

REGION 5 – ONEIDA LAKE BASIN

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The summer was warm and a little drier than usual, especially after June. The average temperature in June was 67.9°F, 2.1° above normal, and there was 5.35" of rain, 1.64" above normal. Of the rainfall, 2.86" fell on 14 June. In July, the average temperature was 73.7°, 2.8° above normal. There was only 1.75" of rain, 2.27" below normal. The August averages were 73.0°, 3.8° above normal, and 2.71" of rain, 0.85" below normal.

The wet June didn't seem to have an adverse effect on most breeding activity, and the warm temperatures probably helped. Ground-nesting Wild Turkeys did seem to delay breeding, but there were many broods of Ruffed Grouse by early July. Tree Swallows were a little late as many young were on wires, being fed by adults, at the same time that Cliff and Barn swallows fledged.

Common Loons produced young on Skaneateles Lake. An adult with young was seen in Spafford, but the south end of the lake is split between three Regions and the location of the nest remained unknown, to the confusion of Atlasers. Tom Salo reported that Common Loon and Common Merganser populations recovered nicely at Stillwater Reservoir after it had been drained for dam repairs in 2001.

A **Brown Pelican**, which was first reported in Region 2, was relocated at Sandy Pond where it was seen regularly for over a week. Two observers looking for the pelican were fortunate to have, and carefully describe, a **Pomarine Jaeger** flying overhead, a rare summer record. It may have been the result of an early departure from the breeding grounds. Four immature Black-crowned Night-Herons at Sandy Pond may have resulted from local breeding or may have come from breeding sites to the north. The night-herons at Onondaga Lake are probably breeding locally, but a little more Atlas work is needed there earlier in the season to confirm this. There was no large concentration of Great Egrets this year and only two reports of Cattle Egret.

The Great Swamp Conservancy in northern Madison County attracted uncommon summer waterfowl such as Gadwall, Northern Shoveler, Green-winged Teal, Ruddy Duck and American Coot, but only the teal was confirmed as a breeder. Elsewhere, another shoveler appeared to be mated with a Mallard and coots did breed in Utica Marsh. At Delta Lake, the water level dropped only slightly in August, resulting in low numbers of shorebirds reported there. However, mudflats at Salmon River Reservoir in Redfield attracted shorebirds, but the area was only accessible by boat. There were few early June reports of northbound shorebirds, as many birders had turned their attention to Atlas work. A late June Willet was a surprise and two Whimbrel reports were better than recent years.

The small breeding populations of Red-headed Woodpecker, Acadian Flycatcher, Fish Crow and Orchard Oriole all seem to be holding their own and,

with the exception of the woodpecker, may be growing. Common Raven continues to expand out of higher elevations, with family groups in central Oswego County and sightings from just south of Syracuse. Sedge Wrens were found at two sites, while Henslow's Sparrow was found at one. Marsh Wrens are often only reported from the large marshes, but this year they were found at many smaller marshes as well.

A **White-eyed Vireo** remained in Utica into early June, after which no one bothered to look for it again. John Rogers found a second pair of Prothonotary Warblers in Big Bay Swamp while doing Atlas work. With at least two pairs there this year we can only guess as to how long the species may have been present. Other birds turned up during Atlas work were a Kentucky Warbler and a Ruby-crowned Kinglet, both out of range in northern Onondaga County. In neither case was breeding confirmed. In Happy Valley WMA David Nash found a singing Blackpoll Warbler and then saw the female carrying food into a conifer for an unusual breeding record away from the Adirondacks or Catskills.

The cone crop was mixed, as some white pines bore cones while many had few or none and red pines seemed to produce a moderate crop. Other nut and seed bearing trees had only fair crops this year. Natalia Garcia mentioned good fruit crops of elderberry, mountain ash and grey dogwood, while Matt Perry cited lots of grapes, buckthorn, honeysuckle and other berries good for wintering frugivores.

A total of 200 species was reported for the season, better than many years. Highlights included **Brown Pelican**, Cattle Egret, Willet, Whimbrel, **Pomarine Jaeger**, Sedge Wren, Blackpoll Warbler, Prothonotary Warbler and **Kentucky Warbler**.

CONTRIBUTORS

Brenda Best, Sue Boettger, Joseph Brin, Bernie Carr, Natalia Garcia, Bill Gruenbaum, Barbara Herrgesell, Gene Huggins, Kevin McGann, John Moore, David Nash, Matt Perry, Bill Purcell, John Rogers, Marge Rusk, Tom Salo, Mickey Scilingo, Julie Siler, Gerald Smith, Sheila Smith, Maureen Staloff, Chris Tessaglia-Hymes, Matt Young, Ken Zoller.

ABBREVIATIONS

Bvle – Baldwinsville; CM – Clay Marsh; DL – Delta L; GSC – Great Swamp Conservancy, n. MADI; HIWMA – Howland I WMA; LOL – L Ontario littoral; OneiL – Oneida L; OnonL – Onondaga L; SFWS – Spring Farm Wildlife Sanctuary, Kirkland; SPd – Sandy Pd; SVB – Sylvan and Verona Beach; Syr – Syracuse; TRWMA – Three Rivers WMA; UM – Utica Marsh.

LOONS – DUCKS

Com. Loon: ad and 3 y Skaneateles L, unclear as to whether breeding occurred in Reg 5; alt ad SPd 28 Jul.

Pied-billed Grebe: max 8 CM 14 Jul; y reported from W Monroe, SPd, CM, UM, GSC.

BROWN PELICAN: imm SPd 26 Jul (BC), 2nd Reg record (previous 1920), seen by mob 27 Jul to 5 Aug, last 14 Aug.

Least Bittern: reported Deer Creek WMA, Six Mile Creek Schroepel, GSC, HIWMA, CM.

Great Blue Heron: max 106 Sterling 10 Jul.

Great Egret: max 3 Bville 2 Aug; singles widespread.

Cattle Egret: GSC 10 Jun; HIWMA 5 Jul.

Green Heron: max 23 CM 24 Jul.

Black-crowned Night-Heron: ad and 2-3 imm OnonL after 25 Jul; 4 imm SPd 28 Jul.

Turkey Vulture: 2 y about to fledge in old house Fayetteville 15 Jul; 2 y in Camillus barn 22 Jul.

Mute Swan: 2 fl Pulaski 6 Jun.

Wood Duck: 89 Verona Marsh 10 Aug; last downy y 10 Aug.

Gadwall: GSC 10 Jun.

Blue-winged Teal: ad with y GSC in Jun; max 20 DL 20 Aug.

N. Shoveler: male GSC in Jun; male Palermo 19 Jun, possibly mated with Mallard.

Green-winged Teal: ad with y GSC in Jun.

Ring-necked Duck: Oswego 10 Jul.

Hooded Merganser: max 17 Redfield 21 Aug.

Com. Merganser: max 80 Redfield 29 Aug.

Ruddy Duck: 1-2 GSC to 2 Jul.

HAWKS – ALCIDS

Bald Eagle: ad took fl Herring Gull Stillwater Res 26 Jul; breeding suspected there but not confirmed; imm and ad

regular along L Ontario thru.

N. Harrier: max 5 Pompey 25 Aug; FY GSC 23 Jul.

N. Goshawk: breeding DeRuyter Res; male Constantia 13 Jun.

Red-shouldered Hawk: SPd 5 Jun flying S, wanderer or migrant.

Merlin: Bville 29 Aug; fl E end Stillwater Res 8 Aug; also found at W end of reservoir.

Peregrine Falcon: SFWS 19 Jul, unusual there.

Ruffed Grouse: females with y widespread Tug Hill after 15 Jun.

Wild Turkey: few reports of y before late Jul.

Virginia Rail: 3 Columbia Ctr 22 Jun.

Sora: 4 Columbia Ctr 22 Jun.

Com. Moorhen: CM where they are uncommon 16 Jun; 6 Columbia Ctr 22 Jun.

Am. Coot: up to 4 pair GSC 10 Jun; breeding confirmed UM 21 Jul; present Columbia Ctr.

Black-bellied Plover: max 25 W Monroe 2 Jun; no fall reports.

Semipalmated Plover: 2 GSC 7 Jun; max 13 Redfield 25 Aug.

Greater Yellowlegs: max 26 Redfield 26 Aug.

Lesser Yellowlegs: max 27 Redfield 26 Aug.

Solitary Sandpiper: arr 2 Columbia Ctr 7 Jul.

WILLET: Fair Haven SP 29 Jun (CT).

Spotted Sandpiper: max 15 OnonL 26 Aug.

Upland Sandpiper: reports from Schroepel, Fulton airport, Remsen.

Whimbrel: max 3 SPd 16 Aug; 2 SPd 25 Aug.

Ruddy Turnstone: SPd 27 Jul, only report.

Red Knot: W Monroe 2 Jun; no fall reports.

Sanderling: 5 Pony Farm Lysander 18 Aug, unusual location; max 14 SPd 16 Aug.

Semipalmated Sandpiper: 8-10 per day DL in Aug.

Least Sandpiper: max 120 Redfield 21 Aug.

White-rumped Sandpiper: SPd 8 Aug, only report.

Baird's Sandpiper: max 6 SPd 26 Aug, high.

Pectoral Sandpiper: arr Bville 25 Jul.

Stilt Sandpiper: 2 OnonL 28 Aug, only report.

Short-billed Dowitcher: 2 SPd 11 Aug; SPd 16 Aug.

Wilson's Snipe: max 6 GSC 2 Aug.

Pomarine Jaeger: ad or subadult SPd 27 Jul: dark-morph jaeger with spatulate tail feathers (MY!, JS).

Little Gull: ad SPd 10-18 Aug.

Bonaparte's Gull: max 40 SVB 30 Aug.

Caspian Tern: 2 Constantia 17 Jun, possibly nesting Oneil?; max 69 SPd 12 Aug.

Black Tern: max 6 SPd 16 Aug.

DOVES – WOODPECKERS

Com. Nighthawk: Green Lakes SP 10 Aug, first migrant; max 43 Syr 31 Aug with total of 217 12-31 Aug; migration thought to have started late as birds possibly hung back in warm weather.

Whip-poor-will: reports from Cold Brook and Constantia.

Chimney Swift: max 120 W Winfield 29 Aug.

Red-headed Woodpecker: 4 pairs in beaver swamps T Ira, T Hannibal, T Lysander, same as in 2001.

Yellow-bellied Sapsucker: Plainville 4 Jul, seems out of place.

Black-backed Woodpecker: Trout Pd HERK 23 Jul.

FLYCATCHERS – WAXWINGS

Olive-sided Flycatcher: arr Labrador Hollow 4 Aug.

Acadian Flycatcher: reports from Whiskey Hollow, Hannibal, Ira.

WHITE-EYED VIREO: Proctor P Utica

to 2 Jun.

Fish Crow: Oakwood Cemetery Syr 30 Jun.

Com. Raven: breeding central OSWE in Palermo and Volney; reported from Onondaga Hill and TRWMA, new locations.

Carolina Wren: numerous reports Syr; W Monroe 12 Jun; Liverpool 6, 16 Jun; Cicero 20 Jun; Hastings 27 Aug.

Sedge Wren: Sterling 6 Jun; 1-2 T Richland to 18 Jun.

Marsh Wren: some less expected places were W Dead Creek Bville, GSC, Columbia Center, Westmoreland, Sage Creek Marsh.

Golden-crowned Kinglet: on territory T Richland near Fernwood, unusual at low elevation.

Ruby-crowned Kinglet: Brewerton 16 Jun, well out of range.

WARBLERS

Tennessee Warbler: Cazenovia 7 Jul; Stillwater Res 12 Jul; arr Hastings 31 Aug.

Nashville Warbler: TRWMA 10 Jun, late.

N. Parula: likely late migrants De Witt 1 Jun, W Monroe 12 Jun, CM 18 Jun; 4 McKeever BBS 30 Jun, good number.

Yellow Warbler: max 22 SPd 18 Aug.

Magnolia Warbler: Cicero Swamp 7 Jul, unusual.

Cape May Warbler: Lebanon 10 Jun, late.

Black-throated Blue Warbler: 3 W Monroe 12 Jun and 1 there 19 Jun, late.

Prairie Warbler: breeding Dewitt; on territory Georgetown.

Bay-breasted Warbler: SFWS 31 Aug, only report.

Blackpoll Warbler: last LOL 5 Jun; pair carrying food Happy Valley WMA 26 Jun (DN), unusual location.

Cerulean Warbler: none s end Otisco L where formerly 4-5 pair.

Prothonotary Warbler: pair Big Bay Swamp on Oneil 2 Jul with male carrying

REGION 6 – ST. LAWRENCE

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The first two weeks of June were warm, sunny and dry, a pleasant departure from the cold and wet conditions of May. Temperatures ranged from average to 1°F below average in Watertown for the month. In the third and fourth weeks of June, rain resumed and there were several days of intermittent downpours. The St. Lawrence River Valley and western Adirondacks received the majority of the precipitation, 2"–3" above normal. July was similar to 2001, extremely hot and dry throughout the Region. Temperatures were 2°–2.5° above normal, with most large cities having at least one day over 90°. The Town of Colton, in the Adirondacks of St. Lawrence County, had the most days over 90° with nine. The hot and dry conditions persisted into August, with precipitation being 2" below normal throughout the area. The first cold wave occurred on 24 August and produced the first good wave of migrants.

The above-average precipitation during the latter half of June created flooding in many streams and marshlands throughout the area. The Robert Moses Power Dam in Massena was unable to discharge excess water for two weeks because of potential flooding of the commercial docks in Montreal. The Black River, which drains the Tug Hill, remained over its banks as well until mid-July. The reports of pairs of adult ducks in the rivers in late May and early June suggested flooded nesting areas. The only proof of poor nesting was a 50% decrease in the number of ducklings along the St. Lawrence River in the Morristown area during July. One