

REGION 6 — ST. LAWRENCE

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The North Country experienced a hot summer, the sixth warmest summer on record for the State. June and July were hot with temperatures averaging 3°F above normal. Rainfall was below normal throughout the period causing moderate to severe drought conditions. Rainfall returned to normal in August in the Adirondacks and St. Lawrence Valley but the Lake Ontario Plain remained dry. Water levels on the St. Lawrence River were eight inches below the norm in June but returned to normal in July due to adjustments to the flow at the Power Dam. Vegetation was delayed due to the cool April-May period, with some of the latest blooming dates in memory. Particularly notable was Black Locust in full bloom in late June in Henderson.

Positives for the period include increased numbers of Ruffed Grouse, Wild Turkey and recovery of Chipping Sparrow, Field Sparrow, Song Sparrow, and Swamp Sparrow probably due to the mild winter in the Northeast. Other positives were increased reports of Red-shouldered Hawk, Whip-poor-will, Swainson's Thrush, Clay-colored Sparrow, Vesper Sparrow, Grasshopper Sparrow, and Evening Grosbeak. Neotropical migrants that recovered from bad counts last year included Red-eyed Vireo, American Redstart, Ovenbird. Good numbers of Golden-winged Warbler were found in the Indian River Lakes district, which is still untainted by Blue-winged Warbler genes.

A new State and Region 6 breeding record was established for *Tundra Swan*, seen with two young in August by Betty Hughes and Tom Dudones. Hughes had noted a pair adult Tundra Swan at Perch River WMA in May which were felt to be late migrants. Since the birds were only seen at a great distance, one can only speculate about one adult being injured as the reason for breeding so far south of the normal range. The Black-crowned Night-Heron breeding colony on Little Galloo I increased partly due to destruction of the nesting trees on Gull I by the NYSDEC to assist the Black-crowned Night-Heron on Gull I, and a new colony was established in the St. Lawrence River.

Grassland surveys continued again this year led by Dean DiTommaso, Nick Leone, Thelma Emery and Betty Hughes. They recorded 31 singing male Sedge Wren from 18 sites in the vast uncut fields which are becoming more common as corn production decreases. Di Tommaso found a new species for the Region, a singing male *LeConte's Sparrow* on Jones road in the T Lisbon StLA on 23 Jun. The bird stayed for a month but no mate was seen. As birders converged on

the area, the surrounding meadows were subjected to more scrutiny, yielding many nearby Sedge Wren and an additional rarity, *Yellow Rail*, heard by P. D. Buckley on 2 Jul while watching a small stream just west of the LeConte's location. Buckley heard the bird calling intermittently over a period of five minutes. Since the bird was not seen, this will have to be verified next summer but this habitat is correct for Yellow Rail and they have been located near Ottawa in past years. Leone's night surveys of singing Henslow's Sparrow yielded approximately 51 individuals from several locations around Perch Lake with nine additional birds on Fort Drum in daylight. These numbers surpass the totals from last year's survey. Leone's surveys are extremely important for the future protection of this species in the State. These habitats need to be protected as soon as possible before their use is changed or development occurs.

DiTomasso, Leone and others made several trips to the bogs in the Adirondacks to verify last year's reports of *Palm Warbler*. Of particular interest was the Massawepie Mire, a large bog in the Towns of Colton and Piercefield next to the Massawepie Boy Scout Camp. Last year, Palm Warbler was reported in the bog, listed as the Grasse River Flow in last summer's report, by two parties. This summer large numbers of Lincoln Sparrows, and approximately 20 pairs of Palm Warbler were discovered, many with young, a Region 6 record. Nearby Hitchins Bog contained two additional pairs of Palm Warbler. The discovery of this previously unknown colony of Palm Warbler was impressive but not a total surprise, as the area had been closed to birders during the Atlas surveys in the 1980s. Other findings of note in the many other bogs visited were several singing Ruby-crowned Kinglet, breeding Rusty Blackbird and large numbers of Yellow-bellied Flycatcher. Possible breeders were Merlin and Cape May Warbler. The third breeding record for the Region went to the pair of Orchard Oriole, discovered last year on Point Peninsula, who raised three young.

Negatives for the period include poor counts of Broad-winged Hawk, American Kestrel, Eastern Wood-Pewee, Purple Martin, Barn Swallow and Eastern Meadowlark. Other rarities included N. Saw-whet Owl and Red-necked Phalarope

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Abbreviations : Adk - Adirondack; CV - Cape Vincent, JEFF; CB - Chaumont Barrens, T Clayton/Lyme, JEFF; CPWF - Chandler Pond Wild Forest, T Colton, StLA; CrL - Cranberry L, T Clifton, StLA; ED - El Dorado Beach Preserve, T Ellisburg, JEFF; HB - Hitchins Bog T Piercefield/Colton StLA; LC - Limeric Cedars, T Brownville, JEFF; LFPP - Lyons Falls Pulp & Paper Property, T Montague, Martinsburg, West Turin, LEWI; MM - Massawepie Mire, T Colton/Piercefield, StLA; OBBS - Ogdensburg BBS, 1 Jul; PRWMA - Perch River WMA, JEFF; PBBS - Philadelphia BBS 2 Jul; PtPen - Point Peninsula, T Lyme, JEFF; TLou - T Louisville, TMas - T Massena, StLA; SLR - St. Lawrence River; ULLWMA - Upper and Lower Lakes WMA, T Canton, StLA; WBM - Wilson Bay Marsh, T Cape Vincent, JEFF; WHWMA - Wilson Hill WMA, T Louisville, StLA.

Summer Reports: **Com. Loon:** two pair with two imm WHWMA. **Pied-billed Grebe:** reported ULLWMA, WHWMA, and Fish Creek WMA T Macomb StLA. **Double-crested Cormorant:** 7000 pairs Little Galoo I; new nesting colony McNairn I SLR just over line from T Morristown. **Am. Bittern:** ten reports scattered throughout. **Black-crowned Night-Heron:** ad, imm TMas. **Tundra Swan:** pair with two half grown y PRWMA (BH, TD), new nesting record for Region and State. **Mute Swan:** two imm WHWMA 2 Jun. **Brant:** two on pond T Pinkney LEWI 4 Jun (LC), unusual location. **Wood Duck:** breeding poor due to low water levels. **Green-winged Teal:** two ad six y T Lou 24 Jul. **Am. Black Duck:** single ED Aug. **N. Pintail:** single ED 9 Jul (PK). **Blue-winged Teal:** FL WHWMA and T Lou. **N. Shoveler:** ad PRWMA 22 Aug (TD). **Gadwall:** two pair TLou. **Ring-necked Duck:** three hens with broods of 2, 7, 4 ULLWMA 15 Jul (DD). **Hooded Merganser:** singles T Worth JEFF, LFPP 15, 16 Jun, TLou, all Jun. **Com. Merganser:** broods Raquette R T Colton; 16 y Dead Creek Flow 4 Jul (J&PT).

Turkey Vulture: feeding on carcass with corvids Adk P (PO). **Osprey:** eight reports, mainly from Adk P and SLR valley. **Bald Eagle:** ad LFPP 15 Jun; pair WBM; ad High Falls Oswegatchie R StLA; ad carrying fish Rays Bay T Henderson 9 Aug; imm ED 15 Jun. **N. Harrier:** 19 ad from StLA, two y CV, four y TLou. **Sharp-shinned Hawk:** three singles, one "grazing" all summer at feeder CV (M&BW). **Cooper's Hawk:** one Jones Road T Lisbon StLA 1 Jul; one Bates Road CV 13 Jul. **N. Goshawk:** one T Fine StLA 19 Jun. **Red-shouldered Hawk:** pair Wanakena, Buck Pd T Fine, Degrasse T Clare, single L of the Woods T Theresa JEFF. **Broad-winged Hawk:** one CrL 5 Jul. **Golden Eagle:** ad Millins Bay CV 24 Jul, CV 26 Jul, Gunns Corners CV 9 Aug (MW), probably same bird. **Am. Kestrel:** only seven reports, scarce. **Merlin:** pair Lows L T Colton StLA

(TG), breeding status unknown. **Peregrine Falcon:** ad Cat Mt T Colton StLA 6 Jul (P&JT). **Gray Partridge:** two pair CV 8 Jul, eight Mason Road CV 17 Aug. **Ring-necked Pheasant:** hen with 12 y WBM 20 Jul, five y Chaumont 29 Aug. **Spruce Grouse:** ad male MM 4 Jun (DD). **Ruffed Grouse:** breeding reports Adirondack P, Tug Hill and SLR valley. **Wild Turkey:** four breeding reports, total 54 y. **Yellow Rail:** *intro*. **Virginia Rail:** four imm TLou 11 Aug. **Sora:** two FL Route 37 TMas 9 Jul. **Am. Coot:** four imm TLou 6 Jun (MB). **Black-bellied Plover:** arr ED 31 Jul, singles ED 6, 22 Aug. **Semipalmated Plover:** arr ED 30 Jul, max four ED 22 Aug (PK). **Killdeer:** max 15 PRWMA 22 Aug. **Greater Yellowlegs:** arr ED 19 Jul, max three ED 22 Aug. **Lesser Yellowlegs:** arr ED 9 Jul, max 12 ED 23 Jul. **Solitary Sandpiper:** arr PRWMA 23 Jul, two ED 16 Aug. **Spotted Sandpiper:** max 19 ED 6 Aug. **Upland Sandpiper:** 14 reports JEFF and StLA, max 10 Mason Road CV; ad, two y Pierrepont late Jun (KC). **Ruddy Turnstone:** two ED 31 Jul. **Sanderling:** arr two ED 19 Jul, max 11 ED 28 Aug. **Semipalmated Sandpiper:** arr 68 ED 27 Jul, max 100+ ED 30 Jul. **W. Sandpiper:** one ED 22 Aug (TD). **Least Sandpiper:** arr two ED 4 Jul, max ten PRWMA 22 Aug. **White-rumped Sandpiper:** one ED 30 Jul. **Pectoral Sandpiper:** one PRWMA 22 Aug. **Dunlin:** one ED 6 Aug, early. **Stilt Sandpiper:** five PRWMA 22 Aug. **Short-billed Dowitcher:** arr Rays Bay T Henderson 12 Aug, max two PRWMA 22 Aug. **Am. Woodcock:** max ten Mass 1 Jun. **Wilson's Phalarope:** one ED 27 Aug (PK). **Red-necked Phalarope:** three imm PRWMA 22 Aug (TD). **Bonaparte's Gull:** arr three PtPen 21 Jul, max 18 T Henderson LOL 28 Aug, 8 ED 30 Aug. **Black Tern:** ad calling persistently and diving on Great Blue Heron at PRWMA for five minutes; failing to move the heron, the tern began to attack a nearby Am. Bittern (TD), nest defense on a David and Goliath level!; max 10 Grasse R. ULLWMA 23 Jul.

Black-billed Cuckoo: ten reports throughout. **E. Screech-Owl:** five CV 10 Jun. **Barred Owl:** one Route 56 TLou 7 Jun, two CrL 4 Jul. **N. Saw-whet Owl:** single T Montague LEWI 14 Jun (BP). **Com. Nighthawk:** two Watertown 2 Jul, singles Adams and T Henderson in migration. **Whip-poor-will:** two Burnt Rock Road CV 21 Jun, three Calaboga Road T Alexandria JEFF, max 30 near Black Creek T Hammond StLA 7 Jun (DD). **Chimney Swift:** max 200 T Watertown 23 Aug (NL), probably migrants. **Ruby-throated Hummingbird:** scarce. **Red-headed woodpecker:** one CV through 12 Jun, one Mixer Road T Ellisburg 13 Jun. **Red-bellied Woodpecker:** one CV 17 Jun, ad, two y T Henderson 11 Jun. **Yellow-bellied Sapsucker:** max 11 LFPP 15 Jun. **Hairy Woodpecker:** max 20 TLou 2 Jun. **Black-backed Woodpecker:** one Chandler P T Colton 10 Jun, one MM 8 Jul.

Olive-sided Flycatcher: four in bogs T Fine, Colton, two LFPP 15, 16 Jun (BP). **E. Wood-Pewee:** low numbers from several observers. **Yellow-bellied Flycatcher:** 32 from six sites T Fine, Colton, Adirondack P, three LFPP 15 Jun. **Alder Flycatcher:** four T Theresa, Rossie StLA Jun, four LFPP 15, 16 Jun (BP). **Willow Flycatcher:** five reports, max five TLou 2 Jun, FY 2 Jul. **Least Flycatcher:** max 11 LFPP 15 Jun. **E. Kingbird:** average numbers StLA, down CV. **Horned Lark:** five T Philadelphia JEFF 4 Jul, six Evans Mills T Leray JEFF 27 Aug. **Purple Martin:** low numbers for third year. **Tree Swallow:** max 600 6 Aug CV. **Cliff Swallow:** max 200+ Long Sault Dam 1 Jun (MB). **Barn Swallow:** smaller flocks from all observers. **Gray Jay:** four sites Adirondack P, three with y (DD). **Boreal Chickadee:** two MM 8 Jun (DD). **Carolina Wren:** one singing CV 17 Jun, 4 Jul. **Winter Wren:** four LFPP 15 Jun. **Sedge Wren:** 31 singing males from 14 sites in StLA and 4 sites JEFF (DD), well established in uncut fields. **Ruby-crowned Kinglet:** singing males Oswegatchie R T Fine, CPWF, HB, Streeter L T Fine, Crystal L, MM (DD, PO). **Blue-gray Gnatcatcher:** two 19 Watertown Aug, singles there 26, 29 Aug (RB), probably migrants. **Veery:** max 24 LFPP 15, 16 Jun (BP). **Swainson's Thrush:** max 26 LFPP (BP), up 50% from last year. **Hermit Thrush:** 14 LFPP 15, 16 Jun (BP), average. **Wood Thrush:** max 50 TLou and TMas 1-11 Jun, average. **N. Mockingbird:** one Rays Bay T Henderson 13 Jul, pair Fauret Road CV 12 Jun, five Valley Road CV 10 Aug. **Brown Thrasher:** numbers low.

Solitary Vireo: max 18 LFPP 15, 16 Jun (BP). **Yellow-throated Vireo:** four LFPP 15, 16 Jun (BP), OBBS. **Warbling Vireo:** max 17 TLou Jun, low breeding numbers elsewhere. **Red-eyed Vireo:** 61 LFPP 15, 16 Jun (BP), up 50 %. **Blue-winged Warbler:** singles PRWMA 1 Jun, Watertown 3 Jun (NL). **Golden-winged Warbler:** max 14 Indian R Lakes area T Theresa-T Rossie 7 Jun (NL), high count. **Nashville Warbler:** five LFPP 15, 16 Jun (BP). **N. Parula:** four HB 13 Jun, one Dead Creek Flow T Colton StLA 4 Jul (P&JT). **Yellow Warbler:** 31 OBBS, stable population. **Chestnut-sided Warbler:** nine TMas/TLou, low; 17 LFPP 15, 16 Jun (BP); max 20 Littlejohn WMA 17 Jun (LC). **Magnolia Warbler:** 13 LFPP 15, 16 Jun (BP). **Cape May Warbler:** singing male CPWF 10 Jun (DD) where present 2 weeks earlier, breeding? **Black-throated Blue Warbler:** 11 LFPP 15, 16 Jun (BP), five Dead Creek flow T Colton StLA. **Yellow-rumped Warbler:** 15 LFPP 15, 16 Jun (BP). **Black-throated Green Warbler:** 19 LFPP 15, 16 Jun (BP). **Blackburnian Warbler:** 15 LFPP 15, 16 Jun (BP). **Pine Warbler:** 12 TLou Jun. **Prairie Warbler:** seven LC 4 Jun, six Route 9 T Clayton 30 Jun (NL). **Palm Warbler:** 20 breeding pairs, ten y MM, HB (DD), new breeding area. **Blackpoll Warbler:** arr CV 18 Aug.

Cerulean Warbler: six Hart Flats Road T Theresa JEFF 7 Jun (NL, BH, TE). **Black-and-white Warbler:** three LFPP 15, 16 Jun (BP), three CB 4 Jul. **Am. Redstart:** 75/day TLou/TMas, 27 LFPP 15, 16 Jun (BP), numbers up. **Ovenbird:** 45 TLou/TMas, recovery from last year's low, 14 Littlejohn WMA T Worth LEWI 17 Jun. **N. Waterthrush:** max ten LFPP 15, 16 Jun (BP). **Mourning Warbler:** max ten LFPP 15, 16 Jun (BP), singles T Colton 7 Jun, Ft Drum Memorial Drive JEFF 2 Jun. **Com. Yellowthroat:** 34 OBBS/PBBS, average. **Wilson's Warbler:** imm CV 13 Aug. **Canada Warbler:** max eight LFPP 15, 16 Jun (BP), three pair Dead Creek Flow, T Colton StLA.

Scarlet Tanager: max 11 T Theresa-Rossie JEFF, four LFPP 15, 16 Jun (BP). **N. Cardinal:** 24 TLou/TMas Jun. **Rose-breasted Grosbeak:** 13 LFPP 15, 16 Jun (BP), 9 OBBS. **Indigo Bunting:** max 19 Theresa-Rossie JEFF, nine PBBS, average. **Chipping Sparrow:** recovery to normal levels on BBS LFPP 15, 16 Jun (BP) and TMas. **Clay-colored Sparrow:** two Route 812 T Harrisonville LEWI 12 Jun, max four PtPen Middle Road 25 Jun, single Oak Pt Road T Hammond StLA (NL). **Field Sparrow:** max ten PBBS. **Vesper Sparrow:** max 25 Ft Drum roads despite limited access (NL), good numbers; three T Lisbon StLA (DD), singles T Pitcairn, T Pamela, three T Harrisonville, all JEFF. **Savannah Sparrow:** numbers up on grassland BBS. **Grasshopper Sparrow:** 20 from six locations JEFF, max seven Perch L Road T Pamela 28 Jun (NL); single T Oswegatchie StLA 23 Jul (DD). **LeConte's Sparrow:** male T Lisbon StLA 23 Jun-20 Jul (DD, mob). **Henslow's Sparrow:** total 51 on night surveys JEFF, several sites had five or more singing with highest population in fields bordered by Perch L Road and Bonney Road; nine Route 29 Ft Drum (NL). **Song Sparrow:** recovery to average numbers on BBS. **Lincoln's Sparrow:** max 26 HB, five Clear Pd Wild Forest; 24 pair MM 11 Jun (DD), only 20% of bog covered. **Swamp Sparrow:** max 18 LFPP 15, 16 Jun (BP), improved. **White-throated Sparrow:** max 52 LFPP 15, 16 Jun (BP) 26 TMas-average. **E. Meadowlark:** still low on grassland BBS, improved in JEFF (LC). **Rusty Blackbird:** two ad with y HB 17 Jun (DD), single Oswegatchie R Five Ponds Wilderness T Fine 17 Jun (PO). **Orchard Oriole:** pair with three y PtPen Chaumont Bay JEFF (DP). **Red Crossbill:** eight from four locations in Adk P, CPWF, Clear Pd Wild Forest, HB, MM all in Jun (DD). **White-winged Crossbill:** four Littlejohn WMA 17 Jun. **Pine Siskin:** eight Oswegatchie R T Fine StLA 3 Jun. **Evening Grosbeak:** widely reported in Jun, max 60 TMas; flocks T Fine, Sevey Corners T Colton, T Lisbon, Clear Pd Wild Forest, HB, MM, CPWF, FY TMas Aug-all StLA; single Adams JEFF 4 Jul.

Corrigendum: Kingbird 44(4):320. The night singing Sedge Wren "around Perch River WMA..." should read Henslow's Sparrow.

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