

REGION 3—FINGER LAKES

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Weather-wise, summer 2014 was unremarkable in Region 3. June experienced several high temperature days including many days over 80° F, but average temperatures were similar to the long-term normal and precipitation slightly higher. July was completely average. August was cooler and rainier than usual, with 66% higher precipitation and an average temperature three degrees below normal. However, none of these conditions had particularly noticeable effects on birdlife.

In general, numbers of breeding birds seemed typical this year. Both species of cuckoos were reported in somewhat lower numbers than usual, although both were certainly present. Breeding warblers were present in the expected diversity and abundance. Grassland species in the area continue to decrease, with Grasshopper Sparrows and Vesper Sparrows reported in only a handful of locations. Upland Sandpipers continue at the fairgrounds near Seneca Falls but were not reported anywhere else in the Region, as has been typical in recent years. Prothonotary Warblers and Red-headed Woodpeckers, very uncommon breeders in the Region, both bred near Montezuma in the same areas as last year. Also at Montezuma, Northern Shovelers bred on the Main Pool and Least Bitterns were more numerous in July than for many years.

One of the most exceptional reports of the season was a well-described Nelson's Sparrow seen in the Town of Dryden on 1 June; almost unknown in the Region in spring or summer. Two Clay-colored Sparrows were reported, both continuing from the spring period, one on Cornell Campus in Tompkins County and one near Summerhill in Cortland County. A Black Vulture was seen at the Cornell Compost facility in Tompkins County on 20 July, perhaps indicative of the upward trend we have been seeing for this species in recent years.

Several species of winter ducks lingered into the summer period, including Bufflehead at Mud Lock in Cayuga County on 17 June and Long-tailed Duck on 4 June. Another odd phenomenon was lingering Bonaparte's Gulls and Common Terns at Frontenac Marina on Cayuga Lake, the former from June through the end of July.

Although thought of as "fall migration," it is well known that southbound shorebird movement in the Region peaks during the summer period with some northbound birds still being seen into June. This year early July found high numbers of many species at Montezuma NWR, and, as always, August proved to be the month with highest shorebird diversity. Twenty-four species of migrant shorebirds were reported in the Region, including Hudsonian Godwit, Baird's Sandpiper, American Golden-Plover, both dowitcher species, and both Red-

necked and Wilson's Phalaropes. Away from Montezuma, a Willet was found at Myers Point on Cayuga Lake on 23 August.

In addition to shorebirds, Montezuma NWR hosted a few other interesting birds this summer. An American White Pelican showed up at Knox-Marsellus Marsh on 25 July, the same location and only four days from the date that one arrived in 2013. On 13 August, two Sedge Wrens were found in the same area at Montezuma, and presumably a third was seen on the Wildlife Drive the next day. Singing Sedge Wrens were also reported at a location in Bath in Steuben County near the end of June.

An unexpected addition to the Region's summer avifauna was a pair of Monk Parakeets discovered in late June. The birds were found building a nest in the barn on a farm on the east shore of Seneca Lake in Schuyler County. The pair worked industriously on their creation for at least a week, affording great views to visiting birders, before disappearing and not being reported subsequently.

Finally, as fall passerine migration began, an early Tennessee Warbler was found at Hammond Hill State Forest on 29 July and a very rare Kentucky Warbler was seen in Caroline, Tompkins County on 26 August.

Birders totaled 215 species in the Region this summer.

CONTRIBUTORS

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ABBREVIATIONS

Aurora – Aurora Bay, CAYU; Compost – Cornell University Compost Piles on Stevenson Rd., TOMP; Cornell—Cornell University Campus, TOMP; Durland – Durland Preserve, TOMP; Hammond—Hammond Hill SF, TOMP; Hog Hole – Alan H. Treman State Marina Park, TOMP; Knox-Mar – Knox-Marcellus Marsh area, Montezuma NWR, SENE (includes Towpath and East roads); LPBP—Lindsay-Parsons Biodiversity Preserve, TOMP; MNWR – Montezuma NWR, SENE (includes Visitor Center, Wildlife Drive, Tschache, and Mays Point); Myers – Myers Pt, Lansing, TOMP; Sapsucker – Sapsucker Woods, TOMP; Unit II—Cornell Research Ponds Unit II, TOMP.

WHISTLING-DUCKS – VULTURES

Snow Goose: max 13 Emerson Park CAYU, flock present all summer; 1 MNWR wildlife drive all season.

Wood Duck: max 219 MNWR 3 Jul.

Eurasian Wigeon: MNWR 1-2 Jun; Knox-Mar 27-29 Jun; rare in summer.

N. Shoveler: MNWR Jun-Jul, females with chicks.

N. Pintail: max 8 Knox-Mar 13 Aug (AG); Canandaigua 10 Jul (KS) most notable, uncommon in midsummer.

Green-winged Teal: max 120 Knox-Mar 23 Aug (JM, LS).

Redhead: max 5 MNWR 14 Aug (CW, KR).

Ring-necked Duck: MNWR, scattered reports thru summer.

Long-tailed Duck: Taughannock SP TOMP 4 Jun (DG), very late.

Bufflehead: Mud Lock CAYU 17 Jun (DC), very late.

Com. Loon: max 11 Aurora 14 Jul (CW), high. **AMERICAN WHITE PELICAN (R3):** Knox-Mar 25 Jul – 1 Aug (mob).

Least Bittern: max 12 MNWR 12 Jul (mob).

Great Egret: max 127 MNWR 15 Aug (DWh, JT), birds flying to roost.

Black-crowned Night-Heron: max 20 Knox-Mar 11 Jul.

BLACK VULTURE (R3): Compost 20 Jul (KM), only report, still very rare in Region.

HAWKS - TERNS

Com. Gallinule: max 130 MNWR 5 Aug (GK).

Sandhill Crane: max 12 Knox-Mar 20 Aug (TL); breeding in sev loc.

Black-bellied Plover: max 9 Knox-Mar 7 Jun (DS); last Knox-Mar 8 Jun; arr MNWR 6 Aug.

Am. Golden-Plover: arr Knox-Mar 17 Aug; max 34 Knox-Mar 31 Aug (JM, LS).

Greater Yellowlegs: max 150 Knox-Mar 16 Jul (JM, LS).

WILLET (R3): Myers 23 Aug.

Lesser Yellowlegs: max 480 Knox-Mar 13 Aug (AG).

Upland Sandpiper: fairgrounds Seneca Falls thru, only loc.

Hudsonian Godwit: arr Knox-Mar 29 Aug (Ruddy).

Ruddy Turnstone: max 65 Canandaigua ONTA 5 Jun (JA); last Knox-Mar 7 Jun; arr Knox-Mar 30 Jul.

Stilt Sandpiper: arr Knox-Mar 10 Jul (MT, DS); max 122 Knox-Mar 13 Aug (AG).

Sanderling: arr Myers 23 Jul (JM, LS).

Dunlin: last Knox-Mar 8 Jun (DNI).

Baird's Sandpiper: arr Knox-Mar 30 Aug.

White-rumped Sandpiper: max 55 Knox-Mar 31 Aug (JM).

Short-billed Dowitcher: max Knox-Mar 16 Jul (JM, LS).

Long-billed Dowitcher: arr Knox-Mar 9 Jul.

Wilson's Phalarope: first Knox-Mar 6 Jul (JM, LS).

Red-necked Phalarope: first Knox-Mar 1 Jun (KR, TL).

Bonaparte's Gull: max 12 Frontenac Marina CAYU 4 Jul (JM, LS), scarce in summer and high, group present for several weeks in varying numbers.

Lesser Black-backed Gull: Seneca Falls SENE 4 Jul (JM, LS), only report.

Caspian Tern: max 103 Hog Hole TOMP 2 Aug (MI), high.

Black Tern: max 59 Knox-Mar 6 Jun (JM, LS), high but not unusual.

Com. Tern: max 21 Frontenac Marina CAYU 6 Jun (JM, LS), present on Cayuga Lake for several weeks, uncommon in summer.

PIGEONS - PARROTS

Com. Nighthawk: max 28 Downtown Ithaca TOMP 25 Aug (TL); last spring Danby SF 1 Jun, arr fall Big Flats, CHEM 18 Aug.

Red-headed Woodpecker: max 6 MNWR 6 Jul, breeding pair and offspring; Compost 1 Jun (CW); Sapsucker Woods 22 Jul; Cornell TOMP 25-31 Aug.

MONK PARAKEET: 2 Hector SCHU 18-26 Jun, pair building nest.

FLYCATCHERS - WAXWINGS

Olive-sided Flycatcher: Durland 6 Jun (JM, LS), late; Unit II 6 Aug (JM, LS), early.

Yellow-bellied Flycatcher: Hanshaw Rd. TOMP 1 Aug (TS), early.

E. Kingbird: max 60 LPBP 22 Aug (BFR, GMo), high.

Philadelphia Vireo: arr Phelps ONTA 30 Aug, only report.

Purple Martin: max 600 MNWR 20 Aug (TL), high.

SEDGE WREN (R3): 2 Bath STEU 26&30 Jun (TPer); 2 Knox-Mar 13-14 Aug; 1 MNWR 14 Aug.

Swainson's Thrush: last Northeast Ithaca TOMP 2 Jun (KR); arr Hawthorns 25 Aug (CW).

LONGSPURS – WARBLERS

“Lawrence’s” Warbler: Baker Hill Rd. TOMP 16 Aug (KM).

Prothonotary Warbler: Connecticut Hill WMA TOMP 7 Jun (SY); Armitage Rd. SENE, breeding pair at Region border most of summer.

Tennessee Warbler: Hammond 29 Jul (JM, BW, SB), early, rare in summer.

KENTUCKY WARBLER (R3): Caroline TOMP 26 Aug (SKe).

Cape May Warbler: arr Trumansburg TOMP 18 Aug (LF).

Northern Parula: last in spring Lansing TOMP 11 Jun (CTH); first in fall Cornell 29 Aug (JP).

TOWHEES - WEAVERS

CLAY-COLORED SPARROW (R3): Lick St., Summerhill CAYU 29 Jun (mob), continuing from May; Cornell TOMP 17-20 Jul (GMO, KM), continuing from May.

NELSON’S SPARROW (R3): Unit II 1 Jun (TPeg), exceptional in spring/summer.

Red Crossbill: Summerhill SF CAYU 29 Jun (JM), 18 Jul (CW), 9 Aug (GK); Finger Lakes NF SENE 29 Jun (MMe).

Pine Siskin: Horseheads CHEM 23 Jul (MP).

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