

REGION 3 – FINGER LAKES REGION

Bill Ostrander

80 Westmont Avenue,

Elmira NY 14905

brown_creeper@sg23.com

The summer was cooler and wetter than normal. June started off the cool temperatures, averaging 1.9°F cooler than normal. July was 0.8° cooler than normal and August was just 0.3° cooler than normal. June, with less than 3” of precipitation, was actually drier than normal. Both July and August, however, saw more than 7” of rainfall each, doubling the normal and making it the second wettest July-August period since 1879.

The Ithaca June Count, after returning last year, did not happen this year. That fact, along with time constraints preventing me from taking advantage of other data sources, such as eBird, discouraged me from doing any of my usual summer to summer comparisons. Since most of the missing data affects primarily land bird data, I will mention some possible swings in waterbird numbers. These will be based on raw numbers, not normalized by birder effort, since the missing effort in the data is primarily toward land birds and normalizing causes virtually all of the water bird numbers to show significant increases.

There were several interesting waterfowl observations. A single Snow Goose enjoyed the waterways and lawns of Stewart Park in Ithaca for most of

August. Gary Chapin and Dominic Sherony spotted a Lesser Scaup and a Bufflehead at Montezuma National Wildlife Refuge in late July. Julie Horton discovered two White-winged Scoters diving in Seneca Lake near the Geneva Chamber of Commerce building on 16 August. At least one of them remained through 24 August. The male Common Goldeneye present at Stewart Park at the end of May lingered through the first week of June. Mark Chao discovered two Red-breasted Mergansers making a one-day visit to Myers Point in Lansing. Waterfowl species that seemed to be up in numbers included Mallard, Blue-winged Teal, Ruddy Duck and surprisingly, in light of the swollen rivers of July and August, Common Merganser. Canada Goose and Wood Duck appeared to be down in numbers.

Non-breeding, probably immature, Common Loons were present in relatively high numbers, with flocks noted in July on both Seneca and Cayuga lakes. Pied-billed Grebes were enjoying a successful nesting season at Montezuma as the summer season ended. Julie Horton found an American White Pelican at Kashong Point, Seneca Lake, but the bird did not stay for others to see. In spite of, or perhaps because of, cormorant harassment programs at nesting colonies, the number of cormorants in the Finger Lakes Region was nearly double last year's number. Interesting waders included Timothy Smith's Cattle Egret at the Big Flats Bird Sanctuary and the Glossy Ibis found and photographed by Rupert McGrath.

The most interesting raptor note was the return of the Peregrine Falcon to its roost on Bradfield Hall on the Cornell University campus on 24 June after a three-month absence.

Like Pied-billed Grebes, moorhens and coots both were having excellent breeding success at Montezuma as the season ended. Sandhill Cranes were prevalent in the Region. Jay McGowan and Bard Prentiss spotted two in the Knox-Marcellus Marsh in the Montezuma Wetlands Complex. Bob Guthrie reported one near Branchport, where two had been reported in spring exhibiting nesting behavior. Mickey Scilingo spotted one flying over Cayuga Lake near Ithaca. Kris West, a Nature Conservancy scientist and past intern with the International Crane Foundation in her native Wisconsin, was surprised to be seeing one from time to time along I-86 in Big Flats on her trips to the Arnot Mall.

The best shorebirds of the season were the Red Knots at Montezuma's Benning Marsh, first reported by Bill and Shirley McAneny. Scott Haber and Michael Harvey found a Red-necked Phalarope at Montezuma's Mays Point. Several shorebird species were up in numbers this summer, including Killdeer, Greater and Lesser yellowlegs, Ruddy Turnstone, Sanderling, Semipalmated, Least and Stilt sandpipers, Dunlin, Long-billed Dowitcher and Wilson's Snipe. Down in numbers were American Golden-Plover, Solitary and Upland sandpipers. An early Lesser Black-backed Gull barely made it into the summer season with its 31 August appearance at Montezuma. The Ring-billed Gull colony in the Chemung River in downtown Elmira managed to fledge most of its young before the heavy rains of July. Nevertheless, a few remaining flightless young had just enough room on the island's peak to escape the high water while the fledged juveniles and the adults evacuated to the hockey arena roof. A pair of Herring Gulls also fledged one young at the colony.

There were no nesting Common Nighthawks or Whip-poor-wills reported. Only one Red-headed Woodpecker could be found. Joel Baines found four very early Ruby-crowned Kinglets in the Town of Ithaca 14 August. Another showed up in Sapsucker Woods about a week later.

Steuben County produced both "Brewster's" and "Lawrence's" warbler hybrids. A singing male Golden-winged Warbler was apparently on territory in Lansing, but eventually disappeared. Likewise, for a male Northern Parula in Robert Treman State Park and a Yellow-breasted Chat at Lindsay-Parsons Biodiversity Preserve.

The Clay-colored Sparrows returned to their site in Caroline and apparently nested successfully. An immature male Dickcissel with a not-quite-right song defended a territory and a female Song Sparrow from other Song Sparrows for the first week of June at the Reynolds State Game Farm. Jay McGowan found a family group of Red Crossbills in the Town of Orange while he was blockbusting for the Breeding Bird Atlas on 30 June. Another Red Crossbill visited the feeders at Sapsucker Woods for two days in early July. Several observers reported Pine Siskins at their feeders in June. These reports ended with three separate reports on 4 July. Karen Burns had a single male Evening Grosbeak visit her feeder in Junius for one day in mid-June.

CONTRIBUTORS

Mike Andersen, Laura Andrus, Susann Argetsinger, Joel Baines, Bill Baker, Eric Banford, John Baur, Bob Beal, Linda Benedict, Fred Bertram, Karen Brazell, Joe & Scott Brin, Bill Brown, Jean Bub, Karen Burns, Margaret Cady, Gary Calabrese, Mark Chao, Gary Chapin, Russ Charif, Dick Clements, Benjamin Clock, Linda Clougherty, Candace Cornell, Kevin Cummings, Tyler Davis, Greg Delisle, Mark Dettling, Amielle DeWan, Nancy & Rachel Dickinson, Melanie Driscoll, Michael Duttweiler, Karen Edelstein, Jesse Ellis, Harry Ellsworth, Jody Enck, Michael Engle, Bill Evans, Brett Ewald, Steve & Susan Fast, Dick Feldman, Martha Fischer, Jeff Gerbracht, Fred Gillette, Mary Ellen Gleason, John Greenly, John & Sue Gregoire, Bob Guthrie, John Haas, Scott Haber, Meena Haribal, Dolores Hart, Michael Harvey, Ed Hemminger, Barbara Herrgesell, Anne Hobbs, Asher Hockett, Jeff Holbrook, Julie Horton, Lanse Hoskins, Pete Hosner, Sara Jane Hymes, Santiago Imberti, Carolyn Jacobs, Anne Marie & Tim Johnson, Judy Jones, Michael Jordan, Elizabeth King, Mindy LaBranche, Paul Larrabee, Leona Lauster, Tim Lenz, Susanne Lorbeer, Bill & Shirley McAneny, Dave McDermitt, Kevin McGann, Jay & Kevin & Perri McGowan, Rupert McGrath, Bob McGuire, Matt Medler, Andrew Miller, Nari Mistry, Ann Mitchell, Mike Morgante, Barbara Morse, Corie Myers, Bill & Joan Ostrander, Jim Pawlicki, Alicia Plotkin, Nick Polato, Mike Powers, Bard Prentiss, Marie Read, Ken Rosenberg, Charlie Rouse, Dave & Mark & Matthew Russell, Catherine Sandell, Marty Schlabach, Mickey Scilingo, Dominic Sherony, Carol & Joe Slattey, Roger Sleeper, Nick Sly, Timothy Smith, Christine Sousa, Laura Stenzler, Sarah Fern Striffler, David Suggs, Chris Tessaglia-Hymes, Bob Thomas, Julian & Mary Jane Thomas, Bruce Tracey, Andrew VanNorstrand, John Van Niel, Matt Victoria, Marge Villanova, Watt Webb, Allison & Evan & Jeff Wells, Fred Werner, Kris West, Chris White, Lisa Wood, Andrea Wuenschel, Matt Young.

WHISTLING-DUCKS – VULTURES

SNOW GOOSE: StP 31 Jul-23 Aug (CT).

Canada Goose: max 28 RivP 31 Aug, low.

Gadwall: max 10 MNWR 1 Jun (JMGo, BP), high.

Mallard: max 1000 MNWR 28 Aug (BEw), high.

Green-winged Teal: arr 2 MNWR 1 Aug; max 15 MNWR 5 Aug.

Redhead: max 27 MNWR 1 Jun (JMGo, BP), high.

Ring-necked Duck: MyPt 31 Jul (MCh), only report.

LESSER SCAUP: MNWR 24 Jul (GCh, DSh).

WHITE-WINGED SCOTER: 2 Seneca L Geneva ONTA 16-24 Aug (JuHo).

BUFFLEHEAD: MNWR 24 Jul (GCh, DSh).

COM. GOLDENEYE: Ithaca 6 Jun (MDe).

Com. Merganser: max 49 RivP 15 Aug (B&JO), high.

RED-BREASTED MERGANSER: 2 MyPt 23 Aug (MCh).

Ruddy Duck: max 25 MNWR 9 Jun, high.

Ruffed Grouse: max 16 Lindsay-Parsons Biodiversity Preserve TOMP 6 Jun (MDe), high.

Com. Loon: 17 Farleys Pt CAYU 24 Jul (DSu); max 19 Elm Beach SENE 26 Jul (fide MVil), high.

Pied-billed Grebe: max 51 MNWR 28 Aug (BEw), high.

HORNED GREBE: Seneca L Geneva ONTA 4 Jul (FB).

AM. WHITE PELICAN: Kashong Pt YATE 22 Aug (fide JuHo).

Double-crested Cormorant: arr MNWR 25 Jul; max 101 MNWR 28 Aug.

Great Egret: MNWR 16 Jun; arr MNWR 6 Jul (MVic), early; max 51 MNWR 28 Aug (BEw), high.

CATTLE EGRET: Big Flats Bird

Sanctuary CHEM 12 Jun (TS).

Black-crowned Night-Heron: arr MNWR 26 Jun; max 13 MNWR 4 Aug.

GLOSSY IBIS: MNWR 8 Jun-10 Jul (RM, ph).

HAWKS – ALCIDS

Merlin: arr MNWR 13 Aug.

Peregrine Falcon: arr Cornell U 24 Jun (NP), early; max 2 MNWR 27 Aug.

Com. Moorhen: max 51 MNWR 28 Aug (BEw), high.

Am. Coot: max 201 MNWR 28 Aug (BEw), high.

SANDHILL CRANE: max 2 MWC 1 Jun (JMGo, BP); Branchport 14 Jul (BG); East Shore P 27 Jul (MiSc); Big Flats 10 Aug thru (KW!).

Black-bellied Plover: max 5 MWC 1 Jun; last Reynolds State Game Farm TOMP 2 Jun; arr 5 MNWR 13 Aug.

Am. Golden-Plover: MNWR 31 Aug (JEl, PH), only report.

Semipalmated Plover: last 3 MWC 1 Jun; arr MNWR 9 Jul, early; max 50 MNWR 28 Aug.

Greater Yellowlegs: arr 3 MNWR 6 Jul; max 110 MNWR 13 Aug (St&SuF), high.

Lesser Yellowlegs: arr Neimi Rd Pds TOMP 6 Jul; max 157 MNWR 15 Aug.

Solitary Sandpiper: arr MNWR 10 Jul; max 2 SaW 22 Aug, low.

Spotted Sandpiper: max 7 MyPt 4 Aug, low.

Ruddy Turnstone: arr MNWR 28 Jul; max 7 MyPt 13 Aug.

RED KNOT: arr & max 5 MNWR 31 Jul (B&SM); 4 MNWR 1 Aug (J&KMGo, ph).

Sanderling: arr MyPt 26 Jul; max 8 StP 13 Aug.

Semipalmated Sandpiper: last 3 MNWR 1 Jun; arr MNWR 9 Jul (AM&TJ), early; max 308 MNWR 15 Aug.

Least Sandpiper: last MWC 1 Jun; arr 2 MNWR 10 Jul; max 308 MNWR 15 Aug.

White-rumped Sandpiper: last & max 2 MWC 1 Jun; arr 2 MNWR 15 Aug.

Baird's Sandpiper: arr MNWR 15 Aug; max 10 MNWR 24 Aug.

Pectoral Sandpiper: arr 2 George Rd flooded field TOMP 20 Jul; max 70 MNWR 15 Aug.

Dunlin: 70 MWC 1 Jun (JMGo, BP), only report.

Stilt Sandpiper: arr 2 MNWR 21 Jul; max 27 MNWR 12 Aug (JMGo), high.

Short-billed Dowitcher: arr 2 MNWR 6 Jul (MVic), early; max 23 MNWR 15 Jul.

Long-billed Dowitcher: arr & max 10 MNWR 15 Aug (KR), high.

Wilson's Phalarope: arr MNWR 24 Jul (MCh, MVic), early; MNWR 28 Aug.

RED-NECKED PHALAROPE: MNWR 22 Aug (SH, MiHa).

Bonaparte's Gull: arr 4 MNWR 24 Jul; max 5 MNWR 7 Aug (MCh, JMGo), high.

LESSER BLACK-BACKED GULL: MNWR 31 Aug (JEl).

Great Black-backed Gull: arr MyPt 27 Jun (MCh), early; MNWR 20 Aug.

Caspian Tern: arr MNWR 22 Jun, early; max 71 MNWR 1 Aug.

Com. Tern: max 6 MNWR 13 Jun; last 2 MNWR 22 Jun; arr 2 East Shore P TOMP 24 Jul.

Forster's Tern: arr East Shore P TOMP 24 Jul; StP 13 Aug.

PIGEONS – WOODPECKERS

Rock Pigeon: max 17 Elmira 17 Aug, low.

Mourning Dove: max 5 Danby 28 Jun, low.

Barred Owl: Hector 24 Jul (SA), only report.

Com. Nighthawk: last SaW 10 Jun; arr Auburn 25 Jul (FB), early; max 25 Southport 29 Aug.

Chimney Swift: max 17 RivP 16 Aug, low.

Red-headed Woodpecker: Dryden 21-31

Jul (DH).

N. Flicker: max 2 Enfield 5 Jul, low.

Pileated Woodpecker: max 4 Ithaca 18 Jul, low.

FLYCATCHERS – WAXWINGS

Olive-sided Flycatcher: arr SaW 12 Aug (SH), early.

Yellow-bellied Flycatcher: arr Dryden 3 Aug; max 2 SaW 21 Aug.

Fish Crow: max 28 StP 15 Aug (KR), high.

Tree Swallow: max 24 Union Springs 24 Aug, low.

N. Rough-winged Swallow: max 6 MyPt 13 Aug, low.

White-breasted Nuthatch: max 2 Red Spring Rd Woods STEU 12 Jun, low.

RUBY-CROWNED KINGLET: arr & max 4 Ithaca 14 Aug (JBai!), early; SaW 22 Aug (MCh, CT).

Swainson's Thrush: arr Kestrel Haven Avian Migration Observatory SCHU 16 Aug (J&SGrg), early.

Gray Catbird: max 7 Keuka Outlet Trail YATE 6 Jun, low.

Cedar Waxwing: max 21 Union Springs 24 Aug, low.

WARBLERS

GOLDEN-WINGED WARBLER:

Cornell Plantations Teeter Rd Preserve TOMP thru 9 Jun (JMGo, BP).

"BREWSTER'S" WARBLER:

Campbell 30 Jun (JMGo).

"LAWRENCE'S" WARBLER:

Bradford 13 Jun (MP).

Tennessee Warbler: SaW 21 Aug (SH), only report.

N. PARULA: Lansing 1 Jun (JGrn); last Treman SP 16 Jun (BEv).

CAPE MAY WARBLER: Cornell U 31 Aug (SH, MH).

Bay-breasted Warbler: SaW 21 Aug (SH), only report.

Worm-eating Warbler: Lock Creek TOMP 26 Jun (MA, TD, JEl, SH, SI,

CM), only report.

Wilson's Warbler: arr & max 3 SaW 29 Aug.

YELLOW-BREASTED CHAT:

Lindsay-Parsons Biodiversity Preserve
TOMP 5-6 Jun (JBr, KMGa).

TANAGERS – WEAVERS

CLAY-COLORED SPARROW: max 2
Caroline 4 Jun-7 Aug (AMJ).

DICKCISSEL: Reynolds State Game
Farm TOMP thru 6 Jun (AD, CS, FW).

Red-winged Blackbird: max 94 RivP 15
Aug, low.

Brown-headed Cowbird: max 3 Bare
Hill YATE 13 Jun, low.

Orchard Oriole: MyPt 1 Jun (JMGo,
BP), only report.

RED CROSSBILL: max 4 Orange 30
Jun (JM); SaW 7-8 Jul (ML mob).

Pine Siskin: last & max 3 Dryden 4 Jul.

Am. Goldfinch: max 16 Danby 28 Jun,
low.

EVENING GROSBEAK: Junius 15 Jun
(KBu), only report.

House Sparrow: max 10 Danby 28 Jun,
low.