

REGION 7—ADIRONDACK-CHAMPLAIN

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The summer of 2011 was a mostly enjoyable summer for the Region, with temperatures just slightly above normal for all three months and below average precipitation for June and July. In June temperatures in the Adirondacks were 3.1° above normal, with a warm spell in the second week that brought temperatures into the 90s in some towns, including a high of 93° in Willsboro on 9 June. The warm trend continued into July, with temperatures 3.9° above average in the Adirondacks and 2.7° in the Champlain Valley, setting records as the fifth warmest July on record. The warmest week of the summer came in the third week of July, with temperatures reaching 89° in Tupper Lake and 96° in Chazy on 22 July. The coolest July temperatures were nighttime lows ranging from 45-50° on the 14th and 15th. August temperatures remained warm, with temperatures 1.7° above average in the Region, with the highest temperatures occurring in the first few days followed by a cold snap that brought a record low of 39° in Peru on the 6th. The real story of August, though, was rainfall.

After record-breaking precipitation in the winter and spring months the rain was not missed by anyone during these months, but the rain returned in August to continue the record-breaking trend nonetheless and to produce the wettest August on record. Monthly precipitation totals ranged from 2.2-6.5" above normal across the Region. The weather event of the year was certainly Tropical Storm *Irene*, which brought record rainfall totals to some towns and caused flash flooding and widespread damage to roads, homes, and businesses throughout the Region. A series of storms in mid-August had already saturated the ground before *Irene*'s arrival, causing the several inches of rain to pour off the mountainsides in torrents that created new slides on many peaks and made some rivers and streams change course. Official rainfall totals from the storm that hit on 28 August ranged from 5.3" in Lake Placid to 7.5" at Whiteface Mountain, with locals in my town of Keene reporting over 8" of rain. Some of the worst rain fell on the northern side of the high peaks, bringing the Ausable River to a record-breaking height of 19' and causing the worst damage to the towns of Keene, Jay, and Ausable Forks, isolating these towns for days while roads and bridges were repaired.

While road closures created challenges for birders in the Adirondacks post-Irene, good shorebird fallouts were still recorded by birders in the Champlain Valley in the days following the storm. On 29 August a high count of 35 Caspian Terns was reported from Port Henry, and on the 30th a high count of 525 Bonaparte's Gulls was reported from Westport. The 31st brought the highest numbers and greatest diversity of shorebirds all season to the always productive Chazy Riverlands, with 11 shorebird species reported in a single day. The highlights included two Red Knots, two White-rumped Sandpipers, two Baird's

Sandpipers, four Pectoral Sandpipers, and a **Buff-breasted Sandpiper**—only the fourth record in Clinton County.

Chazy Riverlands was also the site of excellent birds in the beginning of the season as the last spring migrants passed through. The 3rd of June brought the first sighting since 1998 of a **Cattle Egret** as well as a Glossy Ibis. A pair of **Red-necked Phalaropes** in breeding plumage stopped by on the 4th and is only the third record for the Region. A **Marbled Godwit** was present from the 15-20th of June—only the fourth county record. On 30 July there was a report at the Riverlands of a drake **Ruddy Duck**, a species usually only seen in migration in the Champlain Valley. Another **Ruddy Duck** report of two chicks came out of Madawaska on 16 July, a unique sighting for a species that is only known to breed in western NY.

Record precipitation in the spring and mild temperatures in the summer resulted in an excellent year for berries, cones, and insects, which seemed to have benefited bird populations as well. In my own observations while conducting bird surveys this summer, I noticed very high numbers of Cedar Waxwings, and there were numerous reports of them across the Region. There was an above average number of reports of Black-billed Cuckoos, likely the result of high tent caterpillar populations. A strong number of Red Crossbills was reported this summer, as well as one report of White-winged Crossbills. In late August there was a scattering of reports of flocks of Common Nighthawks feeding on swarms of insects, though there were no reports earlier in the season. An **Orchard Oriole** was spotted in Keene Valley on 21 June, a good find in the Adirondacks.

Lastly I think it is worth mentioning how some of our rarer species and species of conservation concern fared in this season's reports. There was a lone report of **Spruce Grouse**, an adult male from the Osgood River on 14 July. **Black Terns** were reported from Chazy Riverlands throughout the season, with a maximum report of three individuals, fewer than previous years. Bicknell's Thrush was reported from a number of peaks, with as many as six being reported from both Mt. Marcy and Whiteface Mountain. Boreal Chickadees were reported from a number of bogs and high elevation forests in the Region. Gray Jays seemed to be reliable, with sightings in Bloomingdale and Ferd's Bogs this year and with additional reports from Moose River Plains and Paul Smiths. A single **Three-toed Woodpecker** was observed during a BBS in Inlet. There were only four reports of Rusty Blackbirds, including a report of two breeding pairs again present near Chazy Lake. Common Loons met some challenges this year, with record breaking water levels in the spring flooding many of their usual nest sites. Many of the pairs that I observed adapted well, however, renesting later in the season and successfully fledging at least one chick.

In all, this summer was a record breaking season not only for precipitation but for birds as well. The season total was 196 species, breaking the previous record of 192 set in 2004 and rising well above last year's total of 176.

CONTRIBUTORS

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ABBREVIATIONS

AP – Ausable Point; BB – Bloomingdale Bog; CH – Cumberland Head; CR – Chazy Riverlands; IF – Intervale Farm, Lake Placid; LA – Lake Alice; LP – Lake Pleasant; LL – Long Lake; Mad – Madawaska, MRP – Moose River Plains; NP – Noblewood Park; OL – Oseetah Lake; PS – Paul Smiths; PtR – Point Au Roche SP; RF – Reagan Flats Road, Bombay; SPB – Spring Pond Bog; SB – Sabattis Bog; SC – Scomotion Creek, Plattsburgh; SLB – Silver Lake Bog; StR – Saint Regis Canoe Area; SSP – Shingle Shanty Preserve, Ti – Ticonderoga, TL – Tupper Lake; WF – Whiteface Mtn., WM – Wickham Marsh.

WHISTLING-DUCKS – VULTURES

Snow Goose: CR 15 Jun (BK&JO).
Brant: CR 3 Jun (BK).
Canada Goose: max 58 RF 23 Aug (RS).
Wood Duck: max 14 Pt Au Fer 19 Aug.
Gadwall: 2 RF 3 Jun(RS); 6 CR 8 Jun (JO).
Am. Black Duck: max 15 Saranac Lakes 15 Jul (AW).
Blue-winged Teal: CR 15, 28 Jun (BK).
Green-winged Teal: 3 CR 30 Jun (NO).
Ring-necked Duck: 5 OL 12 Jun (GD); 8 TL 26 Jun (JZ); 8 PS 1 Jul (BM); 4 Chub Pond 27 Jul (BH).
Lesser Scaup: CR 11 Jun (BK&JO).
Com. Goldeneye: 2 OL 12 Jun (GD); 2 Port Kent 20 Jun (SP).
Hooded Merganser: 6 Black Pond 15 July (SF); max 8 AP 17 Aug (BJ).
Com. Merganser: max 26 Essex 22 Aug (AW).
Ruddy Duck: CR 30 Jul (BK&CM), drake late rec CLIN; 2 FL Mad 16 Jul (AB&SO).
Ring-necked Pheasant: Chazy 4 Jul (BK&CM).
Ruffed Grouse: max 8 IF 4 Jun (JD).

Spruce Grouse: Osgood Ri 14 Jul (GE), male.
Wild Turkey: max 20 RF 16 Jul (RS).
Com. Loon: max 20 StR 1 Jul (KF).
Pied-billed Grebe: max 7 CR 8 Jun (JO); PS 9 Jul (JF).
Double-crested Cormorant: 2 SB 1 Jul; max 2050 Port Henry 30 Aug (EJ).
Am. Bittern: max 4 PS 9 Jul (JF).
Great Blue Heron: max 14 Wilmington 13 Jun (GD).
Great Egret: 2 Riley Brook 20 Jun; 2 CR 28 Jun, AP 1 Jul; RF 16 Jul; NP 19 Aug.
CATTLE EGRET (R7): CR 3 Jun (BHo), 1st sighting since 1998.
Green Heron: max 3 SC 31 Jul (NO).
Black-crowned Night-Heron: max 5 SC 14 Jul (NO); 3 Valcour I 20 Jul (BK).
Glossy Ibis: CR 3 Jun (BHo).
Turkey Vulture: max 17 Crown Pt 16 Aug.

HAWKS - ALCIDS

Osprey: max 6 AP 17 Jul (BJ).
Bald Eagle: max 3 12 Jun OL (GD).

N. Harrier: max 4 Essex 31 Jul (DN).
Sharp-shinned Hawk: max 4 BB 23 Aug (AG).
Cooper's Hawk: Willis L 30 Jul (KC); Malone 24 Jul (KC); Ti 9 Aug (PH).
N. Goshawk: LP 2 Jul (JD); Tahawus 14 Aug (MY); Bigsby Rd 20 Aug (BW).
Red-shouldered Hawk: SLB 4 Jul (KF); TL 10 Jul (JD).
Broad-winged Hawk: max 6 BB 27 Aug (AG).
Red-tailed Hawk: max 2 RF 3 Jun (RS).
Am. Kestrel: max 6 Altona 17 Aug (MMc).
Merlin: max 2 IF 5 Jun (LM); 2 Willsboro 21 Jun (SP).
Peregrine Falcon: IF 4 Jun (LM); Upper Saranac L 17 Jul (AW); Mt Colvin 31 Jul (MM&DD).
Virginia Rail: LA 17 Jun (NO).
Sora: CR 10 Jul (JO).
Com. Gallinule: max 5 CR 25 Aug (BK&CM); Riley Brook 20 Jul (NO).
Am. Coot: CR 31 Jul-27 Aug, mob.
Black-bellied Plover: max 14 CR 4 Jun; arr CR 4 Jul, early CLIN; CR 31 Aug.
Am. Golden-Plover: 18 CR 31 Aug (JO&BK).
Semipalmated Plover: arr NP 29 Jul (MMe&DD); max 13 CR 31 Aug (BK&JO).
Killdeer: max 10 NP 7 Aug (MMe&DD).
Spotted Sandpiper: max 3 Raquette L 14 Aug (BT).
Greater Yellowlegs: CR 9 Jul-31 Aug; 2 NP 18 July (TW); max 11 CR 31 Aug.
Lesser Yellowlegs: CR 2 Jul-31 Aug, max 22 9 Jul; 2 NP 18 Jul & 6 Aug (TW).
Whimbrel: ESSEX FERRY 29 JUL (DN).
MARBLED GODWIT: CR 15, 20 Jul (JO, BK, CM, NO), 4th rec CLIN.
Ruddy Turnstone: 2 CR 31 Aug (BK&JO).
Red Knot: 2 CR 24, 26 Aug (BK&JO).
Sanderling: 2 CR 24 Aug (BK&JO); 8 Port Henry 29 Aug (EJ).
Semipalmated Sandpiper: 7 NP 7 Aug (MMe&DD); Port Henry 29 Aug (EJ); max 24 CR 31 Aug (BK&JO).
Least Sandpiper: 14 NP 7 Aug (MMe&DD); 2 Port Henry 29 Aug (EJ); max 28 CR 31 Aug (BK&JO).
White-rumped Sandpiper: CR 15 Jun (BK), late rec CLIN; max 28 CR 11 Aug.
Baird's Sandpiper: CR 13 Aug; max 2 CR 31 Aug (JO).
Pectoral Sandpiper: NP 7 Aug (MMe&DD); max 4 CR 31 Aug (BK&JO).
Dunlin: 2 CR 3 Jun-11 Jun, late CLIN.
BUFF-BREASTED SANDPIPER (R7): CR 31 Aug (JO), 4th CLIN record.
Am. Woodcock: max 2 Raquette L 14 Aug (BT).

RED-NECKED PHALAROPE (R7): 2 CR 4 Jun (JO), pair, 3rd CLIN record.
Bonaparte's Gull: 400 CR 19 Jun; 305 NP 9 Aug (CF); max 525 Westport 30 Aug (EJ).
Little Gull: 2 CR 4 Jun-29 Jun, mob.
Great Black-backed Gull: max 6 Port Kent 5 Aug (KJ).
Caspian Tern: 3 SC 14 Jul (NO); 17 CR 17 Jul; 22 NP 29 Jul; max 35 Port Henry 29 Aug (EJ).
Black Tern: CR 18 Jun-10 Jul (JO); max 3 CR 29 Jun; CR 3 Aug (NO).
Com. Tern: 6 RF 3 Jun (RS); 2 AP 20 Jun (SP); 2 CR 17 Jul-31 Jul.

PIGEONS - WOODPECKERS

Yellow-billed Cuckoo: PS 4 Jul (BM); 2 Mad 16 Jul (SO&AB), only reports.
Black-billed Cuckoo: 2 RF 3 Jun; 2 Belmont 5 Jun; 2 L Placid 10 Jul; Piseco 13 Jul; 2 Keene 14 Jul; Essex 31 Jul; Witherbee 31 Jul; Altona 17 Aug.
E. Screech-Owl: AP 17 Aug (BJ).
Great Horned Owl: Keene 19 Jun (J&PT); Willis L 13 Aug (KC).
Barred Owl: max 2 Lewey L 4 Jul (RW).
Com. Nighthawk: BB 18 Aug (MMA); 3 SL 25 Aug (AB); max 20 Plattsburgh 25 Aug; 16 Peru 30 Aug (DR).
E. Whip-poor-will: max 5 Miner Flat Rock 26 Jul (NO); 2 Willsboro 31 Jul (MMe&LS).
Chimney Swift: 4 Ferds Bog 10 Jun; 6 MRP 25 Jun; max 12 Big Simons Pd 6 Aug.
Ruby-throated Hummingbird: max 3 Bigsby Pond 19 Aug (BW); 3 MRP 25 Jun (JZ).
Belted Kingfisher: max 6 OL 19 Jul (GD).
Red-bellied Woodpecker: Inlet 7 Jul (CW), only report.
Black-backed Woodpecker: max 4 Moose Pond 22 Jun; 4 Ferds Bog 18 Aug, many reports.
Am. Three-toed Woodpecker: Inlet 7 Jul (CW), only report.

FLYCATCHERS - WAXWINGS

Olive-sided Flycatcher: max 6 Mad 16 Jul (AB&SO); also multiple reports from BB, SLB, and MRP.
Yellow-bellied Flycatcher: LA 8 Jun; 5 SLB 11 Jun; 4 BB 18 Jun; max 7 High Peaks Wilderness 18 Jun.
Alder Flycatcher: max 15 IF 4 Jun (LM).
Willow Flycatcher: 2 RF 3 Jun (RS); LA 8 Jun (JO); Dickinson Ctr 4 Jul (AN); SLB 11 Jul (JH).
Great Crested Flycatcher: max 3 RF 4 Jul (RS).
Yellow-throated Vireo: Rand Hill 27 Aug (JH).
Warbling Vireo: max 3 Malone 24 Jul (KC).
Philadelphia Vireo: SPB 11 Jun (AB); Keene 9 Jul (J&PT); LP 16 Aug; WM 29 Aug.

Gray Jay: max 6 SSP 11 Jun (JP); 3 Ferd's Bog 17 Jun (GL); 4 PS 14 Jul (BM); 5 BB 19 Jul (GD).

Com. Raven: max 5 Pitchoff Mtn 6 Aug (SS).

Horned Lark: 4 CR 8 Jun (JO).

Purple Martin: 6 RF 3 Jun (RS).

N. Rough-winged Swallow: max 8 RF 3 Jun (RS); 3 Upper Saranac L 16 Jul (AW).

Bank Swallow: 4 RF 16 Jul (RS).

Cliff Swallow: 8 CR 2 Jul; 20 RF 16 Jul (RS).

Boreal Chickadee: LP 8 Jul (JD); 6 Mad 15 Jul; 2 PS 4 Aug; 6 BB 1 Aug with FL; MRP 2 Aug; max 9 Panther Peak 20 Aug;

Tufted Titmouse: LP 8 Jul; 2 Essex 31 Jul.

Carolina Wren: CH 1 Jun-31 Jul (NO); Plattsburgh 12 Jun (BK).

Marsh Wren: max 15 SC 15 Jul (NO).

E. Bluebird: max 6 RF 23 Aug (RS).

Veery: max 6 IF 5 Jun (LM).

Bicknell's Thrush: 5 Porter Mt 11 Jun; max 6 Mt Marcy 18 Jun (KF); 6 WF 18 Jul (AB); 2 Blue Mt 31 Jul (JC).

Swainson's Thrush: 8 Mt Marcy 18 Jun (KF); 3 Blue Mt 3 Jul; max 15 WF 13 Jul.

Wood Thrush: IF 5 Jun (LM); NP 27 Jun (J&PT).

N. Mockingbird: LP 5 Jul (JD); Plattsburgh 2 Aug (NO).

Brown Thrasher: IF 6 Jun (LM); LA 16 Jun (NO); max 3 RF 4 Jul (RS).

Cedar Waxwing: max 40 MRP 25 Jun (JZ); high numbers across Region due to excellent berry crop.

LONGSPURS - WARBLERS

Tennessee Warbler: SPB 1 Jul (T&CW); BB 27 Aug (AB&SO).

Am. Redstart: max 6 RF 4 Jul (RS).

Cape May Warbler: IF 6 Jun (LM); 18 Jun Mt Marcy (KF); 18 Jun SPB (MMc); Inlet 7 Jul (CW).

N. Parula: max 11 Dunlop Rd 12 Jul (SF).

Magnolia Warbler: max 16 IF 5 Jun (LM).

Bay-breasted Warbler: IF L Placid (AB).

Blackburnian Warbler: max 9 StR 1 Jul (KF).

Chestnut-sided Warbler: max 10 IF 4 Jun (LM).

Blackpoll Warbler: WF 4 Jun; 8 Porter Mt 11 Jun (MMe); max 30 Yard Mt 16 Jul (J&PT).

Black-throated Blue Warbler: max 12 StR 1 Jul (KF).

Palm Warbler: max 10 BB 18 Jun.

Pine Warbler: max 7 StR 1 Jul (KF).

Black-throated Green Warbler: max 16 Hurricane Mt 19 Jun (MMe).

Canada Warbler: max 10 Mad 15 Jul (SF).

TOWHEES - WEAVERS

E. Towhee: RF 3 Jun (RS); MRP 25 Jun (JZ); TL 10 Jul (JD); Malone 24 Jul (KC).

Field Sparrow: BB 12 Jun (AB); CP 20 Jul (C&TW).

Vesper Sparrow: French Settlement Rd 4 Jun (NR).

Savannah Sparrow: max 9 LP 16 Jul (SF).

Lincoln's Sparrow: SPB 18 Jun; SB 1 Jul; max 10 BB 23 Aug (AG).

Swamp Sparrow: max 6 BB 11 Jul (SF).

Scarlet Tanager: MRRA 1 Jun; 3 StR 1 Jul; SLB 4 Jul; 2 PS 9 Jul; max 4 Inlet 7 Jul (CW).

Rose-breasted Grosbeak: 3 Clarojast 29 Jun; max 7 Inlet 7 Jul; 4 SLB 18 Aug; 2 Keene 20 Aug.

Indigo Bunting: max 10 MRP 12 Jun; 4 Dickinson Ctr 25 Jun-18 Aug.

Bobolink: 4 CH b7 Jun-15 Jul (NO); 8 Heaven Hill 11 Jun (BS); max 110 Essex 7 Aug (MMe).

E. Meadowlark: 2 RF 3 Jun (RS).

Rusty Blackbird: SPB 18 Jun (MMc); 4 Chazy L 18-19 Jun; Whiteface Landing 20 Jun (MMc); Browns Tract 12 Jul (GL), only reports.

Brown-headed Cowbird: max 8 PS 4 Aug (RS).

Orchard Oriole: Keene Valley 21 Jun (LM), 2nd yr male.

Purple Finch: Inlet 2 Jun (GL); 5 SLP 3 Jul (SF); 5 Witherbee 31 Jul; max 6 BB 10 Aug.

Red Crossbill: 4 BB 18 Jun; LP 5 Jul; 2 Inlet 8 Jul; 3 Vanderwhacker Mt 30 Jul; 3 Boreas R 1 Aug; 3 Minerva 2 Aug; 4 Browns Tract 14 Aug; Tahawus 14 Aug; good number of reports.

White-winged Crossbill: Osgood R 19 Jun (J&PT).

Evening Grosbeak: BB 18, 20 Jun (SB); LL 19 Aug (JC).

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