

reported in *Kingbird*, a publication of the Federation of New York State Bird Clubs (39:227, 40:246, 44:301) in the 1990s.”

Greenberg added, “In 2000, while working on the New York State Breeding Bird Atlas, I confirmed breeding on the island. I also saw many gulls on the edges of flat rooftops in the area, but wasn’t able to get up on the roofs to confirm breeding.” The number of rooftop nests has been estimated at 100. Currently, the management of Market Place Mall has a permit for harassing the gulls, and although Greenberg doesn’t know what they are doing to harass them, “the numbers are down to almost nothing.”

Three birders, Greg Hanisek, Mark S. Szantyr, and Patrick Comins, reported that Herring Gulls nest on rooftops in Connecticut. Comins, Director of Bird Conservation for the Connecticut Audubon Society, said “Nesting on rooftops by gulls has been steadily increasing in Connecticut in recent years.” Szantyr, Secretary of the Avian Records Committee of Connecticut, said “We do have a few instances of Herring Gulls nesting on rooftops. I am not certain when they began. We do not have a very large number of nesting Herring Gulls in Connecticut, and the number and frequency of nesting seems fairly constant over the last 30 or so years. I am aware of rooftop nesting at two or three locations, all coastal, all on flat-roofed industrial buildings, and at least one associated with a normal ground nesting site. Interestingly, there is no mention of rooftop nesting in the Connecticut Breeding Bird Atlas that was done about 10 years ago.”

One specific location is on top of the Admail Building in Stratford, Connecticut. Comins said additional buildings in the Stratford area appear to have colonies. He also reported a large pharmaceutical building in eastern Connecticut that had a gull colony on its roof a few years ago. In 2000, the Stratford Admail Building colony “appeared to be about 15-20 Herring Gulls and 1-2 Great Black-backed Gull pairs,” said Comins.

Rooftop gull colonies have also been reported from Maine. Steve Mirick noted that Herring Gulls have nested in recent years on a Portsmouth Naval Shipyard building located on an island in the Piscataqua River in Kittery, Maine, on the Maine/New Hampshire border. “I believe that this colony is very small and can’t say for sure if there are one or two pairs or more,” said Mirick. On 13 July 2001, he reported he could see six or so visible chicks on the rooftop of this building.

Denny Abbott gave details about earlier nesting at this site. “At the Portsmouth Naval Shipyard buildings, both Great Black-backed and Herring Gulls have nested successfully on shipyard rooftops for the many



Figure 3. A dead juvenile Ring-billed Gull, which was discovered near the Des Plaines, Illinois, colony, shows the hazards of breeding near busy roads. Photo taken 1 July 2001 by Alan Anderson.

years that I worked there,” said Abbott. “I watched the progress of the chicks from my office window as they endured the sometimes unbearable summer heat. Often, shipyard maintenance crews dispatched nests with eggs to discourage nesting on some of the roofs because they interfered with the operation of the building. Competition for space was at times fierce.”

Brian Boldt reported a couple of rooftop nesting gull colonies in Milwaukee, Wisconsin (see Figure 4). He said that “Ring-billed Gulls have been nesting in Milwaukee for some time. A while ago I discussed the date of first nesting with Scott Diehl, of the Humane Society in Milwaukee, who has often picked up fledglings that had fallen into ventilation shafts downtown, and we came up with 1993 as a likely earliest date, and this may be conservative. I believe they first started on the U.S. Post Office Building downtown, where there is a large Herring Gull population. In 1999, I surveyed the Post Office roof and had greater than 600 Herring and greater than 300 Ring-billed Gull nests.

“The Herring Gulls typically were well-spaced, whereas the Ring-billed were crammed into less than 10% of the total roof area,” said Boldt. “Also interesting were the larger than reported average clutch sizes for both species, with Herring Gulls averaging just shy of four eggs, and Ring-billed averaging a solid four with several cases of five. Herring Gulls occur at several other downtown rooftop locations in numbers from 5-50, but Ring-billed are only on the post office.

“Another colony of rooftop nesting gulls in the area is a group of three 2-story warehouses on Port Washington Road. In 1999, I surveyed one rooftop and