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## Western Great Lakes



### Peder H. Svingen

Most of the Region received below-normal precipitation. Good habitat for shorebirds was found in western Minnesota and along the Lake Michigan shoreline of the Upper Peninsula.

**Abbreviations:** Agassiz (Agassiz N.W.R., Marshall, MN); Big Stone (Big Stone N.W.R., Lac Qui Parle, MN); C.G.I. (Coast Guard Impoundment, Milwaukee, WI); L.P. (Lower Peninsula of Michigan); Pte. Mouillee (Pointe Mouillee State Game Area, Monroe, MI); Shiawassee (Shiawassee N.W.R., Saginaw, MI); U.P. (Upper Peninsula of Michigan).

### WATERFOWL THROUGH CRANES

Single Tundra Swans summered in each state. Wisconsin's was healthy in Ashland (RB), but the others were injured or unable to fly. Michigan reported a male White-winged Scoter in *Houghton* 14 Jun (JK). A female Spruce Grouse with 3 downy young in *Ogemaw* (HB, *fide* CP) provided a rare breeding record for Michigan's L.P. Wisconsin's only Spruce Grouse was in *Vilas* 21 Jun (JS). Unseasonable were summer Horned Grebes in *Baraga* and *Alger* in the U.P., and Wisconsin had one in *Ozaukee*, WI 29 Jul (JF). Red-necked Grebes nested in *Delta*, MI (SH) for the 2nd consecutive year. Clark's Grebe was found in four Minnesota locations, including one paired with a probable Western Grebe x

Clark's Grebe hybrid at Thielke L. (ph. PBB).

Unusual for ne. Minnesota was a Snowy Egret at Duluth 1-3 Jun (LWM, SLF). In the U.P., a juv. Little Blue Heron was a rare find at Elmwood Wildlife Area, *Menominee* 22 Jul (ph. SH); Michigan also had Little Blues in *Berrien* and *Mason*. In Minnesota, the ad. Little Blue at Lubenow W.M.A. provided a first county record for *Swift* 27 Jul (BJU). Michigan reported a Tricolored Heron at Pte. Mouillee 12 Jun+ TP (p.a., BMu, ST, AMB, m.ob.). Small numbers of Cattle Egrets were in two Michigan and six Minnesota counties. A Yellow-crowned Night-Heron graced *Jackson*, MI for the 4th consecutive year 5-12 Jun (m.ob.). Minnesota had single ad. Yellow-crowneds in *Murray* 11 Jun (KJB) and *Nicollet* 17 Jun (BJU). A Glossy Ibis visited Pte. Mouillee 4-12 Jun (p.a., ST, BMu, AMB).

Wisconsin reported an ad. Mississippi Kite soaring over the Rock River, *Rock* 4 Jun (QY). A Rough-legged Hawk lingered through 12 Jun on Manitou I. in *Keweenaw*, MI (JY, ZG). A Yellow Rail at Thunder Lake W.M.A., *Oneida* 15 Jun (RHo) inhabited a new Wisconsin location for this species; Michigan's only reports were from the traditional location at Seney N.W.R. King Rail was found in three Wisconsin locations: *Columbia* 13 Jun (TP), *Door* 5 Jul (CS), and *Dodge* 23 Jul (SCu). Common Moorhens in 12 Minnesota counties made that state's best showing in decades; unusually far n. was one in *Wexford*, MI 6 Jun (AVP).

### SHOREBIRDS

Shorebird surveys in w. Minnesota (PCC, PHS) found good numbers and diversity attributable to scheduled drawdowns at Agassiz and at Big Stone N.W.R. The highlight was Chu and Svingen's discovery of an ad. male Snowy Plover at Big Stone 1 Jul, which led to



Long anticipated in the state but not predicted to arrive in July was Minnesota's first Slaty-backed Gull at Grand Marais, Cook County. Discovered by Molly and Ken Hoffman 21 (here 22) July 2006, this adult was subsequently seen and photographed by many. Photograph by David A. Cahlander.

the discovery of an ad. female on the 3rd (ph. DWK, JLO) and 2 recently hatched chicks on the 8th (DBz, CCB, ph. RLE). The chicks were faithfully attended by the male through at least 29 Jul, when both apparently fledged; at least one lingered at the refuge through 27 Aug. Michigan had 50 breeding pairs of Piping Plovers, down slightly from last year; an apparent migrant was in *Berrien* 23 Jul (TB). In Wisconsin, 5 nesting pairs on the Apostle Is. produced 5 chicks; 2 birds in *Manitowoc* 17 Jun (JH) showed no signs of nesting; and a loner lingered at Kohler Andrea S.P., *Sheboygan* 1-11 Jul (JF). In Minnesota, a Piping

**SA** For the first time in over 100 years, wild-hatched Whooping Cranes walked Wisconsin wetlands. Two Whooping Cranes pecked out of their shells 22 Jun. The parents are captive born four-year-old birds hatched at Patuxent, MD, which were then released at Necedah N.W.R. as part of the experimental flock. This pair lost their first eggs but nested again and hatched these avian vanguards.

Plover nest with four eggs was found on Garden I., *Lake of the Woods* (JEB, RBJ), and singles were at two *Lac Qui Parle* locations (PCC, BJU, m.ob.). Record high for Minnesota was the count of 1251 Killdeer in *Lac Qui Parle* 9 Jul (PCC, PHS). Michigan reported 2 American Avocets in *Berrien* 4 Jul (TG, WMB) and one at *Shiawassee* 25 Jul (DJP). Most unusual of three Wisconsin reports was an avocet in *Milwaukee* 22 Jun (JI).

Another record-high count for Minnesota was of 57 Solitary Sandpipers at St. John's University, *Stearns* 31 Jul (PCC). Michigan welcomed a Willet in *Wayne* 13 Jun (WGP), followed by three reports from *Berrien*. Wisconsin's only Willet was at C.G.1. 19-22 Jun (JI). Each state had at least one northbound Whimbrel: up to 8 in *Cook*, MN 2-5 Jun (RBJ, SC), plus singles at *Milwaukee*, WI 3 Jun (SL), *Duluth*, MN 22 Jun (KRE), and *Alpena*, MI 9 Jul (SS). Single Whimbrels in *Sheboygan* 15 Jul (GT) and *Oconto* 16 Jul (JS) were considered record-early fall migrants for Wisconsin. Unusual for Michigan was a Hudsonian Godwit in *Delta* from 16-18 Jul (SH). Michigan also had single Marbled Godwits in *Berrien* 8 Jul (BA) and *Menominee* 22 Jul (SH). Single Red Knots were at *Milwaukee*, WI 19-24 Jun (JF) and at *Tawas Point S.P.*, MI 24 Jun (JSo). In *Lac Qui Parle*, MN, Semipalmated Sandpipers peaked at 1919 on 29 Jun, and Least Sandpipers peaked at 2316 on 9 Jul (PCC, PHS). Breeding of Wilson's Phalarope was confirmed at *Portage Marsh, Delta*, MI 11 Jul (SH). Five Red-necked Phalaropes at *Pte. Mouillee* 6 Jun (ATC) furnished an unusual spring record for Michigan; fall migrants appeared in all three states in late Jul.

## GULLS THROUGH WOODPECKERS

Michigan had the only Laughing Gull at St. Joseph, *Berrien* 4 Jul (TB). Wisconsin had three reports of Franklin's Gull along L. Michigan between 18 Jun and 31 Jul. In Wisconsin, 3 ad. Little Gulls spent most of the summer in *Sheboygan* (KP), while an imm. was sporadic in *Ashland* (RB). Unzen photographed an ad. California Gull in *Lac Qui Parle/Swift*, MN 20 Jun. Long anticipated in Minnesota—but predicted by no one to appear in late Jul—was an ad. Slaty-backed Gull found by Ken and Molly Hoffman at *Grand Marais* 21 Jul (ph. DAC, †PCC, †KRE, †PHS, m.ob.). Its confiding behavior allowed close observation until it was found dead 14 Aug (RF; \*Bell Museum of Nat-



This Sage Thrasher was discovered in Luce County, Michigan by Joyce Peterson on 28 June 2006 (here). It was seen by many during its 16-day stay as it sang persistently from a forest clearing growing up to young jack pines. This unexpected first summer record was Michigan's fifth overall. Photograph by Skye Haas.

ural History). Tardy was a third-cycle Glaucous Gull in *Winnebago*, WI 2 Jun (JM). Single ad. Least Terns transited *Nobles* 4 Jun (DBz, COB, m.ob.) and *Olmsted* 24 Jun (JWH, ph. CCB, ph. RLE). A cacophonous 1500 breeding pairs of Caspian Terns were recorded at *Gravel and Pirate Is.* in L. Michigan (SM). A new Wisconsin colony of Common Terns at a mitigation site on *Lake Butte des Morts* produced 9 chicks (SM).

Wisconsin's only Eurasian Collared-Dove of the season was recorded in *Grant* 2 Jun (JR). In Michigan, one or 2 continued from spring at *Three Oaks, Berrien*. Minnesota now has too many collared-doves to enumerate. Establishing the 3rd Wisconsin record was a White-winged Dove at *Green Bay* 23 Jun-4 Jul (EH, ph. DB). Minnesota's 10th White-winged Dove vacationed at *Nelson's Resort* on *Crane L., St. Louis* 2-24 Jun (ph. JBP, ph. DMK). Any Snowy Owl in the Region during summer is noteworthy and usually follows a significant irruption; this summer, each state reported this species! Michigan had 3 in the L.P.: *Huron* 10 Jun (ph. LH), *Charlevoix* 13-14 Jun (JA), and from spring through 17 Jun at *Traverse City, Grand Traverse* (DW, ph. EW).

Wisconsin also had 3: *Sheboygan* 3-4 Jul (MBr), *Brown* 16-17 Jul (JG), and *Ashland* 28 Jul (RB), while Minnesota contributed one in *Itasca* through 2 Jun (SC). Although Northern Hawk Owl breeding was not confirmed in Minnesota following the 2004-2005 irruption, no fewer than nine nests were found this summer (DAG et al.). Also in Minnesota, a Burrowing Owl trumpeted at the *Rochester* airport through 24 Jun but was unable to attract a mate; a pair of owls mortgaged a badger hole in *Stevens* (ph. DO). The Chuck-will's-widow in *Berrien*, MI was last heard 13 Jul Wisconsin's Chuck-will's-widow in *Jackson* was rediscovered 11 Jun (AP) and called through 4 Jul (m.ob.); another was heard about 16 km away at *Wazee L.* 29 Jul (RH). Black-backed Woodpecker was reported from four Michigan counties in the U.P. Wisconsin birders found Black-backed at a new location in *Iron* 4 Jun (RB) and the usual Nicolet N.F. location 13-26 Jun (TP, KK).

## FLYCATCHERS THROUGH FINCHES

Far from its usual Minnesota haunts were Acadian Flycatchers in *Lyon* 4 Jun and *Lincoln* 27 Jun (ph. KJB). Michigan's first summer Say's Phoebe visited *Manitou I., Keeweenaw* 11 Jun (ZG, JY). All three states hosted Scissor-tailed Flycatcher this summer *Door*, WI 13-15 Jun (SLe, GP), *Yellow Medicine*, MN 1 Jul (AF), and *Alpena*, MI 6-7 Jul (KS). Except for 10 Minnesota counties, Log-

**SA** For the 3rd consecutive year, record-high numbers of Kirtland's Warbler were tallied in Michigan; 1457 in 11 L.P. counties and 21 in four U.P. counties made the highest total—1478—since monitoring began in 1951. In Wisconsin, 3 Kirtland's were discovered 2 Jun in *Jackson* (JPo) and observed through 19 Jun by multiple observers. Intriguing was a brief sighting of a single Kirtland's there after a passing thunderstorm 29 Jul (RH); another was recorded 9 Jun in *Marquette* (KK).

gerhead Shrike was unreported in the Region. Minnesota reported a Rock Wren in *Rock* 7 Jun (ph. MS). Michigan had Carolina Wrens in 17 L.P. counties, plus *Marquette* in the U.P. 28-29 Jul (ZG) and another 3 km away 30 Jul (SH). This species also showed well in Wisconsin, with 25 reports from nine s. counties. Northern Mockingbird was well represented in 12 Michigan counties, including *Keweenaw* in the U.P., where a pair built a nest at Eagle Harbor but later abandoned it (LB); also unusually far north were singles in *Cook*, MN 1 Jun (JW) and *Bayfield*, WI 7 Jun (TO). Another first summer occurrence for Michigan was a Sage Thrasher singing from young jack pines in an open forest clearing in *Luce* 28 Jun–13 Jul (JPe, m.ob.).

Two singing male Blue-winged Warblers plus a Brewster's Warbler in *Menominee* 9 Jun (SH) suggest expansion into the sw. U.P. Photographs documented a second-year female Virginia's Warbler banded in *Kalamazoo*, MI 25 Jun (RK), a remarkable occurrence at any season but truly extraordinary in midsummer. Spring stragglers in Wisconsin included a Northern Parula in *Milwaukee* 27 Jun (MB) and a Black-throated Blue Warbler in *Kenosha* 4 Jun (JD). Unusual for the s. L.P. were Black-throated Blues in *Oakland* 22 Jun (ATC) and *Berrien*. Exceptionally early was a southbound Blackburnian Warbler in *Waukesha* 29 Jul (TM). Wisconsin reported a Yellow-throated Warbler at Kettle Moraine S.F., *Waukesha* 1-2 Jun (DG, TP), in addition to the traditional location at Wyalusing S.P. Michigan's only Yellow-throateds were in *Berrien*.

Prairie Warbler surveys in Michigan found 8 males and one female at Warren Dunes S.P., *Berrien* (KM); at least six pairs were in *Allegan* (JP); and others were found in *Luce*, *Mason*, and *Washtenaw*. In Wisconsin, one sang at Kohler Andrea S.P., *Sheboygan* 3 Jun–11 Jul (MB, m.ob.). Prairie Warbler is still casual in Minnesota; a singing male in *Nobles* 4-5 Jun (DBz, COB) was unusually far sw. In Michigan, a total of 57 Cerulean Warblers at *Allegan* S.G.A., *Allegan* was fewer than last year's record-high 80 (RS). Unexpected in the U.P. was a Worm-eating Warbler at Peninsula Pt., *Delta* 23 Jul (ph. EE). Elsewhere in Michigan, a Worm-eating Warbler stayed at Warren Dunes S.P., *Berrien* 15 Jun–18 Jul (KM, m.ob.). Wisconsin also had an unusual report of Worm-eating Warbler from the Kettle Moraine S.F., *Waukesha* 30 Jun (TM); others were in traditional nesting areas in *Sauk*



This Virginia's Warbler was captured and banded at the Pitsfield Banding Station in Kalamazoo County, Michigan by Richard and Brenda Keith on 25 June 2006 (here)—a surprising third state record. One of the previous records was also of a bird captured at a banding station, perhaps not surprising for a species whose subtle field marks make it easy to overlook. Photograph by Brenda Keith.

(CH). Northwestern in Wisconsin was the Kentucky Warbler in *Douglas* 26 Jun (RJ). Significant for Michigan were singing male Wilson's Warblers near the Tahquamenon R. mouth, *Chippewa* 3-10 Jun (CP) and near Newberry, *Luce* 16 Jun (LD). Yellow-breasted Chat was found in four Michigan and four Wisconsin counties.



A Say's Phoebe at Manitou Island, Keweenaw County, Michigan 11 June 2006 (here) was the first of its species to be recorded in the state in the summer season. Photograph by Joe Youngman.

In Michigan, a pair of Summer Tanagers probably nested at Warren Dunes S.P. (JTW, m.ob.); one was in *Berrien* 7 Jun (AV). Also noteworthy were single Summer Tanagers in *Lincoln*, MN 5 Jun (SPS), *Milwaukee*, WI 19 Jun (MB), and at Sherburne N.W.R., MN 4-11 Jul (HW, m.ob.). A male Lark Bunting surprised Beneke during a B.B.S. in *Beltrami*, MN 14 Jun (BAB); another male was photographed at Seney N.W.R., MI 20-21 Jun (AG). Good numbers of Henslow's Sparrows were found in all three states, including a high count of 25 at the Sharonville S.G.A., MI (ATC). A Lazuli Bunting visited a feeder in *Blue Earth*, MN 10 Jun (SBR, ph. DWK, JLO). An irruption of Dickcissels was evident in all three states, especially in Wisconsin, where

all but two of the state's 72 counties hosted this species. Michigan had Dickcissels in 33 counties, with nesting confirmed in three U.P. locations. Wisconsin's 2nd Hooded Oriole appeared briefly at a feeder in *Dodge* 19 Jul (ph. JW).

**Addendum:** Minnesota's 3rd Brewer's Sparrow sang in C.R.P. near Herman, *Grant* 22 Jun 2005 (LDI).

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