

REGION 3 – FINGER LAKES

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Summer 2006 was fairly normal in terms of temperature, but very wet. The average temperature in June was just 0.1° F warmer than normal. July was 2.9° F above normal, and August was 0.4° F above normal. Rainfall in June was 7.52 inches, 194% of normal. July precipitation was 6.77 inches, 191% of normal. August rainfall was 4.84 inches, 142% of normal.

Comparing this year with last year, there was little significant change in waterfowl numbers. Common Mergansers and Wood Ducks were both down in numbers. Certainly the mergansers, and possibly also the Wood Ducks, were affected by the abnormally high precipitation. High water in the Chemung River prevented Common Merganser families from gathering on the shoals. Interesting species present included a possibly injured Snow Goose through most of the season at Montezuma National Wildlife Refuge. A second individual joined it 2-7 July. Early in June, there were six **Snow Geese** at Seneca Lake State Park. Benjamin Clock found two **Eurasian Wigeons** at Montezuma in early July. Four birders from Ithaca spotted two Common Goldeneye at Mud Lock at the northeast corner of Cayuga Lake in late June.

All of the reports of Common Loon came from Cayuga Lake, with no more than two seen at a time. Single Horned Grebes were found on Seneca Lake, Cayuga Lake, and even on tiny Eldridge Lake in Elmira.

Great Blue Herons were again plentiful, particularly in the Montezuma Wetlands Complex. The only wandering heron to be detected was a Cattle Egret at Montezuma NWR.

Eighteen Bald Eagles at Montezuma NWR was a Regional record high count for the summer. Bald Eagles were also noted with frequency through the summer along the Chemung River. The big raptor news was of successfully nesting Merlins in Ithaca and Cayuga Heights, both conveniently nesting near the homes of avid birders, and another family group spotted at Montezuma NWR.

As the quality of habitat in the Main Pool at Montezuma NWR continued to decline, so did the numbers of nesting Common Moorhens and American Coots, the latter having its second consecutive significant decline. Sandhill Cranes were seen occasionally in Montezuma NWR and in the Region 3 portion of the Wetlands Complex. More surprising were the two that Noah Hamm found in the Town of Lansing in early June.

Puddler's Marsh along Towpath Road in the Montezuma Wetlands Complex was the season's hot spot for shorebirds. Short-billed Dowitchers were way up this year, marking the second consecutive year of increases for that species. A Willet at Watkins Glen, 22 Hudsonian Godwits and two Red Knots at Puddler's Marsh, and a Marbled Godwit flying off the spit at Myers Point comprised the shorebird highlights.

More than 1000 pairs of Ring-billed Gulls and three pairs of Herring Gulls nested in the colony in the Chemung River in downtown Elmira. Unfortunately, their island was completely flooded by high water on 3 June carrying hundreds of young birds downstream. At least several dozen of them managed to land on shore on one side of the river or the other. Adults continued to care for these and many of them fledged. By 6 June, the water had receded. Only three young had managed to stay on the island by clinging to or simply being caught in vegetation. More than a thousand adults were back on the island that day. Courtship, copulation, and nest-building resumed. The island was again flooded 28 June. A couple hundred gulls were on the island the following day, but there was no more nesting activity observed. It is likely that no Herring Gull young survived, the first newly hatched young having been observed the morning of the first flood.

The Snowy Owl, which first showed up in May in the Town of Genoa, Cayuga County, was reported from the neighboring Town of Venice in early June, the first June record for this species in the Region. Several observers reported migrating Common Nighthawks in late August. Mourning Doves showed a significant increase in the Region for the third consecutive year.

John and Sue Gregoire banded an adult female Yellow-bellied Flycatcher with a "highly edematous brood patch" on 8 July and recaptured the same individual, 5 August. The capture of a juvenile on 10 August led them to suspect local breeding.

The only Golden-winged Warbler reported in the Region this summer was a migrant at Sapsucker Woods, 28 August. The male Yellow-throated Warbler which appeared at Harris Hill Park in early May continued to hold territory through at least 3 July. No female or young were ever observed. Observers reported migrant Blackpoll Warblers through mid-June. A breeding-plumaged male was silently feeding in a White Oak at Newtown Battlefield Reservation on 5 July. The only report of Worm-eating Warbler came from the species' stronghold at Lindsay-Parsons Biodiversity Preserve. Yellow-breasted Chat, on the other hand, was absent from the Preserve. One was reported from the Town of Ithaca.

Clay-colored Sparrow returned to its breeding ground in Caroline. Bill Purcell checked historic sites of Henslow's Sparrow in Steuben County and found two in the Town of Rathbone. A thorough survey at the grassland Important Bird Area at The Center at Horseheads turned up a total of 47 Grasshopper Sparrows in mid-June. Three observers heard an early night-migrating Dickcissel over Cornell University on 30 August.

Winter finch specialist Matt Young located the Region's only Red Crossbill at Summerhill State Forest. Brian Sullivan found two Pine Siskins in the Town of Dryden in mid-June and Chris Wood found one at Myers Point in mid-July for the only reports of that species.

CONTRIBUTORS

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ABBREVIATIONS

HHP—Harris Hill Park CHEM, MNWR—Montezuma NWR, MWC—Montezuma Wetlands Complex, MyPt—Myers Point, SW—Sapsucker Woods.

WHISTLING-DUCKS - VULTURES

SNOW GOOSE: 1-2 MNWR 3 Jun - 19 Aug (mob); max 6 Seneca L SP 6 Jun (LBI, CR, FS), high.

Trumpeter Swan: max 4 MNWR 9 Jul.

Wood Duck: max 44 MNWR 11 Aug, -.

Gadwall: max 12 MNWR 16 Aug (CW), high.

EURASIAN WIGEON: 2 MNWR 7 Jul (BC).

Am. Wigeon: max 12 MNWR 30 Aug (JA), high.

Blue-winged Teal: max 35 MNWR 16 Aug (CW), high.

N. Shoveler: max 8 MNWR 16 Aug (CW), high.

N. Pintail: arr MNWR 12 Aug; max 3 MNWR 13 Aug (KR), high.

COMMON GOLDENEYE: 2 Mud Lock CAYU 26 Jun (AH, SKr, JMcL, AM).

Com. Merganser: max 13 Elmira Dam CHEM 18 Jul, -.

Ruddy Duck: last & max 4 MNWR 3 Jun.

Wild Turkey: max 20 Ithaca 14 Jun, +.

HORNED GREBE: last Seneca L SP 6 Jun (FS); Ledyard 2 Jun (CSc); Aurora Bay, Cayuga L 29 Jul (SBI, TL); Eldridge Park 1 Aug thru (JSc, AT).

Great Blue Heron: max 422 MNWR 11 Aug (LSC), high.

Great Egret: max 102 MWC 25 Aug (MiH, TL), high.

CATTLE EGRET: MNWR 9-10 Jul (GC).

Black-crowned Night-Heron: last SW 14 Jun (JR), late; arr MNWR 4 Jul; max 18 MWC 29 Aug.

HAWKS - ALCIDS

Bald Eagle: max 18 MNWR 11 Aug (LSC), high.

Merlin: max ad, 4 FL MNWR (SBI, TL) 29 Jul; 2 ad, 3 FL Ithaca 29 Jul (PHu),

high; 2 ad, 2 FL Cayuga Heights (SH) 10 Jul.

Peregrine Falcon: arr Elmira 21 Jul; MNWR 22 Aug.

Wild Turkey: max 20 Ithaca 14 Jun, +.

Com. Moorhen: max 15 MNWR 12 Aug, -.

Am. Coot: max 20 MNWR 12 Aug, -.

SANDHILL CRANE: 2 Cherry Road Research Pds TOMP 4 Jun (NH); MNWR 10 Jun (GJ); max 5 MNWR 16 Aug (CW), high; 4 MWC 26 Aug (PHu).

Black-bellied Plover: arr & max 61 MyPt 19 Aug (TL), high.

Am. Golden-Plover: arr 2 MWC 23 Aug; max 13 MWC 25 Aug.

Semipalmated Plover: last 2 MNWR 11 Jun; arr 3 MNWR 11 Jul; max 50 MWC 29 Aug, -.

Greater Yellowlegs: arr MNWR 21 Jun (TL), early; max 50 MWC 25 Aug.

Lesser Yellowlegs: last MNWR 4 Jun (RD), late; arr MNWR 21 Jun; max 425 MWC 29 Aug (MA, TL), high.

Solitary Sandpiper: arr 2 MNWR 21 Jun; max 11 MNWR 15 Jul.

WILLET: Watkins Glen 19 Aug (GU).

Whimbrel: MyPt 12 Jul; max 12 MyPt 22 Jul (BoM).

HUDSONIAN GODWIT: max 22 MWC 29 Aug (MA, TL, BoM), high.

MARbled GODWIT: MyPt 19 Aug (KR!).

Ruddy Turnstone: arr MNWR 16 Aug; max 2 MWC 29 Aug.

RED KNOT: 2 MWC 20 Aug (DL!, TL, BoM, NS).

Sanderling: arr MyPt 13 Jul (CW), early; max 6 MyPt 19 Aug.

Semipalmated Sandpiper: last 35 MNWR 11 Jun; arr 16 MNWR 11 Jul; max 330 MWC 27 Aug (SBI, ToJ, GS), high.

Western Sandpiper: MNWR 11 Jun, only report.

The Kingbird 2006 December; 56 (4)

Least Sandpiper: last MNWR 21 Jun (TL), late; arr MNWR 1 Jul; max 200 MWC 26 Aug.

White-rumped Sandpiper: last 6 MNWR 11 Jun (M&TL), late; arr MNWR 9 Jul (MA, TL), early; max 15 MWC 29 Aug (MA, TL), high.

Baird's Sandpiper: arr MyPt 22 Jul (CW), early; max 10 MWC 27 Aug, -.

Pectoral Sandpiper: arr MNWR 4 Jul; max 250 MWC 29 Aug (MA, TL), high.

Dunlin: last 3 MNWR 11 Jun (M&TL), late; max 22 MWC 3 Jun.

Stilt Sandpiper: arr MNWR 12 Jul (MV!), early; max 55 MWC 27 Aug (SBI, ToJ, GS), high.

Buff-breasted Sandpiper: MWC 30 Aug, only report, -.

Short-billed Dowitcher: arr MWC 10 Jul; max 350 MWC 26 Aug (MCh, RD, ToJ), high, +.

Long-billed Dowitcher: arr 2 MNWR 29 Jul; max 6 MNWR 4 Aug.

Wilson's Snipe: max 8 MNWR 19 Aug.

Wilson's Phalarope: last MNWR 4 Jun (fide MV), late; arr MNWR 1 Jul (JBr), early; max 5 MWC 27 Aug (SBI, ToJ, GS), high, +.

Red-necked Phalarope: arr MNWR 16 Aug; max 3 MWC 26 Aug (LBI, JBu, BG, L&PHo, CJ, LL, CR), high.

Bonaparte's Gull: arr MyPt 22 Jul; max 3 Long Pt SP 29 Jul.

Caspian Tern: arr MyPt 17 Jun; max 35 MWC 29 Aug.

Com. Tern: max 2 MyPt 17 Jun.

FORSTER'S TERN: MyPt 10 Aug (KR); max 3 Stewart P TOMP 19 Aug (ToJ); MyPt 21 Aug (PHu).

Black Tern: max 42 MNWR 18 Jul (CW), high.

PIGEONS - WOODPECKERS

Rock Pigeon: max 75 Stewart P TOMP 6 Aug, +.

Mourning Dove: max 170 Romulus 20 Aug, +.

SNOWY OWL: Venice thru 4 Jun (fide MV).

Com. Nighthawk: last Elmira 14 Jun; arr MWC 20 Aug; max 31 Elmira 27 Aug, +.

Chimney Swift: max 200 Elmira Dam CHEM 27 Aug (D&JC), high, +.

Downy Woodpecker: max 8 Ithaca 14 Jun, +.

Hairy Woodpecker: max 3 HHP 3 Jul, +.

N. Flicker: max 8 HHP 15 Jul, +.

FLYCATCHERS - WAXWINGS

Olive-sided Flycatcher: last SW 10 Jun; arr Finger Lakes National Forest 25 Aug; Dryden L Trail TOMP 27 Aug.

Yellow-bellied Flycatcher: last MNWR 4 Jun; 1 ad f banded Kestrel Haven Avian Migration Observatory SCHU 8 Jul, same bird retrapped 5 Aug; 1 juv Kestrel Haven Avian Migration Observatory SCHU 10 Aug, *intro*.

Philadelphia Vireo: arr SW 28 Aug; max 2 SW 30 Aug.

RUBY-CROWNED KINGLET: Caroline 29 Aug (AM&TiJ), only report.

Swainson's Thrush: last 2 Caroline 6 Jun (SKe), late; arr Flat Rock TOMP 23 Aug.

WARBLERS

"Brewster's" Warbler (Hy): SW 2 Jun, only report.

GOLDEN-WINGED WARBLER: SW 28 Aug (BC), only report.

Tennessee Warbler: arr HHP 26 Aug.

N. Parula: last Mulholland Wildflower Preserve TOMP 6 Jun, only report.

YELLOW-THROATED WARBLER: HHP thru Jul 3 (BO).

Pine Warbler: max 8 HHP 26 Aug (BO), high.

Prairie Warbler: max 10 Lindsay-Parsons Biodiversity Preserve TOMP 5 Jul (GKI), high.

Bay-breasted Warbler: arr 2 SW 29 Aug.

Blackpoll Warbler: last Horseheads 16 Jun (MCa), late; Newtown Battlefield Reservation (BO!) 5 Jul; arr SW 30 Aug.

Cerulean Warbler: MNWR 11 Jul, -.

Worm-eating Warbler: max 3 Lindsay-Parsons Biodiversity Preserve TOMP 24 Jun, only report.

Wilson's Warbler: arr Dryden 24 Aug; max 4 SW 28 Aug (MCh, BrM, CoT), high.

YELLOW-BREASTED CHAT: max
Ithaca 11 Jul (SG).

TANAGERS - WEAVERS

Chipping Sparrow: max 38 HHP 26
Aug, +.

CLAY-COLORED SPARROW:
Caroline 1 Jun (CW).

HENSLOW'S SPARROW: max 2
Rathbone 27 Jun (BPu).

DICKCISSEL: Cornell University 30
Aug (MiH, ToJ, TL).

Bobolink: max 500 Rafferty Road Pd
CAYU 13 Aug, +.

Com. Grackle: max 10,000 MNWR 26
Aug (JBU, CJ), high, +.

Brown-headed Cowbird: max 20 Ithaca
14 Jun, +.

House Finch: max 10 Hammond Hill
Children's Camp 15 Jun, +.

RED CROSSBILL: Summerhill State
Forest 1 Jul (MY).

PINE SISKIN: max 2 Hammond Hill
Children's Camp TOMP 15 Jun (BS);
MyPt 21 Jul (CW).

House Sparrow: max 105 Riverfront P
CHEM 30 Aug, +.