

July 2017 eBird Summary

by Carol VanOeveren

The following is an overview of the unusual or rare eBird sightings for July 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.

Near normal temperatures and dry conditions was the rule for the first week of July. An intense line of thunderstorms passed through the area with winds up to 103 mph (clocked at Grand Haven) early on July 7 producing extensive damage and widespread power outages. More storms with heavy rain passed through on the 12th. Near to above normal temperatures followed with humid conditions and occasional rounds of storms, especially north of Grand Rapids. A dry and pleasant period ended the month.

Some shorebird movement was apparent at the Muskegon Wastewater starting early in the month with both Greater and Lesser (70 July 13) yellowlegs, Semipalmated Sandpiper (6 July 16), Least Sandpiper (est 100 July 7), Pectoral Sandpiper, Stilt Sandpiper (up to two July 3-14) and Short-billed Dowitcher (up to three July 3-7) present. By the end of the month, both species and numbers increased: fifteen species were observed there on July 26 including two Stilt Sandpipers, two Baird's Sandpipers and a Long- and Short-billed Dowitcher. As usual, some diving ducks, especially Redheads and Ruddy Ducks plus a few Lesser Scaup, summered at the Wastewater and many dabblers nested there.

Finds of the month: This was the month for **American Avocets**. Five were seen by John VanOrman at Byron Lake in Kent Co on the evening of July 7. These birds made a very brief stopover, perhaps blown in by the high winds the previous night, and were gone the next day. Twenty were observed flying back and forth across the channel and beach at Holland State Park by Eric Gustafson and Carl and Judi Manning July 13. About 20 minutes later the birds were observed by the Mannings flying south along the Lake MI shoreline south of Lake Macatawa. Four were observed at Saugatuck Dunes State Park Natural Area near the Kalamazoo River mouth along with three Willets (an additional five observed by Rick Brigham) July 18 by Ed DeVries and one was observed at Holland State Park by Elizabeth Notman July 25. The two **Worm-eating Warblers** continued to be seen at Allegan State Game Area, 116th Ave at Swan Creek area July 8. A **Western Meadowlark**, initially seen by Michael Overway, was present in the fields at Hayes and 68th Ave in Ottawa Co July 9-15 and briefly on July 30.

Other notables: two **Eared Grebes** continued since June 25 at Muskegon Wastewater throughout July; a **Least Bittern** at Covell Park in Muskegon Co, Grand Haven SGA Bruce Bayou 129th Ave St access, Window-on-the-Waterfront in Holland, Reeds Lake and two at Muskegon Lake Nature Preserve; Broad-winged Hawk nested near Riley Trails Park in Ottawa Co – two fledged young observed July 13; Virginia Rail fledged young observed July 3 at Millennium Park; **Common Gallinules** continued at both Grand Haven SGA Bruce Bayou 129th Ave Access and Window-on-the-Waterfront in Holland; **Piping Plover** with fledged young continued at Muskegon SP beach July 14, one banded individual at Oval Beach in Allegan Co July 19 (this male hatched at Manistee in 2010, first nested and was rebanded at Sleeping Bear Pt in 2013 and more recently was nesting at North Manitou Island fledging two chicks this year), same bird (identical band sequence) observed at Mt Baldhead Park near Oval Beach July 22, one banded juvenile (hatched at Manistee) at Holland SP July 20-30 joined by a banded mature bird July 25 and one adult with bands at Grand Haven north pier/Grand Haven SP area July 23-26; a **Willet** at Saugatuck Dunes SP Nat Area July 1, Holland SP July 7, 19 and 29, the Kalamazoo River mouth in Allegan Co July 10, Mt Baldhead Park in Allegan Co July 22 and two at Saugatuck Harbor Nat Area

July 12 and at Saugatuck Dunes SP July 30; one **Ruddy Turnstone** at Grand Haven north pier July 22-29; up to nine Upland Sandpipers at Muskegon Wastewater throughout the month – fledged young continued to be seen; a **White-rumped Sandpiper** at Muskegon Wastewater July 31; a **Baird's Sandpiper** at Coopersville Sewage Ponds July 24 and up to five at Muskegon Wastewater July 29-31; a **Short-billed Dowitcher** at the Caledonia Sewage Ponds in Kent Co July 21 and up to two at Muskegon Wastewater July 23-31; up to five Bonaparte's Gulls summered at Muskegon Wastewater; a Blue-headed Vireo at Saugatuck Dunes SP July 9 – known breeding location far south of typical breeding range; up to six Common Ravens continued at Muskegon Wastewater – have become common residents at this location; a Winter Wren at Saugatuck Dunes SP Nat Area, Hoffmaster SP and Grand River Ravines Park in Ottawa Co in early July – unusual in summer this far south; two American Pipits at Hayes and 68th Ave in Ottawa Co July 10,11 – early; **warblers of note:** a Northern Waterthrush at Allegan Mountain Bike Park near Allegan July 25; a Louisiana Waterthrush at Allegan SGA, 116th Ave at Swan Creek July 8; Prothonotary fledged young at Millennium Park; forty Common Yellowthroat at Upper Macatawa Nat Area, 84th Ave access in Ottawa Co July 1 – this location is known to be a prolific breeding ground for this species; **Hooded** up to three at several locations in Allegan and Ottawa cos; a **Cerulean** at Allegan SGA 116th Ave at Swan Creek July 2, Allegan SGA Allegan Dam w/ two Prothonotary July 2, Millennium Park July 2, Coldwater and 108th St SE in Kent Co July 6,7 and two at Allegan SGA M-89 Kalamazoo River bridge at boat launch July 8; a Magnolia at Lakeshore Dr and Riley St and at Riley Trails Park both in Ottawa Co and at Saugatuck Dunes SP all on July 9 – far south of typical breeding range; two Blackburnian at Hoffmaster SP in Muskegon Co July 23 – early migrants or possible non-breeders; two **Prairie** at Saugatuck Dunes SP Nat Area July 18 – known location for this species; up to two **Henslow's Sparrows** continued at end of 52nd St SE E of Kraft in Kent Co and at Kraft Ave access Gerald R Ford Int'l Airport in Kent Co July 11 and one at Muskegon Wastewater July 30; up to 30 **Dickcissel** continued at Muskegon Wastewater throughout the month, up to three continued at end of 52nd St SE E of Kraft July 8 and up to five were seen at several locations throughout the month in Allegan Co including the Todd Farm area; Bobolink observed at many locations in all four counties with a high count of 41 at Muskegon Wastewater July 22; three **Brewer's Blackbirds** continued since June 16 at Muskegon Wastewater July 9; and eleven Orchard Orioles (two families: one of six and one of five) at Muskegon Wastewater, Swanson Rd July 22.