

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 9th 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 21st and 28th.

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 Nighthawk 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** (12th 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 1st, **Little Blue Heron** on the 11th and 14th, Glossy Ibis at the NMWMA (Guy Baldassarre Marsh) and 1-2 **White-faced Ibis** there from the 2nd - 6th.

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 20th at the hawk watch then Beechwood State Park and the 28th 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 2nd. 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 14th. 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 3rd 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 12th and several White-rumped Sandpipers towards the beginning of the month. A Willet was seen on the 1st 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 1st and at Sodus Point on the 10th. 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 12th 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 14th 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 14th 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 20th and 23rd 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 18th 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 28th 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 27th, 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 18th. A Long-billed Dowitcher was seen and photographed by one observer at the East Spit on the 30th. The only report of Upland Sandpiper came from the Geneseo Airfield on the 24th. A Forster's Tern was found at the East Spit on the 19th by Michelle Gianvecchio and persisted until the 23rd. 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 11th with 33 Bald Eagles being a highlight. The summer hawk count begins in August. Some additional raptor movement was noted on the 30th and 31st 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!



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



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