

## REGION 3—FINGER LAKES

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June and July were unusually cool throughout the Region, with average monthly temperatures in Ithaca more than 2.4° F and 3.5° F below usual, respectively. Precipitation levels in both months were close to normal. August's average temperature was about 1° F warmer than the long-term mean in Ithaca, with more than fifty percent more rain.

Reports of waterfowl and other aquatic birds were mostly as expected for the Region. On 13 June at the north end of Cayuga Lake, Steve and Susie Fast saw 14 Snow Geese, a new high count for the Region in summer. One Eurasian Wigeon, seen by Mike and Joann Tetlow at Montezuma NWR on 12 June, was the only rare dabbling duck of the season. Jessie Barry, Chris Wood, and Ben Clock observed some late diving duck species—Greater Scaup, Bufflehead, Common Goldeneye, and Ring-necked Duck—in early June at the north end of Cayuga Lake. Even more surprisingly, given the rarity of the species in midsummer in our Region, Chris, Jessie, and Marshall Iliff found another Bufflehead on 23 July at Stewart Park in Ithaca. Lyn Jacobs found a Horned Grebe off the east shore of Canandaigua Lake on 10 and 14 July.

The absence of unusual duck numbers or species surely resulted in part from the draining of the Main Pool at MNWR all summer. While unfavorable for ducks, the huge flats of emergent weeds proved hospitable to foraging Sandhill Cranes, which were consistently observed here throughout the summer, with an impressive high count of 10 reported to eBird in August. Before the weeds grew, the Main Pool briefly had abundant habitat for shorebird stopovers in the last days of northbound migration in early June. Steve Kelling reported 555 Semipalmated Sandpipers on 4 June, a record for Region 3.

This was just the beginning of a season of big shorebird surprises. On the morning of 9 June, Chris Wood and Jessie Barry found a Whimbrel at Myers Park in Lansing. This bird remained for about two hours, eventually viewed by many observers. On 2 August, shorebird excitement recurred, or you could say recurved, at Myers Park, with the arrival of three American Avocets, first found by Bob McGuire and subsequently seen by many. Those birds were present only for an afternoon, but on 20 August Sam and Steve Kelling found an American Avocet at May's Point Pool at MNWR. This bird stayed through the end of the reporting period.

Shorebird habitat was limited at MNWR, and shorebird numbers therefore were generally low during fall migration. Still, birders reported the expected wide variety of shorebird species at the refuge. Most notable among these was an adult Western Sandpiper found by Dominic Sherony and Brad Carlson at MNWR on 18 August. For quantity and location, Tom Johnson's find of four Red-necked Phalaropes off Stewart Park in Ithaca on 28 August is also worthy of note.

This year there were no summer records of American Golden-Plover or Buff-breasted Sandpiper, two long-distance migrants that can be expected in our Region by late August. Lack of drier open flats at MNWR, combined with minimal observer effort to find such habitat elsewhere, may explain the absence of these species.

Mike and Joann Tetlow found 30 Bald Eagles feeding on concentrations of carp in the vestiges of the Main Pool at MNWR on 12 June. Area birders submitted no unusual reports of gulls or owls during the season. A Red-headed Woodpecker was seen at a feeder in Ithaca on 23 July.

Few songbird rarities turned up during the summer. A Yellow-breasted Chat, first found in late May on Pulteney Road in Yates County, stayed until at least 4 June, when it was last reported to eBird by Leona Lauster. In Summer Hill State Forest, near the northeast corner of Region 3, several boreal breeders lingered well into June, including a Ruby-crowned Kinglet (present in June for the second consecutive year), Rusty Blackbird, and Philadelphia Vireo. No one has presented definitive confirmation of whether these birds attempted to breed, or were late passage migrants.

After an unprecedented irruption the previous winter and spring, White-winged Crossbills seemed to vacate the Region, with only one reported on 5 June by Chris Wood and John Berner, also at Summer Hill SF. Matt Young found two Red Crossbills here on 7 June, and in a much bigger surprise, Ryan Douglas saw one Red Crossbill in atypical habitat in Sapsucker Woods on 20 July. Pine Siskins were observed throughout the period and Region by multiple observers, albeit in apparently declining numbers by the end of July. Lee Ann van Leer saw a juvenile begging from an adult in Freeville in early June.

## CONTRIBUTORS

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## ABBREVIATIONS

KH – Kestrel Haven Avian Migration Observatory (Schuyler); MNWR – Montezuma NWR; Myers – Myers Park, Lansing; SW – Sapsucker Woods; SHSF – Summer Hill State Forest; StP – Stewart Park, Ithaca.

## WHISTLING-DUCKS – VULTURES

**Snow Goose:** 14 Mud Lock (CAYU) 13 Jun (SF), late, high, +; 1 StP 10 Jul thru (DN, *et al.*), early.

**EURASIAN WIGEON:** 1 MNWR 12 Jun (MT, JT).

**Ring-necked Duck:** 2 MNWR 8 Jun (CLW, JesB, BeC), late.

**Greater Scaup:** 2 Harris Park (CAYU) 4 Jun (CLW), late.

**Bufflehead:** 1 Harris Park (CAYU) 4 Jun (CLW); 1 StP 23 Jul (CLW, JesB, MI), rare in summer.

**Com. Goldeneye:** 2 Harris Park (CAYU) 4 Jun (CLW), late.

**Horned Grebe:** 1 Canandaigua Lake (ONT) 10 and 14 July (LJ), only reports.

## HAWKS – ALCIDS

**Bald Eagle:** 30 MNWR 12 Jun (MT, JT), high, +.

**Merlin:** 1 Geneva 15 Jun (JN); 2 Ithaca 13 Jul (CS), probable breeding.

**Peregrine Falcon:** arr StP 7 Aug (JesB, CLW, BC).

**Sandhill Crane:** 10 MNWR Aug (eBird), high.

**Black-bellied Plover:** last 1 Myers 4 Jun (DN); arr Myers 23 Aug.

**Am. Golden-Plover:** no reports.

**Semipalmated Plover:** arr MNWR 3 Jul.

**AMERICAN AVOCET:** 3 Myers 2 Aug (BM, mob); 1 MNWR 20 Aug (StK, SaK), thru.

**Greater Yellowlegs:** arr MNWR 3 Jul.

**Lesser Yellowlegs:** arr MNWR 3 Jul.

**Upland Sandpiper:** 11 Seneca Falls 29 Jun thru (PH, *et al.*), confirmed breeding.

**WHIMBREL:** 1 Myers 9 Jun (CLW, JesB, mob).

**Ruddy Turnstone:** 2 arr MNWR 2 Aug (TL), only report.

**Sanderling:** arr Myers 31 Jul.

**Semipalmated Sandpiper:** max 555 MNWR 4 Jun (StK), high ++; arr MNWR 17 Jul.

**Western Sandpiper:** 1 MNWR 18 Aug (DS, BrC, !)

**Least Sandpiper:** arr MNWR 3 Jul.

**White-rumped Sandpiper:** arr MNWR 16 Aug.

**Baird's Sandpiper:** arr MNWR 20 Aug (StK, SaK); 1 Myers 28 Aug (TJ).

**Pectoral Sandpiper:** arr MNWR 11 Jul.

**Stilt Sandpiper:** arr MNWR 13 Jul.

**Buff-breasted Sandpiper:** no reports.

**Short-billed Dowitcher:** arr MNWR 11 Jul.

**Long-billed Dowitcher:** 3 arr and max MNWR 26 Aug (TJ).

**Wilson's Phalarope:** 2 arr MNWR 11 Aug (LSC).

**Red-necked Phalarope:** arr MNWR 25 Aug (SD); max 4 StP 28 Aug (TJ *et al.*).

**Bonaparte's Gull:** max 4 Myers 12 Aug (RD).

**Forster's Tern:** arr StP 4 Aug.

## PIGEONS – WOODPECKERS

**Red-headed Woodpecker:** 1 Ithaca 23 Jul (MW).

## FLYCATCHERS – WAXWINGS

**Yellow-bellied Flycatcher:** arr KH 20 Aug.

**Philadelphia Vireo:** 1 SHSF 15 Jun (MY), late.

**Ruby-crowned Kinglet:** 1 SHSF 5, 6, 8 Jun, 7 Jul (CLW, JBer, MY), possible breeding unconfirmed.

## WARBLERS

**Blackpoll Warbler:** last Brooktondale (TOMP) 9 Jun (EB).

**Yellow-breasted Chat:** last Pulteney Road (YATE) 4 Jun (LL).

## TANAGERS – WEAVERS

**Bobolink:** max 400 MNWR 19 Aug (eBird).

**Rusty Blackbird:** 1 SHSF 5 Jun (CLW, JBer), late.

**Orchard Oriole:** max 6 Lick Brook TOMP 17 Jul (MC).

**Red Crossbill:** 2 SHSF 7 Jun (MY), 1 SW 20 Jul (RD).

**WHITE-WINGED CROSSBILL:** 1 SHSF 5 Jun (CLW, JBer), only report.

**Pine Siskin:** many reports throughout Region, thru; juv FY Freeville early Jun (AvL).

