



# Little Gull

Visit the RBA's website at [www.RochesterBirding.org](http://www.RochesterBirding.org)

Rochester Birding Association, P.O. Box 92055, 1335 Jefferson Road, Rochester, NY 14692-9998

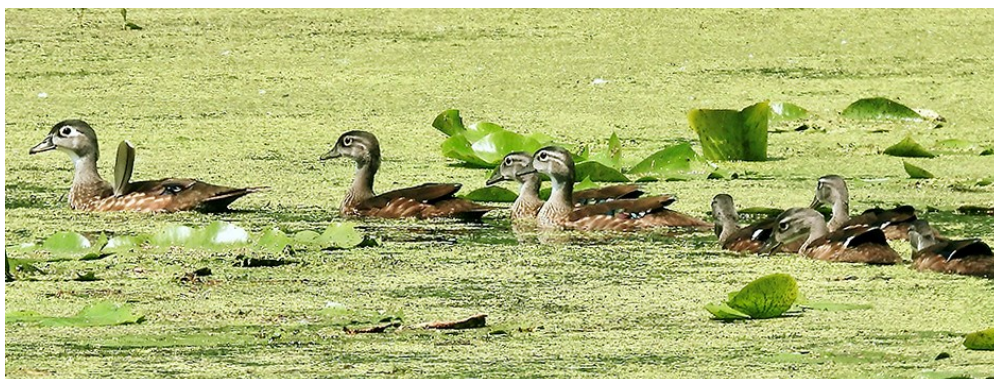
## September 2022 Events and Birding Field Trips

Please note: Leaders and trip details are subject to change. Please check the most recent issue of the Little Gull, or the online schedule at the RBA website <https://rochesterbirding.org/>, for updated information prior to departure! Trips run approximately 2 to 4 hours! Bring binoculars. All field trips will go rain/snow or shine unless there is a travel advisory issued. Online registration <https://rochesterbirding.org/> for each trip is required and opens at 7:30 PM, 7 days before the trip date and ends at 1 PM the day before the trip. When COVID guidelines allow, if at all possible, please carpool!

- Sept 3**  
Saturday  
**Beginner Birder Trip – Charlotte and Turning Point Park**  
We'll be looking for shorebirds, warblers, and other fall migrants along the river and lakeshore. At Charlotte Beach, we'll look for gulls in many plumages and some shorebirds, too. At Turning Point Park, we will look for local resident birds and fall migrants. Bring binoculars. The Charlotte Beach area is mostly flat and paved; one long, steep grade at Turning Point Park. Length about 2.0 miles total. Restrooms are available at Charlotte only. Meet at **8:00 a.m.** at Ontario Beach Park in Charlotte in the northeast corner of the parking lot, beside the Genesee River outlet.  
**Bring binoculars and, if you have them, spotting scopes.**  
**Leader:** John Boettcher 585-671-9639 and co-leader Rosemary Reilly 585-748-0802
- Sept 8**  
Thursday  
**RBA Monthly Meeting @ 7 pm—Asbury Methodist Church and Zoom, see below for details**  
Eastern Australia: Its Unique and Spectacular Birds by Dominic Sherony
- Sept 10**  
Saturday  
**Whiting Road Nature Preserve**  
This preserve includes about 240 acres of land that is made up of a variety of bird habitats. This results in decent birding lists throughout the year. The trails are well marked and maintained. However, they do get muddy at times, so appropriate footwear is recommended based on the weather leading up to the trip date. Most of the trails are flat, but there definitely will be a bit of up and down trail climbing in some sections. Our trek will take us on parts of the blue, brown, orange, and red trails. Moderate difficulty in a few spots. Length about 2.5 miles. Restrooms are not available. Meet at **8:00 a.m.** in the parking lot on Whiting Road in Webster, 0.6 miles south of Lake Road.  
**Leaders:** Candace Giles 585-281-1643 and Eunice Thein 585-746-2919 or 585-746-0863 and co-leader Dick Horsey 585-435-2837
- Sept 10**  
Saturday  
**Letchworth Outdoor Rec Fest 10 am—4 pm** Humphrey Nature Center, Letchworth State Park  
Morning bird hike at 9:00 am and other events throughout the day. RBA and many other organizations will be tabling. \$10 entry fee starts at 9:00 am.
- Sept 11**  
Sunday  
**Durand-Eastman Park**  
We'll be looking for thrushes and other migrants. Durand can be surprising this time of year. This will be an easy 2-3 hour walk mostly along paved roads, with a steady medium grade at one point. Length about 2.5 miles, total. Restroom facilities are not available on this route, but are in other areas of the park. Meet at **8:00 a.m.** in Parking Lot D on the north side of Lake Shore Blvd. between Zoo Road and Log Cabin Road.  
**Leaders:** Tom and Jeanne Verhulst 585-362-0803

- Sept 14**  
Wednesday  
**New! Sandra L. Frankel Nature Park (Brickyard Trail)**  
The Brickyard Trail is a wide, flat, fine gravel, multi-use trail situated between Elmwood Avenue and Westfall Road in Brighton (across from the east end of Buckland Park). It contains woods at both ends and ponds and marsh in the middle, providing good bird habitat. We will walk the full length of the trail and back (1.7 miles) to look for migrating fall warblers, kinglets, sparrows, wrens, and finches. There might even be a late Green Heron hanging around. Meet at **8:00 a.m.** at the Buckland Park Headquarters (Buckland House) parking lot on the south side of Westfall Road. Dress for the weather. Insect repellent may be needed for the wooded sections. No restrooms. Wheelchair friendly—please call leaders for accessibility questions.  
**Leaders:** *Jeanne and Tom Verhulst 585-362-0803*
- Sept 17**  
Saturday  
**Montezuma National Wildlife Refuge**  
We'll be looking for waterfowl and migrating shorebirds. Expect to see herons, eagles and possibly falcons. There will be a number of stops during this mostly driving trip. Restrooms are available at the Visitor Center. Meet at **10:30 a.m.** at the Montezuma Visitor Center. Pack a lunch. **Spotting scopes would be very useful.**  
**Leaders:** *Mike and Joann Tetlow 585-748-5838 and Dominic Sherony 585-298-4260*
- Sept 25**  
Sunday  
**Iroquois National Wildlife Refuge**  
We'll look for migrant ducks and various passerines in this "get to know Iroquois in autumn" trip. This trip is a combination of driving and walking and includes a boardwalk, forest trail, and dirt road. Length about 3.5 miles total on mostly flat trail. Port-a-john available about midway through trip. Meet at **11:00 a.m.** at the Brockport Wegmans' parking lot (restroom). For those traveling from the west, meet at the Upper Stafford Marsh Overlook near 5999 Albany Road, Oakfield, NY at **11:30 a.m.** Bring a lunch and beverages as this trip can go into the afternoon. **Spotting scopes would be very useful.**  
**Leaders:** *Sheryl Gracewski and Tom Nash 585-261-6975 and co-leader Rosemary Reilly 585-748-0802*
- [October and November are Excellent Months to Observe the Parade of Waterbirds on Lake Ontario.](#) Several experienced birders are active at the lake watch beside the Lakeshore Pavilion at parking lot 4 of Hamlin Beach State Park many mornings during these months.
- Oct 9**  
Sunday  
**Hamlin Beach State Park**  
We'll start off walking flat wooded and brushy areas of the park, looking for thrushes, sparrows, and maybe a half-hardy warbler or two. After that, we'll stop by the lake watch to view ducks on the water and in flight, learning about the lake watch process. Dress appropriately for cooler weather along the lake, and wear comfortable footwear. Restroom facilities are available. Meet at **8:00 a.m.** in Hamlin Beach State Park, Parking Lot 1. **Spotting scopes would be very useful.**  
**Leader:** *Dominic Sherony 585-298-4260 and co-leaders Sheryl Gracewski and Tom Nash 585-261-6975*

***Events Continue on page 7***



Wood Duck - Braddock Bay  
East Spit - © Candace Giles -  
August 1, 2022

Greetings RBA members,

Although COVID-19 is still present in our community, it has lessened considerably. To reflect this, below are our updated field trip guidelines going forward. We look forward to seeing you on one of our many trips! ~  
The Field Trip Committee

### **RBA Guidelines for Field Trips**

In order to protect the health of our birders and the wider community, and in order to ensure compliance with any NYS COVID-19 mandates that might be in effect, the following policies and guidelines will govern our field trips for the foreseeable future.

#### **Registration:**

- The RBA will continue with advance registration through Eventbrite for all field trips.
- Registration opens at 7:30 p.m. seven days before the trip date.
- Generally, capacity limits have been greatly expanded but will be determined on a trip-by-trip basis with input from leaders (or if there are NYS mandates).
- By registering for a field trip, participants acknowledge that they have read and will abide by RBA policies.
- If participants are not be able to attend, we encourage them to cancel their reservation before 1:00 p.m. the day before the trip to make room for others. (Canceling is done through the participant's Eventbrite confirmation email.)

#### **Health Screening Considerations:**

- Full contact information is required at registration, in case contact tracing is requested.
- No one who has *any* COVID-19 symptoms (or Flu or cold, for that matter!) should attend. Symptoms: cough, chills, muscle pain, sore throat, runny nose, fever of 100.4 F or greater without fever-reducing medications, shortness of breath or difficulty breathing, or loss of taste or smell.
- No one who has tested positive for COVID-19 in the past 10 days or who has been instructed to self-isolate or quarantine should attend. [The current (August 2022) CDC protocol, for COVID-19 is a minimum of 5 days isolation ended only if there is no fever, without medication, on day 6 or after 24 more hours without a fever. After that, one is to wear a mask for another 5 days when outside the home.]
- No one unwilling to wear a mask who has been in close contact (within 6 feet) with anyone who has tested positive for COVID-19 or who has had symptoms of COVID-19 within the past 10 days, should attend.
- Participants who test positive for the coronavirus within 14 days after attending a field trip are encouraged to contact the RBA at [info@rochesterbirding.org](mailto:info@rochesterbirding.org).

#### **Safety Best Practices:**

If participants have met the above requirements:

- Mask wearing is optional.
- Scope use/sharing is allowed.
- Participants are still encouraged to keep hand sanitizer with them.



Photo by Richard Ashworth

## President's Corner, Randi Minetor—

That feeling of anticipation is in the air—the one we all learned to experience every September back when we were in preschool. For birders, our thoughts turn to fall migration, and to the emerging mudflats that appear as water levels recede around the edges of ponds, wetlands, and lakes. We have already begun to see small, mixed flocks of shorebirds arrive on the East Spit at Braddock Bay, an exciting new hotspot that has attracted rarities like Red-necked Phalarope, White-faced Ibis, and Stilt Sandpiper in recent seasons. Iroquois and Montezuma National Wildlife Refuges will soon become the places to be for arriving shorebirds, both well worth the drive from Rochester to view the bounty they attract throughout September and October.

For some of us, September also means competition—specifically the Montezuma Muckrace, arguably one of the nation's most challenging “birdathons,” because it takes place when birds are wearing their muted, basic plumage instead of in spring, like just about every other birdathon in America. Muckracers compete in teams of three or more people to find as many bird species as they can in a 24-hour period (this year, the event takes place from 7:00 p.m. on Friday, September 9, until 7:00 p.m. on Saturday, September 10). Heard-only birds are accepted, so those birders who can identify the chip notes of migrating birds have a distinct advantage over those who cannot. At the end of the race, teams turn in their lists of birds to be tallied by Montezuma staff, and winners receive the first pick from a wide array of prizes donated by many local bird-friendly businesses. (Eventually, everyone gets a gift from the prize table, so no one goes home empty-handed.)

Why on earth would anyone want to bird competitively? Isn't birding an inclusive pastime in which all birders want to share their sightings and help others “get on the bird”? Birding is all that and more, but the Muckrace is a fundraiser for the Friends of the Montezuma Wetlands Complex, the organization that helps fund things like viewing platforms and trail improvements at the refuge. Your registration fee is your contribution, but many teams also raise funds from their friends and families to help make their participation even more worthwhile.

For me, competition has been a great way to practice and improve my spotting and listening skills in the field. I competed for more than a decade on a Muckrace team called the Buffleheads, with lifelong birders Diane Henderson, Lucretia Grosshans, and Shirley Shaw, and their command of birdsong and plant identification really helped me up my game. If you're new to birding, getting on a team with some veterans can be a terrific learning experience. And if you already know all of that, you have a great chance of winning. Also, you don't have to compete to form a team and play along. The Muckrace permits Recreational, Youth, Low-Carbon (birding by bicycle), and Photography teams to participate, so you can challenge yourselves without competing against others.

If you want to test your skills in identifying dull-plumaged shorebirds and “confusing fall warblers,”

the Muckrace is a great way to do this. As a bonus, looking forward to this annual event turns the waning days of summer into the excitement of approaching fall—making you feel like a kid again. See you out there!



Our smallest shorebird, the Least Sandpiper's yellow-green legs differentiate it from other tiny peeps. Photo by Nic Minetor.



## RBA in the Field

### Compehner Farm, Fields and Forests— May 29, 2022

It was a most beautiful late May day in the 70's with sunshine and a very light breeze making for good birding by ear in several instances as 12 of us toured this active farm and residential yard which is well suited for a very good variety of nesting species. The walk started with a stroll around the residence and gardens. A welcome (and very obvious) early species was the pair of Cliff Swallows that are nesting on the vinyl-sided garage's motion light. Their nest had recently been completed and the swallows gave the group extremely close-up looks.

The yard was busy with Cedar Waxwings feasting on the remains of last year's holly berries near the front porch. Several Purple Finches were present at the feeders and nearby evergreens where they are nesting. Eastern Bluebirds are nesting in the garden and in several locations on the farm. All had a very closeup look into an Orchard Oriole's nest which had 5 eggs only about 5 feet above the ground, and was well-woven into the lower branch of a dwarf crabapple tree in the back yard.

Our walk transitioned into an easy hike over this former dairy farm, now a small cash crop operation, where Bobolinks, Eastern Meadowlarks, native sparrows, and others enjoy the meadows and fields. It was a delightful walk as we encountered several additional species including a great look at a Black-billed Cuckoo. With careful concentration, both Horned Lark and Vesper Sparrow were located, as they are regulars on this farm as well. As we made our way back home, we encountered a Yellow-billed Cuckoo, Rose-breasted Grosbeak, Scarlet Tanager, Indigo Bunting, Ruby-throated Hummingbird, and several orioles (both species) feeding at the grape jelly.

Nearing the finish of our field trip the group made a short drive to some more forested locations where an additional 10 species were added including Hooded Warbler, American Redstart, Wood Thrush, Eastern Wood Pewee, Dark-eyed Junco, and a very cooperative Louisiana Waterthrush.

The trip was a success with 66 species recorded—but especially great looks at several beautiful birds including the nesting Cliff Swallows and Orchard Orioles. It was a perfect day to enjoy the scenic beauty of the farm and birds everywhere – not to forget great com-

radery among the birders!

*Hans Kunze and Rick Stevens*

### Odonata Sanctuary—June 19, 2022

Eight people joined us on a beautiful day to bird the private reserve owned and run by Steve Melcher.

A displaying male Peacock was immediately located among the other resident rescued animals. We also found nesting Barn Swallows, House Sparrows, and House Wrens, before leaving the parking lot.

Proceeding up the hill to the first field we found Baltimore Orioles, Field Sparrows, Northern Cardinals, Bluebirds, and a flyby Meadowlark. The Bobolink did not show up this year.

At the next field after crossing the Irondequoit Creek, we encountered some Warbling Vireos, Cedar Waxwings, and an Eastern Kingbird.

Upon entering the old growth woods, we found Eastern Towhees, a Brown Thrasher, and Eastern Wood Pewee. In the woods we heard Red-eyed Vireos, Great Crested Flycatchers, and Eastern Wood Pewees.

At the pond we had a brief look at a flying Green Heron. On the post trip walk we found Purple Finch and Savannah Sparrows.

We had 43 species for the day.

*Tom Nash, Sheryl Gracewski, Steve Melcher*

### Barnhart's Camp and Keeney Swamp June 26, 2022

Early on a warm and sunny Sunday morning, 13 people (3 new to our field trips!) gathered at the Nunda Shop-n-Save parking lot to begin the legendary Barnhart's Camp trip. Could we beat last year's total of 82? Almost immediately, keen eyes and ears identified an Eastern Meadowlark on a distant rooftop. A Common Yellowthroat, a Killdeer, Chimney Swifts and a kettle of 36 Turkey Vultures—a record for that location—were among those quickly added. Our trip was off to a great start with 27 species.

At our second stop on the Nunda-Dalton Road a Blue-winged Warbler was briefly seen flitting as we arrived, but never gave us really good looks. Nevertheless, an Eastern Towhee sang and showed well, and Wood Thrush, Ovenbird, Pine and Chestnut-sided Warblers, Cedar Waxwing, and Eastern Bluebird were among the 30 species identified there.

Stops along the back roads of Livingston and Allegany Counties produced a juvenile Bald Eagle, Bobolinks, a Yellow-billed Cuckoo, Red-tailed Hawks, Indigo

Buntings, Rose-breasted Grosbeaks, Baltimore Orioles, and Common Ravens, among others, for our list. Our last stop before lunch was for Prairie Warbler, and we were not disappointed, as it was seen and heard well by all! A Black-billed Cuckoo at the same spot was an added bonus.

Reaching the Barnhart's Camp about 1 pm, we rested in the barn while we feasted on a delicious lunch provided by Carolyn and Jerry as well as on a host of great salads, fruit, and dessert brought by everyone to share. Next, the Barnharts led a walk on trails behind their house. An Eastern Bluebird box had eggs, Bobolinks carried food, and Eastern Kingbirds were seen feeding young. Including Ruby-throated Hummingbirds and Purple Finches at the feeders, the tally for the Camp totaled almost 30 species.

Going on 4 pm, we headed to Keeney Swamp to drive the forest roads in search of warblers. Ovenbirds were plentiful, Canada and Chestnut-sided Warblers were few, but we saw singing Mourning Warblers at two locations! At the lake, there were Great Blue and Green Herons, Wood Duck, and Mallard. An Osprey nest was occupied, and two adult Bald Eagles sitting side by side on a distant tree were a treat. (This brought our eagle total to four, tying last year's record.) Our last stops were along roads in Klipnocker State Forest, where a highlight was a beautiful Magnolia Warbler. Close to 9 pm, we tried one last time for Barred Owl. As we all stood quietly in the gathering darkness, a "who-cooks-for-you" rang out in the forest! What a great way to end this very special RBA field trip! Our total species for the day: 93, a new record for the trip! Many thanks to the Barnharts and to all who attended. The camaraderie among participants and all the great ears and eyes contributed to its immense success!

*Jeanne Verhulst on behalf of Carolyn and Jerry Barnhart, Tom Verhulst, Rick Stevens, and Hans Kunze.*

#### **Conesus Inlet WMA— July 30, 2022**

There were seven of us total and, in about four hours (plus one more hour by the airfield), we came up with 80 species – an excellent count for late July. Our only Bald Eagle came early, with a flyover adult at Vitale park; also a flyover Merlin. A couple unexpected birds by the swamp west side overlook and board walk were Northern Waterthrush and Purple Finch. Also nice at that location were two Ravens, which flew over and we could hear one calling all the time we

were there. Wood Ducks, Great Blue and Green Herons and Belted Kingfishers were easily seen at most of our stops. Of special note at the East Swamp Rd. pond were two adult Common Gallinules with 5 small chicks (very cute!); also a couple Hooded Mergansers. We did not see the target Cliff Swallows at the usual Giltner Rd. barn; but did pick up a couple at the airfield trip. Nick and I walked around the airfield grassland adding Savannah Sparrows, more Meadowlark, etc., but no Upland Sandpipers. Searching around the old barns and nearby cornfield, we did come up with good numbers of swallow, including at least two Cliff Swallows. Of special note was a large flock (c. 1500) of Red-winged Blackbirds, flushed out of the corn in part by a Red Fox which we saw run into the field. Blackbirds are definitely starting to gather in their post-breeding flocks. Thanks to those who participated.

*James Kimball, Nick Kachala, Elijah Kruger*

#### **Montezuma NWR— August 7, 2022**

In spite of the heat warning for the area, 5 people joined us leaders for the annual beginner bird trip to Montezuma. The area was drier than it had been a few years ago, which greatly reduced the number of productive stops. At the visitor's center we had a Purple Martin flying around and some shorebirds that we later got better views of.

The creek at the start of the Wildlife Drive and the LaRue Marsh immediately after were the most productive for shorebirds. Several species of sandpiper were noted in this area: Least, Semipalmated, and Solitary Sandpipers, as well as several Semipalmated Plovers. The highlights were the great scope views of ~10 Wilson's Snipe.

On the Seneca river we had some Caspian Terns fly by and several Great Blue and Green Herons.

In the main pool we had more cooperative birds like: the Pied-billed Grebe, Common Gallinule, Great Egret and Osprey. Here we could linger over them, getting good scope views.

Views at Knox-Marsellus were distant but did provide an exciting look at a group of Sandhill Cranes. Also present were some furtive Wood Ducks.

We ended the trip with a total species count of 40.

*Sheryl Gracewski, Tom Nash, John Boettcher*

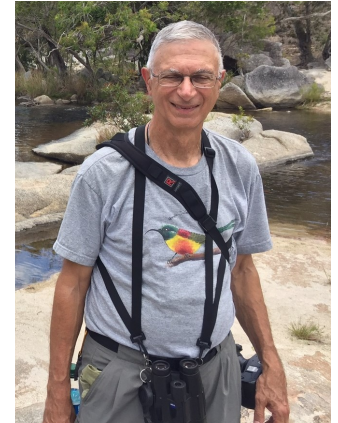


## September Monthly Meeting: Eastern Australia: Its Unique and Spectacular Birds by Dominic Sherony

If you had to select two words to characterize Australian birds, they might be strange and beautiful. There are bird families that have spectacular colors, some that have ancient origins, and others with unusual behaviors. The varied habitats and geological history of Australia resulted in a diversified bird population that has a high percentage of endemic species. I

will focus on selected families of birds or individual species and present their uniqueness and, in some cases, their unusual lifestyles.

Dominic Sherony was born and grew up in northern Illinois and attended University of Detroit and Illinois Institute of Technology, completing degrees in Chemical Engineering. He worked for Xerox Corporation for 31 years after graduate school. In that period, he took up bird watching as a hobby in 1972 and has been an active birder since but especially after his retirement. Dominic has many and varied interests in birding including leading local trips, and he has been active in New York State as a member of New York State Avian Records Committee for eleven years. He was a region co-coordinator with Robert Spahn for the NYS 2000 breeding bird atlas, and he has written numerous papers about birds, volunteered at Braddock Bay Bird Observatory and presently volunteers at High Acres Nature Area. He enjoys the challenge of photographing birds, and occasionally gives talks.



## *Continued September 2022 Events and Birding Field Trips*

**Oct 15**

Saturday

### **Batavia Wastewater Treatment Plant**

Why a wastewater treatment plant? Open water and a great location mean that this spot appears regularly on fall birding lists. We will drive on the banks of the ponds, getting out wherever the birds are congregating. Discover the great opportunity this spot (and its helpful staff) offers. Restrooms might be available at the plant offices. Meet at **9:00 a.m.** at the wastewater treatment plant (17 Treadeasy Ave.) at the end of Industrial Blvd., which is off Pearl Street (Route 33) at the western edge of the city of Batavia. From the NYS Thruway (I-90) at Batavia, exit 48, go south on Route 98 into the city of Batavia. At the second light (candy store), make a right turn onto Oak Street, which is Route 33. Continue on Rt. 33 west approximately 0.5 miles to Industrial Blvd. and make a left. Proceed south past the railroad tracks and straight up the hill and through the open gates to the entrance building of the treatment plant (first building on your left). Or, from Rochester, take I-490 W, to Exit 2 (Route 33 west). Follow Route 33 west through Batavia; turn left onto Oak Street (Route 33), stay right at roundabout, continue on Route 33, 0.5 miles to Industrial Blvd., turn left. Continue straight across the railroad tracks and up the hill. Turn left into the parking lot of the offices. If possible, we will carpool from the plant offices. **Spotting scopes would be very useful.**

**Leader:** Christina Hoh 973-224-7009 and co-leader Cathy Ballard 585-322-2621

**Oct 29**

Saturday

### **Durand-Eastman Park**

Waxwings, winter finches, and lingering migrants are possible. We may visit Irondequoit Bay to look for waterfowl. Steady moderate grade at one point. Length about 2.5 miles, total. Restrooms may be available on this route. Meet at **9:00 a.m.** in Parking Lot D on the north side of Lake Shore Blvd. between Zoo Road and Log Cabin Road. Please dress for the weather.

**Leaders:** Amy Kahn 585-310-2330, Sheryl Gracewski and Tom Nash 585-261-6975

## Records Report May 2022

1. May 2022 provided a quiet, warm end to spring. There was no really severe weather. Temperatures averaged 60.6°F, 1.8° above normal. There were no days above 90°, but 10 days at 80° or higher was the 9<sup>th</sup> most for a May. There was a five day period with highs all in the 80s mid month. Precipitation totaled 2.41", 0.45" below normal, with the period from 5-13 May rain-free. Only two days saw over 0.50", with 0.90" and 0.57" on the 21<sup>st</sup> and 28<sup>th</sup>.

2. Another May with virtually all expected species reported and quite a few rarities. Good weather meant lots of birding and reports. About 135,836 lines in the eBird data download, down only slightly from last May; BBBO banding records; the hawkcount table; geneseebirds posts; plus some direct, personal input provided much to review and summarize. The table of Noteworthy Records on the RBA website; possibly a banding tally for the spring season on the BBBO website; and the hawkwatch data at the Hawkcount website all provide more detail. There were about 663 unique observers contributing to eBird this month.

3. Again, essentially all the expected waterfowl were recorded this month. Departure dates again were generally early and numbers of lingering individuals low; many fewer in the vicinity of the new barrier beach island at Braddock Bay than last year, and low numbers in the NMWMA. Decent peak counts were reported for only Mute Swan, Long-tailed Duck, and Red-breasted Merganser. Eurasian Wigeon and Canvasback are often present through much of this month but were missed. **Common Eider** and Harlequin are rare into this month. Migrant grebes were scarce, and even breeding Pied-billed grebe numbers low.

4. Cuckoos arrived as expected and were reported in good numbers in scattered areas with gypsy moth outbreaks. There were some good Common Night-hawk counts along the lakeshore, with the peak 75 at the hawk watch. Lots of hummingbird reports, but only 13 banded at BBBO. Sandhill Crane numbers remained good, both migrants and reports from breeding locations.

5. Shorebird habitat was relatively poor. Most of the noteworthy reports were from the Braddock Bay sites or a pond on the Genesee Valley Greenway; almost

none from the NMWMA. Rarer species included: **Piping Plover** (12<sup>th</sup> regional spring record), **Marbled Godwit**, Stilt Sandpiper (rare in spring), and Willet. Among the missing were Upland Sandpiper and no phalarope reports. There were 23 species reported. There was a particular good movement on 27 into 28 May, with good high counts including: 85 Whimbrel, 50 Ruddy Turnstones, 53 Sanderlings, and 550 Dunlin. More details are summarized in the Noteworthy Records Table.

6. The expected gulls and terns were all reported, mostly in typical to low numbers; the best counts were 258 Caspian Terns and 41 Black terns. Rarer reports included two adult Laughing Gulls, a Franklin's Gull, and lingering Glaucous Gulls to late in the month. About eight Lesser Black-backed Gulls were reported through the month.

7. Loon reports and numbers were low; the maximum only 50 Common Loons on 5 May. Once again, other waterbirds and waders added some excitement, with: two American White Pelicans on the 1<sup>st</sup>, **Little Blue Heron** on the 11<sup>th</sup> and 14<sup>th</sup>, Glossy Ibis at the NMWMA (Guy Baldassarre Marsh) and 1-2 **White-faced Ibis** there from the 2<sup>nd</sup> - 6<sup>th</sup>.

8. Black Vulture was reported from Mendon Ponds Park and the hawk watch. Generally, hawk watch numbers, peaks and totals, were modest, with the overall total for the month 15,630, 80% of those Turkey Vultures and Broad-winged Hawks. There were five days with 1000+ birds tallied. Interesting total counts were 6,111 Turkey Vultures, 974 Bald Eagles, and only 6,701 Broad-winged Hawks. Again, no Northern Goshawk reports. **Mississippi Kite** on the 20<sup>th</sup> at the hawk watch then Beechwood State Park and the 28<sup>th</sup> over a Rochester garden center were to only rarities. Full details can be found at the Hawkcount webpage.

9. Recall again that the non-passerine land birds have mostly been moved to earlier in the list. Owls and woodpeckers are now the bulk of this section. The Owl Woods counts continued, with one each Long-eared and Northern Saw-whet Owls added on the 2<sup>nd</sup>. Red-headed Woodpecker numbers were again decent at about 38 total at 30 locations. Our regular three falcon species were reported in reasonably good numbers.



10. Again, of the regularly expected passerine species were reported, with only a few irregular rarities were missed. After a few late arrival dates to start, then most were back to normal. Typical of recent years, migration tended to come in bursts dictated mainly by appropriate weather systems. This gives us some unusual counts of individual species at times, e.g. 123 Magnolia and 67 Bay-breasted Warblers banded at BBBO on the 14<sup>th</sup>. Overall, it is clear that numbers are reduced generally. Breeding bird atlas work resulted in very large numbers of reports for some commoner species. The Noteworthy Records table tries to capture interesting examples. As a group, the “winter” finches were absent other than a few Pine Siskins. Nearly all the warblers, 35 species, were located, with **Kirtland’s Warbler** a special addition and only Kentucky Warbler “missed”. Other rarer reports included: **White-eyed Vireo**, Sedge Wren, Clay-colored Sparrow, Worm-eating Warbler, Prothonotary Warbler, **Yellow-throated Warbler**, and Prairie Warbler.

Looking quickly at the BBBO banding data, we find this year’s spring total down about 20 % from last year and the lowest in the 11 years of data I have close at hand, with net hours down a bit but still typical. Comparing numbers banded by species with the prior ten years’ averages and using two Standard Deviations (STD) as the cutoff, this year there were two passerine species significantly higher – Least Flycatcher and Bay-breasted Warbler - and one lower – Ruby-throated Hummingbird. Again, one must be wary in applying such statistics. Black-capped Chickadee continued with its alternate high and low years, this year low (last four – 232, 3, 675, and now 3). Again, interesting to anyone? Or am I wasting my time?

11. Please submit reports to eBird, post them on GeneseeBirds, and/or send by the 5th of the month to Nick Kachala, nicholaskach@gmail.com.

### Records Report June 2022

A first half of the month filled with heavy rainfall contrasted with abnormally dry conditions setting in by the month’s end. Temperatures averaged 67.5°F, 1.5 degrees above average. Seven days had highs in the 80s F and three days were 90° F or above. Precipitation totaled 2.04 inches, 1.32 inches below average.

Weather conditions were generally good for birding despite some days of widespread precipitation to-

wards the beginning of the month. Lots of birders were out atlasing and got to some underserved spots around the region; nice to see. The monthly eBird download came in at 63,203 lines raw and fell to 49,911 lines after removing excess data from western Orleans, Genesee, Wyoming, and eastern Ontario Counties, representing a shrinkage of 2.9% from 2021. Rarities felt slower than in recent years’ past, but still made a decent list. Black-bellied Whistling Duck, Willet, two Laughing Gulls, two Least Terns, Snowy Egret, Swainson’s Hawk, and Sedge Wren topped the list.

Expected breeders like Mallard and Wood Duck had high counts much lower than expected. Lingering waterfowl were scarcer than in recent years. These waterfowl were consistently found at places like Braddock Bay’s East Spit, with Blue-winged Teal, American Wigeon, Greater Scaup, and Red-breasted Merganser seen periodically. A Green-winged Teal was reported through the month at the ever-productive Chandler Road section of the Genesee Valley Greenway Trail outside of Genesee. A Ring-necked Duck was found at Van Dyne Spoor Road in NMWMA most of the month.

Yellow-billed Cuckoo was reported strong with 174 lines. Common Nighthawk reports dried up earlier than last year with the last on June 3<sup>rd</sup> around the Greece ponds. Ruby-throated Hummingbird reports came in at 536 lines. The only consistent reports of Common Gallinule and American Coot came out of Van Dyne Spoor Road at NMWMA.

Observers in Monroe County continued their strong coverage of the East Spit Island, an actual island this year with Lake Ontario’s water levels about average compared to last spring when it became a peninsula extension of the normal East Spit. Birders were rewarded with some lingering shorebirds including a Black-bellied Plover on the 12<sup>th</sup> and several White-rumped Sandpipers towards the beginning of the month. A Willet was seen on the 1<sup>st</sup> at Sodus Point. Thirteen species of shorebird were seen in total, not the best but not horrible. For gulls, a Laughing Gull was seen at the East Spit on the 1<sup>st</sup> and at Sodus Point on the 10<sup>th</sup>. There were no reports of Lesser Black-backed Gull, a sharp contrast to last year, where they were consistent around Braddock Bay well into the month. Two Least Terns made a brief appearance on the morning of the 12<sup>th</sup> at the East Spit barrier island

and were also picked up heading east past Charlotte Pier later.

Small movements of late-migrant raptors continued into the month with occasional volunteer staffing of the Braddock Bay Hawk Watch. June 14<sup>th</sup> was an excellent day with 140 Turkey Vultures, 47 Bald Eagles, 49 Broad-winged Hawks, and a Swainson's Hawk making for a pleasant surprise for the two observers present. There were 22 reports of Red-headed Woodpecker. American Kestrel came in at 75 lines. There were at least two pairs of breeding Merlin confirmed and 12 lines of Peregrine Falcon. Fish Crow had a high count of nine from downtown Rochester, where the bulk of the county's population now seems to reside.

Passerine numbers contained nothing excited. Reports of late migrants were very few to almost non-existent, perhaps more of a consequence of reduced effort now that June arrived, and spring migration is "over" (the noteworthy table was dominated by too few names). There were notable misses such as Olive-sided Flycatcher, Philadelphia Vireo, and Lincoln's Sparrow. There was only one report of Swainson's Thrush on the 14<sup>th</sup> and no reports of Gray-cheeked Thrush, which was surprising given that these two species' nocturnal flight calls are reliably detected with passive acoustic monitoring well into or sometimes past the second week of the month. The rarest passerines were a Sedge Wren found at Burger Park in Greece, the Clay-colored Sparrows on Cook Road in Hamlin, and a Prairie Warbler in northern Letchworth State Park. An additional Clay-colored Sparrow showed up in Caledonia, seen only on one day.

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### Records Report July 2022

1. Dry conditions persisted through the month, enough for the U.S. Drought Monitor to upgrade parts of the region to moderate drought. Dryness was most evident by stunted crops throughout the Genesee Valley and Wyoming County. Temperatures averaged 72.1°F, 0.2°F below normal. Only July 20<sup>th</sup> and 23<sup>rd</sup> reached above 90°F, although many days in the high 80s matched with increasing humidity later in the month contributed to many unbearable days.

Precipitation averaged 1.78 inches for the month, 1.78 inches below average, with about 0.94 inches of that falling on the 18<sup>th</sup> in a widespread rain event. Strong thunderstorms were mostly absent from the first half of the month, but the more seasonable isolated thunderstorms were common in the latter half of the month. A strong line of thunderstorms on the morning of the 28<sup>th</sup> produced a rare EF-2 tornado in central Wyoming County. The 500-yard-wide tornado knocked down a barn and damaged several other structures over a 10 mile path.

2. The popular locations in the region continued to receive regular coverage and some late season atlas effort was prevalent in the eBird download. It was nice to see that some observers made efforts in some more remote locations in the southern part of the region. The eBird download came out at just over 44,000 lines after out-of-region filtering. No outstanding high counts of species were recorded. Sedge Wren at two spots, a Forster's Tern, and a rare mid-summer Long-tailed Duck were the only significant headlines in the region for July.

3. Counts were generally lower than expected for some of the common breeding waterfowl like Mallard and Wood Duck. The Northern Montezuma Wildlife Management Area and the Lake Ontario shoreline were the places where the uncommon summer waterfowl appeared, most notably a Long-tailed Duck at Irondequoit Bay Outlet. A male Common Goldeneye appeared at the Braddock Bay East Spit. Green-winged Teal were also occasionally seen all month at the East Spit. An adult male Ring-necked Duck was seen for one day at Twin Cedars Environmental Area in Avon. Mute Swan numbers on Braddock Bay were down from last July, but likely just distributed to the nearby ponds.

4. No significant gatherings of Chimney Swifts were observed, with the highest count being 16 at the Brickyard Trail in Brighton. Lower high counts than expected of Common Gallinule, American Coot, and Pied-billed Grebe persisted off Van Dyne Spoor Road in the tract preferably listed by some as the Sandhill Crane Unit in the NMWMA. A lone Sandhill Crane was observed flying over Braddock Bay on the 27<sup>th</sup>, with a few others at known breeding sites.

5. Fall shorebird migration picked up towards the end of the month totaling 16 species. The East Spit was

the best location and received constant coverage. Whimbrel had a high count of 5 on the 18<sup>th</sup>. A Long-billed Dowitcher was seen and photographed by one observer at the East Spit on the 30<sup>th</sup>. The only report of Upland Sandpiper came from the Geneseo Airfield on the 24<sup>th</sup>. A Forster's Tern was found at the East Spit on the 19<sup>th</sup> by Michelle Gianvecchio and persisted until the 23<sup>rd</sup>. It was seen by a few others as well but not as heavily reported as the June Braddock Bay individual.

6. Mike Tetlow noted a small dispersal flight of Red-tailed Hawks and Bald Eagles from the Braddock Bay hawk banding station on 11<sup>th</sup> with 33 Bald Eagles being a highlight. The summer hawk count begins in August. Some additional raptor movement was noted on the 30<sup>th</sup> and 31<sup>st</sup> from the platform. There were 118 lines of American Kestrel, 10 lines of Merlin, and nine lines of Peregrine Falcon in the eBird download.

7. Red-headed Woodpecker was reported at 10 locations. Swallow numbers were generally low with moderate numbers of Purple Martins at a few locations along the Lake Ontario shoreline as well as the Conesus Inlet WMA. Bank Swallow numbers were lower than in recent years at the large colonies along the lakeshore. The Sedge Wren at Burger Park from June continued into this month and a second singing

bird was found towards the end of the month singing simultaneously. Another Sedge Wren was found at the end of Morgan Road in the NMWMA behind the DEC facility. Small numbers of warblers that breed in the hills around the Finger Lakes and Letchworth SP were reported as well. The Wetmore Road spot in southeast Livingston County south of Harriet Hollister Spencer Recreation Area continues to be our region's only Prairie Warbler stronghold. Something of a surprise among the passerines is the very low numbers of reports for Golden-crowned Kinglet and some of the scarcer breeding warblers typically found in the hills south of Rochester. One might expect better numbers in years such as this with active breeding bird atlas work underway. This bears future attention.

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	2022	2021	10-year Average
Species for July	180	180	180.3
New for the year	1	1	2.5
Total for the year to date	280	274	272.2

Thank you to all who submitted eBird checklists in May, June and July!



Stilt Sandpiper (left), Semipalmated Sandpiper (center), Short-billed Dowitcher (right) - Braddock Bay East Spit - © Alan Bloom - July 20, 2022



Eastern Kingbird with Young, Barnhart's Camp, June 26, 2022, Jeanne Verhulst

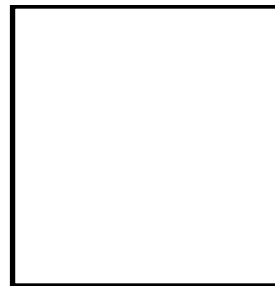


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