

REGION 4—SUSQUEHANNA

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Summer 2011 followed one of the wettest springs on record with 26.57" of precipitation for the year through 31 May (the average is 15.05"). June had only about one half an inch above normal precipitation falling on 13 of the days, but due to the already excessive rainfall the Region did not start drying out until July. Many otherwise normally dry fields and pastures were spotted with wetlands. July was almost the opposite, with 1.40" on eight of the days, more

than two inches below normal. August went back the other way, with rainfall on 15 of the days totaling 8.90" compared to the normal 3.45". The total annual precipitation to 1 September was 41.20", exceeding the normal for the whole year of 38.65". Temperatures were slightly above normal with 24 days below normal and 52 days above normal for the season, with half of the above normal days occurring in July. The highest temperature of 95° F was in July, with only three other days in the 90s in the month. The only additional 90° day was in June.

In summary, temperature should not have been a problem for nesting. Wet conditions were another story. It is likely that ground nesters had quite a problem, and even nesting in shrubs and trees could have been a problem. Several American Robin nests were observed to be literally washed out of the trees. At the end of July Andy Mason reported hearing of a couple of Wild Turkey broods, probably only a few days old, that he considered "were very likely from second nestings as a result of lost broods in our wet spring." On the other hand, waterfowl could have found new territory to nest and feed in with the increased wetland areas.

The bird of the season for Region 4 could possibly be the Whip-poor-will heard and seen by Bob Donnelly in early June at his home in Cherry Valley.

As in past years, there were limited observations of American Black Duck. Two Common Loons were reported on the Pepacton Reservoir in early June but there were no reports to indicate that they stayed in that area. Two sightings of Pied-billed Grebes were seen on opposite sides of Tioga County. There was enough time between the observations that it could have been the same individual. Whitney Point Wildlife Management Area had two single observations of **American White Pelican** and American Bittern.

Richard Guthrie reported an Osprey on 23 August in Oxford, Chenango County, and Brian O'Keefe saw another one on the same day at Tully Lake in Cortland County. Bald Eagles continue to be commonly reported throughout the Region. As in past years, there were few sightings of Northern Harrier. No large numbers of American Kestrel were sighted, but there were sightings scattered throughout the Region. One sighting on Blodgett Road in the Town of Owego, Tioga County noted two parents feeding young seen through wire mesh covering a window of a dilapidated barn.

There were two sightings of **Merlins**, but none that indicated that there may have been successful breeding this year. Members of the Naturalist's Club of Broome County observed the nesting of **Peregrine Falcons** on the Security Mutual building in downtown Binghamton, Broome County and their subsequent appearance in Binghamton throughout the period. There was only one other area with a Peregrine Falcon observation during the season.

Marsh and shorebird reports were greater this year in both numbers and variety, as should be expected with the increased wetland area this year. Short-billed Dowitcher was one of the species found in a flooded area along Interstate 81 in Broome County. The Tri-cities airport proved good once again as a spot to find shorebirds in August.

Reports of the Common Nighthawk were limited, with only one sighting outside of the usual late August migration period. There were over 90 reports on eBird for Chimney Swifts, however only 5 of those reports were of double digit numbers. The number of sightings reported may be up but the numbers are still down from past years.

A species that seems to be doing better than in past years is Eastern Wood-Pewee. Fish Crow and Common Raven sightings have become more numerous both in number of reports and in number of locations where reported

The Pharsalia area, New Michigan State Forest, and German Hollow, all in Chenango County, usually are the places to go to see warblers during the summer season. Bear Spring Mountain Game Management Area on the highway between Walton and Downsville in Delaware County won the prize this year. Its 2000' elevation provides different habitat that is otherwise typically not very accessible. The Mourning Warblers found there are found only in a few of the higher areas in the Region. Blackburnian Warblers were also found there in good numbers by Brendan Fogarty.

There were 19 reports of Bobolinks on eBird, but in greater than single digits. The population is seriously down in numbers from past years. Another bird in serious trouble is the Eastern Meadowlark. A total of ten birds were observed in the seven reports to eBird.

Outside of the usual areas in Chenango County, there were two sightings of Red Crossbills in Broome and Tioga Counties. Matt Young reported in his annual cone abundance survey that there are heavy cone crops in most of the cone-bearing species. This could result in the possibility of seeing siskins and crossbills more widespread this fall and winter.

A notable bird missing from the Region for the summer was American Woodcock. Other birds missed in past years were reported on eBird this season; this is most likely not an indication of a higher population but just a higher level of reporting them.

CONTRIBUTORS

Jeannette Baldwin, Marty Borko, Andrea Burke, Bob Donnelly, Brendan Fogarty, Lisa Gorn, Richard Guthrie, Meena Haribal, Spencer Hunt, Hugh Kingery, William Kuk, Andy Mason, Dave McCartt, Naturalist's Club of Broome County (NCBC), Dave Nicosia, Brian O'Keefe, Bob Pantle, Marie Petuh, Bill Purcell, Tom Salo, Charles Scheim, Cindy Staley, Tioga Bird Club (TBC), Dan Watkins, Don & Joanne Weber, Jon Weeks, Tom Whitney, Glenn Wilson, Matt Young.

ABBREVIATIONS

Bing – Binghamton, BROO; Bpd – Boland Pond, BROO; BSGMA – Bear Spring Mountain Game Management Area, DELA; CGW – Carantouan Greenway Waverly, TIOG; CVSF – Cherry Valley State Forest, OTSE; CVSP – Chenango Valley SP, BROO; DP – Dorchester Park, BROO; End – Endicott,

BROO; GH – German Hollow, CHEN; HSF – Heiburg State Forest, CORT; Ifm – I-81 flooded marsh, BROO; JC – Johnson City, BROO; NMSF – New Michigan State Forest, CHEN; TCA – Tri-cities Airport, BROO; TL – Town of Lisle, BROO; TM – Town of Morris, OTSE; TS – Town of Springfield, OTSE; TT – Town of Tioga, TIOG; TU – Town of Union, BROO; TV – Town of Vestal, BROO; UR – Unadilla River, CHEN; WPWMA – Whitney Point WMA, BROO.

WHISTLING-DUCKS – VULTURES

Wood Duck: max 15 Bpd BROO 15 Aug (mob).
Am. Black Duck: max 3 HSF CORT 20 Aug; only 3 other reports.

Com. Loon: 2 Pepacton Reservoir DELA 4 Jun.
Pied-billed Grebe: TO TIOG 3 Jun; CGW TIOG 19, 21 Jul.

Double-crested Cormorant: max 12 Bpd BROO 29 Jun.

Am White Pelican: WPWMA BROO 16 Jul, only report.

Am Bittern: WPWMA BROO 1 Jul, only report.

Great Egret: max 5 Bing BROO 26 Jul.

HAWKS - ALCIDS

Osprey: T Oxford CHEN 23 Aug; Tully Lake CORT 23 Aug; only reports.

Bald Eagle: pr CO Otsego Lake OTSE entire season; mob throughout Region; doing well.

N. Harrier: TM OTSE 16 Jun; TL BROO 15 Aug; TCA BROO 31 Aug.

N. Goshawk: CO Laurens OTSE thru (CS), only report.

Am. Kestrel: 1 ad, 2 y UR CHEN 11 Jun; 2 ad, 3 y TO TIOG 6 Jul.

MERLIN: T Vestal BROO 18 Aug; HSF CORT 20 Aug.

PEREGRINE FALCON: 2 ad 4 y Bing BROO 12 Jun; juv TS OTSE 29 Jul.

Virginia Rail: 2 CGW TIOG 25 Jul; Perkins Pd CHEN 30 Jul.

Sora: Ifm BROO 5 Jul, only report.

Semipalmated Plover: max 3 TCA BROO 31 Jul.

Killdeer: max 37 TCA BROO 8 Aug.

Spotted Sandpiper: max 18 UR CHEN 11 Jun.

Solitary Sandpiper: max 4 Lime Hollow Center CORT 25 Jul.

Greater Yellowlegs: TCA BROO 30 Aug, only report.

Lesser Yellowlegs: max 3 Ifm BROO 5 Jul.

Semipalmated Sandpiper: max 3 End BROO 5 Jul.

Least Sandpiper: max 25 TCA BROO 30 Aug.

Short-billed Dowitcher: 4 Ifm BROO 5 Jul, only report.

Wilson's Snipe: T Burlington OTSE 15 Jun, only report.

Caspian Tern: max 6 DP BROO 15 Aug.

PIGEONS - WOODPECKERS

Com. Nighthawk: Bing BROO 5 Jun (JW); max 30 Bing BROO 31 Aug; few reports.

WHIP-POOR-WILL: Cherry Valley OTSE 8 Jun, only report.

Chimney Swift: max 60 JC BROO 26 Aug (MP); numbers are still down.

FLYCATCHERS - WAXWINGS

E. Wood-Pewee: max 12 CVSF OTSE 19 Aug; mob, doing well.

Alder Flycatcher: max 3 T Hancock DELA 12 Jun.

E. Kingbird: max 50+ TL BROO 15 Aug DW; mob.

Blue-headed Vireo: 2 UR CHEN 11 Jun; 2 BSGMA DELA 18 Jun; 2 Steam Mill SF DELA 10 Jul.

Fish Crow: max 6 TV BROO 6 Aug; 5 TT TIOG thru.

Com. Raven: max 4 TG CHEN 1 Jul.

Purple Martin: max 3 TT TIOG 6 Jul; only 5 reports; doing poorly.

Bank Swallow: max 3 BSGMA DELA 18 Jun; few reports.

Cliff Swallow: max 7 BSGMA DELA 18 Jun.

Blue-gray Gnatcatcher: 4 CVSP BROO 27 Aug; 3 TU BROO 15 Aug; only reports.

Swainson's Thrush: 2 NMSF CHEN 30 Jul; only report.

LONGSPURS - WARBLERS

Louisiana Waterthrush: max 2 TM OTSE 4 Jun.

N. Waterthrush: Ifm BROO 5 Jul, only report.

Golden-winged Warbler: T Roseboom OTSE 17 Aug, only report.

Nashville Warbler: Morgan Hill SF CORT 30 Jul, only report.

Mourning Warbler: max 3 BSGMA DELA 18 Jun.

Hooded Warbler: 2 Griggs Gulf SF CORT 3 Aug, only report.

Magnolia Warbler: max 3 BSGMA DELA 18 Jun.

Blackburnian Warbler: max 20 BSGMA DELA 18 Jun.

Black-throated Blue Warbler: max 3 BSGMA DELA 18 Jun.

Pine Warbler: GH CHEN 8 Jun; Bing U Nature Center BROO; 20 Jul; CVSF 16 Aug; only reports.

TOWHEES - WEAVERS

Swamp Sparrow: max 4 CGW TIOG 23 Jul.

Bobolink: max 30+ Greater Bing Airport BROO 20 Aug.

E. Meadowlark: 3 Glimmerglass SP OTSE 13 Jun; 2 TS OTSE; only 5 other reports, scarce.

Red Crossbill: 6 T Richford TIOG 13 Jun; 2 JC BROO 2 Jul.