

REGION 3 – FINGER LAKES

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Summer 2005 was the hottest on record, with temperatures exceeding 90°F on 13 days. The period from 1 July through 29 August was the driest on record. Consequently, water levels in rivers and ponds dropped and temporarily created habitat desirable to shorebirds.

Mute Swans nested at Montezuma National Wildlife Refuge for the first time in at least the last decade. A Snow Goose and two Brant were among the geese at Stewart Park on 19 June. The Brant continued in that vicinity through the end of the month. Several species of diving ducks made appearances in the Region, including both Scaup species, Common Goldeneye, Bufflehead and Red-breasted Merganser. The near absence of cattails in the main pool at Montezuma seemed to be responsible for a drop in numbers of nesting Mallards, Redheads, Ruddy Ducks, Pied-billed Grebes and American Coots.

Double-crested Cormorant numbers were down by about a third this summer from last. The dispersal of a large colony of American White Pelicans in the western US resulted in as many as four of these birds reaching the Finger Lakes Region. At least one was present through the entire season at Montezuma.

Black-crowned Night-Herons nested at Montezuma NWR and the species attained its largest number there in the past decade. No one found any southern herons wandering into the Region. Two to three Sandhill Cranes made periodic appearances in the Region's portion of the Montezuma Wetlands Complex

A pair of Merlins attempted nesting near the business section of the Village of Horseheads, but abandoned after their adopted crow's nest was damaged by high winds. Observers recorded the largest Regional summer counts of Bald Eagles and Peregrine Falcons at Montezuma NWR.

While May's Point pool at Montezuma NWR was completely drained and unsuitable for shorebirds, Benning Marsh, Tschache Pool and Puddler's Marsh (Montezuma Wetlands Complex) provided alternatives to migrating shorebirds. Sandpiper highlights included multiple sightings of Whimbrel, Red Knot, Western Sandpiper, Buff-breasted Sandpiper and Red-necked Phalarope. Nevertheless, overall shorebird numbers reported were down, except for species with more upland tendencies.

The gull colony at Elmira was used by about 800 pairs of Ring-billed Gulls and three or four pairs of Herring Gulls. Bonaparte's Gull and Forster's Terns were the best sightings among larids, but both species have been recorded in the Region almost annually in recent summers.

Many observers reported that cuckoos were everywhere. While the reported numbers did not achieve statistical significance from last year, Yellow-billed Cuckoo numbers were up. Surprisingly, there was an almost equal and opposite change for Black-billed Cuckoo. There was no significant outbreak of gypsy moth in the Region, but eastern tent caterpillar may have helped attract the Yellow-billed Cuckoos.

Swallows were reported in large numbers at Montezuma NWR after the breeding season. The Purple Martin colony at the Refuge's Visitors' Center was very active and successful this year. In spite of West Nile Virus, observers reported more Blue Jays and American Crows this year, but fewer Fish Crows and Common Ravens.

The most interesting passerines of the season were American Pipits at Montezuma in late August, Clay-colored Sparrow at Summerhill State Forest, Henslow's Sparrow in the Finger Lakes National Forest and a possible **Lazuli Bunting** at Taughannock Falls State Park. Reported numbers of several warbler species were down from last year. There were no other identifiable trends among passerine populations.

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ABBREVIATIONS

BFT — Big Flats Trail CHEM; BH — Beam Hill TOMP; CLB — Cayuga L Basin; FLNF — Finger Lakes National Forest; GRFF — George Rd flooded field TOMP; MNWR — Montezuma NWR; MWC — Montezuma Wetlands Complex SENE; MyPt — Myers Pt TOMP; RivP — Riverfront P CHEM; SaW — Sapsucker Woods TOMP; StP — Stewart P TOMP.

WHISTLING-DUCKS — VULTURES

SNOW GOOSE: StP 19 Jun (RZ).

Canada Goose: max 80 StP 14 Jul, +.

BRANT: StP 19 Jun (RZ); max 2 StP 25 Jun (MAAn); Treman Marina SP 30 Jun (DN).

Mute Swan: max 7 (family group) MNWR 19 Aug (C&JSI), nested.

Wood Duck: max 72 Rt 38 swamp TOMP 13 Aug, +.

Mallard: max 120 CLB 2 Jul, -.

Blue-winged Teal: max 5 MNWR 6 Jun (DN), high for very recent years but still very low, -.

N. Pintail: last MNWR 12 Jun; arr 2 MNWR 29 Aug; max 2 MNWR 29 Aug (BB, DN).

Redhead: max 7 MNWR 6 Jun, -.

Ring-necked Duck: max 6 MNWR 29 Aug (BB, DN), high, +.

GREATER SCAUP: MNWR 6 Jun (DN).

LESSER SCAUP: last MNWR 6 Jun (DN), late; arr MNWR 13 Aug (GCh).

BUFFLEHEAD: max 2 MNWR 6 Jun (DN).

COM. GOLDENEYE: Holiday Harbour ONTA 9-24 Jun (CJ).

Com. Merganser: max 53 Elmira 30 Aug (DC), high.

RED-BREASTED MERGANSER: Farleys Pt CAYU 17 Jul (DSu).

Ruddy Duck: max 3 MNWR 10 Jul, -.

Ruffed Grouse: max Bear Swamp SF CAYU 19 Jun, -.

Com. Loon: MNWR 6 Jun (DN), only report, -.

Pied-billed Grebe: max 28 MNWR 24 Aug, -.

AM. WHITE PELICAN: max 4 MNWR 7 Jul (C&JSI), high; at least 1 thru.

Double-crested Cormorant: max 25 StP 15 Aug, -.

Am. Bittern: max 7 MNWR 27 Aug, high.

Great Blue Heron: max 75 MNWR 21 Aug, +.

Great Egret: arr 6 MNWR 19 Jun, early; max 21 MWC 18 Aug, -.

Green Heron: max 25 MWC 17 Aug, high, +.

Black-crowned Night-Heron: max 20 MWC 17 Aug, high.

Turkey Vulture: max 28 GRFF 10 Jul, +.

HAWKS—ALCIDS

Bald Eagle: max 17 MNWR 19 Jun (BGU, LL), high.

Red-tailed Hawk: max 4 Cass P TOMP 27 Jun.

Am. Kestrel: max 6 Mt Pleasant TOMP 16 Jul.

MERLIN: arr SaW 16 Aug; 2 Horseheads 2-7 Jun (RS), failed nesting attempt.

Peregrine Falcon: Auburn 14 Aug; max 3 MNWR 29 Aug (BB, DN).

Sora: max 6 MNWR 22 Aug (AHA).

Am. Coot: max 76 MNWR 24 Aug, -.

SANDHILL CRANE: 2-3 MNWR & MWC 26 Jun thru (mob).

Black-bellied Plover: last 2 MyPt 1 Jun; arr MyPt 25 Jul (BMc), early; max 8 StP 31 Aug (TL), high.

Am. Golden-Plover: arr MWC 14 Aug; max 8 Ithaca 31 Aug, +.

Semipalmated Plover: last 3 MNWR 19 Jun (SD, BMC), late; arr 2 MNWR 17 Jul; max 70 MWC 18 Aug, high, +.

Greater Yellowlegs: arr 2 MNWR 26 Jun; max 55 MWC 14 Aug, -.

Lesser Yellowlegs: arr 4 CLB 2 Jul; max 75 MWC 31 Aug, -.

Solitary Sandpiper: arr CLB 2 Jul; max 6 MNWR 25 Aug, +.

Spotted Sandpiper: max 6 GRFF 18 Jul, low.

Upland Sandpiper: 2 Jasper 20 Jun; 2 Groton 14 Aug.

WHIMBREL: arr MWC 19 Aug (MAn, GKO); max 18 MWC 23 Aug (BS), high; T Seneca 30 Aug (CR), +.

Ruddy Turnstone: arr MyPt 25 Jul (MCh), early; max 2 MyPt 25 Jul, -.

RED KNOT: arr MNWR 13 Aug (GCh); MWC 18-19 Aug (mob).

Sanderling: arr MyPt 6 Jul (MCh), early; max 3 MNWR 31 Aug, -.

Semipalmated Sandpiper: last 2 GRFF 2 Jun; arr 2 MNWR 18 Jul; max 120 MWC 18 Aug, -.

W. SANDPIPER: arr MNWR 13 Aug (LBe, MCh, BH, CWi); max 2 MNWR 14 Aug (SHa, TL, BMc); MWC 29 Aug (BB, DN!).

Least Sandpiper: last 2 GRFF 2 Jun (DN); arr 3 MNWR 10 Jul; max 150 MWC 18 Aug, -.

White-rumped Sandpiper: arr MNWR 17 Aug; max 6 MWC 19 Aug.

Baird's Sandpiper: arr MyPt 31 Jul; max 16 MWC 28 Aug, +.

Pectoral Sandpiper: arr MNWR 18 Jul; max 100 MWC 14 Aug, +.

Dunlin: 1-2 MNWR thru, -.

Stilt Sandpiper: arr 2 MNWR 18 Jul; max 4 MNWR 18 Aug, -.

Buff-breasted Sandpiper: arr MWC 18 Aug (BMc, DN), early; max 8 MWC 22 Aug (GP), high, +.

Short-billed Dowitcher: last MyPt 1 Jun (BMc), late; arr 8 MNWR 17 Jul; max 18 MNWR 21 Aug.

Long-billed Dowitcher: arr & max 4 MWC 14 Aug.

Wilson's Snipe: max 6 MNWR 22 Aug, -.

RED-NECKED PHALAROPE: arr MWC 18 Aug (MM); max 2 MWC 20 Aug (DW); MWC 27 Aug (GCh, RBA, MTe).

BONAPARTE'S GULL: MNWR 23 Jul (MCh, StF, TL, BMC, DN), only report, -.

Ring-billed Gull: max 1520 RivP 1 Jun, +.

Herring Gull: max 20 StP 18 Jul, +.

Caspian Tern: arr MNWR 12 Jun (JBau, MCh), early; max 38 StP 2 Aug.

Com. Tern: Elmira Dam CHEM 12 Jun; arr MyPt 1 Jul; max 5 StP 16 Jul.

FORSTER'S TERN: max 2 StP 4 Jul (J&KCon); MNWR 31 Jul (LS!).

PIGEONS—WOODPECKERS

Mourning Dove: max 24 BFT 28 Aug, +.

E. Screech-Owl: max 2 Oaks Corners ONTA 1 Jun, low, +.

Com. Nighthawk: Aurelius 12 Jun; arr

MWC 28 Aug; max 2 MWC 29 Aug,
very low, -.
Chimney Swift: max 13 RivP
29 Jun, low.
Belted Kingfisher: max 3 BFT 28 Aug.
Downy Woodpecker: max 2 Horseheads
Dump CHEM 4 Jun, low.
N. Flicker: max 2 Pine City 30 Aug, low.
Pileated Woodpecker: max 4 Wayland
3 Jun.

FLYCATCHERS — WAXWINGS

Olive-sided Flycatcher: last Dryden L
Trail TOMP 12 Jun (StF!), late; arr SaW
22 Aug.
E. Wood-Pewee: max 6 SaW
26 Aug, low, -.
Yellow-bellied Flycatcher: arr SaW
21 Aug.
Alder Flycatcher: max 8 FLNF 4 Jun, +.
Least Flycatcher: max 3 FLNF 4 Jun.
Great Crested Flycatcher: max 6 SaW
21 Jul.
E. Kingbird: max 6 The Center at
Horseheads CHEM 27 Aug.
Red-eyed Vireo: max 20 FLNF 4 Jun, -.
Blue Jay: max 20 Caroline 29 Aug, +.
Am. Crow: max 43 BFT 28 Aug, +.
Purple Martin: max 600 MWC
18 Aug, +.
Tree Swallow: max 23,000 MWC 17
Aug (MAn, JE, TL, BS), high, +.
N. Rough-winged Swallow: max 100
MWC 17 Aug, +.
Bank Swallow: max 1000 MNWR
29 Aug, +.
Barn Swallow: max 5000 MWC
17 Aug (MAn, JE, TL, BS), high, +.
Tufted Titmouse: max 14 SaW
25 Aug, -.
Red-breasted Nuthatch: max 2 FLNF
4 Jun.
Brown Creeper: max 2 Dryden 29 Jun, -.
House Wren: max 4 FLNF 4 Jun, low.
Marsh Wren: max 20 MNWR 12 Jun
(JBau, MCh), high.
Blue-gray Gnatcatcher: max 6 MNWR
19 Jun.

E. Bluebird: max 4 Neimi Rd Pds
TOMP 12 Aug, low but probably a lack
of reporting, -.
Veery: max 20 Dryden 3 Jul, -.
Hermit Thrush: max 10 BH 1 Jul.
Wood Thrush: max 10 Dryden 29 Jun.
Am. Robin: max 57 BFT 28 Aug, +.
Gray Catbird: max 23 BFT 28 Aug, +.
N. Mockingbird: max 5 Horseheads
Dump CHEM 4 Jun.
Brown Thrasher: max 3 FLNF 4 Jun.
European Starling: max 1000 The
Center at Horseheads CHEM 27 Aug, +.
AM. PIPIT: 6 MNWR 24 Aug (K&LB,
BGU, AHA, Julie Horton, Lyn Jacobs,
LL), high, early, +.
Cedar Waxwing: max 33 BFT 28 Aug, -.

WARBLERS

Blue-winged Warbler: max 3 FLNF
4 Jun, low.
Yellow Warbler: max 16 FLNF
4 Jun, low.
Chestnut-sided Warbler: max 15 BH
5 Jun, -.
Magnolia Warbler: max 5 SaW 30 Aug.
Black-throated Blue Warbler: max
4 BH 5 Jun, -.
Yellow-rumped Warbler: max 6 BH
5 Jun.
Black-throated Green Warbler: max
5 BH 5 Jun, low, -.
Blackburnian Warbler: max 6 BH
5 Jun, -.
Blackpoll Warbler: last RivP 3 Jun.
Black-and-white Warbler: max 2 BH
5 Jun.
Am. Redstart: max 14 FLNF 4 Jun.
Ovenbird: max 22 FLNF 4 Jun, -.
N. Waterthrush: max 3 SaW 1 Aug.
Louisiana Waterthrush: max 4 Six Mile
Creek Gorge TOMP 5 Jun, -.
Com. Yellowthroat: max 25 FLNF
4 Jun, -.
Wilson's Warbler: last Ithaca 5 Jun
(LH), late; arr & max 2 SaW 24 Aug.
Canada Warbler: max 7 Shindagin
Hollow SF TOMP 6 Aug.

TANAGERS—WEAVERS

Scarlet Tanager: max 7 SaW 24 Aug.

Chipping Sparrow: max 3 FLNF
4 Jun, low, -.

CLAY-COLORED SPARROW:

Summerhill SF TOMP 4 Jun (JSi, MY).

Grasshopper Sparrow: max 6 Jasper
3 Jun, +.

HENSLOW'S SPARROW: FLNF
24 Jun (RS), only report.

White-throated Sparrow: max 2 Bear
Swamp SF CAYU 25 Jun.

Dark-eyed Junco: max 9 FLNF 4 Jun.

N. Cardinal: max 10 SaW 26 Aug.

Rose-breasted Grosbeak: max 10
Dryden 29 Jun.

LAZULI BUNTING: possible
Taughannock Falls SP 11 Jun (IH!),
no report to NYSARC but e-mail from
observer looked good.

Indigo Bunting: max 16 BFT
28 Aug, +.

Bobolink: max 50 MWC 18 Aug, -.

Red-winged Blackbird: max 2000
MWC 28 Jul, +.

E. Meadowlark: max 9 FLNF 4 Jun, -.

Com. Grackle: max 40 FLNF
4 Jun, +.

Orchard Oriole: max 5 Ledyard
17 Jul, +.

Baltimore Oriole: max 6 StP 15 Aug,
low.

Purple Finch: max 10 BH 5 Jun.

Pine Siskin: max 3 Kestrel Haven
Avian Migration Observatory SCHU
18 Jun (J&SGr).

Am. Goldfinch: max 60 SaW
25 Aug, +.

House Sparrow: max 20 StP
31 Aug, +.