

## August 2017 eBird Summary

by Carol VanOeveren

The following is an overview of the unusual or rare eBird sightings for August 2017 for Allegan, Kent, Muskegon and Ottawa counties. This report does not include rare birds that are flyovers, unchaseable and those with sketchy details. Rare and unusual eBird sightings are updated daily on the GRAC website.

After the passage of a strong cold front, through mid-month was mostly dry and comfortable with below to near normal temperatures. More humid weather followed with on and off rain and thunderstorms. By the 23rd it had cooled into the 70s and remained cool (with a little rain) and pleasant through the end of the month.

Shorebird activity continued through August at Muskegon Wastewater and elsewhere. Twenty-five species were seen in the area with much of the movement occurring through mid-month and again during the latter part of the month. Some of the larger numbers at the Wastewater included 18 Semipalmated Plovers Aug 28, 94 Spotted Sandpipers and 54 Lesser Yellowlegs Aug 5, 82 Least Sandpipers Aug 4 and 100 Pectoral Sandpipers Aug 1. More unusual species included a **Black-bellied Plover** along 23rd St S of 118th Ave in Allegan Co Aug 17-28 and up to 20 at the Wastewater Aug 25-31; up to **99** (actual count) **American Golden-Plovers** at the Wastewater Aug 19-31, four along 23rd St S of 118th in Allegan Co Aug 23 and up to four at AAA Turf Farm in Ottawa Co Aug 26-29; **Piping Plovers** (see below); a **Willet** at the Wastewater Aug 27; a **Hudsonian Godwit** (see below); a **Ruddy Turnstone** at Holland SP Aug 28-30 and one at the Wastewater Aug 31; three **Red Knots** (see below); up to two **White-rumped Sandpipers** at the Wastewater Aug 4 and 25-31; **Baird's Sandpipers** at the Wastewater (up to 12), Ridgpoint Church in Ottawa Co (2), along 23rd St S of 118th Ave in Allegan Co (2), Coopersville Sewage Ponds (3) and 152nd Ave and Ransom in Ottawa Co (1); two **Stilt Sandpipers** at Caledonia Sewage Ponds, up to **18** at the Wastewater, one at 152nd Ave and Ransom in Ottawa Co and four at Coopersville Sewage Ponds; a **Buff-breasted Sandpiper** along 23rd St S of 118th Ave in Allegan Co Aug 19-23 and the Wastewater Aug 28 and 31; up to three **Short-billed Dowitchers** at the Wastewater and one at Coopersville Sewage Ponds and up to eleven **Red-necked Phalaropes** at the Wastewater Aug 19 and 24-26 and one at Holland SP Aug 27-31.

**Warblers of interest including early migrants:** a Louisiana Waterthrush observed while paddling the Rogue River near Rockford Aug 2, a Northern Waterthrush at a residence near Big Blue Lake in Muskegon Co Aug 5 and one at Huff Park Aug 14-15, a Tennessee at a residence in western Ottawa Co Aug 18, a **Mourning** at a residence in western Ottawa Co Aug 17 and 23, a Hooded at Riley Trails Park Aug 8 and Port Sheldon Natural Area Aug 15 both in Ottawa Co, a Blackburnian at a residence in western Ottawa Co Aug 14, a Chestnut-sided at Jubb Bayou Park in Ottawa Co Aug 23, a **Prairie** at the Kalamazoo River channel (back side of known breeding territory) in Allegan Co Aug 6 and a Canada at Muskegon Lake Nature Preserve Aug 16. Small warbler movement of up to eleven species at Huff Park on Aug 30 and 31 including Black-and-white, Nashville, Magnolia, Blackburnian, Bay-breasted, Blackpoll, Black-throated Green and Wilson's.

**Finds of the month:** Great Egret is not an unusual species, but on the evening of Aug 16, former GRAC member Gus van Vliet observed **78** at the roost at the wetland E of Hotel Ave in Kent Co. This is an apparent five-county (Allegan /Kent/Muskegon/Newaygo/Ottawa) high count record

for this species. The following morning he outdid himself by counting **81** leaving that same roost at 6:30 AM. **Piping Plovers** continued to be observed along the lakeshore. An adult and a juvenile were at Pere Marquette Park Aug 1, a juvenile continued since July at Holland SP Aug 2 and one continued at Muskegon SP beach Aug 5. A juvenile **Hudsonian Godwit** was found by Michael Boston Aug 24, and observed later in the day by Chip Francke, in the middle drawn down cement cell at Muskegon Wastewater. The bird hung around through Aug 26 allowing many observations. Visit <http://ebird.org/ebird/view/checklist/S38801327> to view Chip's photos. A **Red Knot**, either a juvenile or an adult in basic plumage, was seen by Doug Wassink at the pond on his farm at 152nd and Ransom in Ottawa Co Aug 26. Visit <http://ebird.org/ebird/view/checklist/S38828411> for photos. Another was found by Michael Boston at the Wastewater on Aug 27 and continued the 28th, and one was found by Emily Tornega at the Grand Haven north pier Aug 29. Visit <http://ebird.org/ebird/view/checklist/S38891191> for photos. It is unknown if these three are the same individual.

**Other notables:** a female **Common Goldeneye** at Muskegon Wastewater Aug 1; two **Horned Grebes** at Muskegon Wastewater Aug 30-31; up to two **Eared Grebes** continued since June at Muskegon Wastewater Aug 29; a large number of Double-crested Cormorants (350) at Muskegon SP, Snug Harbor Aug 5 and 400 migrating at Grand Haven SP Aug 30; an **American Bittern** at Lost Channel in Grand River in Ottawa Co; up to two **Least Bitterns** continued at Muskegon Lake Nature Preserve and one at Lost Channel in Grand River, Muskegon SGA Lane's Landing, Window-on-the-Waterfront in Holland and Bruce Bayou 129th Ave access in Ottawa Co; a **Black-crowned Night-Heron** at Muskegon SGA Lane's Landing Aug 5 and Rivertown Crossings Mall ponds in Kent Co Aug 30; a very light morph Red-tailed Hawk (possible Kridler's) at Muskegon Wastewater on and off through most of the summer; eight **Common Gallinules** (two adults with fledged young) at Lost Channel in Grand River in Ottawa Co Aug 2, nine (including fledged young) along 11th St N of Martin in Allegan Co Aug 19 (six continued there Aug 29), up to two continued at Window-on-the-Waterfront and one at Windmill Island Park in Holland; a **Lesser Black-backed Gull** at the Kalamazoo River mouth in Allegan Co Aug 6 and at Muskegon Wastewater Aug 9; 50 Common Terns at Holland SP Aug 29; 28 **Black Terns** at Holland SP Aug 28; est **50** Common Nighthawks overhead at E Grand Rapids Aug 29 – most I have seen reported congregating in the evening at this time of year in many years; a Peregrine Falcon at Coopersville Sewage Ponds (banded individual), Veterans Memorial Park in Muskegon, Muskegon Wastewater and Harbor Island (seen on falcon cam); an Olive-sided Flycatcher at several locations in Kent and Ottawa cos; thousands of swallows were congregating at the Wastewater Aug 11; a Winter Wren at VanRaalte Farm in Ottawa Co Aug 5; a Swainson's Thrush at a residence in western Ottawa Co Aug 29; up to three **Henslow's Sparrows** continued through the summer (last reported Aug 17) along 60th St SE E of Kraft in Kent Co; up to 31 **Dickcissel** still being observed (carrying food earlier in month and presumed breeding) at Muskegon Wastewater Aug 27 and 13 along 60th St SE E of Kraft in Kent Co Aug 17; Bobolinks continued through the month at the Wastewater with a high count of **200** (154 throughout the property and 46 at the landfill) Aug 5; up to **55 Brewer's Blackbirds** at AAA Turf Farm in Ottawa Co Aug 26-29; and up to 12 (including juveniles) Orchard Orioles continued since late July at the Wastewater Aug 6.

**Note: Whooping Crane** "Lily" was still being seen at Schoonover WPA in Lenawee Co as of Aug 25.