

western great lakes region



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The cool spring weather extended into June. In fact, most of the summer was cool, with only a few brief periods of hot, humid weather. Rainfall proved variable. Many portions of all three states had above average rain during June and early July. In some instances it was excessive (!), e.g., Milwaukee had five–ten inches overnight with localized flooding, and Michigan's Allegan and Ottawa counties had eight–nine inches in one day with extensive flooding. All three states had localized severe thunderstorms, with scattered tornadoes spawned from some of these storms. A particularly severe storm struck east-central Wisconsin in late June, while southeast Michigan was raked by several tornadoes July 2, causing extensive damage. The latter half of July saw a drier pattern predominate, extending into August.

Birding mirrored the weather, rather uneventful. There were very few rarities—Brown Pelican, Anhinga, Tricolored Heron, Roseate and Arctic terns. Encouraging was

the record number of breeding and summering Piping Plovers in Michigan. Also encouraging was the second-highest Kirtland's Warbler census in Michigan, while exciting for Wisconsin was the *five* territorial males, a record number. Last, there was an exceptional number of late migrating warblers, vireos, and flycatchers, having been delayed by a cold, wet May.

Abbreviations: M.W.S. (*Muskegon Wastewater System, Muskegon Co., MI*); P.M.S.G.A. (*Pt. Mouillee State Game Area, Monroe Co., MI*); SH.N.W.R. (*Shiawasee N.W.R., Saginaw Co., MI*); W.P.B.O. (*Whitefish Pt. Bird Observatory, Chippewa Co., MI*).

LOONS TO IBISES

Late migrating Red-throated Loons were noted in *St. Louis, MN*, June 1–2, with a maximum of eight (m.ob.), and Michigan's W.P.B.O. intermittently between June 1–7, with a maximum of 15 (JM, AB, LD). Thirty Com. Loons were still migrating by W.P.B.O. June 1 (AB). Early fall migrating Horned Grebes were found in Michigan.

One was seen July 23 in *Keweenaw (LB)*, with two July 26 at W.P.B.O. (LD). Michigan had “book-end” Red-necked Grebes. A late migrant was present at W.P.B.O. June 1 (LD), while singles were in *Keweenaw* July 15 (LD), and at W.P.B.O. July 22, with 23 there July 28 (LD). In Wisconsin they nested at 4 sites, including 12 nests at *Rush L., Winnebago (TZ)*. Eared Grebes were found in Wisconsin, with one in *Dane* June 20 (EH et al.), and four were on *L. Maria, Green Lake*, July 7–12 (DB, TS et al.). Wisconsin had only its 2nd W. Grebe breeding record when a nest with 2 eggs was discovered by Ziebell June 22 on *Rush L.*, the site of the first nesting. Unfortunately, this time it was unsuccessful, with the parents lingering until July 19. Another individual was present on *L. Maria* between June 26–July 9 (DT, SR et al.). Minnesota had its first confirmed **Clark's Grebe** nesting when a nest with 3 eggs was found in *Todd* July 1 (KB).

American White Pelicans were again found in several Wisconsin sites. Peak summering numbers included 200 in *Trempealeau (FL)* and 70 at *Horicon N.W.R. (DT)*. They nested on *Cat I.* at the s. end of *Green Bay*, with 104 nests, up from 50 last year. This species, and the Double-crested Cormorants, are placing increasing pressure on the nesting herons of the island, which may cause heron abandonment in the future, due to limited space and lack of foliage. Michigan had 3 Am. White Pelican sightings. They included summering birds (one–three) at P.M.S.G.A. (WG et al.), two at M.W.S. June 8–10 (MM, JP, GW), and two at SH.N.W.R. June 19–July 27 (DP, BG, MW). A **Brown Pelican** was at *Marquette, MI*, June 27–29 (JH, JF, CP). A pair of **Anhingas** was found by Spahn July 5 on *Thunder L., Oneida*. The birds proved extremely difficult to see, but a few lucky birders were able to relocate them intermittently through July 26 (DT, DG, JH, BB). This provides only Wisconsin's 7th record.

In contrast to last summer, there was only a token influx of southern herons. Beside the nesting Snowy Egrets at *Green Bay*, other Wisconsin sightings included a single

in *Winnebago* June 11 (DT) and at Milwaukee June 12–July 6 (MB, DG, MK et al.). Minnesota had one in *Kandiyoki* July 3 (R&JF). Michigan had reports from 4 sites. One was at P.M.S.G.A. June 6 (WP). The individual at Rogers City June 11 furnished a first for *Presque Isle* (WG). At SH.N.W.R., one–two were present intermittently June 9–July 10 (DP). At the Karn Plant, *Bay*, one–three were seen July 14–27 (m.ob.). An ad Little Blue Heron was seen by Domagalski in *Washington*, WI, June 13. In Michigan, one was present at the Karn Plant July 5–11 (AB, JSo). Pearson had a brief look at a **Tricolored Heron** at Horicon N.W.R., WI, June 15, where they summered last year. One was at Michigan's Karn Plant July 6–13 (AB, JSo). Cattle Egrets nested as usual at Green Bay, and also at Oshkosh (TZ). Non-nesting birds included a maximum of five at the Karn Plant and one–three in *Swift* and *Clay*, MN. The only Yellow-crowned Night-Heron was found in *Ramsey*, MN, June 30 (AH).

SWANS TO CRANES

Two Tundra Swans summered at P.M.S.G.A. (WP), with one in *Mecosta*, MI, July 13 (SRo). Trumpeter Swans nested in Minnesota and Wisconsin. For example, there were more than 20 nests in the Twin Cities area. A Greater White-fronted Goose was seen June 1 at W.P.B.O. (GB, DJ) for only the 2nd record there. A tardy Snow Goose was in *Big Stone* June 22 (LE), making this 9 of the past 10 summers it has been found in Minnesota. A Ross's Goose present at Duluth since May 26 was last seen June 1, providing a record-late spring departure (m.ob.).

Breeding N. Pintails and N. Shovelers in *Keweenaw*, MI, were unusual (LB). A female Canvasback was at the Erie Marsh Preserve, MI, July 26 (DO, DPi, JS). Ring-necked Ducks at Rush L. June 22 (TZ) and until June 29 at Goose Pond (PA), both Wisconsin, were out of range. Unusual were six Greater Scaup that summered at Milwaukee (MK et al.). Singles were at Crex Meadows W.A. June 3 (JN) and Bailey's Harbor July 20 (R&CL), both Wisconsin. Lesser Scaup were found for varying lengths of time in 11 Wisconsin counties. An injured female Harlequin Duck was discovered on a wet road in *Cook*, MN, June 7 (PB). A few late migrating Oldsquaws were found at W.P.B.O. June 1–8 (AB, LD). Most unusual were two that lingered at Bailey's Harbor, WI, June 10–July 19 (JR, FL). A few late migrating scoters were found at W.P.B.O. A Surf was present June 7 (LD),

while three White-wingeds were also noted June 7, with four June 15 (LD). A male Com. Goldeneye was at Manitowoc June 6–19 (DT). A Bufflehead was still in Milwaukee June 6 (MB), with a female lingering at Manitowoc until July 9 (CS). Red-breasted Merganser flocks were still migrating past Manitowoc and W.P.B.O. during the first week of June.

Unusual was an Osprey at Milwaukee July 18 (DG). In Minnesota, Red-shouldered Hawks were found as far north as *Cass*, *Crow Wing*, and *Aitkin*. The W.P.B.O. had a late Broad-winged Hawk migration with 1370 counted between June 1–13; the peak was 400 June 1 (LD). The Merlin seen by Bardon in *Kittson*, MN, July 11 was an ad. male of the *richardsoni* race. The two Peregrine Falcons that passed over W.P.B.O. June 2 (LD) were very late spring migrants.

Minnesota again had a limited number of Gray Partridge reports (11 counties). For Michigan, there were very few Spruce and Sharp-tailed grouse reports. In Wisconsin, there was an average number of Spruce Grouse sightings, but a limited number of Sharp-tailed. Yellow Rails were on territory in 4 Minnesota counties: *Aitkin* (three), *Cass* (six), *Marshall* (one), and *Morrison* (one). For Wisconsin, the surprise was five–ten (!) on territory in the Comstock Bog, *Marquette*. In Michigan, a few were at Seney N.W.R., with one June 4–18 near Houghton L., *Rosecommon* (MP). A possible sub-ad. Black Rail was killed by a "predator" in *Menominee* July 13 (NI). Unfortunately, the specimen was not kept, nor were photos taken. If accepted by the records committee, it would represent the Upper Peninsula's first record.

SHOREBIRDS

No fewer than 22 species lingered into June. Wisconsin had the most with 15, followed closely by Michigan's 14, while Minnesota had several. Interesting sightings from these late spring migrants included a Black-bellied Plover June 14 at the Karn Plant, MI (JSo); Am. Golden-Plover June 24 (spring migrant?) in *Otter Tail*, MN (RJ); Semipalmated Plover at SH.N.W.R. June 19 (DP); Greater Yellowlegs June 12 and Lesser Yellowlegs June 19, both at SH.N.W.R. (DP); two Solitary Sandpipers June 4 in *Berrien*, MI (WJ); a Willet at P.M.S.G.A. June 6 (WP); single Whimbrels at W.P.B.O. June 4 (LD) and at the Karn Plant June 8–9 (GS, JS); a Hudsonian Godwit in *Columbia*, WI, June 1 (KBu); and a Marbled Godwit at New Buffalo, MI, June 22 (JG). Other noteworthy observations included Ruddy Turn-

stones lingering through July 9 at Manitowoc (CS); Sanderling and Semipalmated Sandpipers in *Dane*, WI, through June 20 (PA, EH), with White-rumped Sandpipers present through June 13 (PA, EH); Baird's Sandpipers in *Oconto*, WI, until June 11 (J&KS); an absurdly late Stilt Sandpiper in *Winona*, MN, June 18 (KB); plus a Dunlin that summered at SH.N.W.R. (DP), joined by two others July 10. Piping Plovers were nonexistent in Wisconsin, while Minnesota had only two at their breeding location on Pine-Currys I., *Lake of the Woods*. However, Michigan had an excellent total of 23 pairs producing 45 fledglings, with an additional 17 adults found (*vide* KS).

The fall migration commenced, as usual, during late June, with a few early migrants found at scattered sites in the Region. The main fall exodus started in early July, increasing in momentum for the duration of the month, but limited by less than favorable habitat. Noteworthy fall migrants were Am. Avocets in both Michigan and Wisconsin. In the former, one–two birds were present in *Berrien* June 22 and July 5, 21 & 25 (JG, PC, KG, KM, SRo). In Wisconsin, single Am. Avocets were in *Clark* July 13 (KL) and *Dane* July 21 (PA, EH). Willets appeared in all 3 states, with a total of 21 in Michigan, 11–15 in Minnesota, and two in Wisconsin. Single Whimbrels were found at St. Joseph, MI, July 17 & 25–26 (JG, SRo, WJ, KM). A W. Sandpiper was seen at North Pt., *Alpena*, MI, July 31 (WG). Peak numbers for Lesser Yellowlegs included 191 at SH.N.W.R. July 31 (DP) and 161 in *Big Stone*, MN, July 20 (LE); for Semipalmated Sandpiper, 268 at SH.N.W.R. July 31 (DP) and 250 in *Renville*, MN, July 19 (KB); Least Sandpiper, 175 at SH.N.W.R. July 10 (DP), 106 in *Big Stone*, MN, July 20 (LE), and 38 at SH.N.W.R. July 31 (DP); and 122 Short-billed Dowitchers at SH.N.W.R. July 31 (DP).

GULLS TO WOODPECKERS

An ad. Parasitic Jaeger was found by Williams at Wisconsin Pt., Superior, June 2. This represented only Wisconsin's 2nd June record. Laughing Gulls were almost nonexistent in the Region. Singles were at Manitowoc June 13 (CS) and Milwaukee July 4 (TW). The only Franklin's Gulls were found in Minnesota. No nesting was reported at their traditional sites. However, an impressive peak of 12,000 occurred in *Douglas* July 24 (KB). Likewise, Little Gulls were exceptionally scarce. Minnesota had one May 30–June 2 at Pelican L., *Wright* (m.ob.). One was at Manitowoc June 5–6 (CS, DT). Very late was a Thayer's Gull at

Two Rivers June 7 (MPe). Also exceptionally tardy was an Iceland Gull at Two Rivers June 19 (DT), with another at Manitowoc July 11–17 (CS). At least three Lesser Black-backed Gulls were found on the Wisconsin side of L. Michigan. An adult was present at Two Rivers June 18 (MPe), with a different individual there June 19 (DT). Another adult was seen at Sheboygan intermittently until July 6 (D&MB, BD et al.). Glaucous Gulls were seen intermittently at Manitowoc/Two Rivers until mid-July (DT, CS). Several Great Black-backed Gulls summered at Sheboygan, Kewaunee, and Two Rivers, WI. A possible breeding pair was in the gull colony on Bird I., *Alpena* (GN). There are only 2 previous breeding records for Michigan.

A **Roseate Tern** was found in *Berrien*, MI, June 21 (KMi, JG). If accepted by the records committee, it would represent the first state and Regional sighting. Single ad. **Arctic Terns** were found at Duluth June 2–3 (PS, SB, AH) and at Sheboygan June 8 (RH, AS, JO). Ellwanger counted 920 Black Terns in *Big Stone*, MN, July 29.

Good numbers of Black-billed and Yellow-billed cuckoos were found in Wisconsin and Michigan. Snowy Owls appeared in 2 states. For Michigan, one was in *Ionia* June 6 (TB), another in *Sebewaing* June 9, while the last was an emaciated individual found near *Sandusky* June 11, which subsequently died (*vide* JSo). A very healthy bird was at *Ashland*, WI, between July 2–10 (DV, ph.). A N. Hawk Owl was found in suitable nesting habitat in *Roseau*, MN, June 7 (GK). Great Gray Owls nested in Minnesota's Sax-Zim Bog (2 nests; PB et al.). Additional sightings included *Aitkin*, *Koochiching*, *Lake*, and *Roseau*. Michigan's *Keweenaw* has its first summer sightings, with two June 6 (LB) and one July 22 (JRo). One was also found in *Emmet* June 14 (RP). The Long-eared Owl June 9 in *Traverse*, MN, was in an unusual location (RJ). Single Short-eared Owls were present in *Kittson*, *Marshall*, and *Wilkin*, MN (KB), and *Chippewa*, MI (RA). Minnesota reported lower Red-headed Woodpecker numbers, especially in the s.w. section. Black-backed Woodpeckers nested in *Cook* (KE) and *Lake of the Woods* (*vide* GM), and there was probable nesting in *Beltrami* (DJo). Birds were found in several n. Wisconsin counties.

FLYCATCHERS TO SHRIKES

There were many late migrating flycatchers. For example, an Olive-sided Flycatcher was in far s.w. Minnesota at *Pipestone* June 12



Male Kirtland's Warbler in Vilas County, Wisconsin, in June 1997. Two males were present on territory at this site, and three others in another county in Wisconsin, during this season. Photograph/Chris Wood

(ND). There were numerous Yellow-bellied Flycatcher sightings in s. Wisconsin and Michigan until mid-June. Hard to explain were Alder Flycatchers in *Dakota* June 26 (KB) and *Anoka* July 4 (TT), both Minnesota. An Acadian Flycatcher in *Marinette* June 12 was considerably out of range (J&KS), and there were unusual breeding records in *Washington* (NC, BD) and *Winnebago* (TZ), all Wisconsin. Also out of range were single Willow Flycatchers in *Douglas*, WI (RJo), and *Twig*, MN (DW). The Wisconsin bird had been present at this site last year. While Minnesota had more W. Kingbird reports than last year, it was still below average. A Scissor-tailed Flycatcher attempted to nest with a W. Kingbird near *Elk R.*, MN.

After the low number of Red-breasted Nuthatches during the winter and spring, it was surprising to find birds during June in *Waukesha*, *Milwaukee*, and *Appleton* (a pair), with early July observations in *Dane* and *Iowa*, all Wisconsin. An early fall migrant was in *LaCrosse* July 27 (FL).

Single Carolina Wrens were found in *Washington*, WI, June 27 (SD) and *Hennepin*, MN, July 28 (SC). House Wrens nested in the outhouse at *Whitewater S.P.*, MN (DZ)! A male Mt. Bluebird nested with a female E. Bluebird at *Bemidji*, MN (m.ob.). The Townsend's Solitaire found by Binford in *Keweenaw* provided the county's first summer record. Early June migrating Swainson's Thrushes were found in both Wisconsin and Michigan. Single N. Mock-

ingbirds were seen in *St. Louis*, MN, June 1 (T Wi) and *Door*, WI, June 15 (R&CL). Loggerhead Shrikes are declining throughout the Region. Minnesota had only seven reporting counties, below average. Wisconsin's only record was a successful nest in *Shawano* (about the 4th year at this site), while Michigan had no sightings.

VIREOS TO WARBLERS

Vireos and warblers extended their migration well into June. At least 3 vireo and 17 warbler species were observed in good numbers until at least June 10–15. For example, in *Milwaukee* Korducki found more than 2 vireo and at least 16 warbler species consistently June 5–8 & 14. Because all 3 states had numerous late sightings, only the highlights can be included. In extreme s.w. Wisconsin, a Blue-headed Vireo was seen by Robbins in *Grant* June 1. A Blue-winged Warbler was in *Lyon*, MN, June 3 (RS). Tennessee Warblers were found as late as June 10 in *Douglas*, WI (RJo), while Minnesota had them until June 15 in *Brown* (JSp), *Anoka* June 20 (KB), and *Hennepin* July 1 (DWa). A Magnolia Warbler was found by Hale in *Jefferson*, WI, June 12. A Yellow-rumped Warbler was at *Tawas Point S.P.*, MI, June 10 (GN, Sca). A Palm Warbler was in *Milwaukee* June 3 (MB), plus a very late one was bathing in a bird bath in *Door* June 23 (R&CL). Out-of-range and late was a Cerulean Warbler in *Douglas*, WI, June 10 (RJo). For Minnesota, out-of-range and late sightings included a Prothonotary in

Otter Tail June 24 (AE), a Connecticut in Ramsey June 19 (KB), and Wilson's in Anoka June 30 (KB).

White-eyed Vireos were found in 5–6 Wisconsin sites, with nesting in several. In Michigan, they were at 2 sites, with several pairs nesting at one site. Bell's Vireos were found at 5–7 Wisconsin sites. Philadelphia Vireos made news in Wisconsin. The first confirmed nesting was made in Bayfield, as reported by Chris Wood, June 5, plus possible nesting at 2 additional Bayfield sites June 30 (CW) and July 10 (JFr).

Noteworthy warbler observations included Golden-winged on territory in Marshall, MN, a slight n.w. expansion (S&KS, PS). There were 4 July reports of Tennessee for Wisconsin: Bayfield July 7 (JFr), Portage July 15 (MBe), Washington July 19 (BD), and Dodge July 26 (BD), undoubtedly representing possible territorial and early fall migrants. In Minnesota, two singing males in Kittson July 6 (PS) were w. of their usual range. The Orange-crowned Warbler at Seney N.W.R., MI, in late July (JM) was a rare summer sighting. A Nashville and Yellow-rumped in Kittson, MN, July 6 (PS) were w. of normal. The territorial Black-throated Blue Warbler in Beltrami, MN, was unusual (DJo). Yellow-throated Warblers were again on territory in Wyalusing S.P., WI, during June, with one–two present (m.ob.). For Minnesota, one was in Sibley S.P. for the 4th consecutive summer, remaining into July (R&JF). Additional reports came from Hennepin and Ramsey, giving Minnesota 5 documented and 4 undocumented reports for 1997, an unprecedented number. **Kirtland's Warbler** made news in both Michigan and Wisconsin. For Michigan, 728 singing males were censused, just 37 short of the 1995 record. The 19 males in the 3 Upper Peninsula counties provided a new record there, while the remaining 709 were from 10 Lower Peninsula counties. For Wisconsin, there was a record five territorial males from 2 counties. Two were present in Vilas (BR et al.), with the other three in Marinette (JT et al.). Both groups were discovered June 18–19, with birds remaining on territory until July 1–6. Prairie Warblers were on territory briefly at 3 Wisconsin sites: Green June 9–10 (PA, EH); Schlitz Audubon Center, Milwaukee, June 11–29 (MB et al.); and Portage June 27–July 5 (MBe). Minnesota had a territorial male at Lanesboro in July (m.ob.).

Worm-eating Warblers were nesting/territorial in Berrien and Allegan, MI, and Sauk, Grant, and Waukesha, WI. Kentucky

Warblers were found at their usual Wisconsin nesting sites, plus Dane, Green, and Sauk. Michigan had them in Kalamazoo, Hillsdale, and Berrien, the latter individual probably a late migrant. For the first time in 6 years, none was in Nicollet, MN. Hooded Warblers were nesting/territorial in 8 Wisconsin and one Minnesota counties. Canada Warblers on territory in Boot L. were well s. of their normal Minnesota range (KB). Yellow-breasted Chats were found at 2 Minnesota sites: Yellow Bank R., Lac Qui Parle, June 9–22 (RJ et al.) and Nelson's Fen, Olmsted, June 26–July 5 (CK et al.). In Wisconsin, they were at 6 sites, including Bong Wildlife Area June 1 (TW); Schlitz Audubon Center June 12 (MB); Brooklyn Wildlife Area, Dane, until June 19 (a few; PA); Brooklyn Wildlife Area, Green (nesting; PA); Governor Dodge S.P. June 27 (DT); and Waushara July 12 (TS).

TANAGERS TO FINCHES

A male W. Tanager spent June 10–11 at the Ross' feeders in Colgate, WI (W&SR). While the bird was able to fly, it would not leave the yard, sleeping in low shrubs where a predator killed it June 11 (ph.). A Blue Grosbeak in Lac Qui Parle, MN, June 10 (RJ) provided a first county record. Out-of-range was one in Renville, MN, July 31 (CM). Dickcissels arrived late again; good numbers were found in Wisconsin, albeit not quite equal to last summer.

Two singing Field Sparrows in Bayfield, WI, were unusually far north (CW). Henslow's Sparrows were found in at least 11 Wisconsin and 6 Minnesota counties. In the latter state, the bird in Renville July 19 represented a first county record (KB, SC). Le Conte's Sparrows were found in at least 6 Wisconsin counties. In Minnesota, birds in Anoka, Big Stone, and Swift were s. of normal. Nelson's Sharp-tailed Sparrows were present in 6 Minnesota counties (Aitkin three, Clay one, Kittson at least four, Mahanomen one, Marshall, and Pennington four). For Wisconsin, the species was found at the usual site, Crex Meadows W.A., June 3 (JN). White-throated Sparrows lingered in Minnesota's Winona until June 8 (DZ), Olmsted June 26 (CH), and Jackson July 5 (KB). A total of four late migrating White-crowned Sparrows were found at W.P.B.O. June 1, 2 & 13 (LD). However, hard to explain was one in Roseau, MN, June 24–25 (BS).

Orchard Orioles were again numerous in Wisconsin, though slightly fewer than the outstanding showing last summer. Unusually far south was the Red Crossbill in

Jackson, MN, July 5 (KB). Both Red Crossbills and **White-winged Crossbills** nested in Wisconsin. The latter represented a first state record.

CORRIGENDA

In AFN Vol. 51, No. 1, there were several typographical errors involving Scott Diehl. He should be credited with the exhausted Am. Bittern and Virginia Rail brought to the rehab center in Milwaukee Nov. 1 & 19, respectively.

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