

REGION 1—NIAGARA FRONTIER

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The summer of 2016 experienced drought conditions that lowered creeks and streams and negatively affected agriculture. A dry spring continued into June. The mean temperature was 67.6° F, 1.3° above average. Rain was sparse, with a total of 1.31" at the Buffalo airport, 2.35" below average. July was hot and dry, with an average temperature of 74.1°, 3.0° above normal. Rainfall at Buffalo was 1.80", 1.43" below average. It was the warmest August on record, with the mean temperature at 75.6°, 6.0° above normal. There was 4.17" of rain, 0.91" above average, which came mostly in the form of thunderstorms late in the month to break the drought temporarily. Weather data is excerpted from National Weather Service *Monthly Weather Summary* for Buffalo.

I did not find many comments regarding the impact on the breeding season from the unusually hot and dry weather. The uncommon and/or declining breeding species typically tracked in this summer season report were again mostly found in their previously documented breeding areas.

Steve Dowlan submitted photos of two adult **Sandhill Cranes** with a colt to eBird in August with a note that they had been seen at the location in Kiantone for at least one month. This provides new breeding evidence for Region 1. It is suspected that cranes bred in the Oak Orchard WMA and/or Iroquois NWR areas again, with sightings of adults through the summer. Two summer sightings of one adult in Clarence warrant watching next summer.

Black Vultures remained throughout the summer in Lewiston, consistent with recent summers, while summer sightings in Genesee and Erie counties may have been wanderers from this group, if not evidence of expansion. **Upland Sandpipers** were again in Java, Tillman Road WMA, and Shelby. **Common Nighthawk** reports from Buffalo and Jamestown in June were more likely possible breeders than migrants, as these are the only remaining locations with recent breeding evidence. **Merlins** continue to increase in summer to the point that not all sightings can be included here. Those in June and July are more indicative of breeding. An **Olive-sided Flycatcher** at Keeney Swamp SF in early July occurred at a date suggestive of possible breeding. A **Fish Crow** in Niagara Falls provided a rare summer record, although proof of breeding is still lacking for Region 1. **Sedge Wrens** were at Joseph Davis SP and Conewango Swamp WMA. **Prothonotary Warbler** was only found at Tonawanda WMA. **Clay-colored Sparrows** continued at Lakeside Beach SP and Krull Park in Olcott.

Jacqueline Walters and Connie Adams were conducting colonial waterbird monitoring in Buffalo Harbor for NYSDEC when they came across a female

Common Eider. The bird remained for several weeks but was not always accommodating, as it was believed to be making foraging trips out to Lake Erie. This was the first Regional record for summer and sixth overall. Two **Harlequin Ducks** lingered at Niagara Falls into early June; this marks the second straight summer with report of this species. A few summering diving ducks were reported from the Great Lakes, Niagara River, and Batavia WWTP. An **Eared Grebe** continued from the 31 May finding at Batavia WWTP, with a second that joined in early August; a nearly annual summer occurrence at this location.

Annie Wilcox-Swanson was assigned to check on a report to NYSDEC of an unusual heron hanging around an Eden yard which turned out be a **Wood Stork**. The bird was present throughout the day of 26 August and reportedly roosted that night and departed the next morning. This was the third record for the Region.

Just as rare was the Region's third **White Ibis** found by Matt Nusstein at Evangola SP on 15 July. Many birders trekked to see this rarity before it departed later in the day. What was very likely the same bird was found by Chris Kundl three days later at Gratwick Park in North Tonawanda.

The shorebird highlight was a banded **Piping Plover** discovered by Sue Barth at Woodlawn Beach SP 15-16 August. Following up on the band revealed the bird was hatched and banded at Wassaga Beach, Ontario on Georgian Bay in June. Fifteen **American Avocets** were sighted at Dunkirk Harbor along with two other reports in July at this location. The summer's lone **Willet** report was from Dunkirk Harbor in July as well. Joe Mitchell found a **Red Knot** in Buffalo Harbor on 29 August; records of this declining species have become scarce. A **Red-necked Phalarope** at Buffalo Harbor in August rounds out the summer shorebird highlights.

During a trip back home to Buffalo area, Jim Pawlicki found and photographed a **Long-tailed Jaeger** from the tower at Erie Basin Marina on 21 August. This marks the fifth Regional record and also the second in three years that Jim documented. Willie D'Anna had a jaeger on Lake Ontario from Fort Niagara SP that was either a Long-tailed or Parasitic on 30 August. Immature **Lesser Black-backed Gulls** continue to be found in summer with increased regularity.

The southbound warbler migration included a **Golden-winged Warbler** at Buckhorn Island SP and a record early Palm Warbler on 22 August at Fort Niagara SP. A **Louisiana Waterthrush** documented at Amherst SP on 6 August by Jim Sawusch was a rare "fall" migrant record of this species for the Region.

Last but not least was an unexpected sighting of a young male **Summer Tanager** at Point Gratiot in July. Stuart Mackenzie initially heard the tanager "churupping"; this provides the first summer record of this species.

CONTRIBUTORS

Connie Adams, Rick Bacher, Sue Barth, John Barton, Don Bemont, Elaine Dart, Willie D'Anna, Steve Dowlan, Joanne Goetz, Andy Guthrie, Richard Guthrie, Ethan Gyllenhaal, Alec Humann, Bernie Kester, Tom Kerr, Christopher Kundl, Greg Lawrence, Tim Lenz, Karen Lee Lewis, Stuart Mackenzie, Karen Markey, Andrew Meyers, Jim Miles (JiM), Joe Mitchell (JoM), Mike Morgante, Celeste Morien, Brian Morse, Matt Nusstein, James Pawlicki (JPa), Jon Podoliak (JPo), Betsy Potter, Richard Rosche, James Sawusch, Shelly Seidman, Alex Shipherd, R. Stineman, Kim Sucy, Gale VerHague, Jacqueline Walters, Annie Wilcox-Swanson.

ABBREVIATIONS

AISP – Allegany SP, CATT; AmSP – Amherst SP, ERIE; BMAC – Beaver Meadow Audubon Center, WYOM; BufH – Buffalo Harbor, ERIE; BuSP – Buckhorn I SP, ERIE; BWWTP – Batavia Waste Water Treatment Plant, GENE; ChauL – Chautauqua L, CHAU; CSWMA – Conewango Swamp WMA, CATT; DH – Dunkirk Harbor, CHAU; EvSP – Evangola SP, ERIE; FLC – Forest Lawn Cemetery, Buffalo, ERIE; FNSP – Fort Niagara SP, NIAG; INWR – Iroquois NWR, GENE/ORLE; JDSP – Joseph Davis SP, NIAG; LBSP – Lakeside Beach SP, ORLE; NF – Niagara Falls, NIAG; NFSP – Niagara Falls SP, NIAG; NR – Niagara R; OOWMA – Oak Orchard WMA, ORLE/GENE; PB – Point Breeze, ORLE; PG – Point Gratiot, CHAU; SPWS – Sinking Ponds Wildlife Sanctuary, ERIE; TBNP – Times Beach NP, ERIE; Tiftt NP – Tiftt Nature Preserve, Buffalo ERIE; TRWMA – Tillman Road WMA, ERIE; TWMA – Tonawanda WMA, GENE/NIAG; WFWMA – Watts Flats WMA, CHAU; WoBSP – Woodlawn Beach SP, ERIE.

WATERFOWL - VULTURES

Mute Swan: N Harmony CHAU 18 Jul; Buffalo NR 25 Aug; only reports away from L Ontario shore.

Wood Duck: max 78 Tiftt NP 7 Aug; 76 BWWTP 12 Aug.

Gadwall: max 8, 11 BWWTP 5 Jun, 1 Jul; 5 BufH 21 Aug.

Am. Wigeon: 3 INWR 2 Jun; 2 BWWTP 18 Jun; max 9 BWWTP 27 Aug.

Blue-winged Teal: ad + 6 yg OOWMA 9 Jul; New Albion L CATT 10 Aug; arr 12 BufH 15 Aug; max 95 BWWTP 27 Aug (GL, EG).

N. Shoveler: 2, 3, max 10 BWWTP 12 Jun, 10 Jul, 27 Aug; INWR 4 Jul.

N. Pintail: INWR 30 Jul (CM), only report.

Green-winged Teal: 6, max 10 INWR 10, 12 Jul; 7 BWWTP 17 Jul.

Redhead: BWWTP 5 Jun – 13 Aug; Tiftt NP 8 Jun – 17 Jul; 3 Ellery ChauL 10 Jun (GV); max 8 INWR 11 Jun (AG); Buffalo NR 12 Jun; NF 26 Jun.

Ring-necked Duck: TWMA 19 Jun, 4 Jul (JiM, KS, BP, WD); DH 30 Jul -25 Aug (JG, GV); only reports.

Greater Scaup: BWWTP 27 Aug (GL, EG), only report.

Lesser Scaup: 4, 1 BWWTP 10-12 Jun, 29 Jun; BWWTP 1, 26 Jul, 11 Aug; only reports.

COMMON EIDER: BufH 3-21 Aug (JW ph., CA, mob), unexpected, 1st summer and 6th Reg record.

HARLEQUIN DUCK (R1): 2 NFSP 2 Jun (CK), continued from spring; second consecutive summer with NF record.

Bufflehead: N Collins ERIE 10 Aug (JPa, JoM), only report.

Com. Goldeneye: NFSP 9 Jul (JB), only report.

Com. Merganser: max 27 Sheridan CHAU 18 Jul; 16 DH 31 Jul; 25 Wilson NIAG 15 Aug.

Red-breasted Merganser: Ellery Chaul 11 Jun; DH 25 Jun; only reports.

Ruddy Duck: 23, 22, 25 BWWT 7 Jun, 24 Jul, 23 Aug, regular location in summer.

Com. Loon: AISP 1 Jun (AS, AM); max 3 Mayville Chaul 22 Jul (TL); Clarence ERIE 13 Aug; Wilson NIAG 14, 17 Aug; FNSP 30 Aug.

Eared Grebe: 1, 2 BWWT 1 Jun -7 Aug, 8 Aug thru (mob); annual location in late summer-fall.

WOOD STORK: Eden ERIE 26 Aug (AWS), 3rd Reg record.

Double-crested Cormorant: max 1500 BufH 6 Aug.

Am. Bittern: max 2, 2, 2, 3 INWR 11, 19 Jun, 10 Jul, 14 Aug; Tift NP 3 Aug.

Least Bittern: 1-2 INWR 2 Jun - 10 Jul; not reported from other locations.

Great Blue Heron: max 115 INWR 2 Jun.

Great Egret: Portville ALLE 30 Jun; 29 NFSP; 20 Jul; 35, 76 OOWMA 31 Jul, 19 Aug; max 176 TWMA 18 Aug.

Black-crowned Night-Heron: 15 INWR, 26 TWMA 18 Aug; uncommon away from NR.

WHITE IBIS: EvSP 15 Jul (MN!, mob); Gratwick P NR NIAG 18 Jul (CK ph.), most likely same bird; 3rd Reg record.

Black Vulture: 3, 4, 2 Lewiston NIAG 3 Jun, 1 Jul, 27 Aug, year round residents; Alexander GENE 11 Jul (ED!); WoBSP 12-19 Aug (SB, WD), 1st summer record for ERIE.

HAWKS-LARIDS

Osprey: well reported from known breeding locations.

Bald Eagle: well reported from known breeding locations; max 7 LBSP 7 Aug (DB).

Broad-winged Hawk: Somerset NIAG 22 Aug (WD), fall migrants are uncommon here.

Virginia Rail: 2, 2 BWWT 4, 26 Jun, 11 Aug; Fredonia CHAU 8, 11 Jun; 2 BMAC 15 Jun, 28 Jul, 1 Aug; TBNP 26 Jun (SS); TRWMA 10 Jul; Tift NP 18 Jul; only reports away from INWR and vicinity.

Sora: Jamestown CHAU 8 Jun; BWWT 26 Jun, 10, 24 Jul; only reports.

Am. Coot: 17 INWR 25 Jun, only regular summer location.

C. Gallinule: max 22 INWR 18 Aug.

Sandhill Crane: 1, 1 Clarence ERIE 1 Jun, 14 Aug (MM, KLL, RG), unexpected location; 2 TWMA 6 Jun; 3, 1 INWR 12 Jun, 30 Jul; 2, 3 OOWMA 4, 9 Jul, 12 Aug, has bred at INWR/OOWMA in recent years; Kiantone CHAU 19 Aug (SD).

Black-bellied Plover: arr DH 16 Aug; BuSP 18 Aug; max 8, 5 Somerset NIAG 22, 23 Aug.

Am. Golden-Plover: arr 2 Somerset NIAG, Carlton ORLE 23 Aug.

Semipalmated Plover: last 5 INWR, LBSP 2 Jun; arr Porter NIAG 15 Jul; 10 OOWMA 30 Jul; max 18 Tift NP 21 Aug.

PIPING PLOVER: juv WoBSP 15-16 Aug (SB ph!, mob), banded in Wassaga Beach, Ontario in June; 5th Reg record in last 50 years.

Killdeer: max 117 Grand I ERIE 21 Aug.

Am. Avocet: arr 15, 1, 6 DH 14, 18, 25 Jul (GV); only reports.

Solitary Sandpiper: arr Birdsall ALLE, TRWMA, OOWMA 4 Jul; 11 LBSP 21 Jul; max 17 Lewiston NIAG 6 Aug.

Greater Yellowlegs: last BWWT 5 Jun (JoM!), late; arr BWWT 1 Jul.

Willet: arr DH 22 Jul (TL; GV); only report.

Lesser Yellowlegs: arr BWWT 1 Jul; max 45 TWMA 25 Aug.

Upland Sandpiper: Medina ORLE 1 Jun (CM); 2 Java WYOM 17 Jun (TK); 1-4 TRWMA 18 Jun-6 Aug, regular location.

Ruddy Turnstone: arr 2 DH 22 Jul; 4 BufH 22 Aug; 2 PB 26 Aug; only reports.

Red Knot: BufH 29 Aug (JoM), only report; reports have become scarce.

Sanderling: arr 3, 8 DH 14, 31 Aug; 11 WoBSP 20 Aug; 3 BWWT 20 Aug; 10 Hanover CHAU 21 Aug; 2 PB 26 Aug.

Semipalmated Sandpiper: 17 BWWT 11 Jun; last 2 LBSP 13 Jun; arr Porter NIAG 8 Jul; max 25 Pomfret CHAU 14 Aug.

Least Sandpiper: last 2 Porter NIAG, 2 INWR, LBSP 2 Jun; arr 3, 40 LBSP 3, 15 Jul.

White-rumped Sandpiper: last LBSP 6, 9 Jun (DB); arr LBSP 22 Aug (DB); only reports.

Baird's Sandpiper: arr John White WMA GENE 12 Aug; WoBSP 15 Aug; OOWMA 19 Aug; only reports.

Pectoral Sandpiper: arr 19 TWMA 11 Jul.

Stilt Sandpiper: arr 3 TWMA 19, 25 Aug; WoBSP 28 Aug; LBSP 30, 31 Aug; Lewiston NIAG 31 Aug; only reports.

Short-billed Dowitcher: arr OOWMA 9 Jul; max 4 INWR 12 Jul.

Red-necked Phalarope: BuFH 8 Aug (JPa), only report.

LONG-TAILED JAEGER: BuFH 21 Aug (JPa, ph!), 5th Reg record.

Parasitic/Long-tailed Jaeger: FNSP 30 Aug (WD).

Bonaparte's Gull: 5 Yates ORLE, BuSP 7 Jun; 3 BuFH 5 Jul; 3 Cold Spring CHAU 24 Jul (TL); max 42 BuFH 21 Aug.

Lesser Black-backed Gull: 1, 1, 3, 1, 1 NFSP 30 Jun, 2, 8, 24 Jul, 16 Aug (CK, WD); Porter NIAG 9 Jul (AG, BM); WoBSP 15-26 Aug; BuFH 15 Aug; Hamburg ERIE 21 Aug; continued increase in sightings Jun-Jul.

Great Black-backed Gull: 18 BuFH 12 Jun, mostly immatures.

Caspian Tern: max 40 N Harmony ChauL 30, 31 Jul; 34 BuFH 21 Aug.

Black Tern: max 32, 36 INWR 2, 11 Jun.

Com. Tern: max 300, 400, 300 BuFH 12 Jun, 5 Jul, 6 Aug; 90, 57 FNSP 9 Jul, 30 Aug.

Forster's Tern: no reports.

PIGEONS-PARROTS

Com. Nighthawk: Forestville CHAU 2 Jun; Buffalo ERIE 9 Jun; 2 Jamestown CHAU 12 Jun; 2 Charlotte CHAU 16 Jun (GV); arr 2 Shelby ORLE 23 Aug; max 4 Wellsville ALLE 25 Aug.

Red-headed Woodpecker: reported from 11 locations; max 8 FNSP 27 Aug (WD).

Merlin: Olean CATT 9 Jun; Birdsall ALLE 26 Jun; Alfred ALLE 30 Jun; Buffalo ERIE 30 Jun; reported from six loc in Jul and 16 loc in Aug.

Peregrine Falcon: Lockport NIAG 26 Jun; BWWT 16 Jul; Shelby ORLE 30 Jul; only Jun & Jul reports away from known breeding areas; reported from seven loc in Aug.

FLYCATCHERS-WAXWINGS

Olive-sided Flycatcher: 2 AISP 3 Jun (RB); Keeney Swamp SF ALLE 4 Jul (GL, EG, JPo), date suggestive of possible breeding, 4th Jul record; arr Dunkirk CHAU, AmSP 22 Aug; three other Aug reports.

Yellow-bellied Flycatcher: arr AmSP 18 Aug.
Acadian Flycatcher: last 2 N Collins ERIE 10 Aug.

E. Kingbird: max 48, 21 DH 13, 17 Aug (GV, RS).

Fish Crow: NF 24 Jun (CK, ph, audio); summer is rarest season.

Purple Martin: 54 Medina ORLE 1 Jun; 96 Bethany GENE 18 Jun; 76, 193 INWR 28 Jun,

6 Jul; 90 Batavia GENE 6 Jul; max 1500 BuSP 25 Aug (AH), coming to evening roost at Grass I.

Tree Swallow: 120 BWWT 23 Aug; max 140 Bethany GENE 29 Aug.

Bank Swallow: max 430 TWMA 18 Aug; 165 BWWT 23 Aug.

Barn Swallow: max 4365 TWMA 18 Aug (JPa), estimated coming to evening roost in cattails; 125 BuSP 25 Aug; 210 Bethany GENE 29 Aug.

Sedge Wren: 1, 4, 1 JDSP 2, 3, 26 Jun (BP); CSWMA 20-22 Jun (TL); only reports.

Swainson's Thrush: last Wilson NIAG 3 Jun; AISP 21 Jun; arr LBSP, AmSP 22 Aug.

LONGSPURS - WARBLERS

Ovenbird: arr N Tonawanda NIAG 21 Aug.

Louisiana Waterthrush: reported from seven loc in Jun-Jul; last AmSP 6 Aug (JS ph!), rare fall migrant report, unusual location.

N. Waterthrush: arr WoBSP 2 Aug.

Golden-winged Warbler: BuSP 31 Aug (AH), only report.

Black-and-white Warbler: 4 Amity ALLE, 3 Angelica ALLE 26 Jun (AG); BMAC 17 Jul; arr WoBSP 15 Aug.

Prothonotary Warbler: 2, 4 TWMA 4, 11 Jun; known breeding location.

Tennessee Warbler: arr FNSP 22 Aug.

Nashville Warbler: Alexander GENE 13 Jun; Ashford CATT 23 Aug; arr 2 FLC, Tiffi NP 23 Aug.

Mourning Warbler: arr AmSP 22 Aug.

Cape May Warbler: arr Wilson NIAG 9 Aug (WD, BP).

Cerulean Warbler: 2 Somerset NIAG 7 Jun; max 3, 4 INWR 21 Jun, 12 Jul; Elba GENE 28 Jun.

N. Parula: 2, 3 AISP 3 Jun, 25-30 Jul; arr Niagara NIAG 31 Aug.

Magnolia Warbler: arr AmSP 17 Aug.

Bay-breasted Warbler: arr NFSP, Newfane NIAG 28 Aug.

Blackburnian Warbler: arr TBNP 10 Aug.

Chestnut-sided Warbler: arr WoBSP 9 Aug.

Blackpoll Warbler: arr WoBSP 16 Aug.

Black-throated Blue Warbler: last Amherst ERIE 11 Jun (BK); 3 E Otto CATT 7 Jul; arr TBNP 25 Aug.

Palm Warbler: arr FNSP 22 Aug (KM), early.

Pine Warbler: arr FNSP 27 Aug

Yellow-rumped Warbler: arr FLC 18 Aug.

Prairie Warbler: reported in ALLE, CATT, CHAU in Jun & Jul.

Black-throated Green Warbler: arr AmSP 22 Aug.

Canada Warbler: BMAC 4 Jun; 2-5 WFWMA 10-29 Jun; 2 Portland CHAU 29 Jun; arr Tiff NP, Attica WYOM 17 Aug.

Wilson's Warbler: arr FLC 24 Aug.

TOWHEES-WEAVERS

Clay-colored Sparrow: 1-2 Olcott NIAG 6 Jun – 2 Jul; LBSP 9 Jun (DB); documented at these sites in previous summers.

Vesper Sparrow: max 3 Ashford CATT 1 Jun; Albion ORLE 1 Jun; Batavia GENE 7 Jun; only reports.

Grasshopper Sparrow: Lewiston NIAG 3 Jun; 3 Middlebury WYOM 16 Jun; max 4, 6

TRWMA 18 Jun, 2 Jul; 3 Dunkirk Airport CHAU 25 Jun; John White WMA GENE 17 Jul; Shelby ORLE 20 Jul.

White-throated Sparrow: last Wilson NIAG 1 Jun; Charlotte CHAU 16 Jun (GV); INWR 16 Jul (JB); last two locations unusual for dates.

SUMMER TANAGER: PG 7 Jul (SM); first summer record for Reg.

Bobolink: max 80 Attica WYOM 24 Aug (RR).

Orchard Oriole: W Seneca ERIE 6 Jun; Bethany GENE 24 Jun; 3 Farnham ERIE 1 Jul; SPWS 3, 21 Jul; only locations away from NIAG; last LBSP 6 Aug.

Baltimore Oriole: max 15 BuSP 19, 25 Aug (AH).

Pine Siskin: Wilson NIAG 1, 24 Jun; Ashford CATT 21 Jun; BMAC 12 Aug; only reports.