

REGION 6 - ST. LAWRENCE

ROBERT E. LONG

2807 Citation Dr, Pompey NY 13138

The summer of 1997 proved to be quite normal for the North Country. The early warmth of June proved a welcome departure from the chill of May. Late leafing species such as willow and walnut were completely bare as the last wave of migrant warblers moved through Morristown STLA, providing the author with a rare treat during the first week in June. June was one to two degrees warmer than average giving most species an early start for nesting. July was dry, windy and slightly cooler (-0.8°F) than the average. Rains during the last ten days of the month ended the drought. August was about one half degree cooler than average. Precipitation varied from slightly below normal in the

Adirondacks to two inches above normal in Gouverneur, which experienced some local storms in the St. Lawrence Valley. The only detrimental effect of weather on breeding was high water in the St. Lawrence River combined with steady winds in July resulting in the loss of 135 Common Tern nests on shoals and low islands from Clayton to Chippewa Bay.

Double-crested Cormorant nesting pairs on Little Galloo Island IBA decreased from 8400 to 7500 this year as nesting areas have decreased and DEC continues to keep the cormorants from nesting on nearby Gull Island. The presence of eight **Great Egrets** in a swamp near Winthrop STLA suggests a breeding attempt. No nests or young were reported. More observation is needed next year. A **Trumpeter Swan** pair nested for the third year in a row at Perch River WMA, producing seven young this year. [RREd: See note in *The Kingbird* 46(4):322 on probable origin of this pair from Wayne County waterfowl collection.] Noteworthy is the fact that this species has chased all the Mute Swans out of this large area of the Wildlife Management Area.

Two new Region 6 species were found this summer, **Black Vulture** and **Fish Crow**. Brian Wood found the vulture on Route 22 near Oxbow JEFF. Bettye Hughes heard, then spotted, the crow at the Salmon Run Mall in Watertown. This is a northward extension of 70 miles for this species. The other rarity was a **Nelson's Sharp-tailed Sparrow** seen by Brian and Mary Wood at Chaumont on 30 August. This is a second record for the Region.

Grassland surveys by Nick Leone, Dean DiTommaso, Mickey Scilingo provided excellent coverage this season. Leone found stable populations of **Henslow's Sparrow** in the Perch River Grassland IBA as did DiTommaso with **Sedge Wren** in the Lisbon Grassland IBA. Scilingo reported excellent numbers of Upland Sandpiper, Vesper Sparrow and **Clay-colored Sparrow** from surveys on Fort Drum. Both Scilingo and Leone found **Short-eared Owls** this year as well. New grassland surveys were developed by Gerry Smith using point counts with ten minute time periods in the Towns of Lyme and Ellisburg JEFF. Good numbers of Vesper Sparrow were located by Bill Purcell on the Ellisburg route, and Leone found a probable nesting area for Northern Harrier on the Lyme route.

The Five Ponds Wilderness Area in the Town of Fine STLA, closed since the blowdown from the microburst in July 1995, opened its trails this summer. Peter O'Shea made the following initial observations: increased numbers of Winter Wren, Nashville Warbler, Northern Waterthrush, and Mourning Warbler and marked decreases in Black-throated Green Warbler and Rose-breasted Grosbeak.

Massawepie Mire and nearby Hitchins Bog, Towns of Piercefield and Colton STLA, were surveyed again this summer for **Palm Warbler** by Dean DiTommaso, Bob Long, John Fritz and Nick Leone. The result was a total of 28 singing males, confirming the presence of a localized but stable breeding colony of this species in the Western Adirondacks.

Positives for the period included successful nesting of Bald Eagle and good numbers of Am. Bittern, Wood Duck, N. Harrier and Am. Kestrel in JEFF, Upland Sandpiper, Caspian Tern, Black-billed Cuckoo, E. Wood-Pewee, Red-eyed Vireo, Warbling Vireo, and Yellow Warbler.

Negatives for the period included poor counts of Sharp-shinned Hawk, lower numbers of nesting Black Tern, disruption of the shorebird migration at El Dorado Town of Ellisburg JEFF due to high water, and fewer reports of Least Flycatcher, E. Kingbird and Barn Swallow.

Species out of season included Snow Goose and Bufflehead in June and Horned Grebe, Red-necked Grebe and Greater Scaup in August. Rarities were Canvasback, Am. Coot, **LITTLE GULL**, Tennessee Warbler, Louisiana Waterthrush, Hooded Warbler and Yellow-breasted Chat.

Contributors : Sue Adair, Marilyn Badger, Jeff Bolsinger, Sandy Bonnano, Richard Brouse, Cape Vincent Group (Mary & Brian Wood, Frank Mueller), Sheila Cerwonka, Lee Chamberlaine, Bruce DiLabio, Dean DiTommaso, John Fritz, Bettye Hughes, Mary Alice Koeneke, Nick Leone, Debbie Litwhiler, Robert Long, Irene Mazzocchi, Gene & Pearl McGory, Paul Novak, Peter O'Shea, Bill Purcell, Mickey Scilingo, Gerry Smith.

Abbreviations : AD - Adirondack Park; AWMA - Ashland WMA T Lyme & Cape Vincent JEFF; BBBS - Balmat BBS TFowler, Pitcairn STLA, TDiana LEWI 21 Jun; BMM - Beaver Meadow Marsh Watertown; BBS - Breeding Bird Survey; CV - Cape Vincent JEFF; CB - Chaumont Barrens T Clayton/Lyme JEFF; Cr L - Cranberry L T Clifton STLA; DMWMA - Dexter Marsh WMA THounsfield & Brownville JEFF; ED - El Dorado Beach Preserve TEL; TEL-T Ellisburg JEFF; FL - Fledged y; FY - feeding y; Then -T Henderson JEFF; Hit B - Hitchens Bog TPiercefield+Colton STLA; IBA- Important Bird Area, National Audubon Soc; JEFF - Jefferson Co; KC - Kelsey Cr Watertown; LEWI - Lewis Co; LG - Little Galloo I. T Hounsfield JEFF; TMas - T Massena STLA; Tmor - T Morristown STLA; TLou - T Louisville STLA; MM - Massawepie Mire T Colton/Piercefield STLA; OBBS - Ogdensburg BBS, 16 Jun (RL); Osw - Oswegatchie; PRWMA - Perch River WMA JEFF; PBBS - Philadelphia BBS 18 Jun (RL); PPT - Pillar Pt T Brownville JEFF; Pt Pen - Point Peninsula T Lyme JEFF; PC - Pond near Chaumont TLyme JEFF; RMPD - Robert Moses Power Dam SLR T Mas STLA; SLR - St. Lawrence R; STLA - St. Lawrence Co; SLV - St. Lawrence Valley; TH - Tug Hill - JEFF & LEWI Co; WBBS - Wanakena BBS T Fine, Clifton, Clare STLA 19 Jun (RL); WMA - Wildlife Management Area.

LOONS-WATERFOWL

Pied-billed Grebe: five reports, max four imm PC 29 Aug.

Horned Grebe: two in early winter plumage RMPD 28 Aug (BD), early.

Red-necked Grebe: one PRWMA 24 Aug (RB), early.

Double-crested Cormorant: nests on SLR increased from 600 to 800 in Tmor & TMas.

Am. Bittern: twelve reports from eight areas; max six PC.

Least Bittern: singles Stoney Cr Boat Launch TEL, TMas, & PRWMA.

Great Egret: eight marsh Rt 420 Winthrop TStockholm STLA (MB).

Black-crowned Night-Heron: four to eight BMM 20 Jul-9 Aug; one Gull I HB 6 Jun; three Winthrop swamp, TStockholm STLA (CS).

Trumpeter Swan: pr with seven y PRWMA.

Mute Swan: one Grass I SLR 1 Jun; one PRWMA 7 Jun.

Snow Goose: one with 18 Canada Geese Rt 5 TLyme JEFF 8 Jun (NL&BH), late.

Wood Duck: breeding throughout; max 100+ BMM 20 Jul.

Green-winged Teal: one imm TMas 29 Jul; two ED 28 Aug.

Am. Black Duck: four reports: Coles Cr TLou, BMM, ED, max eight PRWMA.

Blue-winged Teal: four reports: prs Tmas & FD, singles ED & PRWMA.

Gadwall: ad with six imm Marsh Pond TMas 20/Jul; single PRWMA 7 Jun; two RMPD 27 Jun.

Am. Wigeon: one PRWMA 7 Jun.

Canvasback: single female OSWR T Colton STLA WBBS 19 Jun (RL).

Ring-necked Duck: 20 ad + 11y ULLWMA 14 Jun (DD).

Greater Scaup: single male Pt Pen 18 Aug (IM).

Com. Goldeneye: one female Sawyer's Bay TThen (GM).

Bufflehead: single male RMPD 27 Jun(PD), late.

Hooded Merganser: ad with 11 imm TLou 5 Jun (MB); two CP 29 Aug (CVG).

Com. Merganser: six ED Aug 9.

HAWKS-ALCIDS

Osprey: six active nests SLR Alexandria Bay JEFF to Chippewa Bay STLA (RL); three other reports of nine ind; max six PRWMA 7 Jun (MK).

Bald Eagle: two y in nest PRWMA; three y in nest at Raquette R STLA 11 June; single imm at Lakeview WMA 30 June (GS); imm ED 22 Aug (LC).

N. Harrier: reports from 19 areas; two probable nesting locations in the Towns of Lyme and Orleans JEFF (NL), highest numbers in last six years. **Sharp-shinned Hawk:** five reports of singles, very low numbers.

Cooper's Hawk: four reports of five ind.

N. Goshawk: single ad Rt 56 T Colton STLA (NL, BH).

Red-shouldered Hawk: singles BBBS, T Theresa JEFF, & T Fine STLA; two T Clifton STLA.

Broad-winged Hawk: several seen between Star L and Sevens Corners Rt 3 towns of T Fine, Clifton, & Colton STLA (PO).

Red-tailed Hawk: FY TMas 3 Jun.

Am. Kestrel: ten reports from JEFF; only three from STLA.

Merlin: singles PRWMA 24 Aug (RB); ED 22 Aug (LC).

Gray Partridge: two 15 Jun; 15-20 on 11 Aug, all CV.

Ruffed Grouse: seven reports; broods in AD.

Wild Turkey: large flocks everywhere after a mild winter.

Am. Coot: two Winthrop Marsh Rt 420 16 Aug (MB).

Black-bellied Plover: two Pt Pen 18 Aug.

Semipalmated Plover: three ED 8 Aug; two PtPen 18 Aug; 30 PC 30 Aug. **Greater Yellowlegs:** arr ED 9 Aug; one PtPen 18 Aug; two Ed 22 Aug; 25 PC 30 Aug.

Lesser Yellowlegs: arr BMM 20 Jul(3); max six ED 6 Aug,

Solitary Sandpiper: arr three BMM 20 Jul; dep two Blake Sanctuary 26 Jul.

Spotted Sandpiper: max four PRWMA 30 Aug.

Upland Sandpiper 11 reports from JEFF; two from STLA; max 10 FD.

Sanderling: arr ED 6 Aug; max 6 ED 12 Aug.

Semipalmated Sandpiper. one Clayton JEFF 1 Jun; arr ED 6 Aug (26); max 30 PC 29 Aug.

Least Sandpiper: arr BMM 20 Jul 2; eight PC 30 Aug.

Pectoral Sandpiper: one PC 29 Aug.

Dunlin: eight ED 14 Aug.

Short-billed Dowitcher: five PtPen 18 Aug; 12 PC 29 Aug.

LITTLE GULL: one juv Ed 29 Aug (GS), only report.

Bonaparte's Gull: 12 ad seven juv RMPD; 28 singles ED 20 Jul, 6 Aug.

Great Black-backed Gull: 33 mostly first yr RMPD 28 Aug (PD).

Caspian Tern: 800 pr LG, numbers improved.

Com. Tern: 385 nests SLR, mostly on navigation sites; most natural sites washed out by wave action (LH); nest with two y CV; four nests Pt Pen I 18 Jun (IM).

Black Tern: 47 nests PRWMA (down 50%), 55% successful; six nests LWMA, only one

successful; DWMA 31 nests, 52% successful, 21 nests on floating boards; 30 ad ULLWMA TCanton STLA 14 Jun.

DOVES-WOODPECKERS

Black-billed Cuckoo: nine reports thru; max nine on point count TEI 5 Jul.

E. Screech-Owl: road kill Sawyers Bay THEN 24 Aug.

Barred Owl: one TMas; one Rt 81 TEI (MS).

Short-eared Owl: singles Dog Hill Rd TOrleans 6 Jun; AWMA 20 Jul; three Baggs Corner THounsfield 14 Jun; Rt 342 near Gould's corners TLeRay 20 Jun (NL, BH, MAK), all JEFF; one to two/day confirmed breeding FD (MS).

Com. Nighthawk: singles Then & TMas early Jun; three Watertown 15 Jul; dep eight to ten circling with 40 gulls intersection Rts 11 & 342 TLe Ray JEFF 25 Aug.

Whip-poor-will: two TLou 2 Jun; 19 TLyme JEFF 2 Jun (NL).

Red-headed Woodpecker: one CV Village all summer; singles on pt count T EI 15 Jun; Belleville TEI 27 Jun; FD 18 Jun.

Red-bellied Woodpecker: FY THEN; two on pt count TEI 15 Jun.

Yellow-bellied Sapsucker: pr KC early Jun, only report; missed on WBBS, usually there are ten (RL).

FLYCATCHERS-STARLINGS

Olive-sided Flycatcher: two HitB 29 Jun (DD).

E. Wood-Pewee: reports increased from JEFF; average numbers OBBS.

Yellow-bellied Flycatcher: one near Cr L 2 Jul (PO); four MM 15 Jun (JF RL).

Alder Flycatcher: eight P+OBBS; ten TMas; six pt count TEI, MM; five BBBS, well distributed in SLV; ad JEFF.

Willow Flycatcher: max 13 pt count TEI; increasing in the SLV 6 P+OBBS; three Clayton RR; two Wanakena 8 Jun (RB), unusual.

Least Flycatcher: 30 TNorfolk 3 Jun; 13 BBBS; five WBBS, 50% below average.

Great Crested Flycatcher: max 12 pt count TEI 9 Jun; 10 TLou 1 Jun.

E. Kingbird: 4-8/day TLou; eight pt count TEI 9 Jun; seven P+OBBS, down 50%.

Horned Lark: two Clayton RR 5 Jul; single TLou 1 Jun.

Purple Martin: good numbers from SLV; improving on Lake Plain.

Bank Swallow: 154 pt count TEI 5 Jul.

Cliff Swallow: max 200+ Long Sault Dam TMas 1 Jun (MB).

Barn Swallow: numbers still down 50% on grassland BBS routes.

Gray Jay: three ad & two juv MM 15 Jun (DD).

Com. Raven: reports from THEN, TTheresa, FD away from Adirondacks.

Sedge Wren: 14 PRWMA grasslands IBA area (NL); 18 in grasslands of TLisbon, TCanton IBA (DD), numbers above 1995 surveys.

Golden-crowned Kinglet: three WBBS; two MM 15 Jun.

Ruby-crowned Kinglet: two MM 15 Jun; single TMas 1 Jun, late mig.

Blue-gray Gnatcatcher: singles THEN 17, 18 Jul, 15 Aug (LC), possible migrants.

Veery: 14 BBBS; max 45 TLou.

Hermit Thrush: eight BBBS; seven WBBS, average; three TLou.

Wood Thrush: max 50 TLou/TMas 8 Jun.

Brown Thrasher: singles on pt counts TEI, only reports.

WARBLERS-VIREOS

Solitary Vireo: seven BBBS.

Yellow-throated Vireo: three THammond/Macomb STLA 16 Jun (NL BH); singles PBBS & pt count TEI.

Warbling Vireo: max 28 P+OBBS, 40% above 10 yr average; increasing past three yr.

Red-eyed Vireo: 98 WBBS, recovery after low year of 1994.

Blue-winged Warbler: three reports FD; one Dean School House Rd TEI (NL MS).

Golden-winged Warbler: two TMas; two reports FD & TEI; five PBBS.

Tennessee Warbler: two TLou 1 Jun, late mig; one singing male HitB 29 Jun (DD).

Nashville Warbler: FL TMas; reports from Wanakena, L Bonaparte, & CB; seven BBBS; max 26 MM 15 Jun (JF RL).

N. Parula: two MM 15 Jun.

Yellow Warbler: 52 OBBS, increasing 5% yearly past four years.

Chestnut-sided Warbler: seven WBBS, down 50% from average; max 12 BBBS.

Magnolia Warbler: reports from Then & TEI; max five BBBS; breeding ED.

Black-throated Blue Warbler: max five WBBS.

Yellow-rumped Warbler: 15 WBBS average; breeding ED.

Black-throated Green Warbler: five WBBS; dep ED 30 Aug.

Blackburnian Warbler: three WBBS; dep KC 24 Aug.

Pine Warbler: six TLou/TMas 8 Jun; two Massawepie L T Piercefield 15 Jun.

Prairie Warbler: singles PRWMA & Co Rt 5 TLYme; two CB; two CV.

Palm Warbler: 19 singing males MM 15 Jun; nine singing males Hit B 29 Jun, 5 Jul. (NL DD JF RL).

Cerulean Warbler: five Hard flats Rd TTheresa JEFF; two Black L Rd TMacomb STLA (NL BH).

Black-and-white Warbler: max eleven WBBS, BBBS.

Am. Redstart: 29/day TLou/TMas; 26 WBBS, average.

Ovenbird: 40/day TLou/TMas; 31 BBBS; 26 WBBS, above average.

Louisiana Waterthrush: single W. Lyden Rd T Oseola LEWI 6 Jun (NL BH).

Mourning Warbler: reports from TEL pt count, BBBS, & Tug Hill SF; three WBBS.

Com. Yellowthroat: 56 P+OBBS, increasing past five years.

Hooded Warbler: single TEL pt count 9 Jun; two TOseola LEWI 6 Jun (NL, BH).

Wilson's Warbler: male TMas 14 Jun (MB), late mig.

Canada Warbler: three TEL 15 Jun.

Yellow-breasted Chat: one Area 38 FD 10 Jun (JB).

TCLayton 25 Jun, all JEFF; two CB; max seven FD 3 Jun.

Field Sparrow: max eight FD 24 Jun.

Vesper Sparrow: TEL pt count; singles TCLayton & CV; max 21 FD 26 Jun; FY TLou & FD.

Savannah Sparrow: 26 P+OBBS, average.

Grasshopper Sparrow: 15 from eight sites in JEFF-TLYme, TCLayton, TORleans, PPT, & PRWMA (NL); singles TEL, T Hounsfield; FY TLou; max 12 FD.

Henslow's Sparrow: night surveys totaled 50 individuals from several sites in grasslands around PRWMA (NL); FY TLou 15 Jun (MB), several sites; FY FD.

Nelson's Sharp-tailed Sparrow: one Chaumont TLYme 30 Aug, buffy unstreaked chest (CVG!,NYSARC).

Song Sparrow: 50 OBBS, back to average numbers; low numbers on Lake plain.

Lincoln's Sparrow: three MM 15 Jun.

White-throated Sparrow: 20 WBBS; 35/day TMas, about average.

White-crowned Sparrow: three TMas 1 Jun.

Bobolink: exploding in uncut hayfields JEFF & STLA.

E. Meadowlark: 29 PBBS; 17 OBBS, average.

Purple Finch: FL TMas & THEN.

House Finch: FY TMas; one OBBS; few other reports.

Red Crossbill: FY MM Tlou

Pine Siskin: a few fly overs Jun MM THEN.

Evening Grosbeak: single Alder acres TLorraine TH 7 Jul; FY Barnes Corners LEWI; fly overs MM THEN.

TANAGERS-WEAVERS

Scarlet Tanager: few reports; FY TMas.

Chipping Sparrow: 28 BBBS; 10 OBBS; 41/day TMas, about average.

Clay-colored Sparrow: Co Rt 9 CV 13 Jun; middle Rd PPT 15 Jul; Three mile preserve

(315)-677-9840 - home; (315)-4464580 - work; (315)-446-3426 - Fax; e-mail - rlongmd@AOL.com