

REGION 4—SUSQUEHANNA

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June 2017 was about average regarding temperature and somewhat wetter than normal. July was slightly cooler than the long-term norm but had three inches more rain than average. August was three degrees cooler and a bit drier than average.

From 15 April to 3 June there was a pair of Mute Swans on Plymouth Reservoir in Chenango County. They were noticed by local residents who thought they might stay the summer, but the swans departed. Apparently, they were tolerant of their human neighbors and fed in the same area daily (from E-

mail from Michael DeWispelaere). During the months of June through August there were no records of Mute Swans in eBird in the Region for the last 10 years. However, in *The Second Atlas of Breeding Birds in New York State*, which covered the period from 2000-2005, there were ten or so blocks in the Region with possible or probable breeding and one block showing confirmed breeding. The NYSDEC is currently managing this introduced species and has a draft plan under review. It is not clear how much habitat requirements versus management have affected the population of this species in our Region. Why bother then to report on this species, if it is introduced and proven to damage wetlands and has been aggressive to other waterfowl and on occasion to humans? Well the short answer is that people take an interest in these birds. The swans are relatively unafraid of humans, and so people make a connection to these large and impressive animals. The problem of introduced species will probably not have a uniform solution but will most likely be species dependent. Mute Swans are an interesting illustration of this problem.

Common Gallinules bred in Chenango County in a marsh in Sherburne. Sixteen birds, including eleven juveniles, were seen there, which appeared to represent at least two family groups. There was also at least one juvenile reported from Boland Pond in Broome County. There were perhaps ten blocks reporting possible or confirmed breeding during the 2000-2005 atlas work in the Region, so it is not a very common breeder and may be in decline.

During a kayaking trip through a wetland in Chenango County in the Town of Plymouth on 6 June, a video was taken of an adult Sandhill Crane with two eggs. Also in the Town of McDonough, again in Chenango County, two adults were seen, but no colts were reported. Last year in McDonough, two adults and two colts were reported. In both sightings, local residents had seen the birds for a few years in this season but did not report them. In previous NY breeding bird atlas projects begun in 1980 and 2000, there were no reports of Sandhill Cranes breeding in the Region.

In Broome County two kinds of falcons were breeding. In the city of Binghamton, four Peregrine Falcons were seen on 6 June, one with a Rock Pigeon in its talons, and three other falcons following. In the village of Endicott there were several reports of a breeding Merlin pair with photos taken. There has been a breeding pair of Peregrine Falcons since at least the 2000-2005 breeding bird atlas in Binghamton, while Merlins were reported in only three blocks in the Region.

Regarding migrating shorebirds, there were two reports of a Stilt Sandpiper in the Region. Jeremy Collison found a Stilt Sandpiper in a farm pond in the Town of Smyrna in Chenango County on 13 August. This was a first eBird record for Chenango County. Then on 26 August Dave Nicosia found a Stilt Sandpiper in Johnson City in the Susquehanna River. The bird stayed four days, and was seen and photographed by many observers. A Stilt Sandpiper had not been recorded in Broome since 2002. In the same area, a Baird's Sandpiper was

also discovered on 26 August and also a contingent of ten Great Egrets on 30 August.

Cerulean Warblers were seen and photographed along the Delaware River on 26 June in a riparian habitat, so perhaps they were breeding in this area. In migration, twelve Cape May Warblers in a variety of plumages were seen and photographed in Chenango County on German Hollow Road by Andrew Guthrie on 29 August. In total, 27 species of warblers were seen in the Region for the season, which is the same number as seen in the fall report for the last three years.

There were many reports of Red Crossbills, observed mostly in state forests in Chenango County. Some of these reports were from workers associated with the Cornell Lab of Ornithology who were recording their calls so they could be identified by subspecies (or species, depending on whom you ask). Type 1 (Appalachian), Type 2 (Ponderosa Pine), Type 3 (Western Hemlock), and Type 10 (Sitka Spruce) were all identified, most through audio spectrographic analysis (basically sounds made into graphs). Some of the birds were singing and responded to playbacks, so perhaps they might have been breeding. However, none of the reports mentioned breeding behavior specifically, so this is merely speculation.

In summary, 184 species were reported, with some interesting rarities for the Region. I also want to acknowledge and thank Bill Ostrander who sorted eBird data to identify arrivals, last dates, and high counts.

CONTRIBUTORS

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ABBREVIATIONS

BoPd – Boland Pd, BROO; BUNP – Binghamton University Nature Preserve, BROO; DorP – Dorchester P, BROO; LHNC – Lime Hollow Nature Center, COURT; MHL – Michigan Hollow L, TIOG; SusR – Susquehanna Ri, BROO.

WHISTLING-DUCKS – VULTURES

Mute Swan: 2 Plymouth Res CHEN 15 Apr- 3 Jun, *intro*.

Blue-winged Teal: 2 SusR 26 Aug; Chenango R BROO 27 Aug; only reports.

N. Shoveler: Chenango Ri BROO 27 Aug, only report.

Am. Wigeon: BoPd 28 Jul, ph, only report.

Com. Loon: Owego Creek TIOG 1 Jun, ph, possible injured bird.

Pied-billed Grebe: 8 MHL 10 Aug, 6 juv, 2 ad.

Least Bittern: BoPd 10-25 Jun; MHL 15-19 Jul.

Great Egret: max 10 SusR 30 Aug; 75 reports.

Black-crowned Night-Heron: 2 BoPd 8-9 Aug.

Black Vulture: 5 scattered reports from OTSE & DELA.

HAWKS – LARIDS

Osprey: 30 rep throughout Region.

Bald Eagle: many reports, very widespread.

N. Goshawk: Hancock DELA 17 Jun -23 Jul; Otselic CHEN 4 Jul; Tuller Hill SF CORT 1 Aug.

Red-shouldered Hawk: 3 Marsh Pond SF BROO 8 Jun, 2 nestlings, 1 ad; 25 other rep.

Sora: MHL 15-19 June.

Com. Gallinule: max 16 Sherburne Railroad Marsh CHEN 3 Aug, ph; 2 BoPd 10 Jun.

Sandhill Crane: T Plymouth CHEN 6 Jun, photo of nest with eggs; 2 T McDonough CHEN 22 Aug; *intro*.

Stilt Sandpiper: Smyrna CHEN 13 Aug, ph (JC, MD); SusR 26-30 Aug, mob, ph (DN).

Sanderling: SusR 26 Aug, only report.

Baird's Sandpiper: SusR 26-30 Aug, mob, ph (GC).

Caspian Tern: max 6 SusR 20 Aug; 8 reports.

PIGEONS – PARROTS

Yellow-billed Cuckoo: 15 reports.

Black-billed Cuckoo: 37 reports, interesting ratio of yellow-billed to black-billed.

Com. Nighthawk: max 15 Castle Creek BROO 20 Aug; 15 other scattered rep.

E. Whip-poor-will: Richford TIOG 30 Aug (DM).

Ruby-throated Hummingbird: widely noted, 334 reports.

Red-headed Woodpecker: Hickories P TIOG 10 Jun.

Merlin: 3 Endicott BROO 29 Jul, 8 rep of this breeding pr; 37 other rep.

Peregrine Falcon: max 4 Binghamton BROO 6 Jun, many rep of resident downtown pr.

FLYCATCHERS – WAXWINGS

Olive-Sided Flycatcher: T Hartwick OTSE 5 Jun; Downsville DELA 27 Aug; LHNC 30 Aug; only reports.

Yellow-bellied Flycatcher: 2 Robinson Hollow SF TIOG 27 Aug; Vestal BROO 29 Aug; T Greene CHEN 31 Aug; only reports.

Acadian Flycatcher: James Kennedy SF CORT 1 Jul, only report.

Philadelphia Vireo: BUNP 30 Aug; Vestal BROO 31 Aug; only reports.

Purple Martin: 5 widely scattered rep, single birds Jun & Jul.

Brown Creeper: 82 rep throughout Region thru.

Marsh Wren: most rep BoPd & MHL.

Ruby-crowned Kinglet: Unadilla Boat Launch DELA 26 Aug.

LONGSPURS – WARBLERS

Tennessee Warbler: max 3 German Hollow Rd CHEN 29 Aug; LHNC 29-30 Aug; Hoxie Gorge SF CORT 31 Aug.

Cape May Warbler: max 12 German Hollow Rd CHEN 29 Aug, ph (AG).

Cerulean Warbler: 2 Warren Rd DELA Jun 25-26, ph.

N. Parula: 2 Warren Rd DELA Jun 17-25.

Bay-breasted Warbler: T Spencer TIOG 31 August, only report.

Wilson's Warbler: LHNC 29 Aug; 2 Southwick Rd TIOG 29 Aug.

Yellow-breasted Chat: New Michigan SF CHEN 17 Jun.

TOWHEES – WEAVERS

Grasshopper Sparrow: max 4 T Nanticoke BROO 18 Jun.

Orchard Oriole: Keibel Rd BROO Jun 7; MHL 15 Jul.

Red Crossbill: 46 rep, mostly from SF's CHEN.

Pine Siskin: 4 Jones P Vestal BROO 17 Jun, only report.

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