

REGION 6 - ST. LAWRENCE

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June was 4°F warmer than normal throughout the Region. July was somewhat better, averaging 2.5° above average. A series of "cooler" fronts arrived in early August allowing normal temperatures to return. Precipitation varied considerably during June, with the Adirondacks receiving only half the usual rainfall. The St. Lawrence River Valley and Jefferson County had normal rainfall totals for June and July, but the rains came in brief downpours interspersed with long periods of no rain. The intense showers caused flooding of already dry marshes, creating problems for species nesting close to water. The statewide drought finally hit the North Country in August. The St. Lawrence River and Lake Ontario were at their lowest levels in ten years at the beginning of the period due to the lack of snow in the Great Lakes Basin. Vegetation was lush in June, and the warm weather provided early nesting of many species. However, by early August much of the berry crop was withered and many species left the area early. Aerial insectivores, particularly swallows and martins, were gone two weeks earlier than usual.

Double-crested Cormorant eggs on Little Galloo Island IBA were oiled for the first time in New York State history as a result of a series of NYSDEC studies which suggested that cormorants were causing a marked decrease in the population of Smallmouth Black Bass in the eastern Ontario basin. The US Fish and Wildlife Service and NYSDEC were also under heavy political pressure to do something this year. The eggs were oiled by DEC staff on five occasions from 6 May until 8 July. The number of nests varied from 2,844 to 4,283 and the number of eggs from 5,015 to a high of 16,310 on 20 May. Only 36 chicks hatched from the treated nests, which were all on the ground. There were 80 nests in trees, which were not oiled and which produced 106 chicks. The final assessment of the project was 146 chicks from a total of 2,924 nests counted on 8 July. This was less than two percent hatched, a dramatic decrease. This project will continue in the future, so the results will be not be known for some time. Meanwhile some

3,000 nests on Canadian islands in Lake Ontario and the St. Lawrence River did very well. On the human side, the perpetrators of the massacre in 1998 were caught, fined and many committed to house arrest.

Great Egret reports are becoming more numerous every year. This year 48 were found in the Town of Lawrence, St. Lawrence County. The **Trumpeter Swan** pair nested for the fifth year in a row at Perch River WMA, producing six young. The total number of young produced is now 27. The Trumpeter Swan is fast becoming the most common large swan in this Region in the summer. An unusual goose was reported from Massena; it appeared to be a cross between Canada and White-fronted goose. The bird was associating with a flock of Canada Geese. A picture was taken by Beryl Bond and sent to Syracuse, then on to Cornell where it was identified as a hybrid Canada Goose-Swan Goose. The Swan Goose is a native of Asia and a few of these Geese have escaped from private collections in the Finger Lakes Region.

Black Terns arriving at Perch Lake WMA found dry conditions and did not use the artificial platforms which are designed for high water periods. Then heavy rains flooded nests and adults were seen moving to different areas. Rapid growth of emerging vegetation in dry areas may have been a problem, too. With few staff available to survey the nests, the NYSDEC staff decided on a less invasive method so as not to further distress the colonies. Adults were thus counted during disturbance to estimate pair numbers. In summary, this is an example of what poor weather can do to the breeding success of an endangered species that has few areas of habitat left.

This summer there were few reports from the grasslands and other open areas, probably due to the intense heat. Nick Leone reported good numbers of **Henslow's Sparrows** from a small sample of their breeding areas. Surveys conducted in the shade of the Adirondack and Tug Hill were popular this year. The Bog River flow and Sevey Bog were covered in the Adirondack, while the old Lyons Falls Pulp and Paper property in the Towns of Osceola and West Turin, Lewis County was surveyed, as well as Francis Lake, Lewis County.

One positive for the summer was a modest improvement in the shore-bird flight. It appears that the variety of shorebirds is better at Point Peninsula than El Dorado shores, which continues to have vegetation problems. Some birds rarely seen in recent years were reported at Point Peninsula, including: **Marbled Godwit**, **Baird's Sandpiper**, **Stilt Sandpiper** and **Long-billed Dowitcher**.

Rarities for the season included **Snow Goose**, **Cattle Egret**, **Little Gull**, **Long-eared Owl**, **Blue-gray Gnatcatcher** and **Tennessee Warbler**.

CONTRIBUTORS

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ABBREVIATIONS

AD - Adirondack Park; BMM - Beaver Meadow Marsh, Watertown JEFF; BRF - Bog R Flow, T Colton, Piercefield STLA; CV - Cape Vincent JEFF; ED - El Dorado Beach Preserve; FrL - Francis Lake, T Watson AD LEWI; HP - Holmes Pt, TMor STLA; IBA - Important Bird Area, National Audubon Soc.; JCSP - Jacques Cartier State Park, T Mor STLA; JEFF - Jefferson Co; LC - Limeric Cedars, T Brownville JEFF; LEWI - Lewis Co; LG - Little Galoo I, T Hounsfield JEFF; LWMA - Lakeview WMA, TEL JEFF; MM - Massawepie Mire, T Colton T Piercefield STLA; MM-O - Michigan Mills-Osceola, T West Turin T Osceola LEWI; PBBS - Philadelphia BBS, T Philadelphia, Antwerp JEFF, T Rossie, Hammond STLA 18 Jun (RL); P-M - Page-Monteola Rd, T Osceola and West Turin LEWI; PRWMA - Perch River WMA JEFF; PtPen - Point Peninsula, T Lyme JEFF; RMPD - Robert Moses Power Dam and vicinity, TMas STLA; SB - Sawyer's Bay, THen; SC - Sevey's Corners, T Colton STLA; SF - State Forest; SLR - St. Lawrence R; SLV - SLR Valley; STLA - St. Lawrence Co; TEL - T Ellisburg JEFF; TH - Tug Hill JEFF & LEWI; THen - T Henderson JEFF; TLou - T Louisville STLA; TMas - T Massena STLA; TMor - T Morristown STLA; WBBS - Wanakena BBS, T Fine, Clifton, Clare STLA 1 Jun (RL); WBM - Wilson Bay Marsh, T Cape Vincent JEFF.

LOONS - WATERFOWL

Com. Loon: pair FrL 4 Jun; max 8 BRF 19 Jun.

Pied-billed Grebe: max 8 PRWMA 15 Aug.

Double-crested Cormorant: 5- 6 per day HP thru.

Am. Bittern: 3 areas; FY TMas 16 Jun.

Great Egret: singles from 3 locations THen 3-17 Aug; 2 Yellow L T Rossie STLA 12 Aug; 48 beaver pond on Rt 11C T Lawrence STLA Jul (MM), most likely

from a growing colony on nearby Dickerson I in the SLR on the Quebec side.

Cattle Egret: 1 Chippewa Bay T Hammond STLA 23 Jun (NL).

Black-crowned Night-Heron: 1 ad BMM 3 Jun; many ad Morristown Bay TMor, now nesting on McNairn I just across the border (LH); 3-6 PRWMA Jun and Jul (LC), new nesting location perhaps due to low water.

Turkey Vulture: now plentiful in all

areas.

Snow Goose: 1 ad Ives P Potsdam 10 Jun (SC), lingering with Canada Geese.

Mute Swan: 1 pair + 3 y and 1 pair + 2 y PRWMA 20 Jul.

Trumpeter Swan: 5 ad + 6 y PRWMA 26 Aug.

Gadwall: 12 PRWMA 4 Jul.

Am. Wigeon: 4 PRWMA 4 Jul.

Am. Black Duck: 1 PRWMA 25 Jul.

Blue-winged Teal: pair TLou 1 Jun; pair PRWMA 4 Jul.

N. Shoveler: 1 PRWMA 4 Jul.

N. Pintail: 4 PRWMA 4 Jul.

Lesser Scaup: 1 SB 2 Aug (G&PM).

Oldsquaw: 1 SB 2 Aug (G&PM).

Hooded Merganser: 1 TLou 1 Jun.

Com. Merganser: 3 BRf 19 Jun.

Ruddy Duck: 2 male PRWMA 25 Jul.

HAWKS - ALCIDS

Osprey: FL Massawepie; ad daily on SLR TMor; max 8 PRWMA 15 Aug.

Bald Eagle: 1 ad + 1 imm Tmas 1 Jun; 1 ad BRf 19 Jun; 1 imm Barnes Corners T Pinckney LEWI 1 Aug.

N. Harrier: few reports, little coverage of grasslands?

Sharp-shinned Hawk: 3 reports.

N. Goshawk: ad calling on several occasions MM (PO).

Am. Kestrel: good numbers in JEFF for second year.

Merlin: 1 female FrL 4 Jun (LC).

Wild Turkey: large broods seen everywhere on a daily basis.

Com. Moorhen: 13 Winthrop swamp T Stockholm STLA 7 Jun (SC).

Am. Coot: 1 Brownie Rd TLou 1 Jun; 1 PRWMA 12 Jun.

Black-bellied Plover: 1 ED 6 Aug.

Semipalmated Plover: 3 ED 16-19 Aug.

Greater Yellowlegs: 5 ED 19 Aug.

Lesser Yellowlegs: 20 ED 18 Jul; max 30 ED 20 Jul.

Solitary Sandpiper: 1 PtPen 25 Aug.

Spotted Sandpiper: 7 reports STLA and JEFF; max 8 ED 22 Aug.

Upland Sandpiper: 3 y TThen 10 Jun; max 5 T Clayton JEFF 17 Jun.

MARbled GODWIT: 1 PtPen 30-31

Aug (NYSARC, NL).

Ruddy Turnstone: arr PtPen 25 Aug.

Sanderling: 4 ED 25 Jul; max 9 LWMA 17 Aug; 8 ED 19 Aug.

Semipalmated Sandpiper: arr 20 ED 18

Jul; max 25 ED 20 Jul; 10 ED 19 Aug.

Least Sandpiper: arr 18 ED 16 Jul;

max 31 Pt Pen 31 Aug; 7 ED 16 Aug.

Baird's Sandpiper: 1 PtPen 25 Aug (NL).

Pectoral Sandpiper: arr 2 PtPen 11 Aug; max 12 PtPen 31 Aug.

Stilt Sandpiper: singles PtPen 11 and 31 Aug.

Short-billed Dowitcher: arr 3 PtPen 25

Aug; 12 PtPen 31 Aug.

Long-billed Dowitcher: 2 imm PtPen 30-31 Aug (NL).

Little Gull: 3 ad RMPD 14 Aug (MB, BB).

Bonaparte's Gull: 1ad PtPen 7 Jul.

Caspian Tern: 1,445 nests LG (GS).

Com. Tern: 150+ RMPD 11 Aug (MB), pre-migratory staging.

Black Tern: approx 50 pairs PRWMA, approx 25 pairs WBM 16 Jun, *intro*.

DOVES - WOODPECKERS

Black-billed Cuckoo: only 4 reports.

Yellow-billed Cuckoo: 1 TLou 1 Jun.

Barred Owl: calling heard in 3 locations T Clifton and Fine STLA; 2 pairs TLou.

Long-eared Owl: female calling during Aug in back yard TMas (LH).

Com. Nighthawk: *no reports*.

Whip-poor-will: 2 TMas 1 Jun; female on nest with 2 eggs CB 12 Jun; calling LC 4 Jul; 3 calling Stony Pt TThen 17 Aug.

Red-headed Woodpecker: 1 Mixer Rd TEL; 1 Henderson Village 16 Jun.

Red-bellied Woodpecker: Henderson thru.

FLYCATCHERS - STARLINGS

Yellow-bellied Flycatcher: 3 FrL 4 Jun; 4 P-M 22 Jun.

Least Flycatcher: 8 P-M 22 Jun; max 9 WBBS 18 Jun.

E. Kingbird: max 20+ LWMA 2 Aug.

Yellow-throated Vireo: 2 PBBS 18 Jun; 3 P-M 22 Jun; 4 MM-O 23 Jun.

Blue-headed Vireo: max 7 SC 24 Jun.
Warbling Vireo: 5 PBBS Jun; max 8 TLou 1 Jun.
Philadelphia Vireo: 1 T Colton STLA 18 Aug (SC), early.
Red-eyed Vireo: 60 P-M 22 Jun, 45 MM-O 23 Jun; max 97 WBBS 1 Jun.
Purple Martin: 16+ Henderson Village JEFF 20 Jul; 15 pairs + 31 y HP 29 Jul, early departure.
Cliff Swallow: 20+ Pierrepont-Lorraine Rd JEFF 18 Aug.
Tufted Titmouse: singles LWMA 25 Aug, TLou 2 Jun.
Red-breasted Nuthatch: pair TLou; 3 SC 24 Jun; max 5 P-M 22 Jun.
Brown Creeper: pair Patterson Rd TLou 12 Jun.
Winter Wren: singing males TLou and HP Jun; max 7 P-M, MM-O 22-23 Jun.
Golden-crowned Kinglet: 2 WBBS 1 Jun.
Blue-gray Gnatcatcher: 2 LWMA barrier beach 2 Aug; pair Picton I SLR T Clayton JEFF 6 Aug (AH); departed CV 31 Aug.
Veery: max 22 TLou/TMas 15 Jun; 22 P-M 22 Jun.
Swainson's Thrush: 2 TH 30 Jun; 16 P-M 22 Jun.
Hermit Thrush: 7 WBBS 1 Jun and P-M 22 Jun; 12 MM-O 23 Jun.
Wood Thrush: 10 WBBS 1 Jun; max 30 per day TMas and TLou Jun.
N. Mockingbird: 1 nesting Benton Rd TEL 23 Jun.

WARBLERS

Golden-winged Warbler: single CB 12 Jun.
Tennessee Warbler: several singing near SUNY College of Forestry Station at Wanakena mid Jun (PO); departed TMas 29 Aug.
Nashville Warbler: 1 TH 30 Jun; 3 WBBS 1 Jun; 3 P-M 22 Jun.
N. Parula: 2 BRf 19 Jun; 4 FrL 4 Jun; 5 SC/Chandler Pd WF 24 Jun.
Yellow Warbler: 20 PBBS 18 Jun, down 30%; 26+ LWMA beach 2 Aug; max 50 per day TMas.
Chestnut-sided Warbler: 11 WBBS 1 Jun; 12 P-M 22 Jun.

Magnolia Warbler: 4 FrL 4 Jun; 7 P-M 22 Jun; max 16 WBBS 1 Jun.
Black-throated Blue Warbler: max 18 MM-O 23 Jun; 6 P-M 22 Jun; 4 FrL 4 Jun; 4 WBBS 1 Jun.
Yellow-rumped Warbler: 7 WBBS 1 Jun; 5 P-M 22 Jun; 3 SC 24 Jun.
Black-throated Green Warbler: 8 MM-O 23 Jun; 7 WBBS 1 Jun; 4 FrL 4 Jun.
Blackburnian Warbler: 2 WBBS 1 Jun; 2 P-M 22 Jun; 2 FrL 4 Jun; 2 SC 24 Jun; max 5 TH 30 Jun.
Pine Warbler: 5 JCSP 13 Jun; 3 FrL 4 Jun; 3 BRf 19 Jun; FY TLou 5 Jun.
Prairie Warbler: 1 LC 4 Jul; only report.
Blackpoll Warbler: 2 FrL 4 Jun, late migrant.
Cerulean Warbler: 1 PBBS 18 Jun.
Black-and-white Warbler: max 36 TLou/TMas; 8 WBBS 1 Jun.
Am. Redstart: 16 P-M 22 Jun; 10 MM-O 23 Jun; max 21 WBBS 1 Jun.
Ovenbird: 14 MM-O 23 Jun; max 34 WBBS 1 Jun.
Mourning Warbler: 10 P-M and MM-O 22-23 Jun.
Com. Yellowthroat: max 34 PBBS 18 Jun.
Canada Warbler: 5 WBBS 1 Jun.

TANAGERS - WEAVERS

Scarlet Tanager: 5 WBBS 1 Jun; 3 TLou 1 Jun; 3 P-M 23 Jun.
E. Towhee: 11 PBBS 18 Jun.
Chipping Sparrow: 28 per day TLou and TMas.
Clay-colored Sparrow: 6 sites in JEFF; 2 TMor 23 Jun; 2 PtPen 21 Jun.
Field Sparrow: 9 PBBS 1 Jun.
Vesper Sparrow: 2 Mixer Rd TEL 10 Jun.
Savannah Sparrow: 20 TMas 1 Jun; 10 PBBS 18 Jun.
Grasshopper Sparrow: in 5 towns JEFF; 1 TLou 1 Jun.
Henslow's Sparrow: a small sample taken from the known breeding area yielded 33 singing males (NL).
White-throated Sparrow: 30 P-M 22 Jun; 21 WBBS 1 Jun, average.
Rose-breasted Grosbeak: 8 WBBS 1 Jun.
Indigo Bunting: 5 PBBS 18 Jun; few

reports.

Bobolink: smaller numbers in STLA due to early cutting of the fields.

E. Meadowlark: 33 PBBS 18 Jun, highest number in 9 years.

Purple Finch: FY CV, Hen, TMas.

House Finch: FY CV and TMas; very rare in most parts of the Region.

Red Crossbill: 30+ feeding in tops of Red Pine SC and Chandler P WF 24 Jun.

White-winged Crossbill: heard overhead FrL 4 Jun.

Evening Grosbeak: reports from TMas Jun; T Lorraine JEFF 28 Jun and 5 Jul; 2 Henderson Village 15 Jun; 2 BRF 19 Jun; T Fine Jul.

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