

REGION 3 - FINGER LAKES

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Weather during the summer of 1996 was a mixed bag. June began the season warm and wet in the Finger Lakes. July was cooler than usual, with precipitation slightly above average, while August was warm and dry. The first major cold front passed through the Region on 23 August.

These summer weather conditions seemed to bode well for certain breeding birds, while others suffered. The wet and initially cool conditions of early June had a detrimental effect on early breeders such as Tree Swallows and many ducks, and hatching success for these species was down. On the other hand, Barn Swallows double-brooded, as did several species of warblers. Rare Regional nesting species, including Acadian Flycatcher and Prothonotary and Worm-eating warblers, successfully fledged young. The passage of the cold front in late August initiated the first wave of migrants through the Region, and the first mixed flocks of fall migrants began to appear throughout the Region.

The second annual bird count done in the Ithaca Christmas Bird Count circle was conducted on 15 June. While party hours and the number of participants were the same for 1995 and 1996, total number of species counted was down by almost 20. For the majority of year round residents, numbers were appreciably down from 1995. For example, Wild Turkey, Hairy and Pileated woodpeckers, Black-capped Chickadee, Tufted Titmouse, Red-breasted Nuthatch, Winter Wren, Northern Mockingbird and American Goldfinch all showed at least a 35% reduction in numbers when compared with last year.

Alternatively, for birds which only nest in our Region and winter elsewhere, i.e. vireos, warblers, and most sparrows, numbers were similar to the 1995 count. One possible explanation for the winter resident decline may be due to the severe winter weather and cold, wet spring.

Evidence of the fall shorebird migration began in early July. Several Short-billed Dowitchers of the subspecies *hendersoni* were observed at and near the Montezuma National Wildlife Refuge. Also an **Am. Avocet** was briefly observed on Cayuga Lake. During late August shorebird numbers peaked at Mays Point Pool at the Montezuma Refuge. For example, over 600 individuals of 19 species were observed on 27 August. The importance of this refuge for migratory shorebirds cannot be overstated, and it was a positive development to have the refuge designated as New York's first Important Bird Area by the National Audubon Society.

A total of 200 species of birds was reported. In addition to those species already mentioned, the many interesting highlights include Cattle Egret, Bald Eagle, Buff-breasted Sandpiper, Yellow-breasted Chat, and Red Crossbill.

Abbreviations: CH - Connecticut Hill Wildlife Management Area; DL - Dryden Lake, Town of Dryden; FLNF - Finger Lakes National Forest; HH - Hammond Hill, Town of Dryden; IJC - Ithaca June Count, 15 June in the Ithaca Christmas Bird Count Circle; MBBS - MacDougall Breeding Bird Survey, 9 Jun; MNWR - Montezuma National Wildlife Refuge; MP - Myer's Point, Lansing TOMP; ORBBS - Orleans Breeding Bird Survey 16 Jun; QCM - Queen Catherine Marsh SCHU; SC - Salmon Creek Rd, Town of Lansing; SL - Seneca Lake near Watkins Glen; STP - Stewart Park and Newman Golf Course, Ithaca; SWP - Sapsucker Woods, Cornell Laboratory of Ornithology.

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LOONS-WATERFOWL:

Pied-billed Grebe: entire period MNWR; max 30 MNWR 22 Jul.

Double-crested Cormorant: one IJC (early, A&JW!); 50 MNWR 16 Jul.

American Bittern: one MNWR 16 Jul; one QCM 15 Aug. only reports!.

Least Bittern: one MNWR 16 Jun; one Cayuga Marsh SENE; one QCM 17 Aug.

Great Blue Heron: numerous QCM; 52 IJC; 84 MNWR 22 Jul.

Great Egret: arr MP 26 Jul, avg arrival date; five QCM 24 Aug.

Cattle Egret: one Burdett 6 Jun (JB!).

Green Heron: ten IJC; numerous QCM and MNWR.

Black-crowned Night-Heron: two STP 1-10 Jun; one QCM 27 Jul; numerous MNWR.

TRUMPETER SWAN: four MNWR 18 Jul thru (KM !), origin undetermined, probable escapes.

Canada Goose: 359 IJC; numerous thru Region.

Wood Duck: 37 IJC; 300 MNWR 18 Jul; numerous thru Region.

Green-winged Teal: five MNWR 18 Jul; 25 MNWR 31 Jul; 24 QCM 24 Aug.

Mallard: 109 IJC; 500 MNWR 22 Jul; 100 SP 23 Jul; numerous thru Region.

Blue-winged Teal: two MNWR 18 Jul; one QCM 27 Jul.

Hooded Merganser: two IJC; one MNWR 22 Jul; two QCM 4 Jul.

Com. Merganser: nine MP 25 Jul; eight SL 21 Aug.

HAWKS-ALCIDS:

Turkey Vulture: 25 IJC; six MP 31 Jul; Seneca Lake cliff side group (6-8) present past 10 years disappeared (JB).

Osprey: three MNWR July; one STP July.

Bald Eagle: one imm QCM 27 July; three pairs MNWR and vicinity hatched six.

N. Harrier: one IJC; two MNWR 18 Jul; one Danby 29 Jul; regular QCM.

Sharp-shinned Hawk: four IJC; one WG 22 Jul.

Cooper's Hawk: three IJC; one Caroline 6 Jul.

N. Goshawk: one HH 6 Jun.

Red-shouldered Hawk: two HH 6 Jun; one Shindaigin Hollow 7 Jun; one Caroline 6 Jul.

Broad-winged Hawk: one HH 1 Jun; two IJC; one Caroline 6 Jul; one Arnot Forest 11 Jul.

Red-tailed Hawk: 26 IJC.

American Kestrel: seven IJC.

Ring-necked Pheasant: four IJC; one MNWR 14 Jul; 20 ORBBS; none at QCM (JB!).

Ruffed Grouse: 15 IJC.

Wild Turkey: 12 IJC; 12 FLNF.

Virginia Rail: one DL 6 Jun, only report.

Sora: two QCM 26 Jul, only report.

Com. Moorhen: one DL 6 Jun; 50 MNWR 22 Jul.

Am. Coot: one MNWR 18 Jul; one MP 26 Jul.

Black-bellied Plover: arr MNWR 17 Aug; four MNWR 27 Aug.

Am. Golden-Plover: arr MNWR 18 Aug.

Semipalmated Plover: two MNWR 16 Jun (late); arr MP 15 Jul; 34 MNWR 27 Aug; 3 QCM 27 Aug.

Killdeer: 78 IJC.

AM. AVOCET: one MP 26 Jul (KD!, NYSARC).

Greater Yellowlegs: arr MNWR 14 Jul; eight QCM 26 Jul; 56 MNWR 21 Aug.

Lesser Yellowlegs: arr Canoga 16 Jul; 110 MNWR 17 Aug.

Solitary Sandpiper: arr MNWR 12 Jul; three QCM 27 Jul; four MNWR 27 Aug.

Spotted Sandpiper: seven IJC; seven MP 13 Jul; 12 Flat Rock IT 13 Jul; 12 MNWR 18 Jul.

Upland Sandpiper: two Freeville 10-29 Jun; one MNWR 18 Jul.

Ruddy Turnstone: one MP 13 Jun, late; arr STP 31 Jul; two MNWR 27 Aug.

Sanderling: arr MP 15 Jul; two MP 31 Jul; one MNWR 27 Aug.

Semipalmated Sandpiper: two MP 7 Jun; arr MP 13 Jul; 95 MNWR 27 Aug.

Western Sandpiper: one MNWR 25 Aug.

Least Sandpiper: arr MNWR 7 Jul; 123 MNWR 27 Aug.

White-rumped Sandpiper: eight MNWR 10 Jun; last MNWR 16 Jun (late); arr MNWR 21 Aug.

Baird's Sandpiper: two MP 2 Aug; two MNWR 18 Aug; seven MNWR 21 Aug.

Pectoral Sandpiper: arr MNWR 31 Jul; 66 MNWR 27 Aug.

Stilt Sandpiper: arr Canoga 18 Jul; three MNWR 25 Aug.

Buff-breasted Sandpiper: 1-2 MNWR 18 Aug thru (KD, BE!).

Short-billed Dowitcher: one MNWR 7 Jul; one MNWR 18 Jul (SK), *hendersoni* subspecies; five MNWR 21 Aug.
Com. Snipe: two MNWR 22 Jul.
Am. Woodcock: three IJC.
Wilson's Phalarope: one MNWR 18-27 Aug.
Red-necked Phalarope: one MNWR 18-19 Aug.
Bonaparte's Gull: arr MP 26 Jul.
Ring-billed Gull: 145 IJC; 250 SP 27 Jul.
Herring Gull: two IJC; three STP 31 Jul.
Great Black-backed Gull: 2 IJC; one 1st yr MP 26 Jul; one SL 29 Aug.
Caspian Tern: one SP 8 Jun; max 18 MNWR 31 Jul; five SL 28 Aug.
Com. Tern: one MNWR mid-Jul, only report.
Black Tern: one Canoga 16 Jul, only report.

PIGEONS-WOODPECKERS:

Rock Dove: 176 IJC.
Mourning Dove: 198 IJC.
Black-billed Cuckoo: nine IJC.
Yellow-billed Cuckoo: five IJC.
E. Screech-Owl: three IJC; one WG 13 Jul.
Great Horned Owl: two IJC; one QCM 20 Aug.
Barred Owl: seven IJC.
Chimney Swift: 63 IJC.
Ruby-throated Hummingbird: 34 IJC.
Belted Kingfisher: 27 IJC.
Red-headed Woodpecker: two Ringwood Nature Preserve 9 Jun; two ORBBS; one QCM 1 Jul.
Red-bellied Woodpecker: 62 IJC.
Yellow-bellied Sapsucker: 37 IJC; two Arnot Forest 11 Jul-4 Aug.
Downy Woodpecker: 74 IJC.
Hairy Woodpecker: 35 IJC.
N. Flicker: 61 IJC.
Pileated Woodpecker: 11 IJC.

FLYCATCHERS-STARLINGS:

Olive-sided Flycatcher: one SC 8 Jun.
E. Wood Pewee: 165 IJC.
Acadian Flycatcher: one Danby 2 Jun; one Locke 5 Jun; two (one fl) SC 9 Jun-14 Jul.
Alder Flycatcher: 82 IJC.
Willow Flycatcher: 66 IJC; three MNWR 18 Jul.
Least Flycatcher: five Shindaigin Hollow 7 Jun; 46 IJC.
E. Phoebe: 72 IJC.
Great Crested Flycatcher: 90 IJC.
E. Kingbird: 49 IJC.
Horned Lark: ten MBBS; seven IJC; 34 ORBBS.
Purple Martin: >1000 MNWR 21 Aug.
Tree Swallow: 720 IJC; numbers fledged down in Cornell's nestbox program; 3000 MNWR 18 Jul.
N. Rough-winged Swallow: 38 IJC.
Bank Swallow: 50 IJC; >1000 MNWR 22 Jul thru; 400 SP 30 Jul.
Cliff Swallow: 20 Freeville 2 Jun; 30 SP 13 Aug.
Barn Swallow: 341 IJC; >1000 MNWR 31 Jul thru.

Blue Jay: 216 IJC.
Am. Crow: 709 IJC.
Fish Crow: four IJC; STP entire period.
Com. Raven: one Caroline 25 Aug.
Black-capped Chickadee: 379 IJC.
Tufted Titmouse: 80 IJC.
Red-breasted Nuthatch: eleven IJC.
White-breasted Nuthatch: 42 IJC.
Brown Creeper: 30 IJC.
Carolina Wren: one SC period; four IJC.
House Wren: 261 IJC.
Winter Wren: three IJC.
Marsh Wren: nine MNWR 18 Jul; low numbers QCM.
Golden-crowned Kinglet: one IJC.
Ruby-crowned Kinglet: one FLNF 28 Aug (JB!), very early.
Blue-gray Gnatcatcher: nine IJC; six SP 24 Aug.
E. Bluebird: 29 IJC.
Veery: 241 IJC; nocturnal migrants 25 Aug thru.
Gray-cheeked Thrush: one SWP 1 Jun (JAW!), nocturnal migrant, late.
Swainson's Thrush: several SW 1 Jun (JAW), nocturnal migrant.
Hermit Thrush: 19 IJC.
Wood Thrush: 205 IJC.
Am. Robin: 364 ORBBS; 885 IJC.
Gray Catbird: 368 IJC.
N. Mockingbird: nine IJC.
Brown Thrasher: two MBBS; one ORBBS; 16 IJC.
Cedar Waxwing: 314 IJC; 100 SP 24 Aug.
European Starling: 1579 IJC.

VIREOS-WARBLEDERS:

Solitary Vireo: 55 IJC.
Yellow-throated Vireo: 16 IJC.
Warbling Vireo: 56 IJC.
Red-eyed Vireo: 470 IJC.
Blue-winged Warbler: 55 IJC.
"Lawrence's" Warbler: one SC 8 Jun; one SW 16 Aug.
Tennessee Warbler: two FLNF 28 Aug.
Nashville Warbler: two IJC; one CH.
N. Parula: one Danby 6 Jun (KD!).
Yellow Warbler: 560 IJC; 12 SW 8 Aug.
Chestnut-sided Warbler: 97 IJC.
Magnolia Warbler: five Shindaigin Hollow 7 Jun; 23 IJC.
Black-throated Blue Warbler: 38 IJC.
Yellow-rumped Warbler: 48 IJC.
Black-throated Green Warbler: 88 IJC.
Blackburnian Warbler: 21 IJC.
Pine Warbler: period Cornell Plantations; one WG 3 Jun and 13 Jul.
Prairie Warbler: one Caroline 3 Jun; one IJC; one CH 6 Jul.
Blackpoll Warbler: last MNWR 17 Jun.
Cerulean Warbler: eight SC 10 Jun; one MNWR 16 Jun; two CH 6 Jul; one Savannah 22 Jul.

Black-and-white Warbler: 21 IJC.
Am. Redstart: 140 IJC.
Prothonotary Warbler: one QCM 6 Jun; one SP 9 Jun; one Savannah 22 Jul.
Worm-eating Warbler: five West Danby 22 Jun.
Ovenbird: 274 IJC.
N. Waterthrush: 13 IJC.
Louisiana Waterthrush: 8 IJC.
Mourning Warbler: 12 IJC.
Com. Yellowthroat: 545 IJC.
Hooded Warbler: 17 IJC.
Wilson's Warbler: one SWP 23 Aug.
Canada Warbler: 25 IJC.
Yellow-breasted Chat: one IJC (K.&JM!)

TANAGERS-WEAVERS:

Scarlet Tanager: 100 IJC.
N. Cardinal: 237 IJC.
Rose-breasted Grosbeak: 11 ORBBS; 76 IJC.
Indigo Bunting: three MBBS; 19 ORBBS; 113 IJC.
E. Towhee: 116 IJC.
Chipping Sparrow: 348 IJC.
Field Sparrow: 75 IJC.
Vesper Sparrow: 42 ORBBS; seven IJC.
Savannah Sparrow: 18 MBBS; 116 ORBBS; 168 IJC.
Grasshopper Sparrow: one MBBS; two ORBBS; 23 IJC.
Henslow's Sparrow: one IJC; three Freeville 4 Aug.
Song Sparrow: 965 IJC.
Lincoln's Sparrow: one Lansing 2 Jun.
Swamp Sparrow: 51 IJC; 30 MNWR 18 Jul.
White-throated Sparrow: one Shindaigin Hollow 9 Jun; two IJC; one SW 22 Aug.
Dark-eyed Junco: 179 IJC.
Bobolink: 256 IJC; 100 Caroline 25 Aug. nocturnal migrants.
Red-winged Blackbird: 1230 IJC; 500 MNWR 19 Aug.
E. Meadowlark: one MBBS; six ORBBS; 40 IJC.
Com. Grackle: 412 IJC; 500 MNWR 17 Aug.
Brown-headed Cowbird: 260 IJC.
Orchard Oriole: one MP 1 Jun; one Sheldrake 15 Jun.
Baltimore Oriole: 152 IJC.
Purple Finch: 26 IJC; two Caroline 6 Jul.
House Finch: 290 IJC.
Red Crossbill: two flocks Summerhill Wildlife Management Area 5 Jun.
Pine Siskin: one SWP 3 Jun; one Brooktondale 5 Jun; two Dryden thru 17 Jun; one FLNF 2 Jul.
Am. Goldfinch: 354 IJC.
House Sparrow: 486 IJC.

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