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## Western Great Lakes



**Peder H. Svingen**

**D**ry conditions prevailed in northern Michigan and over most of Minnesota. Good shorebird habitat emerged at Pointe Mouillee in Michigan and in western Minnesota, especially at Agassiz National Wildlife Refuge.

**Abbreviations:** Big Stone N.W.R. (*Lac Qui Parle*, MN); Murphy–Hanrehan (Murphy–Hanrehan Park Reserve, *Dakota/Scott*, MN); Pelican I. (Leech L., *Cass*, MN); Pte. Mouillee (Pointe Mouillee S.G.A., *Monroe*, MI); Shiawassee (Shiawassee N.W.R., *Saginaw*, MI); U.P. (Upper Peninsula of Michigan); Whitefish Pt. (Whitefish Point B.O., *Chippewa*, MI).

### WATERFOWL THROUGH MOORHENS

Unusual for summer was a Greater White-fronted Goose in Alger, MI late Jun–22 Jul (H); singles were also found in five w. Minnesota locations. A male Cinnamon Teal at Pte. Mouillee 9 Jun (WW, AMB) showed no signs of hybridization. Wisconsin's 5th Common Eider in *Sheboygan* 1-5 Jun (ph. DM) was determined to be subspecies *v-nigra*. Unexpected in midsummer in Michigan were a female Common Eider in Alger 29 Jun–1 Jul (p.a., JC, m.ob.) and a male Surf Scoter in *Houghton* 8 Jul (JY). The 4th summer occurrence of Harlequin Duck in Wisconsin was found in *Sheboy-*

gan 1-2 Jun (DT). Michigan reported a basic-plumaged Pacific Loon in *Baraga* 4 Jun (p.a., RR, ph. SH). Unseasonable for Minnesota were single Horned Grebes at Duluth 4 Jul (PHS) and in *Big Stone* 29-30 Jul (KRE et al.). Red-necked Grebes were found in four Wisconsin counties and nested in *Delta*, MI (SH, RR) for the 3rd consecutive year.

In Wisconsin, a calico Little Blue Heron lingered in *Fond du Lac* 4 Jul+ (DT). Tricolored Heron showed up in *Lyon*, MN 5-8 Jun (RBJ, m.ob.) and *Shiawassee*, MI 22 Jul (p.a., MK, KKr). Small numbers of Cattle Egrets were in two Michigan, five Wisconsin, and six

from spring through 14 Jun in *Fond du Lac* (KK). Glossy Ibis was found at Pte. Mouillee for the 2nd consecutive summer, including a high count of 10 birds 9 Jun (p.a., AMB, BMu); a White-faced Ibis crashed the party 9-17 Jun (p.a., JJ, AMB).

Michigan reported Yellow Rail in *Keeweenaw* in addition to the usual location at Seney N.W.R. Wisconsin had King Rails in *Fond du Lac* 6 Jul (DG) and *Dodge* 17 Jul (DT). In Michigan, King Rail was found at two locations about a mile apart at Pte. Mouillee 10 (SB) & 17 Jun (p.a., AMB, BMu, ST). Common Moorhens in six Minnesota



This Western Wood-Pewee was observed building a nest along the Des Moines River near Jackson, Jackson County, Minnesota in late June 2007 and attending at least one small chick 21 July (here). Its mate was presumed to be an Eastern Wood-Pewee, as one was calling near the nest on several occasions. A breeding record from Roseau County, Minnesota in 1977 may also have involved a mixed pairing between these two species (Loon 49: 169-170). Photograph by Karl J. Bardon.

Minnesota counties. A Yellow-crowned Night-Heron appeared at Pte. Mouillee 9 Jun (p.a., AMB, BMu). Wisconsin reported an ad. Yellow-crowned Night-Heron in *Walworth* 8 Jun (OB) and a juv. in *Sheboygan* 23 Jul+ (CS). Wisconsin's 4th summer record of Glossy Ibis was established by birds lingering

counties was fewer than last summer by half but still above average; one at Duluth through 1 Jun was the first one there since 1965.

### SHOREBIRDS

A total of 125 Piping Plover chicks fledged from 63 breeding pairs in the Great Lakes

**SA** Researchers monitoring breeding success of Common Terns at Pelican I. submitted stunning images of Minnesota's and the Region's first **Elegant Tern** 28 Jun (ph. SMO). Caspian Terns also nested here, and some of Mortensen's images show all three species standing together. Elegant Tern rarely wanders inland from the immediate coast, but inland vagrants have been recorded in Arizona and w. Texas. During the nesting seasons, Pelican I. is off-limits to the public but can be viewed from boats that stay outside of the established boundary. Though the Elegant Tern was not relocated, subsequent visits turned up a good variety of shorebirds.

(ER). Providing a first county record was an unmated Piping Plover in *Brown*, MN 10-13 Jun (BTS). The first fall migrant Piping Plover arrived in *Manitowoc*, WI 31 Jul (CS). Two Black-necked Stilts from May in *Berrien*, MI lingered through 6 Jun (p.a., m.ob.), while one found 1 Jul (TW) in *Fond du Lac* entertained many Wisconsin observers through the 6th. At least two pairs of American Avocets nested in *Big Stone*, MN (PHS), while a non-breeding avocet appeared sporadically in *Fond du Lac*, WI 4 Jun–29 Jul (JF, TW). In Michigan, single avocets in *Delta* 8 Jul (PB) and at Pte. Mouillee 22 Jul (AMB) represented the beginning of fall migration. High counts for yellowlegs were 120 Greater and 1437 Lessers at Agassiz N.W.R. 29 Jul (PHS, DAY).

Providing one of Minnesota's few fall records away from L. Superior was a Whimbrel at Pelican I. 18 Jul (ph. ALB). Also early was a flock of 25 Whimbrels in *Macomb*, MI 29 Jul (ATC); flocks of this size are rarely found in the Region during fall migration. A Red Knot visited *Fond du Lac*, WI 20-21 Jul (BB). Wisconsin reported a Western Sandpiper in *Milwaukee* 10-11 Jul (JF), with the same or another ad. at the same location 22 Jul (SCu). Northbound or possibly non-breeding White-rumped Sandpipers were recorded in *Racine*, WI 28 Jun (RF) and *Lac Qui Parle*, MN 30 Jun and 7 Jul (PCC). Buff-breasted Sandpiper migration normally peaks in early Aug, so flocks of 55 in *Lac Qui Parle* 28 Jul (PHS, DAY) and 80 in *Dakota* 31 Jul (SWe) were remarkable for Minnesota. Also noteworthy in that state was a Ruff at Big Stone N.W.R. 28 Jul (PHS, DAY).

## GULLS THROUGH WOODPECKERS

More Laughing Gulls than usual were reported in both Michigan (8-12 birds among three locations) and Wisconsin (singles in three locations). Single Franklin's Gulls wandered as far e. as *Alger*, MI 11 Jun (SCH), *Sheboygan*, WI 12 Jun (DT), and Pte. Mouillee 24 Jun (AMB). Minnesota's 3rd Jul occurrence of Little Gull also furnished a first county record at Paynesville W.T.P., *Stearns* 12 Jul (PCC, RPR). Wisconsin's 12th Black-headed Gull visited *Sheboygan* 16 Jul (p.a., JS). Lingering larids in *Sheboygan* included a third-cycle Iceland Gull 5 Jun (DT, DB), and a Black-legged Kittiwake

2-15 Jun (DT, SL); the latter was record late for Wisconsin.

An estimated 1000 breeding pairs of Caspian Terns off the *Door* peninsula and about 200 breeding pairs of Common Terns at four colonies were encouraging numbers for Wisconsin (SM). Outstanding in Minnesota were ad. Arctic Terns at Garden I., *Lake of the Woods* 15 Jun (RBJ) and Big Stone 14-15 Jul (PHS, PCC); except for 15 May 2004 in *Wilkin*, all previous records were at Duluth, and none were in Jul. Wisconsin's first summer record of Arctic Tern was furnished by an imm. in *Sheboygan* 5-12 Jul (DG, KK).

Apparently the same Band-tailed Pigeon as last winter revisited a feeder in *Pierce*, WI 27 Jul (JA). Furnishing Wisconsin's first summer record in two decades was a Barn Owl in *Jackson* 1 Jul (SBe). A pair of Burrowing Owls raised at least 2 young in *Polk* for Minnesota's first documented breeding since 1991. Presumably returning for its 3rd consecutive year was a Chuck-will's-widow in *Jackson*, WI 1 Jun (AP) through 23 Jul (RC). The Chuck-will's-widow in *Berrien*, MI was last heard 7 Jul. Michigan and Wisconsin each reported several Black-backed Woodpeckers; most unusual was one in the n. Lower Peninsula of Michigan near Cooke Dam, *Iosco* 25 Jul (WSS).

## FLYCATCHERS THROUGH FINCHES

In sw. Minnesota, digital video and audio recordings documented a Western Wood-Pewee paired with an Eastern Wood-Pewee in *Jackson* (vt. KJB, Minnesota County Biological Survey). North of its usual Michigan range was an Acadian Flycatcher in *Mason* 16 Jun (BJ). An easterly Western Kingbird was at

Whitefish Pt. 2 Jun (SF). Minnesota reported the only Scissor-tailed Flycatcher, a first county record in *Cass* 7 Jun (SC, KC). One of Michigan's few summer reports of Loggerhead Shrike in recent years was a one-day event in *Huron* 13 Jun (p.a., LJD). Wisconsin reported White-eyed Vireo in *Green* (TW), *Iowa* (AH), and *Jefferson* (DG); in Minnesota, where this species is still casual, one was unusually far w at Pipestone N.M. 14-18 Jun (ph. KTP). Thirteen reports of Carolina Wren in eight s. Wisconsin counties was a good showing for the Badger State. Well ahead of schedule was a Swainson's Thrush in *Milwaukee*, WI 29 Jul (JM). At Murphy-Hanrehan, 27 Wood Thrush territories within 3 km<sup>2</sup> was the highest density ever recorded there (BAF). Wisconsin reported 6 Northern Mockingbirds in five counties. Mockingbirds in *Baraga* and *Keweenaw* in Michigan's U.P., and *Clay* and *St. Louis* in Minnesota, were all farther n. than usual.

Northward expansion of Blue-winged Warbler was evident in *Wexford*, MI (CMS) and *Hubbard*, MN (KRE et al.). Remarkably far s. in Michigan were Magnolia Warblers in *Hillsdale* 6 & 27 Jun (JR) and *Berrien* 30 Jun–28 Jul (BA, JTW). Cape May Warbler nesting was confirmed in five Wisconsin counties. In addition to the usual locations in *Berrien*, MI and *Grant*, WI, a Yellow-throated Warbler sang at Stinchfield Woods, *Washtenaw*, MI 6 Jun (ATC). A Blackpoll Warbler was tardy in *Florence*, WI 14 Jun (KK). Remarkably far n. in Minnesota were Cerulean Warblers in *Koochiching* 1 Jun and *Carlton* 15 Jun (RBW). Also northerly were a singing male Cerulean in Michigan's Manistee N.F. 15 Jun (CMS) and 3 along the Menominee R. in the U.P. 24 Jun (RR). Worm-eating Warblers continued at traditional locations in *Berrien*, MI, and *Sauk* and *Waukesha*, WI, but one in *Richland* 2 Jun (BD) was at a new Wisconsin location. In Minnesota, a Kentucky Warbler advertised at Minneopa S.P. 17 Jun (BJU). Hooded Warblers in *Lake* (BS) and *Emmet* (SAJ) were farther n. than usual for Michigan. Yellow-breasted Chat showed well in Minnesota and Wisconsin, with each state

**SA** One of the biggest bird stories of the year was the discovery of nesting **Kirtland's Warblers** in Wisconsin. They were found on Plum Creek Timber Company land by Dean DiTommaso, an environmental consultant working on a major pipeline project. An avid birder, Dean discovered 3 singing males on 19 May in a cen. Wisconsin pine plantation. After reporting the sighting to the Wisconsin D.N.R., he continued observations at the site and eventually was able to document 8 singing males, 3 females, and three nests.

The site was carefully monitored by D.N.R. biologists to determine nest success. No definitive evidence of nestlings was found. Two pairs raised Brown-headed Cowbirds, and the 3rd nest was found empty, with the nestlings' fate unknown. Plans are being made for cowbird trapping at the site in 2008, similar to what has been conducted in Michigan for decades.

In 2007, the annual Kirtland's Warbler census documented an estimated **1697** singing males in Michigan, including no fewer than 31 in the U.P. This was a significant increase over the 1478 in 2006. This represents the highest total for this census, which began in 1951 and has been conducted annually since 1971. Thanks to R. Hoffman for writing this summary.

reporting them in five counties; Minnesota's tally included a first county record in *Aitkin* (PHS) and attempted nesting in *Dakota*.

In Michigan, a pair of Summer Tanagers nested at Warren Dunes S.P. (ph. BA, JTW); breeding was suspected but not confirmed here last year. Establishing Wisconsin's 5th summer record was a Summer Tanager in *Brown* 4 Jun (IB). Lark Bunting was found in Minnesota for the 2nd consecutive summer and defended a territory in *Polk* 23 Jun–1 Jul (LS, JCC, m.ob.); unfortunately, it disappeared after the field was partially mowed. Henslow's Sparrow continued its recent resurgence in Minnesota, with reports from 22 counties as far n. as *Clay*, *Morrison*, and *Todd*. Michigan noted this species as far n. as *Lake* 5 Jun (CMS). Nelson's Sharp-tailed Sparrow was scarce in Wisconsin, with only one report from *Crex Meadows* 6 Jul (TP). Outstanding was a male Chestnut-collared Longspur at *Whitefish Pt.* 1 Jun (CB, ph. CN).

Blue Grosbeak is unexpected in the Region except for sw. Minnesota, so males in *Monroe*, MI 20 Jun (p.a., ATC), *Monroe*, WI 2–12 Jul (ph. EW), and *Sauk*, WI 14 Jul (ph. AH) were noteworthy. A male Painted Bunting brightened up De Kam's yard in *Murray*, MN 18 Jul (NED). Dickcissel numbers were down dramatically from last year, but reports were

nonetheless widespread, from 22 Wisconsin and 17 Michigan counties, including five in the U.P. One of the few positive reports of Western Meadowlark in recent years came from the U.P., where at least 24 birds were found. Orchard Oriole was found breeding in *Menominee* 24 Jun (SH), a first for the U.P. A notable count of 236 Red Crossbills was obtained in *Ashland*, WI 9 Jun (RB). Two Red Crossbills strayed s. to *Gratiot*, MI 21 Jul (JR). In Wisconsin, White-winged Crossbills lingered into early Jun in *Shawano* (TE) and *Sawyer* (TP). Except for 30–40 at W.P.B.O. 1 Jul (DMc), Evening Grosbeaks remained scarce.

**Addenda and corrigendum:** For the spring season of 2007 (see *North American Birds* 61: 446–448), Minnesota accepted a *Swallow-tailed Kite* in *Anoka* 4 May (AXH) and a *Worm-eating Warbler* in *Lyon* 23 Apr (RE). A report of *Tricolored Heron* in *Roseau* was not accepted.

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## Iowa & Missouri



### James J. Dinsmore

In Iowa, June was somewhat warmer than usual, with rainfall somewhat below average. July temperatures were about normal, with rainfall again below average. Parts of western Iowa were extremely dry. Temper-

atures in Missouri were about average in June and slightly below average in July. Other than torrential rains in southwestern Missouri in late June, most of Missouri had less precipitation than normal. However, heavy rains in May flooded Squaw Creek National Wildlife Refuge and other marshes in northwestern Missouri. Yellow-headed Blackbirds and other marsh species were absent from these areas this summer.

Regional highlights were Neotropical Cormorants in both states, Anhinga, Snowy Plover, Roseate Spoonbill, Wood Stork, California Gull, Rufous Hummingbird, and Painted Bunting. American White Pelicans and Red-necked Grebes nesting in Iowa and a Eurasian Tree Sparrow nest near Columbia, Missouri were good finds. Missouri had a major influx of southern wading birds.

**Abbreviations:** Benton (Benton heronry, Scott, MO); E.B.C.A. (Eagle Bluffs C.A., Boone, MO); FR.C.A. (Four Rivers C.A., Vernon, MO); O.S.C.A. (Otter Slough C.A., Stod-

dard, MO); R.M.B.S. (Riverlands Migratory Bird Sanctuary, St. Charles, MO); Saylorville (Saylorville Res., Polk, IA); Squaw Creek (Squaw Creek N.W.R., Holt, MO).

### GEESE THROUGH FALCONS

Trumpeter Swans did well, with a nest for the 3rd year in *Livingston*, MO (SK) and 27 Iowa nests hatching young (David Hoffman). Lingering ducks included up to 7 Gadwall (†JE, m.ob.), s. Missouri's first summer record of American Wigeon (†JE, JU), and up to 6 Ring-necked Ducks (m.ob.), all at O.S.C.A. in se. Missouri, plus as many as 5 Northern Shovelers at E.B.C.A. (†PK, SS) and one in *Dunklin*, MO (†JE). Iowa sightings included 2 Greater White-fronted Geese in *Ames* (WO) and single Common Goldeneyes in *Marshall* 14 Jun and *Dickinson* 28 Jul (MR, ET). Only 3 Greater Prairie-Chickens from Iowa's reestablished population were seen in *Ringgold* (SP).

Common Loon reports included 3 in *Greene*, MO 28 Jul (LB, CB, David Ringer) and singles in *Cerro Gordo*, *Dickinson*, *Musca-*