

REGION 4—SUSQUEHANNA

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June 2022 was a bit cooler and somewhat wetter than normal. July was 1.5° F warmer than the long-term average and had about an inch less rainfall than usual. August was 3.3° warmer than expected and was a bit drier than the long term (thirty year) mean.

Once again Common Gallinules were seen in Chenango County in a Sherburne marsh, but no confirmation of breeding was reported this season (thus breaking a five-year streak). However, young Gallinules were reported from two other spots in the Region. At the south end of Canadaroga Lake two juveniles were spotted near a patch of cattails on 29 June, and an adult was heard nearby. On 19 August three chicks and two adults were reported from the Cherry Valley area in Otsego County. There were perhaps ten blocks reporting possible or confirmed breeding during the 2000-2005 atlas work in the Region.

There were two pairs of Sandhill Crane seen in Chenango County this season, but no colts (as young cranes are called) were seen. Mike DeWispelaere reported in eBird, "I'm guessing the young did not survive. I have never seen both adults go off and forage without one staying with the young. Adults were first seen at Law Pond and then in a local hay field. No young seen." In previous NY Breeding Bird Atlas projects begun in 1980 and 2000, there were no reports of Sandhill Cranes breeding in the Region.

In late August there were several reports of Common Nighthawks migrating through the Region, and the numbers seemed higher than last season. For example, on 21 August sixty-plus nighthawks were seen migrating near the Beaver Kill in Delaware County by Lance Verderame who thought, even with that high number, he was underreporting.

Regarding migrating shorebirds, there were Baird's Sandpipers reported in the Region in late August. Also, Short-billed Dowitchers were seen along the Susquehanna River in both Broome and Tioga Counties in July and August. Then on 16 August a Wilson's Phalarope was seen at an eBird location named the Cortland Gravel Pits. This is a relatively large body of water with an aquamarine color visible from I-81 which, due to its color and industrial surroundings, did not look very inviting, at least to humans. Another special shorebird sighting was nowhere near a shore, but from a farm south of Owego in Tioga County. Two Upland Sandpipers were seen by members of the Schlabach family, and they then reported it so that others could see and photograph these birds. Derek Green, who saw these birds, wondered if these might be young birds since late July seemed early for migration. In any event this was a first eBird record for Tioga County, and a rare sighting for the Region.

There were 110 reports of Great Egrets in the Region from mid-July thru August compared to 130 reports in the 2021 summer season. Many sightings came from the Susquehanna and Chenango Rivers, but there were also observations from many ponds and lakes throughout the Region. It is not clear why there is such a fluctuation in numbers of Great Egrets from year to year. For example, in 2018 there were just 27 reports during the summer season.

A **Rufous Hummingbird** was reported and photographed by Linda Hall and others at a feeder near Chenango Valley State Park in Broome County. The identity of the hummingbird was verified using “its solid rufous back eliminating Allen’s” by Jay McGowan.

Swainson’s Thrushes were recorded in the Pharsalia Wildlife Management Area on 2 July by David Nicosia—he reported four singing birds. However, there were no reports in the Region of confirmed breeding for the Swainson’s Thrush. The use of audio recordings and the Merlin Birding ID in eBird seems to be on the increase which is great for documenting breeding behaviors. When I searched for “Merlin” on the eBird data base I found quite a few comments which indicated an observer had verified songs and calls using the Merlin sound ID, and in the field I see birders using the Merlin app.

Like last season there were only a few reports of Pine Siskins. However, there were 38 reports of Red Crossbills contrasting with 50 reports last year though there still seemed to be some high numbers reported. For example, Lance Verderame saw an impressive 74 crossbills in the Arctic-China State Forest in Delaware County on 4 June. There were many immature birds present, some being fed by adults.

In total, 29 species of warblers (which is about average for the Region) were seen in the season; these included a Cerulean Warbler and a singing Kentucky Warbler. The Kentucky Warbler was discovered by Dave Nicosia on 22 May in Beaver Swamp State Forest in Chenango County. The bird sang till it was last reported a month later, on 22 June, giving many a chance to see and hear it. In addition, a “Lawrence’s” Warbler (hybrid) was reported and photographed in Otsego County.

In summary, 187 species (last year 189) were reported, with some interesting rarities and vocalizations for the Region. If there are a reasonable number of reports I try to eliminate duplicate reports on the same day by different observers when reporting the number of reports in the Region. There were 85,306 observations (which is about 14% more than last year) in eBird for our Region, so I 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

BBA – NY Breeding Bird Atlas III; **BMF** – Birdsong Meadows Farm, TIOG; **BPd** – Boland Pd, BROO; **BROO**; **CG** – Carantouan Greenway, T Barton, TIOG; **CN** – carrying nesting material; **CornellLn** – Cornell Lane, T Harford, CORT; **DorP** – Dorchester P, BROO; **FL** – fledgling(s); **FY** – feeding young; **LHNC** – Lime Hollow Nature Center, T Cortlandville, CORT; **MHL** – Michigan Hollow L, TIOG; **NMSF** – New Michigan State Forest, CHEN; **NY** – nest with young; **PHWMA** – Pharsalia WMA, CHEN; **SHM** – Sherburne Railroad Grade Marsh, CHEN; **SusRB** – Susquehanna Ri, Greater Binghamton, BROO; **ULCP** – Upper Lisle CP, T Triangle, BROO; **WHP** – William Hill P, Johnson City, BROO.

Trumpeter Swan: BPd thru.

American Wigeon: Greek Peak Mt Resort
CORT 8 Jul, ph.

Green-winged Teal: 6 scattered reports of
likely early migrants.

Yellow-billed Cuckoo: 120 reports throughout
Region.

Black-billed Cuckoo: 100 reports throughout
Region.

Common Nighthawk: max 63 Beaverkill
Valley Rd DELA 21 Aug; 28 Fly Creek OTSE
29 Aug; 22 WHP 24 Aug; 26 other scattered

rep in late Aug, numbers seem higher than last
year.

Chimney Swift: max 50 Binghamton BROO
24 Jun; 50 WHP 23 Aug.

Ruby-throated Hummingbird: widely noted,
1033 lines in eBird, somewhat more reports
than last year.

RUFIOUS HUMMINGBIRD: T Fenton
BROO 19 -31 Aug, feeder, mob, ph, (L. Hall).

Virginia Rail: max 5 SHM 11 Jun & 28 Jun,
ph, FL, (M. DeWispelaere).

Sora: SHM 8 Jun; MHL 9 Jun; Canadarago L OTSE 29 Jun.

Common Gallinule: max 5 Cherry Valley OTSE 19 Aug, 2 ad, 3 juv, (T. Buhl); 3 SHM 28 Jun; 3 Canadarago L OTSE 29 Jun, 1 ad, 2 juv.

Sandhill Crane: max 2 SHM 11 Jul -30 Aug; 2 PHWMA 29 Aug.

Upland Sandpiper: 2 Long Creek Rd TIOG 18-25 Jul, mob, ph, (SF).

Baird's Sandpiper: Prentice Rd SusRB 26 Aug, ph; SHM 28 Aug, ph; only reports.

Least Sandpiper: max 42 Law Pd North Norwich CHEN 9 Aug, ph, (M. DeWispelaere).

Short-billed Dowitcher: WHP 18 Jul, ph; Confluence P Owego TIOG 24 Aug, ph; Cannon Hole Landing TIOG 24-26 Aug, ph.

Spotted Sandpiper: max 12 WHP 26 Jul.

Solitary Sandpiper: max 10 Stupke Pd CORT 11-12 Aug.

Lesser Yellowlegs: arr SHM 20 Jul.

Greater Yellowlegs: arr SHM 16 Jul.

Wilson's Phalarope: Cortland Gravel Pits CORT 16 Aug, only report (JayM).

Bonaparte's Gull: arr SHM 20 Jul, ph.

Lesser Black-backed Gull: Cortland Gravel Pits CORT 16 Aug, ph, (JayM).

Caspian Tern: 2 ULCP 13 Aug, ph.

Common Tern: DorP 7 Aug, ph.

Common Loon: max 2 Ellis L CORT 16 Jun, ph.

American Bittern: 2 Cherry Valley OTSE 19 Aug; MHL 7 Aug, ph.

Least Bittern: SHM 7 Jun; CG 17 Jun; BPd 3-21 Jul, mob, ph, audio recording; ULCP 13 Aug.

Great Egret: max 5 WHP 22 Aug; 110 reports thru Region, slightly fewer reports this year than last.

Black-crowned Night-Heron: WHP 9 Aug; MHL 14 Aug.

Glossy/White-faced Ibis: MHL 31 Aug.

Black Vulture: max 3 Vestal BROO 28 Aug; 6 other reports from the Vestal area with 4 other scattered reports in the Region.

Osprey: 4 Maryland OTSE 18 Jul, FL; 4 SusRB 10 Jul, FY.

Northern Harrier: 2 Brookins Rd CHEN 7 Jun, FY.

Bald Eagle: many reports, very widespread.

Red-shouldered Hawk: 2 NMSF 9 Jul, FL; 65 scattered reports.

Eastern Screech-Owl: 3 Hogsback Rd CHEN 22 Jul, nocturnal BBA; 21 other scattered reports.

Great Horned Owl: 2 Springfield OTSE 23 Jun, FL, begging calls.

American Kestrel: max 37 BMF 7 Aug, many imm, scoped from 2 locations on 150 acre farm, abundant grasshoppers seemed to be the attraction, (AdTr).

Merlin: max 5 Owego TIOG 26 Jul, perhaps family group, (DG).

Peregrine Falcon: max 3 Binghamton BROO 4 Jun, NY.

Eastern Kingbird: 20 ULCP 30 Jul-14 Aug; 6 BMF 24 Jul.

Olive-Sided Flycatcher: ULCP 2-5 Jun; West River Rd CORT 5 Jun; Shirley Rd TIOG 11 Aug, ph; only reports.

Yellow-bellied Flycatcher: BMF 8 Aug; 5 other reports all of singles in Aug.

Acadian Flycatcher: Robinson Hill SF TIOG 4 Jul; Cuyler Hill SF CORT 6 Aug; only reports.

Horned Lark: max 2 CornellLn 21 Jul, FL.

Purple Martin: 3 scattered reports.

Brown Creeper: max 7 Triangle SF BROO 3 Jun.

Winter Wren: max 7 Middletown DELA 19 Jun, FL; 7 NMSF 9 Jul.

Marsh Wren: most reports from BPd, MHL, and SHM; 6 SHM 22 Jul, FL, ph.

Swainson's Thrush: max 4 PHWMA 2 Jul, audio recordings.

Hermit Thrush: max 12 Dry Brook Ridge Middletown DELA 11 Jun.

Red Crossbill: max 74 Arctic-China SF DELA 4 Jun, FY, (LV); 38 reports from state forests thru the Region, last year there were 50 reports.
Pine Siskin: max 2 Titus L Rd DELA 8 Jun; 4 other scattered reports-about the same as last year.

Grasshopper Sparrow: max 3 Long Creek Rd TIOG 27 Jul; 3 other reports from the same area around the same time.

Song Sparrow: Waterman Rd Delhi DELA 22 Aug, leucistic, ph, (NC); *intro*.

Bobolink: max 300 (est) BMF 20 Jul.

Orchard Oriole: 2 Lovell Hill Rd CORT 5 Jun, CN; 2 Glimmerglass SP 14 Jun; 2 Stone House Rd CHEN 24 Jul, FY; plus a few other reports of singing males.

Ovenbird: max 45 NMSF 6 Jun.

Louisiana Waterthrush: max 8 Griggs Gulf SF CORT 7 Jun, 4 pairs.

Northern Waterthrush: max 3 Jam Pd CHEN 12 Jul, FL.

“Lawrence’s” Warbler (hybrid): Chlorinator Rd OTSE 11-20 Jun, ph.

Mourning Warbler: max 5 Houck Mt DELA 3 Jun; 5 NMSF 6 Jun; 5 Homer CORT 29 Jul.

Kentucky Warbler: Beaver Meadow SF CHEN 22 May-22 Jun, audio recordings, ph, mob, (DN).

Hooded Warbler: max 11 Tuller Hill SF CORT 17 Jul, FL.

Cerulean Warbler: LHNC 3 Jun.

Dickcissel: ULCP 14 Aug, (DN).