

REGION 7— ADIRONDACK-CHAMPLAIN

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June began deceptively sunny and pleasant, but 1.7" of rain at Malone on the 4th was only a harbinger of things to come. Strong thunderstorms on 9 June unleashed a 4"-5" deluge on Essex County, washing out roads, bridges and the rail line in Crown Point and Moriah, causing \$3 million in damages. The same county received up to 2" more rainfall the following day. Hurricane Arlene brought yet more, and between 13-17 June Essex County received another 10", with 50 roads closed in that county alone. The first week of summer was sunny and warm, despite an overnight drop to 34°F at Saranac Lake on 23 June, but another thunderstorm on the 29th brought a small stream advisory to Clinton County and 5500 lost power near Beekmantown. The tail end of Hurricane Cindy brought 3.5" of rain by 9 July, but most of the month was sunny, hot and humid. June and July were just 0.03° short of being the hottest in 50 years, with Plattsburgh sweltering at 92° on 18 July. August began with 40 mph gusts, violent thunderstorms and hail, with trees down at Lake Placid (but a lovely evening at Elizabethtown), and more violent storms along the border on 2 August (also pleasant in the Pleasant Valley of Elizabethtown). Despite most of the month being sunny and hot, Clinton County was pelted by a 6" hailstorm on 10 August that washed out the CP railroad tracks and stopped the Amtrak *Adirondack* as 60-70 mph winds downed trees. By 24 August, Lake Champlain was down to 95.64' and mudflats were exposed along the lakeshore. The season closed with the arrival of the tail end of Hurricane Katrina that had crossed into the Gulf of Mexico on the 27th and demolished the Gulf Coast on the 29th. Reaching here on 31 August, Katrina dumped 4.5" of rain on Inlet and Malone as well as other parts of Franklin and Hamilton counties. Even the more modest 2.5" in the Champlain Valley was a record rainfall for the date in Clinton and Essex counties. At season's end, the average temperature of 71° for June-July-August was the second-warmest on record, exceeded only slightly by the sweltering summer of 1949.

The Adirondack Birding Celebration hike to the 3694' summit of Hurricane Mt. on 4 June failed to produce a Bicknell's Thrush, but participants did hear a loud 20-second hiss along a crack, which increased to the noise level of, say, a vacuum cleaner, then stopped. That evening at 9:26 p.m. a magnitude 1.7 "micro-earthquake" took place 12 miles NNW of Malone. The weird noise on the summit was a premonitory stimulus that resulted from the strain of pressure building up six hours ahead of the actual quake. A phenomenon known as dilatancy (an increase in volume during deformation of solids) causes a release of gases — mostly radon — and radical anomalies in electrical resistance and conductivity. The things you learn looking for thrushes.

Katrina brought a large fallout of shorebirds along Champlain on 31 August, with nine species at Noblewood Park, including 90 Semipalmated Sandpipers. The Chazy riverlands were productive through much of the season, with a first-year **Northern Shoveler** on 4 July and a juvenile male **Ruff** on 3 August, both on the Laurin farm, and at least a dozen shorebird species reported. Four Brothers Islands had 36 adult **Caspian Terns** at the start of the season and each of 18 nests probably fledged some young, although fledging was not seen. The first juveniles were at nearby Noblewood on 22 August, where the large terns were present throughout the season, with as many as 16 there 26-28 August. Caspians were also reported from Chazy Rivers and Wickham Marsh. Noblewood Park had Common Terns from 20-31 August, reaching a peak of 13 birds on the 28th. But Chazy Rivers had a maximum of 50+ on the Laurin farm as early as 31 July. Black Terns at Point au Fer during June-July and at Chazy Rivers July-August were highly encouraging, with as many as 14 at Chazy on 8 August and up to 7 immatures there by the 13th. A singing male **Nelson's Sharp-tailed Sparrow** was seen and heard on the Laurin farm on 2 July, then heard again on the neighboring Gravelle farm on 13 July. The sparrow was flat headed with orange in the face and a buffy, lightly streaked breast and was singing the "cold water on a hot skillet" song of a Nelson's from the middle strand of a barbed wire fence before moving to the top of a post, then flying off. The brief flight was low and undulating. Full details have been submitted to NYSARC.

Other seasonal rarities included a drake **White-winged Scoter** seen on Little Tupper Lake from 18 June to 8 August and briefly visiting nearby Long Lake on 16 July, two **Sandhill Cranes** on a Gabriels potato farm on 7 June, an **Upland Sandpiper** in Chesterfield on 13 June for the first Essex County record of Atlas 2000, a **Red-bellied Woodpecker** at Willsboro Bay on 27 August, a **Wilson's Warbler** once again at Bloomingdale Bog this year on 2-3 June and **Clay-colored Sparrow** in Jay on 2-26 June but present there since 27 May. No less noteworthy were the numbers of cuckoos, mostly Black-billed but a few Yellow-billed, reported from wooded areas due to a major infestation of Forest [not Eastern] Tent Caterpillars in northern NYS. We also direct your attention to several interesting Addenda.

We're pleased to report that, once again, records were obtained from all 690 Atlas blocks in Region 7. Our profound thanks go to all of the observers, both within and from outside the four northeastern counties of NYS, whose collective efforts made this possible. Your trust and willingness in accepting assignments to survey often remote areas not birded in 20-25 years helped provide yet another benchmark standard for future generations of Atlas observers. You truly were an all-star team, and working with you was a joy.

CONTRIBUTORS

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ABBREVIATIONS

BB — Bloomingdale Bog; BP — Brandon P; CH — Cumberland Head; CR — Chazy Rivers; CRF — Cedar R Flow; FB — Ferd's Bog; FBI — Four Brothers Islands; LL — Long L; MB — Monty's Bay; NP — Noblewood P; PtF — Pt au Fer; SB — Sabattis Bog; TL — Tupper L; WM - Wickham Marsh.

WHISTLING-DUCKS — VULTURES

Canada Goose: max 250 NP 28 Aug.

Blue-winged Teal: CR 4 Jul (BK,CM).

N. SHOVELER: 1ST year CR 4 Jul (BK,CM).

WHITE-WINGED SCOTER; m Little Tupper L 18 Jun (MDM)-8 Aug (*fide* JN); also LL 16 Jul (JC).

Com. Merganser: f & 40 y NP 5 Jul (MDM).

Spruce Grouse: m Kildare 3 Jul (SP); brood Bay Pd (GJ); both Boreal Heritage Preserve.

Com. Loon: Chazy L platform produced 2 y.

Pied-billed Grebe: y Scomotion CR 5 Jun (NO); y LL 11 Jul (A&DG); CRF 21 Jun; 3 calling CR 22 Jun; 2 y CR 4 Jul (BK,CM); a good showing.

Red-necked Grebe: basic ad LL 7 Aug (JC), 2nd Aug record.

Double-crested Cormorant: many FBI 15 Jun, no census figures.

Great Blue Heron: 20+ FBI 15 Jul; no Valcour I census.

Great Egret: NP 3 Jun; 2 Is "B" FBI 15 Jul; CR 11-13 Aug.

Black-crowned Night-Heron: 3 NP 3 Jun; 9+ FBI 15 Jul.

HAWKS — ALCIDS

Red-shouldered Hawk: Jay 1 Jun, migrating n.

Broad-winged Hawk: Jay 1 Jun, migrating n.

Am. Kestrel: 5 of 24 FRAN nest boxes produced 16+ chicks, 5 failed, 1 used for roosting; 6 had grackle nests, a starling nest, 6 were empty (MAM); 20 more boxes planned for '06.

Merlin: Deer R Flow, Jay, Little Simon Pd, Mirror L, Santanoni trail; transient CR 24 Aug.

Peregrine Falcon: Hurricane Mt, Jay, Keene, Split Rock Pt, Whiteface Mt, known eyries.

Virginia Rail: WM 5 Jun (MDM); CR 5 Jun-8 Jul (BK); Newport Pd, Moriah 27 Jun (JP,ET); LL 11 Jul (WL); only suggestive of range.

Sora: CR 28 Jun, 3 Jul; ad & 2 y CR 8 Jul (BK), only site reported.

Com. Moorhen: WM 5 Jun (MDM); CR 22 Jun (CM)-11 Aug (BK,CM), nice finds.

Am. Coot: CR (off Hobart Rd) 28 Jun-24 Aug (BK), excellent find.

SANDHILL CRANE: 2 Tucker potato farm, Gabriels 7 Jun (PS), undoubtedly same seen TL 17 May '05; 3rd FRAN & 7th Reg record.

Semipalmated Plover: arr 3 CR 30 Jul-19 Aug; 2 NP 22-31 Aug.

Greater Yellowlegs: arr CR 2 Jul; max 4 CR 7 Jul; NP 31 Aug.

Lesser Yellowlegs: arr 3 CR 7-30 Jul; NP 17 Jul-27 Aug.

Solitary Sandpiper: Keene 5 Jun (J&PT), late ESSE; arr 7 Westport 31 Aug with Hurricane Katrina; 2 Boquet R Willsboro 27 Aug.

UPLAND SANDPIPER: Pt Douglas Rd Chesterfield 13 Jun (DR), 1st ESSE Atlas 2000, only 2nd ESSE since 1980-85 Atlas.

Ruddy Turnstone: arr 3 CR 27 Aug (BK), only report.

Sanderling: arr imm CR 31 Jul; 2 alt NP 20 Aug; MB 24 Aug; max 6 NP 31 Aug with Katrina.

Semipalmated Sandpiper: arr MB 24 Aug; imm CR 31 Jul; max 90 NP 31 Aug (MDM) with Katrina, ESSE record.

Least Sandpiper: arr 8 CR 2 Jul; 3 NP 22 Aug; max 42 MB 24 Aug; 5 NP 31 Aug.

White-rumped Sandpiper: arr CR 31 Jul (BK,CM), early CLIN & Reg; 2 CR 8 Aug; max 5 NP 31 Aug with Katrina, rare here.

Baird's Sandpiper: arr CR 13 Aug (CM,RP,PW), early CLIN & Reg; NP 17 Aug (L&NM); NP 31 Aug (MDM), simi-

larly rare here.

Pectoral Sandpiper: arr CR 11 Aug; CR 13 Aug; max 3 CR 27 Aug; NP 31 Aug, uncommon here.

RUFF: juv m CR 3 Aug (BK), 4th CLIN & Reg record.

Short-billed Dowitcher: arr MB 24 Aug, ID by voice.

Bonaparte's Gull: ad Blue Mt L 14 Jul (GB,TB), "many" Raquette L 16 Jul (JC), 5th & 6th HAMI records; 2 ad Upper Saranac L 30 Jul (PO'S,UW), 13th FRAN record; NP 15 Jul thru; CR 31 Jul, 2 Aug; max 500 NP 22 Aug (ET); 1st season with reports from all 4 counties.

CASPIAN TERN: 36 ads FBI (isl unknown) start of breeding season, where each of 18 nests probably fledged some y (Anon.); WM 1 Jun (JL); numbers NP 3 Jun thru; 1-4 CR 3 Jul-19 Aug (SJ,BK,CM); high 16 (3 juv) NP 26-28 Aug (MDM).

Com. Tern: max 50+ CR 31 Jul (BK); 2 NP 20 Aug; max 16 NP 31 Aug (MDM); no reports from FBI.

Black Tern: PtF Jun (J&RH); 2 PtF 8 Jul (BK); CR 30 Jul; CR 6 Aug, feeding y; max 14 CR 8 Aug (BK); 8 (7 imm) CR 13 Aug (CM,RP,PW), molting FY; heartening reports.

PIGEONS—WOODPECKERS

Black-billed Cuckoo: FB, LL, L Lila, L Placid, Little Indian L, Inlet, Moriah, Sagamore L, Shallow L, Ticondroga, West Mt, other sites, due to Forest Tent Caterpillar outbreak.

Yellow-billed Cuckoo: T Hope 23 Jun (LR); Belfrey Mt & Newport Pd 12 Jul (JP,ET), ditto.

Short-eared Owl: Gabriels 12 Jun (BM), an encouraging find.

Com. Nighthawk: Madawaska 3 Jul; 3-5 Peru 11-15 Jul, 20-21 Aug; max 12 Peru 9 Aug.

Whip-poor-will: Willsboro 5 Jun; Pt Kent 7 Jul.

RED-BELLIED WOODPECKER:

Willsboro Bay 27 Aug (MDM), still rare here.

Am. Three-toed Woodpecker: calling Osgood R 4 Jun (BC); SB area 3 Jul (SP); Moose R Plains 4 Jul (SP); f FB 2 Aug (WL), good finds.

Black-backed Woodpecker: BB, BP, nest Chubb R, FB, Eighth L, Giant Mt, Newcomb golf course, Osgood R, nest Partlow Flow, nest Riverside Dr, West Mt, other sites.

FLYCATCHERS—WAXWINGS

Willow Flycatcher: Riverview 7 Jun (BK); Altona 13 Jun (J&RH); Rand Hill 14 Jun (BK), all CLIN.

Philadelphia Vireo: near Sisters L 4 Jun (WL); 2 Hurricane Mt 4 Jun (J&PT), in chase; near Constable Pd 20 Jun (WL), but undoubtedly more abundant than the paucity of Adk reports suggest.

Gray Jay: BB, Blue Mt, Blue Mt Rd, BP, Chubb R, FB, Helldiver Pd, LL, Madawaska, Osgood R, Partlow Flow, TL, other sites.

Com. Raven: nest Valcour I ledge, built in Mar (NO); NP 22 Aug (ET); reflect spread to shoreline, and even into waters, of L Champlain.

Tree Swallow: decreased HAMI (GL); FBI 15 Jul (MDM), where there are historic nest records.

Barn Swallow: decreased HAMI (RM); FBI 15 Jul (MDM), where there has been an historic ledge nest on the shale cliff of Isl "A."

Boreal Chickadee: BP, Bigelow Rd, Blue Mt, Blue Mt Rd, Calkins Bk, Chubb R, Eighth L, Elk L, FB, Goodnow Mt, LL, Lost Pd, Pillsbury Mt, West Mt, other expected sites.

Tufted Titmouse: Elizabethtown 25 Jun thru (JP); Peru to 11 Jul (EF); Moriah 12 Jul (JP,ET); max 3 banded Elizabethtown 22-25 Aug (JP).

House Wren: pr Plattsburgh raised y in outgoing mail slot of USPS lockbox (EF).

Marsh Wren: Scomotion Cr 5 Jun (NO); WM 5 Jun (MDM); certainly more present.

E. Bluebird: 15 nests eggs, 11 nests y, 27 nests FL Rt 22 ESSE nestbox trail 16 Jun (KL).

Bicknell's Thrush: Allen Mt, Averill Pk, Blue Mt, Lyon Mt, Pillsbury Mt, Whiteface Mt; none Kempshall Mt 24-25 Jun; max 9 singing m Blue Mt 4 Jun (JC).

Wood Thrush: 1600' Rand Hill, CLIN all summer (J&RH), high elevation.

N. Mockingbird: 4 locations Lyons Rd & Rt 22 Plattsburgh Jun-Jul (EF); Akey Rd, CLIN 5 Aug (CM Jr).

WARBLERS

Tennessee Warbler: territorial Cedar R (KC); singing m LL (JC); Nehasane L (TS); Porter Mt (*fide* RW); but still no NYS nest located after two Atlas projects.

Cape May Warbler: singing m Moose R Plains 19 Jun (JN); Elk L 18 Jul (RW); Porter Mt 15 Aug (*fide* RW); welcome Atlas additions.

Palm Warbler: BB, BP, Little Tupper L, Madawaska, Osgood R, Paul Smiths, Santa Clara, SB, Shingle Shanty Bk, St. Regis Falls, St. Regis R; now found on virtually all Adk bogs.

Bay-breasted Warbler: The Gulf CLIN 1 Jun (J&RH), possible breeder; New Russia 2 Jun (ET), probable late transient; LL 19 Jun (*fide* JC).

Louisiana Waterthrush: 600' Highlands Forge, T Willsboro 5 Jun (MDM); singing m 1050' Crowfoot Bk T North Hudson 24 Jun (JP,ET); along rushing brooks.

WILSON'S WARBLER: BB 2-3 Jun (BM), nesting not confirmed.

TANAGERS—WEAVERS

Scarlet Tanager: orange variant Redd Rd Peru (EF).

CLAY-COLORED SPARROW: singing m Stickney Bridge Rd T Jay 2-26 Jun (PO), present since 27 May, f present but species not identified.

NELSON'S SHARP-TAILED SPAR-

ROW: singing m seen Laurin farm CR 2 Jul; heard only neighboring Gravelle farm 13 Jul (BK, NYSARC) where first found 30 Jul-24 Aug 2002.

Purple Finch: 58 banded Elizabethtown 21-31 Aug (JP), 3 with conjunctivitis.

House Finch: Westport feeder Aug (CDa), conjunctivitis.

Red Crossbill: LL 4 Jun (WL); Madawaska 3 Jul (MA,MDM); pr with heavy bills Westport 18 Jul (JP,ET).

White-winged Crossbill: juv LL feeder 13 Jun (JC), only report.

Pine Siskin: 2 Pillsbury Mt 6 Jun (JC); many Jay 8-15 Jun (PO); Elizabethtown Jun-Jul (JP); Madawaska 3 Jul (MDM).

Evening Grosbeak: f recaptured Jenny L WARR 4 Jul (RY), banded Elizabethtown 23 Oct '97, previously captured Jenny L 28 Jul '03, age now 8 yrs, 1 mo; Westport feeder Aug (CDa), conjunctivitis.

ADDENDA

CASPIAN TERN: first nesting by 5 prs FBI 2004 failed late Jun due to proximity to Great Black-backed Gull parents feeding tern chicks to y; late report of re-nesting (high count ~17) in '04, but outcome unknown (Anon. obs.).

BOREAL OWL: Sagamore, T Inlet, caretaker's residence last 2 weeks Feb & 1st week Mar 2005 (*vide* GL), 1st HAMI & 7th Reg report.

Palm Warbler: max 15+ near Shingle Shanty Bk 27 May 2005 (TS), new HAMI & Reg record, but on only a small portion of 100+ ac bog, all suitable habitat; actual population may be as many as ~100 prs.

CORRIGENDUM

CLAY-COLORED SPARROW: Jay 30 May 2005 observer was Melanie McCormack, not Matthew D. Medler.