

REGION 4—SUSQUEHANNA

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Except for the first two weeks, Summer 2010 was generally warm and dry. Precipitation during the first two weeks of June was 4.00", which amounted to one-third of the precipitation for the 13-week period. It also exceeded the normal total of 3.80" for the entire month of June. If birds nesting in that period were able to successfully "weather the storm", then they were in the clear for most of the rest of the time. Precipitation totals for July and August were slightly below normal and above normal respectively. However, two-thirds of the total rainfall for the two months came on two days in July and a month later on two days in August, leaving the rest of the time in a deficit. The weather patterns were consistent with the usual Region 4 summer, with great variability in rainfall from one area to another. During an extended period of time the eastern part of the Region was reported to have 2-3", while at the same time the southwestern area only had 0.2-0.3" of rainfall.

A temperature of 92° in July was the highest recorded at the Binghamton Weather Station during the three-month period, with a total of five 90° days in July. June and August each had 18 days above normal in temperature, and July had 24 days above normal. A total of 23 days for the whole summer had below normal temperatures. The temperatures were warm but not exceptional.

The most significant birds reported during the period were **Loggerhead Shrike**, **Willet**, Great Black-backed Gull, **Cerulean Warbler**, and Clay-colored Sparrow. The shrike was spotted on 13 August by Dan Watkins on private property off Old Vestal Road in Broome County. The Naturalists' Club received permission to observe it over the next four days that it was there. Dan along with Dave Nicosia found the Willet at Boland Pond, Broome County, a hotspot for aquatic and wetland species near the intersection of Routes 12 and 12A. Dave reached a conclusion from replies he received on posting pictures that it probably was a western Willet. It did not stay in the area long enough for observers to confirm that. The first Great Black-backed Gull reported in the last eight years was seen over a week's time on Otsego Lake, Otsego County by Jeff Schmoyer from Kutztown, PA. Bob Donnelly replied to the posting that they are present in late summer and fall until it freezes up. The two Cerulean Warbler sightings could have been of the same birds since they were only a couple of miles apart. Becky Gretton's observation of a singing Clay-colored Sparrow was only 0.4 miles from where she observed one in 2008.

Marie Petuh reported an Osprey on 11 August in the Town of Vestal, Broome County, near the Susquehanna River, and Diane Apker reported the only other sighting in the Region on 27 August in Smithboro, Tioga County, which is also located on the Susquehanna River. Bald Eagles continue to be commonly reported throughout the Region. Northern Harriers were spotted on four occasions, all in Otsego County. The maximum number of American

Kestrels sighted was in northern Otsego County, but the number was down from previous years. However, there were sightings scattered throughout the Region.

Sandy Bright reported that **Merlins** were present but "more reclusive this summer" with only sporadic sightings. She said "there was only one incident that indicated that there may have been successful breeding this year; I observed a Merlin catching prey on Hickory Street. After sitting in a nearby conifer for a few minutes, it carried the prey toward Wilber Park." That was on 2 August. This makes the third year in a row that Merlins have been observed in Wilber Park, Oneonta, Otsego County. Tom and Jo Ann Salo found a begging fledgling with an adult in Cooperstown, Otsego County on 12 July. This was the second year for a confirmed nesting there. The only other area having a Merlin reported was at Marie Petuh's home in Johnson City, Broome County on 8 August, when one was being chased by two crows.

William Kuk observed a **Peregrine Falcon** on buildings in downtown Binghamton, Broome County on numerous occasions throughout the period. Only three times out of the 26 sightings were two present. No information was given on nesting.

Marsh and shorebird reports did not have the variety or numbers of past years. Killdeer and Spotted Sandpiper were the only species that had more than one sighting.

A Philadelphia Vireo was observed by the "Weed Walker" group from the Naturalists' Club of Broome County out on one of their regular Wednesday trips in the Region. There was no early season report from the Pharsalia area this year, but observations in the nearby New Michigan State Forest of Chenango County showed that northern species, such as Swainson's Thrush, exist in other areas in the Region.

Cliff Swallows formed a colony at an overhang on a new bank building in Owego, Tioga County. The new colony is only a short distance away from where a colony existed last year where reconstruction destroyed the suitability of the site for nesting.

Several warblers only had one or two sightings, while others had numerous reports, including Chestnut-sided Warbler, Black-throated Green Warbler, Blackburnian Warbler, and Black-and-white Warbler. As for last summer, no Mourning Warblers were sighted in the southern part of the Region; all sightings in June were at higher elevations in the eastern and northern parts of the Region.

Bobolinks were reported in several locations, but none in August when large flocks have been reported in the past.

Notable species unreported in the Region were several species of shorebirds, American Woodcock, and Northern Waterthrush. The American Black Duck barely moved from the multi-year missing category to the scarce category when Hugh Kingery saw one in August in Cherry Valley, Otsego County. Other scarce birds included the Purple Martin and Eastern Meadowlark. The maximum number of Purple Martins was seen 0.5 miles from where nesting has occurred for the past 40+ years. The Common Nighthawk continues to be reported infrequently in only low numbers. Sightings of Chimney Swifts were up this year, but only a few had double digit numbers, nothing like the triple

digit numbers observed in past years.

This year was the first year for use of reports from eBird. The total number of species reported was 157, up from last year but consistent with previous years.

CONTRIBUTORS

Cutler & Jeannette Baldwin, Renee DePrato, Bob Donnelly, Brendan Fogarty, Shawna Fulkerson, Becky Gretton, Linda Hall, Spencer Hunt, Hugh Kingery, William Kuk, Andy Mason, Dave McCartt, Naturalist's Club of Broome County (NCBC), Nicholas Newberry, Dave Nicosia, Bob Pantle, Sandy Bright, Marie Petuh, Tom & Jo Ann Salo, Jeff Schmoyer, Tioga Bird Club (TBC), Dan Watkins, Don & Joanne Weber, John Workman, Matt Young.

ABBREVIATIONS

Bing – Binghamton, BROO; BPd – Boland Pond, BROO; BSGMA – Bear Springs Game Management Area, DELA; CR – Chenango River; CVSP – Chenango Valley SP, BROO; DP – Dorchester Park, BROO; GH – German Hollow, CHEN; GLSP – Gilbert Lake SP, OTSE; JC – Johnson City, BROO; NMSF – New Michigan State Forest, CHEN; SR – Susquehanna River; TC – Town of Chenango, BROO; TL – Town of Lisle, BROO; TR – Town of Richford, TIOG; TS – Town of Springfield, OTSE; TT – Town of Tioga, TIOG; TTr – Town of Triangle, BROO; TU – Town of Union, BROO; TV – Town of Vestal, BROO.

WHISTLING-DUCKS – VULTURES

Am. Black Duck: Cherry Valley OTSE 23 Aug, only report.

Double-crested Cormorant: max 12 CR T Dickinson BROO 21 Aug.

Least Bittern: T Spencer TIOG 10 Jun, only report.

Great Egret: max 25 TL BROO 14 Aug.

HAWKS - ALCIDS

Osprey: TV BROO 11 Aug; Smithboro TIOG 27 Aug; only reports.

Bald Eagle: pr CO CVSP BROO 9 Jun; mob throughout Region; doing well.

N. Harrier: TS OTSE 10 Jul; GLSP OTSE 1 Aug; scarce.

N. Goshawk: TR TIOG 21 Jun; GLSP OTSE 1, 2 Aug; only reports.

Am. Kestrel: max 8 Cherry Valley OTSE 17 Aug; 6 GH CHEN 1 Aug; 5 n BROO 25 Aug.

MERLIN: 1 ad, 1 y Cooperstown OTSE 12 Jul; ad Oneonta OTSE 2 Aug; JC BROO 8 Aug.

Peregrine Falcon: Bing BROO thru.

Virginia Rail: 2 y TU BROO 1 Jul, only report.

Sora: BPd TC BROO 3 Jun, only report.

Com. Moorhen: pr 6y TL BROO 14 Jul.

Black-bellied Plover: TL BROO 18 Aug, only report

Semipalmated Plover: 2 TL BROO 9 Jun, only report.

Killdeer: max 10 DP TTr BROO 20 Aug.

Spotted Sandpiper: max 2 SR TV BROO 15 Aug.

WILLET: BPd TC BROO 14 Aug (DW, DN).

Great Black-backed Gull: Lake Otsego OTSE 14-21 Aug.

Caspian Tern: DP TTr BROO 18 Aug, only report.

Black Tern: TU BROO 16 Aug, only report.

PIGEONS - WOODPECKERS

Com. Nighthawk: max 10 JC BROO 30 Aug; few reports.

Chimney Swift: max 20 T Greene CHEN 3 Jun (MP); numbers are still down.

FLYCATCHERS - WAXWINGS

Olive-sided Flycatcher: T Hancock DELA 15 Aug, only report.

LOGGERHEAD SHRIKE: TV BROO 13-17 Aug (DW, DN).

Philadelphia Vireo: T Barker BROO 18 Aug (NCBC).

Purple Martin: max 4 TT TIOG 11 Jul; only 3 reports.

Cliff Swallow: CO 14 nests Owego TIOG thru Jun; 10 Walton DELA 23 Jun; 4 CR TC BROO 30 Jun.

Golden-crowned Kinglet: max 4 NMSF CHEN 1 Jul; TR TIOG 5 Aug.

Blue-gray Gnatcatcher: max 2 CVSP BROO 12 Jun; TT TIOG 27 Jul.

Swainson's Thrush: max 9 NMSF CHEN 1 Jul; all other reports in DELA.

WARBLERS

Blue-winged Warbler: max 2 TT TIOG 5 Jul.

"Brewster's" Warbler: m JC BROO 14 Jun (MP).

Tennessee Warbler: T Colchester DELA 3 Jul, only report.

Nashville Warbler: TR TIOG 21 Jun; GH CHEN 1, 4 Aug; only reports.

Chestnut-sided Warbler: max 10 Bear Pen SF 15 Jun; mob, doing well.

Magnolia Warbler: max 4 NMSF CHEN 1 Jul.

Black-throated Green Warbler: max 3 BSGMA DELA 23 Jun.

Blackburnian Warbler: max 15 BSGMA DELA 23 Jun; 10 NMSF CHEN 1 Jul; doing well.

CERULEAN WARBLER: CVSP BROO 3 Jun (MP); 2 TC 6 Jun (LH).

Black-and-white Warbler: max 3 Smithboro TIOG 22 Aug.

Louisiana Waterthrush: T Candor TIOG 10 Jun; T Colchester DELA 2 Jul; only reports

Mourning Warbler: T Burlington OTSE thru Jun, numerous; 4 BSGMA DELA 23 Jun; 2 GLSP OTSE 2 Aug.

Hooded Warbler: 3 BSGMA DELA 23 Jun, only report.

TOWHEES – WEAVERS

CLAY-COLORED SPARROW: TS OTSE 30 Jun (SB); only report

Grasshopper Sparrow: T Milford OTSE 14 Jun (BG); TC BROO 30 Jun (MP); only reports

Bobolink: 20 T Solon CORT 29 Jun; max 22 TS OTSE 11 Jul.

E. Meadowlark: 2 TS OTSE 20 Jun; 2 NMSF CHEN; only 5 other reports, scarce.

Red Crossbill: 2 Smithboro TIOG 20-27 Jul..