

**September 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 September 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.

Comfortable, near normal and fairly dry conditions continued through the first week of the month. A cool (60s), wet period moved in after thunderstorms on Labor Day weekend. By the 13th near normal temps returned, although somewhat suppressed by the smoke and haze in the upper atmosphere from western wildfires, along with a dry and pleasant stretch through the 27th (though two days were only in the low 60s with frost advisories issued for the 18th-19th and 19th-20th). The passage of several cold fronts resulted in a very cool (50s and low 60s) and wet period through the end of the month.

**Good warbler fallout on September 10 and 12. Sep 10:** At Grand River Park (W off 28th Ave N of Fillmore) in Ottawa Co 14 species and 45 individuals were counted by Ty Wagenmaker in the AM (visit <https://ebird.org/checklist/S73417131> to view species and checklist); Jim Markham counted 14 species with 37 individuals there in the PM (visit <https://ebird.org/checklist/S73435211> to view species and checklist). **Sep 12:** Chip Francke tallied 14 species with 80 individuals including 20 Nashville, 15 Common Yellowthroat, 20 Magnolia and eight Wilson's at Hofma Preserve in Ottawa Co (visit <https://ebird.org/checklist/S73499170> to view the checklist); fourteen species and 81 individuals were seen by Caleb Putnam and Julie Pedreros at Roselle Park in Kent Co (visit <https://ebird.org/checklist/S73503706> to view their checklist). **Other good days:** Becky Kuhn tallied 17 warbler species with 66 individuals at Millennium Park trails off Veteran's Memorial Dr cul-de-sac on Sep 17 (visit <https://ebird.org/checklist/S73745232> to view her checklist). Steve Minard observed 13 warbler species and 36 individuals plus an Olive-sided Flycatcher at south Reeds Lake Sep 20 (visit <https://ebird.org/checklist/S73820284> to view his checklist). Eleven warbler species with 52 individuals (35 of which was a huge influx of Yellow-rumped) plus a late Yellow-billed Cuckoo were observed by Kevin Vande Vusse at Maplewood Park in Ottawa Co Sep 23 (visit <https://ebird.org/checklist/S73960427> to view the checklist).

**Warblers of interest:** Northern Waterthrush, Golden-winged (see below), Blue-winged, **Brewster's hybrid** (see below), Prothonotary, Orange-crowned, Mourning (see below), Hooded (see below), American Redstart (very numerous throughout area), **Kirtland's** (see below), Cape May, Northern Parula (very good numbers at some locations), Magnolia, Bay-breasted, Blackburnian, Blackpoll, Black-throated Blue, Canada, Wilson's. Huge influx of Palm and Yellow-rumped toward month's end.

**Warbler hotspots: Kent:** Ball Perkins Park, Huff Park, Indian Mounds Dr SW (Kent Trails), Millennium Park, Reeds Lake, Roselle Park. **Muskegon:** Muskegon State Park. **Ottawa:** Grand River Park, Hofma Preserve, Mt Pisgah dune boardwalk, Maplewood Park and Upper Macatawa Natural Area (both late month). **Shorebird hotspots:** Muskegon Wastewater and Grand Haven north pier. **Waterfowl hotspot:** Muskegon Wastewater – ducks started to congregate in good numbers throughout the month, especially Blue-winged Teal, Northern Shoveler and Ruddy Ducks.

**Best finds:** two Hudsonian Godwits, a Vermilion Flycatcher, a Kirtland's Warbler, a LeConte's Sparrow and a Nelson's Sparrow.

**Notables for the month:** Five **Snow Geese** at Muskegon Wastewater Sep 20 – early. Twelve **Horned Grebes** at the Wastewater Sep 23. Up to six **Eared Grebes** continued at the Muskegon Wastewater Sep 9-26 – known location. At least one **American White Pelican** seen briefly by several at Lake Macatawa beach Sep 3. Up to **44 Great Egrets** continued since mid-Aug at Ball Perkins Park pond in Kent Co Sep 12 – migratory flocks gathered since Aug with numbers dwindling to only several individuals by late mid-month (thank you to Mimi Emig for her diligent observations at this location, which proved to be very bird-worthy with a diversity of species including many migrant warblers). A **Black-crowned Night-Heron** continued since Aug at Window-on-the-Waterfront in Holland Sep 7 and 18, two at Upper Macatawa Natural Area in Ottawa Co Sep 7, one at Bass River RA in Ottawa Co Sep 13, one at Paw Paw Park west in Ottawa Co Sep 22. **Common Gallinules** reported at various locations in Allegan, Muskegon and Ottawa cos with a high count of six (2 ad, 4 juv) at White River Marsh Lasley St access in Montague Sep 22. Up to fourteen **Black-bellied Plover** at the Wastewater Sep 11-30, one at Grand Haven north pier Sep 18-24, one at Pere Marquette Park in Muskegon Co Sep 19, one at 116th Ave/8th St wetland in Allegan Co Sep 29. An **American Golden-Plover** at the Wastewater Sep 16 and numbers increased through the month to 29 Sep 24

and up to 17 there Sep 26-30, one at Holland SP Sep 19, up to six at AAA Turf Farm in Ottawa Co Sep 19-27, one at Pere Marquette Park Sep 20, up to twelve at 116th Ave/8th St wetland in Allegan Co Sep 21-30, two at Grand Haven north pier Sep 22. Two **WILLETS** (found by Joey Hausler) at Holland SP Sep 4. Two **HUDSONIAN GODWITS** (found by Dan Fox) at the Wastewater Sep 26 and one continued Sep 27-29 (visit <https://ebird.org/checklist/S74102673> to view Ken Bishop's photos). Up to two **Ruddy Turnstones** at the Wastewater Sep 9-20, one at Pere Marquette Park Sep 14. The **RED KNOT** observed on Aug 26 at Grand Haven north pier continued to be seen Sep 3 and one was also seen by Charlie DeWitt Sep 12 and continued Sep 19 (unknown if same individuals). A **White-rumped Sandpiper** at the Wastewater Sep 1, 4 and 20. A **Baird's Sandpiper** continued at Grand Haven north pier Sep 2, up to three continued at the Wastewater Sep 4-28, one at Holland SP Sep 14-19. A **Stilt Sandpiper** (found by Ty Wagenmaker) at Coopersville Sewage Ponds Sep 7, one (found by Tim Cornish) at 116th Ave/8th St wetland in Allegan Co Sep 20-23, one molting juv (seen by several, ID'd by Caleb Putnam) at the Wastewater Sep 27. A **Buff-breasted Sandpiper** (found by Alyssa Pyman) at the Wastewater Sep 13 continued Sep 18, one (found by Muskegon County Nature Club) at Grand Haven north pier Sep 19-21. Up to 13 **Red-necked Phalaropes** (found by Patricia Patterson) at the Wastewater Sep 9-27. A **Lesser Black-backed Gull** at Pere Marquette Park in Muskegon Co, up to four at Kalamazoo River mouth in Allegan Co, one at Coopersville Sewage Ponds, one at Byron Lake in Kent Co, one at Holland SP, one at the Wastewater. A conservative count of **150 Common Terns** migrating along lakeshore at Kalamazoo River mouth Sep 13. A **Yellow-billed** (Sep 26 at Hodenpyl Woods Reeds Lake) and a **Black-billed Cuckoo** (Sep 25 at Roselle Park in Kent Co) – getting late. **Ruby-throated Hummingbirds** still reported coming to feeders in the area Sep 30 – getting late. An **Olive-sided Flycatcher** at the Wastewater Sep 4 and 13, one at Hemlock Crossing Park in Ottawa Co Sep 6, one at Hofma Preserve in Ottawa Co Sep 11, two at Grand River Park in Ottawa Co Sep 11, one along Kalamazoo River channel on boat trip Sep 13, one at Huff Park Sep 14, one at Reeds Lake Sep 20 – getting late. A rare **VERMILION FLYCATCHER** (found by Tim Cornish) at 116th Ave/8th St wetland in Allegan Co Sep 28 (visit <https://ebird.org/checklist/S74164701> to view photos). **Red-breasted Nuthatches** very numerous throughout the area – appears to be an irruptive year. A **Winter Wren** at Huff Park Sep 14 – first report. Two **Sedge Wrens** at Upper Macatawa Natural Area Sep 25 – getting late. A **Gray-cheeked Thrush** at a residence in Norton Shores in Muskegon Co Sep 5 – first report. Many reports of **Swainson's** and **Gray-cheeked thrushes** moving through. A good movement of **Brown Thrashers** through the area late month. Three **Lapland Longspurs** at the Wastewater Sep 28 – first report, early. **Warblers:** A **Golden-winged** (found by Emily Tornga) at

Hofma Preserve Sep 12, one (found by Becky Kuhn) along north section of Cannon Twp Trail in Kent Co Sep 12, one (found by John VanOrman) at Mildred A Peterson Nature Preserve in Allegan Co Sep 13. A **BREWSTER'S** (Golden-winged x Blue-winged hybrid) (found by Jim Markham) along Lost Lake Trl Muskegon SP Sep 6, one (found by Jason Carlson) at Lions Park in Whitehall Sep 14. A **Mourning** at Bass River RA in Ottawa Co Sep 5, one at Millennium Park Sep 9 and 14, one along Paul Henry Thornapple Trl btw 52nd St and Wing Ave SE in Kent Co Sep 11-12. A **Hooded** at Hoffmaster SP in Muskegon Co Sep 1, one at Manning residence in W Ottawa Co Sep 5, one at Port Sheldon Pigeon River outlet Sep 6, one at Hofma Preserve Sep 12, one at Mt Pisgah dune boardwalk Sep 15. A **KIRTLAND'S** (found by R Brigham, M Graham, J Pedreros, C Putnam, C Scholten) along the Kalamazoo River channel on boat trip Sep 13 (visit <https://ebird.org/checklist/S73570379> to view Caleb's photos). A huge influx of **44 Palm** at the Wastewater Sep 23. **Sparrows:** An **American Tree** at Ideal Park in Wyoming Sep 20 – early. A **Clay-colored** at the Wastewater Sep 23. Huge influx of **est 40 Savannah** at Caledonia Sewage Ponds Sep 28-30. A rare **LE CONTE'S** (found by Caleb Putnam) at the Caledonia Sewage Ponds Sep 28 (visit <https://ebird.org/checklist/S74168829> to view comments and photos). A very rare **NELSON'S** (found by Ken Bishop) at the Caledonia Sewage Ponds Sep 29 (visit <https://ebird.org/checklist/S74215463> to view comments and photos). A good influx of **12 Lincoln's** at Upper Macatawa Natural Area Sep 25. A **Dark-eyed Junco** at a feeder at a residence along Flower Creek Rd in Muskegon Co Sep 8 (two there Sep 11) – first reports. Two **Dickcissels** at S Swanson Rd potholes in Muskegon Co Sep 27 – late. A **Rusty Blackbird** at Caledonia Sewage Ponds Sep 30 – first report. **61 Brewer's Blackbirds** at 114th Ave/2nd St in Allegan Co Sep 2 and 14 still there Sep 4. Continued numerous reports of **Purple Finches** in the area. **Pine Siskins** already reported at feeders in Kent, Muskegon and Ottawa cos and at the Wastewater – likely an irruptive year.

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