
REGION 3—FINGER LAKES

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The Finger Lakes Region experienced continued drought conditions through the summer 2016 season. June temperatures were normal at Ithaca, averaging 65° F, but the 1.1" of rainfall was 2.9" below normal. July temperatures averaged 79°, 2° above normal, with average daily high temperatures averaging 4° above normal. The 1.64" of rainfall was 2.19" below normal. The average temperature in August was 72°, 5° above normal. Rainfall was 4.28", 0.59" above normal. The drought conditions had mixed effects on shorebird habitat, completely drying up some normally productive areas while lowering water levels in normally inundated areas, creating good habitat for shorebirds.

It was an exciting summer for birders, with several rarities visiting the Region. Out-of-season waterfowl included an early July Tundra Swan and up to four Ring-necked Ducks through most of July and August at Montezuma National Wildlife Refuge (MNWR), single Buffleheads at Elmira in early July and at Seneca Falls in mid-July, scattered reports of Common Goldeneyes from various locations around Cayuga Lake, and Red-breasted Merganser reports from Cayuga Lake, Keuka Lake, Canandaigua Lake, and MNWR. The Red-throated Loon that first appeared at Canandaigua in late April continued through 3 June. Jay McGowan discovered a **Garganey** at MNWR on 5 June and observers continued to see the bird for another 11 days. If accepted by NYSARC, it will constitute a first New York State record. Six **Black-bellied Whistling-Ducks** showed up at the Allan H. Treman State Marine Park in Ithaca on 10 July, the Region's first record of this species. A Eurasian Wigeon was at MNWR for a few days in late June.

Another first record for the Region was a **Brown Booby** that Michele Merritt discovered at the north end of Cayuga Lake on 28 August. Mark Miller found a **Yellow-crowned Night-Heron** on 31 July, at MNWR. A search of the online *Kingbird* archives revealed only two previous records of this species in

the Region. A Little Blue Heron visited Sapsucker Woods on 12 June. A Black Vulture dined at the Stevenson Road compost piles in Dryden on 13 July.

Stacey Robinson found the Region's first **Black-necked Stilt** at MNWR on 18 June, where it continued through 21 June. The only reports of Whimbrel came from MNWR on 11 June and from Seneca Lake State Park on 24 August. Doug Daniels found an impressive 22 Ruddy Turnstones on the shores of Canandaigua Lake on 10 June. Assigning shorebird reports to spring migration or fall migration was especially difficult this year. Lone Semipalmated Plover, Least Sandpiper, and White-rumped Sandpiper at MNWR on 23 June were all midway between clear last spring dates and first fall dates for those species. A **Little Gull** on Cayuga Lake for the first five days in June was the most unusual gull report. A Lesser Black-backed Gull frequented Cayuga Lake and the Stevenson Road compost piles through most of the summer, and another frequented the Chemung River in Elmira through most of August. Ian Davies counted 54 Black Terns at MNWR on 14 June, an encouraging number for this species. Jay McGowan spotted two Forster's Terns at Stewart Park, Ithaca on 6 August.

Red-headed Woodpeckers successfully nested at MNWR again this year. Other reports of the species came from the Town of Catharine and the Town of Starkey. Acadian Flycatcher reports came from five locations in the Region. An estimated 8500 Barn Swallows at Queen Catharine Marsh was a high number for the Region in at least the last fifteen years.

Tim Lenz and Jay McGowan kayaked on the Clyde River on 17 July and found a family of five Prothonotary Warblers including both adults, two fledglings, and one nestling. The rebound of Cape May Warbler from being a Regional rarity to being a fairly common migrant continues, with 13 at one location in the Town of Danby on 30 August. The only report of Yellow-breasted Chat came from the Finger Lakes Trail in the Town of Urbana.

Henslow's Sparrows returned to a grassland in the Town of Ithaca, with as many as three singing males reported. Warren Rofe photographed a **Nelson's Sparrow** at MNWR on 10 June, for a rare summer record of this species. Clay-colored Sparrow was only reported from two locations. A Dickcissel was reported for three days at the Lott Farm in the Town of Seneca Falls. The highest count of Grasshopper Sparrow was only two, an ominous sign for this species. The species was reported from ten locations scattered throughout the Region. Orchard Orioles are apparently doing well, especially in the southern portion of the Cayuga Lake Basin. Jay McGowan's count of 12 at Myers Point was a Regional high for a single site. The only report away from the southern half of the Cayuga Lake Basin was from Bath. "Winter" finch reports included Red Crossbills heard calling at Summerhill and Hammond Hill State Forests and Pine Siskins from four Tompkins County locations.

CONTRIBUTORS

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ABBREVIATIONS

CanL – Canandaigua L, City of Canandaigua; CU – Cornell University; DSF – Danby SF, TOMP; HHSF – Hammond Hill SF, TOMP; ML – Mud Lock, CAYU; MNWR – Montezuma NWR; MyPt – Myers Pt, TOMP; NEI – Northeast Ithaca; QCM – Queen Catharine Marsh, SCHU; SRCP – Stevenson Rd compost piles, TOMP StP – Stewart P, TOMP; TDan – T Danby, TOMP; TDry – T Dryden, TOMP; Tlth – T Ithaca, TOMP; TSMP – Allan H Treman State Marine P, TOMP.

WHISTLING-DUCKS - VULTURES

BLACK-BELLIED WHISTLING-DUCK: 6

TSMP 10 Jul (mob, ph!), 1st Reg record.

Mute Swan: 2 Clifton Springs Hospital Pd 7 Jun-24 Aug (DSp), only report.

TUNDRA SWAN (R3): MNWR 5-17 Jul (mob, ph!), very rare in summer.

EURASIAN WIGEON (R3): MNWR 21-23 Jun (mob, ph!), rare in summer.

Am. Wigeon: max 27 MNWR 18 Jun (TLe, CWo), high.

Am. Black Duck: max 20 MNWR 5-13 Jun (mob), high.

N. Shoveler: max 80 MNWR 27 Aug (DNi), high.

GARGANEY: MNWR 5-16 Jun (mob, ph!), possible 1s7 State record.

RING-NECKED DUCK (R3): 1-4 MNWR 2 Jul-25 Aug (mob, ph!), rare in summer.

BUFFLEHEAD (R3): Chemung R, T Elmira CHEM 30 Jun-15 Jul (BO!); Seneca R, T Seneca Falls SENE 17 Jul (CL, ph), rare in summer.

Com. Goldeneye: 2 ML 5 Jun, 17 Jul (M&WRo, ph, LSc); Frontenac P CAYU 9-10 Jul (JMcG, ph); TSMP 12 Jul (K&MFi, ph); Cayuga Waterfront Trail TOMP 19 Jul (MHa).

Red-breasted Merganser: Union Springs 1 Jun (JMcG, LSa); 1-2 MyPt 3-7 Jun (mob, ph); CanL 8-13 Jun (mob, ph); Keuka L, Branchport (DJ); max 4 ML 4 Jul (SC, ALe, NM, ph), high; MNWR 5 Jul (KJ, TM); ML 9 Jul (JMcG, ph); ML 21 Jul (CL).

Ruddy Duck: 1-2 MNWR 5-14 Jun, 9 Jul, 26 Aug.

Ruffed Grouse: max 10 Boyer Creek Farm TOMP 14 Aug.

RED-THROATED LOON (R3): CanL 1-3 Jun (DCa, ph!, HS, DSp), rare in summer.

Com. Loon: max 13 Seneca L, T Torrey 10 Jul.

BROWN BOOBY: ML 28 Aug (MiMe, ph), 1st Reg record.

LITTLE BLUE HERON (R3): Sapsucker Woods TOMP 12 Jun (mob, ph).

YELLOW-CROWNED NIGHT-HERON (R3): MNWR 31 Jul (MGo!, MMi, DNu!, JS, ph!).

BLACK VULTURE (R3): SRCP 13 Jul (CWo!).

Turkey Vulture: max 134 SRCP 18 Aug (JMcG), high.

HAWKS - LARIDS

N. Goshawk: TDan 4 Jun (JGK), only report.

Sora: max 6 MNWR (JK, CZ), high.

Am. Coot: max 305 MNWR 23 Aug (BO), high.

Sandhill Crane: max 18 MNWR 12 Jun; 4 QCM 17 Jul-21 Aug; Hi Tor WMA YATE 7-30 Aug.

BLACK-NECKED STILT: MNWR 18-21 Jun (mob, ph!), 1st Reg record.

Black-bellied Plover: last MNWR 11 Jun (GaCh, JMi, ASH), late; arr MyPt 6 Aug.

Am. Golden-Plover: arr MNWR 27 Aug.

Semipalmated Plover: last MNWR 23 Jun (DrW), late; arr MNWR 3 Jul (JGK), early.

Solitary Sandpiper: last MNWR 1 Jun; arr MNWR 24 Jun; max 27 QCM 23 Jul (TB, ID, ASp), high.

Greater Yellowlegs: last MNWR 6 Jun (mob), late; arr MNWR 13 Jun (JO), early.

Lesser Yellowlegs: last MNWR 6 Jun (JMcG), late; arr MNWR 13 Jun (KH, JO), early.

Upland Sandpiper: max 4 Lott Farm SENE 7 Jun; max & last Lott Farm SENE 9 Jul.

WHIMBREL (R3): MNWR 11 Jun (FKD); Seneca L SP 24 Aug (DH), only reports.

Ruddy Turnstone: max and last 22 CanL 10 Jun (DD), high; arr MNWR 3 Aug.

Stilt Sandpiper: arr MNWR 14 Jul.

Sanderling: last 2 MNWR 12 Jun (JMcG), late; arr MNWR 3 Aug.

Dunlin: last MNWR 14 Jun (ID, CH, TLe, JMcG), late.

Baird's Sandpiper: arr MNWR 22 Jul (EL), early.
Least Sandpiper: last MNWR 23 Jun (MI), late; arr MNWR 2 Jul; max 300 NMWR 10 Jul.
White-rumped Sandpiper: last MNWR 23 Jun (MI), late; arr QCM 29 Jul.
Pectoral Sandpiper: arr MNWR 3 Jul.
Semipalmated Sandpiper: last MNWR 21 Jun (mob), late; arr MNWR 5 Jul (KJ, TM), early.
Short-billed Dowitcher: arr Risser Rd Swamp ONTA 8 Jul.
Long-billed Dowitcher: arr MNWR 2 Jul (JMcG, ph!, LSA, MSm, DaWe), early.
Wilson's Phalarope: last MNWR 4 Jun (SD, JGK, AM), late; arr MNWR 2 Jul; QCM 30 Aug.
Red-necked Phalarope: MNWR 5 Jun (KMcGo, M&WRo, LAvL); arr MNWR 24 Jul (GaCh), early.
Bonaparte's Gull: Frontenac P CAYU 1 Jun-17 Jul; Keuka L, T Jerusalem YATE 23 Jul; MNWR 27 Aug.
LITTLE GULL (R3): Cayuga L, T Springport CAYU 1-5 Jun (JMcG, ph, KMcGo!, DNu!, LSA).
Herring Gull: max 100 Taughannock Falls SP 26 Aug (JaW); 100 StP 28 Aug (JGK), high.
LESSER BLACK-BACKED GULL (R3): StP and SRCP 7 Jun-31 Aug (mob!); Chemung River, City of Elmira 30 Jul-23 Aug (TLc, ph!, BO).
Black Tern: max 54 MNWR 14 Jun (ID), high.
Forster's Tern: arr 2 StP 6 Aug (JMcG), only report.

PIGEONS - PARROTS

Com. Nighthawk: last MyPt 2 Jun; arr Dotson Community P TOMP 10 Aug; max 40 Willowcreek Golf Course CHEM 25 Aug.
Red-headed Woodpecker: T Catharine SCHU 12 Jun-23 Jul; T Starkey YATE 23 Jul-24 Aug; max 4 MNWR 27 Aug (BMc, DM).
Am. Kestrel: max 4 DIL Woods TOMP, low.
Peregrine Falcon: arr Risser Rd Swamp ONTA 23 Jul.

FLYCATCHERS - WAXWINGS

Olive-sided Flycatcher: last MNWR 5 June; arr TDry 16 Aug; HHSF 16 Aug.
Yellow-bellied Flycatcher: last Hile School Rd Wetland TOMP 5 Jun; arr Tith 30 Jul (TSc), early.
Acadian Flycatcher: T Catharine 1 Jun; 2 DSF 11 Jun-19 Jul; Watkins Glen SP 18 Jun; HHSF 4 Jul; Ford Hill TOMP 14-17 Jul; TDry 18 Aug.
E. Kingbird: max 34 TSMP 21 Aug.

Yellow-throated Vireo: max 3 TDan 4 Jun; 3 Cayuta L Outlet 4 Jun; 3 MNWR 18 Jun; 3 T Hector SCHU 14 Jul, low.
Philadelphia Vireo: arr CU 27 Aug; Cornell Research Pds 27 Aug.
Barn Swallow: max 8500 QCM 2 Aug (TA, ID, TLc), high.
Marsh Wren: max 40 MNWR 2 Jul (JMcG, LSA), high.
Gray-cheeked Thrush: last 2 nocturnal migrants NEI 3 Jun.
Swainson's Thrush: last DSF 4 Jun; arr QCM 27 Jul (GM, rec, RS), early.

LONGSPURS - WARBLERS

Worm-eating Warbler: DSF 4-30 Jun (mob), only reports.
"Lawrence's" Warbler: T Horseheads CHEM 18-19 Jun (MP), only report.
Prothonotary Warbler: max 5 MNWR (TLc, JMcG), high.
Tennessee Warbler: arr TDry 28 Aug.
Cape May Warbler: arr T Caroline TOMP 3 Aug (TA!), early; max 13 TDan 30 Aug (ID, LSe), high.
N. Parula: last Tith 7 Jun; arr TDan 30 Aug (ID, LSe), early.
Bay-breasted Warbler: arr CU TOMP 27 Aug; max 2 TDan 30 Aug (ID, LSe), high.
Blackpoll Warbler: last MyPt 5 Jun; arr McIlroy Preserve CAYU 31 Aug.
Yellow-rumped Warbler: max 5 DSF 24 Jun, low.
Wilson's Warbler: last TDry 3 Jun; arr TDry 27 Aug.
YELLOW-BREASTED CHAT: Finger Lakes Trail, T Urbana STEU 17-19 Jul (DB!, ARE).

TOWHEES - WEAVERS

CLAY-COLORED SPARROW: TDry 6 Jun (JGe!); CU 26 Jun-2 Jul (mob, ph).
Grasshopper Sparrow: max 2 T Covert SENE 3 Jun; 2 T Lodi SENE 3 Jun; Tith 2 Jul, low.
HENSLOW'S SPARROW (R3): 1-3 Tith 12 Jun-3 Aug (mob!).
NELSON'S SPARROW (R3): MNWR 10 Jun (WRof, ph).
DICKCISSEL (R3): Lott Farm SENE 5-7 Jun (mob rec, ph!).
Orchard Oriole: max 12 MyPt 22 Jun (JMcG), high.
Red Crossbill: Summerhill SF CAYU 13 Jul (BS, CWo!); HHSF (AMF, JMcG, NM, rec).
Pine Siskin: TDry 6 Jun (CWo); 2 Caswell Rd Grasslands TOMP 15 Jun (CWo); NEI 5 Jul (JMcG, LSA); NEI (TSc), 11 Jul.