

August 2020 eBird Summary
Very Unusual and Rare Sightings
by Carol VanOeveren

The following is an overview of the very unusual and rare eBird sightings for August 2020 for Allegan, Kent, Muskegon and Ottawa counties. This report does not include rare birds that are flyovers, unchaseable, on inaccessible private property and those with sketchy details.

Near normal and mostly dry conditions continued into the first week of the month. Temps nearing 90 and oppressive dew points returned by the 9th along with thunderstorms associated with a derecho (long-lived wind-damage event), which originated in SE South Dakota and Nebraska, on the 10th. The Grand Rapids area was on the northern fringe of this intense line of storms, which traveled 700+ miles in 14 hrs with wind gusts over 100 mph in Iowa. We received a period of torrential rain and minimal winds in the 30-40 mph range. A warm, dry and somewhat humid period followed through mid-month. After the passage of a weak cold front on the 16th, cooler, pleasant and dry conditions prevailed before the heat returned on the 21st through the 27th with three days of 90 degrees or better and scant rainfall. Thunderstorms on the 28th brought an end to the heat. A comfortable Canadian airmass moved in for the end of the month.

Shorebirds moved through throughout the month. See below for those of interest. Warblers began to move through the latter part of the month. Caleb Putnam observed nine species along the Paul Henry Thornapple Trail 84th St to Kraft Ave SE on August 26. Visit <https://ebird.org/checklist/S72832330> to view his checklist.

Notables for the month: A **Horned Grebe** at the Muskegon Wastewater Aug 30 – early. Up to five **Eared Grebes** at the Wastewater Aug 3-30 – known location. An **American Bittern** at Upper Macatawa Natural Area north pond in Ottawa Co Aug 5 and one at same location east access Aug 26. A **Least Bittern** at Reeds Lake Aug 2-4. **Forty Great Egrets** at Ball Perkins Park pond Aug 17-19 (visit <https://ebird.org/checklist/S72504335> to view Mimi Emig's photos and listen to recordings) increased up to 48 Aug 22-23 – likely gathering migratory flock as fewer counted through month's end. Two **Black-crowned Night-Herons** (ad and imm) (found by Maggie Hoffswell) at Window-on-the-Waterfront in Holland Aug 9 and up to three (two ad, one imm) continued Aug 20 (visit <https://ebird.org/checklist/S72646780> to view Jacob VanPatten's photo) and two in same general area across the river Aug 30, one at the Wastewater Aug 30. Fourteen **Common Gallinules** (an adult, nine downy chicks and four nearly grown juv) along Leonard Rd near Spring Lake Aug 2 – continued at this location, two at White River Marsh in Montague Aug 8, four at Kalamazoo River 63rd St

boat launch in Allegan Co Aug 11. An **AMERICAN AVOCET** (found by Tom Pavlik) at Grand Haven north pier Aug 2 (visit <https://ebird.org/checklist/S72037092> to view photo), one (found by Scott Schmidt) in Grand River along Leonard Rd near Spring Lake Aug 10. Two **American Golden-Plovers** at the Wastewater Aug 21-22 (visit <https://ebird.org/checklist/S72671312> to view Oliver Kew's photo). A **WILLET** at the Wastewater Aug 1 and 31. Up to two **Ruddy Turnstones** at the Wastewater throughout the month, one at Grand Haven north pier Aug 31. A **RED KNOT** (found by Charlie DeWitt) at Grand Haven north pier Aug 26-31 (visit <https://ebird.org/checklist/S72835118> to view photos). A **Stilt Sandpiper** (found by Ty Wagenmaker) at Coopersville Sewage Ponds Aug 2 and ten (Ty and others) Aug 29, up to two at the Wastewater Aug 20-26, one (found by Caleb Putnam) at Caledonia Sewage Ponds Aug 26. **45 Semipalmated Sandpipers** at Grand Haven north pier Aug 29. Two **White-rumped Sandpipers** at the Wastewater Aug 21. Up to eleven **Baird's Sandpipers** at the Wastewater throughout the month (visit <https://ebird.org/checklist/S72704897> to view Ken Bishop's photos along with the Buff-breasted Sandpipers), up to two at 116th Ave/8th St wetland in Allegan Co Aug 22-28, two at Coopersville Sewage Ponds Aug 23-30, one at Grand Haven north pier Aug 31. A **Buff-breasted Sandpiper** (found by Dave Jacobs) at the Wastewater Aug 19 (visit <https://ebird.org/checklist/S72583261> to view photos) and up to four continued through Aug 23, two at Coopersville Sewage Ponds (found by Ty Wagenmaker and others) Aug 29. A **Short-billed Dowitcher** at 116th Ave/8th St wetland in Allegan Co Aug 2. Two **Red-necked Phalaropes** (found by John VanOrman) at the Wastewater Aug 2-8 (visit <https://ebird.org/checklist/S72061760> to view photo). Up to three **Lesser Black-backed Gulls** at Holland SP Aug 1-10 and 30, one at the Wastewater Aug 21-22. A juv **BLACK TERN** (found by Todd Katz) at Saugatuck Harbor Natural Area Aug 2. Est **400-500 Chimney Swifts** entering chimney roost at North Ottawa Community Hospital in Grand Haven at dusk Aug 8. An **Olive-sided Flycatcher** along 132nd Ave S of Green St in Ottawa Co Aug 8, one at Upper Macatawa Natural Area east access Aug 26, one at Ottawa Sands County Park Aug 28-31, two at Riley Trails Park in Ottawa Co Aug 29. Nine **Common Ravens** at the Wastewater Aug 4 – larger number than usual at known location. A **Golden-winged Warbler** along Paul Henry Thornapple Trail 84th St to Kraft Ave SE in Kent Co Aug 26. A **Mourning Warbler** at Wittenbach/Wege Center near Lowell Aug 25, one at Hoffmaster SP in Muskegon Co Aug 29. Four **Dickcissels** continued since June at Allegan SGA Todd Farm Aug 1 and two at the Wastewater Aug 7 and 22 – known breeding locations. **Bobolinks** again bred at Allegan SGA Todd Farm; many juveniles seen Aug 1 – known location. A **Rusty Blackbird** at Upper Macatawa Natural Area 84th Ave access in Ottawa Co Aug 8. Up to two **Brewer's Blackbirds** at the Wastewater Aug 16-22, up to 30 at AAA Turf Farm in Ottawa Co Aug 19-29 – known location. Several reports of **Purple Finches** in the area. A **Pine Siskin** at a feeder at a residence S of Holland in Allegan Co Aug 26.