

western great lakes



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It was a cool wet summer in most of the region. The spring migration overlapped very little with the early part of the season, although there were some surprisingly late migrants. Shorebird movement toward the end of the season was very good in both Minnesota and Michigan. Minnesota had the most significant breeding record with a first nesting of Great-tailed Grackle, while Michigan mustered the best rarity with a Broad-billed Hummingbird.

Abbreviations: Duluth (Duluth, St. Louis, MN); MBRC (Michigan Bird Records Committee); MORC (Minnesota Ornithological Records Committee); M.W.S. (Muskegon Wastewater System, Muskegon, MI); P.M. (Pointe Mouillee State Game Area, Monroe, MI); W.P.B.O. (Whitefish Point Bird Observatory, Chippewa, MI).

LOONS THROUGH VULTURES

Minnesota had a record count of 30 Red-throated Loons on 31 May in Duluth, 15 of which lingered to the late date of 8 Jun (KE, MH). Also at that location was an alternate-plumaged **Pacific Loon** 29 May–3 Jun (KE, et al.). In Michigan 4 Red-necked Grebes 24 Jul in Copper Harbor, *Keewenaw* (JY) were slightly early for fall migration. Unusually far east in Minnesota were an Eared Grebe 3–7 Jun in Duluth (WM, PS) and 2 at the

Lewiston Sewage Ponds, *Winona* (CMA). Michigan also had unusual Eared Grebe sightings, with singles 5–17 Jun at the Calumet Sewage Ponds, *Houghton* (LB, RH, LM) and 4–7 Jun at Southfield, *Oakland*; more typical were the 3 on 1–11 Jun at MWS (SM, JP, GW). Wisconsin had 3 summer sightings of Eared Grebes, including ones 1–5 Jun at Milwaukee (DG, KD, MK), 1–6 Jun in *Eau Claire* (JP) and 17 Jun at Rush Lake, *Winnebago* (TZ). Uncommon in Wisconsin were 2 Western Grebes 1 Jul on Lake Michigan, *Sheboygan* (TB, IB) while one from 30 Jul+ on Duck Lake, *Grand Traverse* (EE, LE, SB, JT) was very rare for Michigan. A record number of Clark's Grebes was recorded this summer in Minnesota, including individuals that bred with Western Grebes at Thielke L. *Big Stone* 15 Jun–7 Jul (PC, et al.) and 24 Jun–3 Jul at Swan L., *Nicollet* (CMA, et al.), which produced 3 hybrid young. Also reported were Clark's Grebes 10–30 Jul at Section L., *Lyon* (CMA, et al.), 19–28 Jun at Swan L., *Sibley* (CMA), and on 23 Jul at L. Osakis, *Douglas* (KE).

American White Pelicans continue to be more common in the eastern portions of the region. They bred in Wisconsin at the Horicon Marsh and in Green Bay, while in Michigan one was seen 8 Jul+ at P.M. Minnesota reported Snowy Egrets 6–11 Jun at Farquhar L. *Dakota* (RS, JS) and 17 May–21 Jun at L. Alice, *Otter Tail* (SM, DM). Michigan had a Snowy Egret 3 Jun–15 Jul at P.M. (PC, AB, WP). Wisconsin reported several Snowy Egrets through the summer at Green Bay, Oshkosh (TZ), and singles 8–15 Jun in Milwaukee (DG, MK) and 10 Jun at

Kenosha (TW). Also in Wisconsin, an adult Little Blue Heron was present 2–6 Jun in *Pierce* (PR). An adult Tricolored Heron was seen in Michigan 6 Jun+ at Nayanquing Pt., *Bay*, while another was seen in Wisconsin at Green Bay on Jun 16 (JR). A **Tricolored Heron** 29 May–4 Jun in Hastings, *Dakota* (TT, et al.) was the 13th for Minnesota. Cattle Egrets remained scarce this summer in Michigan with the only report being one on 19 Jun at P.M. (WP). Cattle Egrets probably nested in Wisconsin at Oshkosh, while individuals were seen at Green Bay and Manitowoc. Minnesota had reports of Cattle Egrets from 5 counties, with flocks up to 6 individuals. A high total in Michigan was the 148 Black-crowned Night-Heron reported on 17 Jul at P.M. (AB). Yellow-crowned Night-Herons are declining in Minnesota; this year individuals were seen 8–15 Jun at Wood L. NC, *Hennepin* (BSe et al.) and 17–18 Jun at L. Alice, *Otter Tail* (PS, mob). In Michigan a maximum of 3 was seen 1–12 Jul at P.M., while one on 14 Jul was a first record for the M.W.S. (MM); all are pending MBRC review. Wisconsin reported a Yellow-crowned Night-Heron at the heron rookery in Oshkosh through 30 Jun (TZ). In Minnesota 2 fly-by *Plegadis* ibises were reported 18 Jun in *Becker* (PS).

WATERFOWL

Two Snow Geese lingered in Minnesota in *Marshall* as did individuals in *Traverse* and *Meeker*. Remarkably, the Minnesota D.N.R. estimated the resident Canada Goose population at 295,000, higher than the total for Mallards, which themselves were 55% above their long-term average. Up to 2 Tundra Swans lingered in Michigan at P.M. through the period, while Wisconsin had summering birds in Green Bay, *Menasha/Neenah*, and one 18–23 Jun at Mead W.A. (DB). Reports of Trumpeter Swans from 16 counties in Minnesota resulted in it being reclassified as regular in that state. For the second consecutive season in Michigan, American Wigeon was confirmed breeding in *Houghton* (LB). Unusually far south in Minnesota was an American Black Duck at Middle L., *Nicollet*, 20–25 Jun (CMA, KE). Rare in Michigan was confirmation of breeding for Northern Shoveler in *Houghton* (LB). A White-cheeked Pintail 24 Jun at P.M. (AB, PC) would provide a first state record for Michigan if accepted by the MBRC; natural occurrence will certainly be a point of contention.

Several Canvasbacks summered at Port Washington (TU, JF), and one was seen on 22 Jun in *Bayfield* (DV), both in Wisconsin, while in Michigan a maximum of 6 summered at P.M. (AB), as did one at M.W.S. Unusually far south in Michigan were single Ring-necked Ducks 15 Jul at P.M. (AB, BH, KO) and 19 Jun at Maple River S.G.A., *Gratiot* (JB). Greater and Lesser Scaups lingered into July and oversummered in several locations in Michigan and Wisconsin. Michigan had a number of unusual summer Bufflehead reports, including a male 3–6 Jun and 22–29 Jul at P.M., a female 14 Jun+ in Olivet, *Eaton*, and a male on 10 Jun at Nayanquing Pt., *Bay* (MHu, KO, GR). Wisconsin reported a Bufflehead 1–2 Jun in *Eau Claire* (JP). The number of summering Ruddy Ducks in Michigan continues to increase; they were seen in 11 Lower Peninsula and 2 Upper Peninsula counties.

HAWKS THROUGH GULLS

An Osprey pair in *Allegan* (RSc) provided the first breeding record for that county and one of the southernmost breeding records in Michigan. Ten Rough-legged Hawks 18 Jun at Buena Vista Marsh, *Portage* (MB) and singles 24 Jul at Thunder Lake Marsh, *Oneida* (BE, KF) and 20–21 Jul in *Milwaukee* (JSt) provided rare summer reports in Wisconsin. Well south of normal in Michigan was a Merlin 23 Jul at the M.W.S. (MM). South of their normal breeding range in Minnesota were nesting Merlins in *Cass* (MN) and *Hennepin* (The Raptor Center), while a breeding pair in *Kittson* were of the Richardson's race (PS), the third consecutive year this race has bred in the northwestern portion of the state. A female Wild Turkey in Michigan's Upper Peninsula 26 Jun represented a first county record in *Baraga* and further evidence of the northward expansion of this species. Yellow Rails were scarce in Wisconsin this summer, with the only report coming from Crex Meadows W.A. In Minnesota Common Moorhen is becoming increasingly scarce; this season the only reports came from *Dakota* and *Wabasha*.

There were a number of reports of lingering shorebirds from the spring migration as well as impressive totals of early fall migrants; unfortunately space limitations preclude listing many of them. Readers are urged to consult each state's regional journals for more details. In Michigan several Black-bellied Plovers oversummered at P.M. An American Golden-Plover in Wisconsin on 23 Jun at Sheboygan (MP) may have been a very late spring migrant or a very early fall arrival. Minnesota reported 4 late spring American Golden-Plovers 19 Jun and 4 early fall birds

on 1 Jul, both in *Big Stone* (KB). Encouraging in Michigan were reports of 30 Piping Plover nests, including the first nest on the Lake Huron shoreline in 15 years. Minnesota had 5 pairs of Piping Plovers in *Lake of the Woods*. In Wisconsin 41 American Avocets 1 Jul at Horicon N.W.R. (Two) provided an unprecedented summer total. Also impressive were 2055 Lesser Yellowlegs reported at P.M. 29 Jul (AB) in Michigan. Upland Sandpipers were reported in the highest numbers since 1988 in Minnesota. A **Baird's Sandpiper** 1–2 Jun at WPBO (LD) was only the second documented spring record in Michigan. A Stilt Sandpiper 26 Jun was record-early in Minnesota, while equally noteworthy was the peak of 272 31 Jul, both in *Big Stone* (KB). An adult male **Ruff** was found at P.M. 30 Jun (WP); the record is pending MBRC review.

In Michigan an ad. Laughing Gull was seen 3–4 Jun at New Buffalo, *Berrien* (PC, JG), and a first-summer was seen 15 Jun at W.P.B.O. (LD). Wisconsin had a Laughing Gull 19 Jun at Ashland (RB, DV) and another 23 Jun+ at Sheboygan (MP, et al.). In Minnesota there were more than 4000 Franklin's Gulls recorded 29 Jun on Pine and Curry Islands, *Lake of the Woods* (BBE), while Wisconsin had reports of one 2 Jun at Milwaukee (MK), 5 on 2 Jun in *Chippewa* (JP), one 12 Jun in *Door* (MR), and one 17 Jun at Green Bay (JR). Also in Wisconsin were a maximum of 4 Little Gulls in Sheboygan 23 Jun+ and one 4 Jun at Manitowoc (AH). A third-summer Lesser Black-backed Gull 2 Jun at Crookston Sewage Lagoons, *Polk* (PPr) would be a first Minnesota summer record if accepted by the MORC. In Michigan a first-summer bird was seen in *Berrien* 3 Jul (PC, JG). A Glaucous Gull lingered to 2 Jun at Sheboygan (DBr, MBr) in Wisconsin. In Minnesota an immature Great Black-backed Gull on 5 Jun in Duluth (PS) would be a first summer record in that state. An ad. **Arctic Tern** 22 Jul at P.M. (AB, BM) was the first in Michigan in several years; the record is pending MBRC review.

DOVES THROUGH FLYCATCHERS

A **White-winged Dove** photographed at a feeder in Plover, *Portage*, remained 10–16 Jun (KH) and provided Wisconsin its first fully documented record. Also in Wisconsin the 2–3 **Eurasian Collared-Doves** remained in *Oconotos* through July; in Minnesota they were reported to be present at Leota, *Nobles* (ND). A Northern Saw-whet Owl 5–15 Jul in Casco Township, *St. Clair* (RE, SE), was south of normal in Michigan. Minnesota reported Great Gray Owls from 5 counties.

Wisconsin noted 5 nesting sites for Short-eared Owls, while Minnesota had Short-eared Owls nesting in *Roseau* (RS, JS) and 18 individuals 18–19 Jun at 10 different locations in the northwestern portion of the state (PS).

A second state record in Michigan was furnished by an adult male **Broad-billed Hummingbird** that visited a feeder near Rockford, *Kent*, 11–13 Jul (DD, AC). Also in Michigan was an adult **Rufous/Allen's Hummingbird** 19–21 Jul in East LeRoy, *Calhoun* (EW); the record is pending MBRC review. Minnesota reported Three-toed Woodpeckers 4 Jun–early Jul on the Gunflint Trail, *Cook* (MSt), and 24 Jun along Spruce Road, *Lake* (KE). In Wisconsin, where the Three-toed Woodpecker is rare, one or two were reported from a burn area east of Gordon, *Douglas*, but the records lacked good documentation. In the same burn, however, Black-backed Woodpeckers were abundant, with over 12 being found. In Minnesota a Black-backed Woodpecker that nested in St. Croix SP, *Pine* (AHe, GS), was the southernmost nesting for the state. A first county record Acadian Flycatcher was found 7 Jun at the Big Island S.P., *Freeborn* in Minnesota. A Western Kingbird was present in Wisconsin 10–12 Jun in *Bayfield* (RB). Also in that state was a **Scissor-tailed Flycatcher** 15–16 Jun in *Washington* (BD, DG, et al.). Minnesota had a well-documented **Scissor-tailed Flycatcher** 10–11 Jun in Duluth (JBr, PS) and another in *Olmsted* on 8 Jul whose documentation is still pending review.

VIREOS THROUGH WARBLERS

Disappointing in Wisconsin were only two successful nestings of Loggerhead Shrike this season, well down from last year's nine. The nests were found in *Dunn* and *Oconto*, while single birds were seen in *Ozaukee* and *Door*. Minnesota also had lower numbers this year, with reports from only seven counties. The only report of White-eyed Vireo in Wisconsin this season was one during Jun in Janesville. A **Bell's Vireo** 18–19 Jul in *Berrien* (CG, BM, DS) furnished Michigan's first record in several years. A Philadelphia Vireo on 29 Jul in Ashland (DV) was considered unusual in Wisconsin. A female Carolina Wren in *Waupaca*, WI, was mated with a House Wren and raised 5 hybrid young (JH). Three Golden-crowned Kinglets 23 Jul in *Stearns* were record-early in southern Minnesota. Blue-gray Gnatcatchers are expanding northward in Minnesota, as was evidenced by 9 nests in *Cass* at the northern edge of their range. A Swainson's Thrush on

18 Jul at Elm Creek NC, *Hennepin*, was the second earliest record in southern Minnesota. Very late in Wisconsin were 2 Bohemian Waxwings 6 Jun in *Vilas* (BF, KF), only the second summer record in the state.

Blue-winged Warblers are expanding their range in Minnesota, as evidenced by reports as far west as *Kandiyohi*, *Renville*, *Brown*, and *Blue Earth* this season. Tennessee Warblers appeared to linger outside their normal breeding areas in all three states and arrived south early in both Minnesota and Wisconsin. Considered noteworthy in Minnesota were Northern Parulas 25 Jun in *Anoka* (WM) and an early migrant 19 Jul in *Hennepin* (SC). Wisconsin reported Yellow-throated Warblers summering again at Wyalusing S.P., while Michigan had reports from *Allegan* and *Berrien*. In Minnesota, where the species is still considered casual, there was a pair at Sibley S.P., *Kandiyohi* (RF, JFr), and one 18 Jun at William O'Brien S.P., *Washington* (DZ). A Pine Warbler to mid-Jun in Madison (PA) was considered unusual in Wisconsin. There were 891 singing males detected during this year's Kirtland's Warbler census in Michigan, down slightly from last year's 902 birds. There were 8 reported from four Upper Peninsula counties, with successful nesting in *Marquette* for the 5th consecutive year. The only Prairie Warbler report in Wisconsin was of one on 2 Jul in *Dane* (PA). Minnesota had its first summer records for Kentucky Warbler in four years with singles 20 May–24 Jun at Minneopa S.P., *Blue Earth* (ME, et al.), 25 Jun–19 Jul at Murphy-Hanrehan Park, *Scott* (BFa et al.), and 18 Jun at Lebanon Hills Park, *Dakota* (SWe). Michigan also had an exceptional summer for Kentucky Warblers, with reports from four counties, including up to 6 individuals in *Hillsdale* (JRe).

TANAGERS THROUGH FINCHES

A pair of **Summer Tanagers** in *Hillsdale* (JRe) provided a rare summer record in Michigan. Minnesota reported a second-year male Summer Tanager 24 Jun in Murphy-Hanrehan Park, *Scott* (BFa). A Spotted Towhee was reported in Minnesota on 3 Jun at Litchfield NC, *Meeker* (DF). Both Minnesota and Wisconsin reported good numbers of Henslow's Sparrows this season. Noteworthy in Wisconsin were at least 4 Nelson's Sharp-tailed Sparrows through Jun at Crex Meadows W.A. Troubling in Minnesota was only one report of Chestnut-collared Longspur from their traditional location at Felton Prairie, *Clay*. Also in that state, Blue Grosbeaks were more widespread this season. Perhaps the same **Painted Bunting**

that summered in Minnesota last year spent the season at Maple Grove, *Hennepin*. Dickcissels were more common this season, reaching the northern portions of the region, perhaps the best irruption since 1984. Minnesota had its first confirmed nesting for **Great-tailed Grackle** in *Jackson* (AHe, PH). Orchard Orioles were reported more widespread than normal in Michigan this season. The **Eurasian Tree Sparrow** in Parke Township, *Clay*, was seen for the 3rd consecutive year in Minnesota. Worrisome was a possible House × Eurasian Tree Sparrow hybrid that was found at that location (PS).

Observers: Karl Bardon, John Baumgartner, Dan Belter, Betsy Beneke (BBE), Murray Berner, Laurie Binford, Ray Brady, David Brasser (DBr), Margaret Brasser (MBr), Judd Brink (JBr), **Adam Byrne** (Michigan), Amy Charlson, Steve Carlson, Phil Chu, Karl David, Nelvina De Kam, Bob Domagalski, Louie Dombroski, Dan Dykstra, Ed Earl, Lori Earl, Kim

Eckert, Russ Emmons, Sylvia Emmons, Bruce Fall (BFa), Bob Fisher, Karen Fisher, Dan Floren, Jim Frank, Jean Frederickson (JFr), Randy Frederickson, Merrill Frydendall, Jim Granlund, Cory Gregory, Dennis Gustafson, Russ Hanson, Kent Hall, Brad Hammond, Mark Hendrickson, Anthony Hertzell (AHe), Paul Hertzell, Jan Hewitt, Aaron Holschbach, Mark Hubinger (MHu), Mark Korducki, Craig Mandel (CMA), William Marengo, Diane Millard, Steve Millard (SMi), Steve Minard, Mike Moran, Brad Murphy, Lyn Murphy, Michael North, Karl Overman, Walt Pawloski, Mark Peterson, Steffi Podolan, Janine Polk, Jim Ponshair (JPo), Paul Prior (PPr), John Regan, Georgia Reid, Jack Reinoehl (JRe), Pete Rodewald, Russ Schipper (RSc), Blaine Seeliner (BSe), Gary Simonson, David Slager, Jeanne Specht, Richard Specht, Jean Strelka (JSt), Mark Stensaas (MSt), Peder Svingen, **Daryl Tessen** (Wisconsin), John Trezise, Tom Tustison, Ellywn Warren, Steve Weston (SWe), George Wickstrom, **Terry Wiens** (Minnesota), Tom Wood (TWO), Joe Youngman, Tom Ziebell, Dave Zumeta.



middlewestern prairie



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Mercifully, the intense drought that had plagued much of the Region ended this summer. Rain began in late May, and June was exceptionally wet. In northeastern Indiana, for example, Jim Haw noted that the June precipitation exceeded the previous maximum by more than three inches.