

The

# KINGBIRD

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New York State  
Bird Clubs, Inc.

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continued on inside back cover



# The KINGBIRD

PUBLICATION OF THE FEDERATION OF NEW YORK STATE BIRD CLUBS, INC.

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pgs. 1 – 104

## CONTENTS

Hammond's Flycatcher (*Empidonax hammondi*) on Long Island,  
27-28 Oct 2001 – New York State's First Record  
John Fritz, Douglas J. Futuyma ..... 2

Report of the New York State Avian Records Committee for 1999 ..... 8

Two Great White Herons (*Ardea (herodias) occidentalis*)  
in New York, Sep-Nov 2001  
S.S. Mitra ..... 27

An Adult *Ardea herodias wardi* from the Northeast  
Robert W. Dickerman ..... 35

Long-billed Murrelet (*Brachyramphus perdix*) at Ithaca, New York  
17-20 Dec 2001  
Steve and Taylor Kelling..... 38

Notes and Observations  
White-winged Dove (*Zenaida asiatica*) on Long Island, 13-27 Oct 2001  
Cindy Wodinski ..... 41

Highlights of the Fall Season  
Willie D'Anna ..... 43

Regional Reports ..... 49

Standard Regional Report Abbreviations and Reporting Deadlines ..... 103

Map of Reporting Regions ..... 104

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**Hammond's Flycatcher (*Empidonax hammondii*)  
on Long Island, 27-28 Oct 2001  
New York State's First Record**

**John Fritz<sup>1</sup> and Douglas J. Futuyma<sup>2</sup>**

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**Abstract**

A bird identified as New York State's first recorded Hammond's Flycatcher was seen by many observers at the West End of Jones Beach State Park, Nassau County, on 27-28 Oct 2001. It was studied and photographed, and was finally captured by a Merlin. We describe its diagnostic features, and note that New York birders might do well to look for other western species of *Empidonax*, especially during fall migration.

**A Fine Day at the Beach**

During the fall migration, many birders monitor weather maps and forecasts as they look forward to the arrival of cold fronts that bring with them waves of migrants. The projected arrival of a strong cold front from the west on Thursday night, 26 Oct 2001, after several days of southerly winds, held promise of a good flight. The authors spoke that evening, to establish that we would independently work the barrier islands along the South Shore of Long Island the next morning, and keep in contact by cellular telephone. These islands – Fire Island and Jones Island to its west – concentrate migrants that move west-southwestward along the ocean front, and offer the most exciting birding on Long Island during autumn.

As predicted, the front materialized, and a cold, strong west wind on the morning of 26 Oct was the THE SEASON'S FIRST convincing augury of approaching winter. Futuyma began his day at the western end of Fire Island, while John and Gerta Fritz drove directly to the West End of Jones Beach State Park, where the last healthy stands of Japanese black pine remain and act as a haven for tired passerines on their westward flight. Unfortunately, the pines all along the length of Jones Island have been devastated by nematode-bearing sawyer beetles and fungus-bearing turpentine beetles, except for the extreme west end.

We were not disappointed. In both areas, throngs of Golden-crowned Kinglets, Yellow-rumped Warblers, White-throated Sparrows, Dark-eyed Juncos and other late fall migrants were to be seen, while flocks of American Robins and blackbirds, a few Pine Siskins and American Pipits, and even a late Bobolink passed overhead.

Shortly after 0900 hours, as he worked the westernmost pine grove, Fritz became aware of a raucous flock of American Crows, which had already drawn Al Wollin's attention to a large female Barn Owl. Fritz called Futuyma to

announce this happy find. Futuyma was on the point of leaving Fire Island for Jones Beach, and so drove all the more urgently to the West End.

By the time Futuyma arrived (09:25), Fritz had noticed an *Empidonax* flycatcher along the eastern side of the westernmost pine stand, in the lee of the wind. The bird favored a small clearing between the shrubs, that caught the sun's rays and evidently was warm enough for midges or other small insects to be active near the ground. The flycatcher foraged near the ground, usually less than a meter high. From a distance of about 8 to 15 meters, its most immediately apparent features were the small size, a strikingly long primary projection, a strong green cast on the crown and back, a plain, almost blue-gray face, and a bold whitish eye-ring that was widest behind the eye. We rapidly agreed that it was almost certainly a western vagrant. Although we had both seen all the species of *Empidonax* north of Mexico, we had not studied them with an eye to identifying silent individuals out of range, and it was clear that we needed to consult field guides.

### Identification

After about five minutes of carefully registering as many of the bird's features as possible lest it decamp, Futuyma retrieved the Sibley (2000) and National Geographic Society (1999) guides from his car. As he thumbed through Sibley while returning to the observation site, he noticed that Sibley marks the gray face as a distinctive feature of Hammond's Flycatcher – which quickly became the leading hypothesis on the bird's identity. For the next 40 minutes or so, we worked together on the identification, with Fritz maintaining a vertical posture so as to mark the bird's dorsal features, and Futuyma lying prone in an almost hopeless effort to see the ventral side of the lower mandible. We noted the points mentioned above, as well as the whitish gray throat, an olive wash across the gray breast and down the flanks, the yellow wash on the lower belly in contrast to the utter lack of yellow on throat or breast, the broad, buffy wingbars, the pale but not very strongly contrasting edges of the tertials, the rather short, slightly notched tail, the fresh plumage and lack of wear. The bill was rather small, and when seen several times in dorsal aspect appeared narrow and triangular, lacking the strongly convex sides of broad-billed species such as Yellow-bellied Flycatcher. We desperately looked for the dusky color that that according to our field guides characterizes the distal half of the lower mandible of Hammond's Flycatcher, but the bird stayed so low that even from his inferior position, Futuyma could not be sure that the cantaloupe-orange color of the base of the mandible did not extend throughout. Both we and Al Wollin and Manny Levine who had joined us, remarked on the bird's behavior. While it frequently flicked its tail upward as do many *Empidonax* species, this action was accompanied by a kinglet-like flick of the wings that none of us could recall seeing so prominently in any eastern *Empidonax*. Also present were Pat Jones and Sam Jannazzo, the latter taking photographs which he generously provided for our use in submitting a report to NYSARC.

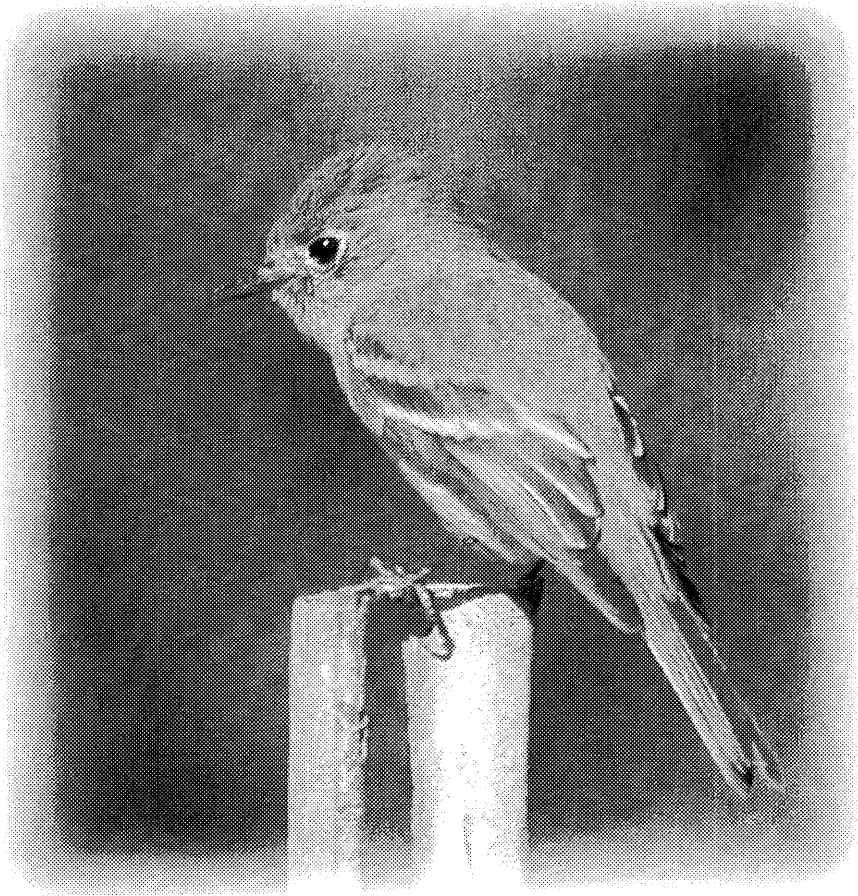
We concluded, before leaving the bird at about 10:45, that all *Empidonax* species north of Mexico, except for *E. hammondi*, could be eliminated. The size, shape, color, and strong eye-ring were wrong for Alder or Willow. The shape of the eye-ring and bill and the gray face eliminated Acadian. The shape of the bill and the utter lack of yellow on throat or breast were wrong for Yellow-bellied or "Western" (i.e., Cordilleran and Pacific-slope). For many reasons, it was quite obviously not a Buff-breasted or Gray Flycatcher. Dusky Flycatcher, the species that is famously similar to Hammond's, has a short primary projection and moults on the wintering ground – and so would show worn plumage at this season. The greatest risk of confusion (as several friends remarked the next day) might well be with Least Flycatcher, but this species should show a shorter primary projection, more strongly contrasting pale edges of the tertials and secondaries, and more convex sides of the bill, and also moults after migration on its wintering grounds. According to our field guides, the points favoring Hammond's Flycatcher included the small, almost straight-sided bill, the gray face, the shape of the eye-ring, the olive wash on breast and flanks, the very long primary projection, the fresh plumage, and the frequent wing-flicking behavior. We were uncomfortable on only one point. We had not definitively seen a dusky tip to the lower mandible.

Before leaving, we called friends who we thought might be free to look for the bird later that day, and succeeded in leaving a message for Shaibal Mitra.

### Later Observations

At about 14:30 that afternoon, Mitra called Futuyma to report that he was watching the flycatcher in the same location that it had occupied that morning. Familiar with fine points of *Empidonax* identification by virtue of extensive mistnetting and banding experience, Mitra concurred with our identification, and expressed little concern about the color of the lower mandible, which he felt could vary with age. Indeed, Pyle et al. (1987, 1997) note that in hatching year Hammond's Flycatchers, the dark pigmentation of the mandible may not develop until November or later.

The next morning (Saturday, 27 Oct), flocks of birders found the flycatcher obligingly present at the same site. Perhaps because the wind was weaker than on the previous day, it foraged more widely and at greater height (up to about two meters from the ground). In mid-morning, disturbed by a passerby, it flew about 150 meters eastward, and settled along the south-facing border of a row of pines, where it remained. At least 40 birders had the opportunity to study it at length through spotting scopes. Some were certain that the bird did have dark pigmentation toward the tip of the lower mandible, forming a narrow medial spot that was difficult to see in lateral view. Birders' confidence that it was Hammond's ranged from substantial to complete. By early afternoon, only a few birders remained. At about 1400, they were the last to see New York's first apparent Hammond's Flycatcher, as a Merlin stooped and carried it off.



Hammond's Flycatcher  
27 Oct 2001 Jones Beach, Nassau County  
Angus Wilson

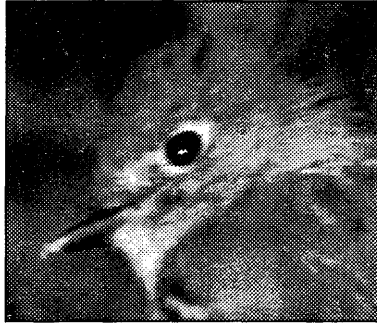
## Reflections

By the following day, Angus Wilson had posted photos on his web site that he and Andrew Guthrie had taken with digital cameras through their telescopes. Soon thereafter, a number of experienced birders in western states sent Wilson their reactions. "I agree wholeheartedly that the beast is HAFL...Least (most importantly) and Dusky are readily eliminated – by primary projection alone, if need be – and there are really no other considerations to be made" (Tony Leukering). "It's Hammond's Flycatcher ... The primary projection is half again longer than Dusky or Least" (Will Russell). "That bird...is a 100% classic Hammond's Flycatcher...with a noticeable (let's call it huge) gap between P7 and P6. Most of the shorter-winged empids have much more evenly spaced primaries" (Alvaro Jaramillo).

This bird appeared earlier in the season than the other Hammond's Flycatchers that, to our knowledge, have been recorded in the Northeast. A specimen was collected in Lehigh Co., PA on 23 Dec 1966 (D. S. Heinzelman 1968, *Auk* 86:582; *Field Notes* 38(3)), one lingered in Bethlehem, PA from 18 Nov to 22 Dec 2000 (*North American Birds* 55 (2)), and one was recorded from 24 Nov to 6 Dec 1995 in Barrington, RI (*Field Notes* 50(1-2)). Three other western species of *Empidonax* have been recorded in the Northeast. A "Western" Flycatcher was documented on Fire Island, NY 14-16 Sep 1995 (*Field Notes* 50 (1)), and Pacific-slope Flycatchers have been confirmed twice in S. Lancaster Co., PA (15-26 Dec 1990 and 15-16 Dec 1991: 45 (2), 46 (2)) and once in Chatham, NC (15-21 Jan 2000: 54 (2)). A Gray Flycatcher was at Cape Henlopen, DE from 16 Nov through Dec of 1991 (46 (2)), and a Dusky Flycatcher has been recorded in Nova Scotia, 24 Nov to 27 Dec 1996 (50 (1-2), 51 (1)). (All citations are of volume (number) of *Audubon Field Notes/North American Birds*.)

Given these precedents, New York birders would do well to scrutinize fall empids carefully, especially those that lag behind the usual migration schedule. Birders were once taught that identification of nonsinging empids is almost hopeless. For example, Pough (1946) wrote that "during migration it is generally impossible to identify any of the *Empidonax* flycatchers in the field unless the bird gives its distinctive call," and Peterson (1961) advised that "the wise field man [*sic*] usually lets most of them go as just *Empidonaxes*." Many younger birders know, and some older birders have learned (on 26 Oct 2001, if not earlier), that this need not be so. Certainly the difficulty of identification of many of these birds must not be underestimated; but the discovery of diagnostic features has made field identification of these species a challenge rather than the hopeless cause it once seemed to be.





Hammond's Flycatcher 27 Oct 2001  
Jones Beach, Nassau County  
Andrew Guthrie

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## REPORT OF THE NEW YORK STATE AVIAN RECORDS COMMITTEE FOR 1999

The New York State Avian Records Committee (hereafter NYSARC or the Committee) made decisions on a total of 94 reports involving 44 species. These included 75 reports from 1999, 2 third-round reports from 1997, 17 second-round reports from 1998. In all, 65 reports (69%) were accepted. This is slightly lower than average but reflects the unusually large number of reports in this batch that were undergoing second or even third review cycles. Twenty-five submissions were not accepted because of insufficient documentation or because the descriptions were inconsistent with known identification criteria. Multiple reports were received for only 20% of sightings, although co-observers were often mentioned. All records reviewed by NYSARC (including descriptions, photographs, videotapes, audio recordings, and Committee comments) are archived at Cornell University in Ithaca. Reports are reviewed by the seven voting members of the committee and voted upon as outlined in McGowan and Burke 2000.

How complete is our coverage? An informal survey of the ten Regional Reports in *The Kingbird* identified more than 70 reports of species or subspecies on the NYSARC review list that were not submitted to the Committee. This included a large number of multi-observer sightings. As we endeavor to make it easier for birders to submit reports via electronic media, it is hoped that the mediocre submission rate will improve substantially. Local bird clubs can help us in this regard by distributing information about the review process to members and all Regional Editors should demand submission of documentation before incorporating state rarities into their reports.

Counties best represented by accepted reports are Niagara and Suffolk, both with 15, Seneca following with 10. In total, the committee reviewed reports from 32 counties. All records are sight records unless otherwise indicated. For accepted reports, the names of observers submitting documentation are given in parenthesis and the names of all contributors are listed in full at the end of the report. Occasionally, the names of the original finders (when known) are given in the narrative. The records in this report are arranged taxonomically following The AOU Check-List of North American Birds (AOU 1998). Those contributing photographs, video or sketches, are given special mention in the narrative. With the rapid advances in affordable camera equipment, we anticipate an increase in the number of scarce or rare species documented by photographs or video. Photographs do not need to be 'magazine quality' for them to be extremely useful in supporting a written description. Similarly, we will gladly accept copies of video or audiotapes accompanied by a written report.

A common misconception persists that only the initial discoverer of a bird may submit a report. In actuality, all observers of a rarity (even if the bird is seen by hundreds of people) are urged to submit written descriptions or other forms of documentation (e.g. photographs, video or sketches). As a rule of thumb, one should never assume that others will submit a report or any other documentation. This may account for the large number of multi-observer sightings that go

undocumented. Submission of multiple independent reports provides a much more compelling and detailed account of the sighting, increasing the likelihood of acceptance.

Information on how to prepare and submit a report, together with an up-to-date list of species reviewed by NYSARC, is posted on the Federation of New York State Bird Clubs web site (<http://birds.cornell.edu/fnysbc/NYSARChome.htm>). This site includes information about the Committee and a photo gallery of recent submissions, including some of those published in this report. NYSARC encourages observers to submit documentation for all species on the review list, as well as species unrecorded in New York. Documentation or correspondence for the Committee should be sent to:

Jeanne Skelly  
Secretary for NYSARC  
420 Chili-Scottsville Road  
Churchville, NY 14428  
E-mail: [jdsKelly@altavista.com](mailto:jdsKelly@altavista.com)

Among the highlights of 1999 were two species new to the New York State Checklist, Black-tailed Gull (*Larus crassirostris*) and MacGillivray's Warbler (*Oporornis tolmiei*). With these inclusions, the state list rises to 456 species. Other notable highlights include the second live occurrence of Yellow-billed Loon (*Gavia adamsii*) and the second record of Spotted Redshank (*Tringa erythropus*). A Mew Gull (*Larus canus*) of the Eurasian subspecies *canus* constitutes the first record away from the Niagara or St. Lawrence Rivers and first state record documented by photography or other physical evidence. Photo-documented records of two or perhaps three White-faced Storm-Petrels (*Pelagodroma marina*) off Long Island mark an exceptional season for this species.

NYSARC is indebted to the seventy-three observers who contributed the reports discussed here. Several individuals put forth considerable effort to document important sightings for the permanent record and where possible, their efforts are acknowledged in the narratives below. Unfortunately, these seventy-three contributors represent a tiny minority of the many hundreds, if not thousands, of active birders and feederwatchers in the state. Hopefully we will see increased participation in the reporting process in future years.

### 1999 Reports Accepted

#### **Yellow-billed Loon (*Gavia adamsii*)**

1999-2-A/B/C/D/E One in West Canada Creek below the Hinkley Reservoir Dam in Town of Trenton, Oneida Co. and Town of Russia in Herkimer Co., 20-30 Jan (Dorothy Crumb, Gerry Rising, William W. Watson, Yolanda Garcia, David J. and Candis C. Cesari). This magnificent bird was documented with an excellent series of reports and supported by an informative color sketch by Yolanda Garcia and photographs by David Cesari. The loon was first discovered on 18 Jan, by Matt

Perry, in the narrow confines of an ice-free stretch of the West Canada Creek shortly after it emerges from the Hinkley Reservoir Dam. . This is the third record for New York State and second live sighting. Many birders from the Northeast enjoyed this rare sight. The previous winter, a juvenile or possibly first-basic Yellow-billed Loon visited Oswego Harbor, also in Region 5 (Phillips, 1998). The extreme rarity of this species in the Northeast and relative proximity of the two sightings (less than 70 miles apart) led to speculation that the same individual was involved. The Oswego loon appeared to be in juvenile plumage, while the Hinkley Dam bird was a sub-adult, most likely a second-year, judging by the absence of small white spots on the wing-coverts, which are inconsistent with definitive-basic 'adult' plumage.

#### **Western Grebe (*Aechmophorus occidentalis*)**

1999-47-A One on Niagara River off McFarland Point Ontario and Village of Youngstown, Niagara Co., NY on 27 Nov (Donald Ford). This well-described bird was first spotted from the Ontario side of the Niagara River. Although *Aechmophorus* grebes are fairly distinctive, the identification of birds as either Western or Clark's Grebe (*A. clarkii*) is not always straightforward. The two are sufficiently similar that some may be unidentifiable, particularly non-breeding birds. However, the observers of the Niagara grebe noted that the dark cap extended below the lores and the eyes which is consistent with Western Grebe.

#### **White-faced Storm-Petrel (*Pelagodroma marina*)**

1999-30-A One or possibly two, at sea over the Hudson Canyon (39.6931; -72.5819) 28 Aug (Shawneen Finnegan); 1999-31-A One at sea approximately 20 miles due south of Montauk Point, Suffolk Co., 9 Sep (Jack Passie). The summer of 1999 marked a banner year for White-faced Storm-Petrels off the eastern seaboard. Both reports from New York waters were accompanied by excellent descriptions and supported by video by Shawneen Finnegan (1999-30-A) and color photographs by Jack Passie and Dave Johnston (1999-31-A). In spite of the lone report, the Hudson Canyon bird(s) was enjoyed by a large number of New

York birders participating in an organized pelagic trip. This unique species breeds on remote islets in the eastern North Atlantic as well as in the southern oceans. Two subspecies occur in the North Atlantic; *P. m. hypoleuca* which breeds on the Selvagen archipelago in the northern summer and *P. m. eadesi* which breeds on the Cape Verde Islands off West Africa. Which subspecies occurs in New York waters remains an interesting and unanswered question. Those breeding on the Selvagens return to their colonies in February where most remain until September. In contrast, *P. m. eadesi*



White-faced Storm-Petrel 9 Sep 1999  
20 mi. south of Montauk Pt.  
Jack Passie

breeds during the northern winter arriving at the breeding sites from November onwards. Although this would suggest New York records pertain to Cape Verde birds, the movements of nonbreeding *hypoleuca* remain completely unknown.

**Tricolored Heron (*Egretta tricolor*)**

1999-19-A One, southern end of Motor Island in the Niagara River, Town of Tonawanda, Erie Co., 2 Jun (William Watson); 1999-22-A One on Tschache Pool at Montezuma National Wildlife Refuge, Town of Tyre, Seneca Co., 8 Jul (Benjamin Fambrough). A predominantly coastal species, Tricolored Herons are common summer visitors to Long Island, but very rare elsewhere, particularly in northern and western parts of the state.

**Black Vulture (*Coragyps atratus*)**

1999-20-A One over Derby Hill, Town of Mexico, Oswego Co. on 31 Mar (Bill Purcell); 1999-40-A One over Wooley Hill Hawk Watch, West Burlington, Town of Burlington, Otsego Co., 21 Oct (Tom Salo). Two well-described birds observed from hawkwatches. Tom Salo's comprehensive report of the Wooley Hill bird included helpful field sketches of the head and underwing pattern, clearly eliminating Turkey Vulture (*C. aura*). During the last decade, Black Vultures have undergone a major range expansion, particularly in southern parts of the state such as along the Hudson River Valley. Because of this sustained change in status, NYSARC has dropped this species from the review list (NYSARC 2000). This said, the species remains very rare in western New York, and full documentation should be submitted to local records committees from that area.

**Ross's Goose (*Chen rossii*)**

1999-35-A One in field near Point au Roche State Park, Town of Beekmantown, Clinton Co., 8 Oct (David J. Hoag); 1999-37-A/B One on May's Point Pool, Montezuma National Wildlife Refuge, Town of Tyre, Seneca Co., 14 Oct (William W. Watson, Michael F. Galas); 1999-39-A One to three Treadwell Bay, Point au Roche State Park, Clinton Co., 29 Oct (David J. Hoag); 1999-43-A One at Monty Bay, north of Point au Roche State Park, Clinton Co., 11 Nov (David J. Hoag). Each fall and winter, David Hoag searches the thousands of Snow Geese that pass through the upper reaches of Lake Champlain (both in New York and Vermont) for color-marked birds. As a by-product of these valuable studies, Hoag has revealed the regular occurrence of small numbers of Ross's Geese as well as numbers of possible Ross's x Snow Goose hybrids. Reports of this primarily western species have increased dramatically in eastern North America during the last two decades (Ryder and Alisauskas 1995). The first record for NY occurred in March 1983 (Treacy 1983) and the species has become annual. With good views, Ross's Goose is readily separable from Snow Goose (*C. caerulescens*) and the primary identification challenge is that of Ross's x Snow Goose hybrids. We urge that potential Ross's Goose reports be carefully documented with an emphasis on bill and head characteristics which are needed to eliminate the possibility of hybrids (Trauger et al., 1971, Roberson, 1993).

**Mississippi Kite (*Ictinia mississippiensis*)**

1999-26-A One on Great Gull Island, Suffolk Co., 26 Jul (Dick Young). Detailed description (supplemented with sketch) of an adult or perhaps subadult seen flying over the large Common Tern colony. Great Gull Island covers 17 acres and lies 7 miles east of Orient Point. The island serves as a regular stepping stone for migrant raptors, including a long-staying Swainson's Hawk (*Buteo swainsoni*) in 1998 (NYSARC 1998-50-A). This is the second record of Mississippi Kite for Great Gull Island, the first being an immature on 25 May 1991 (1991-41-A/B).

**Sandhill Crane (*Grus canadensis*)**

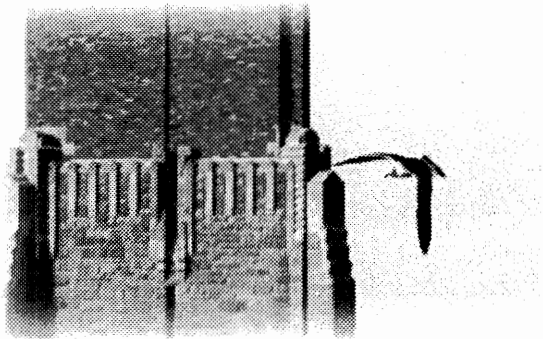
1999-9-A One near the Montezuma Wetlands Complex Headquarters, Town of Tyre, Seneca Co., 11 Apr (Catherine I. Sandell); 1999-11-A Two near intersection of Rt 63 and Dunlop Road, Town of Shelby, Orleans Co., 29 Apr (Richard Sowinski); 1999-12-A One off the Klossen Marsh trail in the Tonawanda Wildlife Management Area, Town of Alabama, Genesee Co., 1 May (Willie D'Anna); 1999-21-A One on West River at the south end of Canandaigua Lake, Town of Italy, Yates Co., 28 Jun (Catherine I. Sandell). Reports of Sandhill Cranes have become increasingly common during the past decade or so, especially from western parts of the state and along the southern shore of Lake Ontario. Because of this sustained increase in occurrence, the species was removed from the NYSARC review list (NYSARC 2000).

**Spotted Redshank (*Tringa erythropus*)**

1999-25-A Adult in alternate plumage, near Dune Road east of the Ponquogue Bridge, Shinnecock, Suffolk Co., 19 Jul (Rex G. and Birgit Stanford). The Spotted Redshank was discovered at high tide as it roosted with several Greater Yellowlegs (*T. melanoleuca*) and American Oystercatchers (*Haematopus palliatus*) in the salt marsh east of the Ponquogue Bridge. After several minutes of observation, during which time it was photographed, the redshank flew into longer marsh grass and could not be relocated. Aberrantly dark (melanistic) Greater and Lesser yellowlegs (*T. flavipes*) and potential vagrants such as Common Redshank (*T. totanus*) were excluded by the combination of blackish plumage, white uppertail coverts and lower back, deep red legs and lack of white secondaries or inner primaries. A detailed written description was supported by a distant, but helpful, color photograph taken by Rex Stanford using a conventional single lens reflex camera held to the eyepiece of his telescope. This is the first acceptable record of this attractive Eurasian shorebird since the individual that spent two consecutive winters (1992/93 and 1993/94) in Sheepshead Bay, Brooklyn, Kings Co.

**Marbled Godwit (*Limosa fedoa*)**

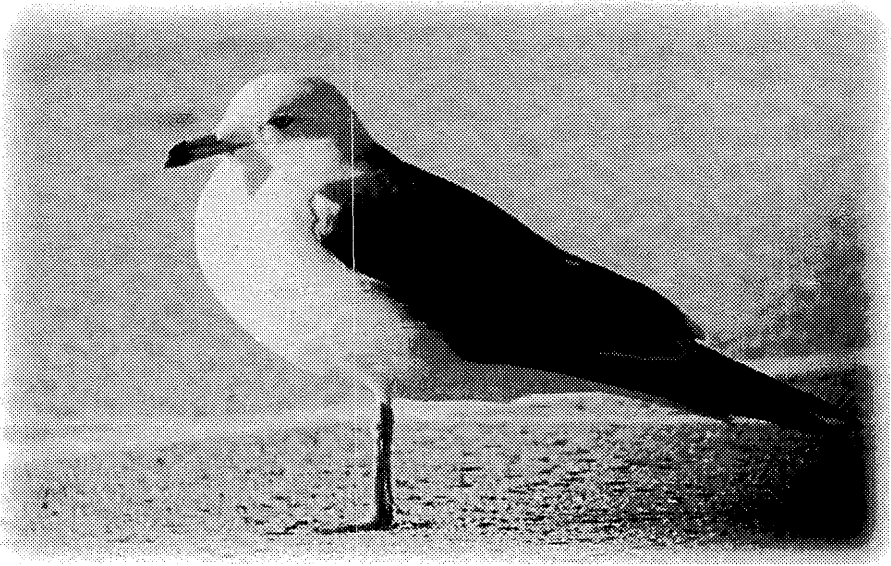
1999-32-A One Point Peninsula Shoal, Town of Lyme, Jefferson Co., 30-31 Aug (Nick Leone, photographed by Lee Chamberlaine). Annual in small numbers on Long Island, Marbled Godwit remains rare elsewhere in the state. The Point



Black-tailed Gull 1 Feb 1999  
Jones Beach, Nassau Co.  
Rex Stanford



Mew Gull (*Larus c. canus*)  
14 Mar 1999  
Shinnecock Inlet, Suffolk Co.  
Rex Stanford



Black-tailed Gull 1 Feb 1999 Jones Beach, Nassau Co.  
Rex Stanford

Peninsula bird frequented a small island with a limestone shoreline, short sections of sandy beach and stagnant pools. The bird was studied at close range over a two-day period and also photographed by Don Johnston. This excellent report included a careful description of the cinnamon underwing coverts and axillaries thereby eliminating all other species of godwit.

**Black-tailed Gull (*Larus crassirostris*)**

1999-79-A Adult near Parking Lot 6, Jones Beach State Park, Nassau Co., 31 Jan-1 Feb (Wilson and Guthrie 1999). This constitutes the first record for New York State. The Black-tailed Gull was discovered loafing on the ocean beach late in the afternoon on 31 Jan by Andrew Guthrie and Angus Wilson. As dusk descended it moved further down the beach and then onto the ocean to roost with several thousand other gulls. To the relief and enjoyment of many local birders, the Black-tailed Gull was still present the following day, squabbling for handouts in Parking Lot 6 amid the usual Herring Gulls (*L. argentatus*) and Ring-billed Gulls (*L. delawarensis*). With records from Nova Scotia to Florida (Lethaby and Bangma 1999), the regular occurrence of this Asiatic gull on the East Coast of North America remains puzzling.



**Mew Gull (*Larus canus*)**

1999-4-A/B/C One in first-basic plumage at the Shinnecock Inlet, Suffolk Co., 6 Feb-23 March (Anthony J. Lauro, John J. Fritz, Joan L. Quinlan). Although there are four subspecies of Mew Gull, the Shinnecock individual showed a suite of characters consistent with the European subspecies *L. c canus*, a distinctive form known in the European literature as the "Common Gull". Brief written descriptions were supported by a series of color photographs taken by John Fritz, Joan Quinlan and Angus Wilson. Separation of Mew Gulls and Ring-billed Gulls (*L. delawarensis*) is subtle and must take into account a combination of structural and plumage features. Key features in the identification of the Shinnecock bird were the smaller size, structure and color of the bill, sharply demarcated black subterminal tail band, relatively muted upperwing pattern and precise patterning of the upper wing coverts. The gull made irregular appearances at the inlet for several weeks and was seen by many observers. Where it spent its time when not at the inlet remains a mystery. For a more detailed account with photos see Guthrie et al., 1999. Common Gull is a rare but increasing regular visitor to eastern North America. The majority of records come from the maritime provinces of Canada suggesting immigrants from Iceland (first colonized in 1955) or the Faeroe Islands. This hypothesis is supported by an individual in Newfoundland that was banded as a chick in northern Iceland. The Shinnecock bird constitutes the first record of Mew Gull in New York away from the Niagara or St. Lawrence rivers. This is also the first New York occurrence to be documented by photography or other physical evidence.

**California Gull (*Larus californicus*)**

1999-41-A/B One adult on lower Niagara River, Devils Hole State Park, Town of Lewiston, Niagara Co., 7 Nov (Willie D'Anna, Brendan Klick); 1999-42-A/B One adult Niagara River, Devil's Hole State Park, Town of Lewiston, Niagara Co., 8-9 Nov (Michael F. Galas, William Watson); 1999-45-A One adult on lower Niagara River, Robert Moses Power Plant, Town of Lewiston, Niagara Co., 21, 26, 27 Nov (Willie D'Anna); 1999-49-A One adult on lower Niagara River, Robert Moses Power Plant, Town of Lewiston, Niagara Co., 4, 11-12 Dec (Willie D'Anna); 1999-53-A/B One adult and one third-basic on 'roosting' rocks in the lower Niagara River, Devils Hole State Park, Town of Lewiston, Niagara Co., 26 Dec (Willie D'Anna, Brendan Klick). The Niagara Frontier remains the premier locality for this western species in New York State. It is unclear exactly how many individuals were involved in this year's series of nine reports – certainly a minimum of two. On 26 Dec, D'Anna and Klick observed an adult and a third-basic standing close to one another on exposed rocks in Devils Hole State Park, a short distance upstream of the Robert Moses Power Plant, a favored locality. Following the first record in 1992, one or two California Gulls have been logged each winter on the Niagara River, the majority involving adults (reviewed in D'Anna 2000).

**Arctic Tern (*Sterna paradisaea*)**

1999-14-A One Chazy River Landing (or Chazy Riverlands) on Lake Champlain, Town of Champlain, Clinton Co., 10 May (William E. Krueger). Careful study of this lone tern roosting with Ring-billed Gulls (*L. delawarensis*) noted the unmarked red bill and projection of the tail beyond the primary tips. Presumably this individual was following an inland route towards its breeding grounds in arctic Canada. There are only a handful of acceptable records for this species in spring or early summer.

**Ash-throated Flycatcher (*Myiarchus cinerascens*)**

1999-44-A One at Fort Tilden, Queens Co., 20 Nov (Dale Dyer). Studied by a group of twenty or more observers but only one report submitted. Fortunately, this clear description ruled out other *Myiarchus* flycatchers. The late fall date is fairly typical for this western species.

**Western Kingbird (*Tyrannus verticalis*)**

1999-36-A/B/C/D One on Overlook Lane, Hamlet of Meadowdale, Town of Guilderland, Albany Co., 11-17 Oct (Lawrence Alden, Barbara Putnam, Robert E. Budliger, Walter G. Ellison). Present for at least a week, this Western Kingbird was studied by numerous local birders and described in detail in the four reports received, supplemented with field sketches and notes by Ellison. All four reports noted the white outer rectrices, a distinctive feature of this species that is not found in other North American kingbirds. Cassin's (*T. vociferans*), Couch's (*T. couchii*) and Tropical Kingbird (*T. melancholicus*) were further eliminated by the lack of a sharp contrast between the whitish malar area and pale gray breast, relatively slender bill and paler green coloration on the mantle. Lack of emargination on the outer primaries noted by Ellison, indicates a first-year bird. Western Kingbirds are regular fall migrants to coastal New York but remain much rarer inland.

**Mountain Bluebird (*Sialia currucoides*)**

1999-38-A One in the Rocky Point Natural Resources Management Area, Suffolk Co., 27 Oct (Joel L. Horman). A female-type accompanied by several Eastern Bluebirds (*S. sialis*) studied for a few minutes in an open clearing.

**Yellow-throated Warbler (*Dendroica dominica*)**

1999-17-A One Golden Hill State Park, Town of Somerset, Niagara Co., 15 May (Willie D'Anna); 1999-46-A One at private residence, East Main Street, West Winfield, Herkimer Co., 24 Nov (C. Kendall Zoller); 1999-55-A One visiting feeders in two private yards in Skaneateles, Onondaga Co., 13-27 Dec (Dorothy W. Crumb, photos by Robin Jowaisas). The Skaneateles bird was observed at two different feeders (1.5 miles apart) on East Lake Road. Although not seen by experienced birders, the homeowners supplied good verbal descriptions to Dorothy

Crumb who submitted the report. Most importantly, the record was documented by color photographs taken by Robin Jowaisas, whose feeder hosted the bird from 13-18 Dec. On the night of the last sighting when temperatures fell below zero, the warbler was seen by homeowner Linda Pietroski as it huddled near a suet feeder. Its ultimate fate is unknown. The Golden Hill State Park bird was found by Michael Morgante and Michael Turisk. The report from Herkimer Co. required two rounds of review due to the brevity of the description. The information supplied is, however, consistent with Yellow-throated Warbler and the tendency of this species to appear in the fall is also supportive. An earlier report of this bird from October was too vague to evaluate. This southern species is a regular spring overshoot to New York State, most frequently to the Delaware River Valley and urban parks in the New York City area. Records anywhere from more northern parts of the state or from the late fall and winter remain notable.

**MacGillivray's Warbler (*Oporornis tolmiei*)**

1999-52-A/B One, Mohlenoff Nursery, Victory Boulevard, Staten Island, Richmond Co., 15-28 Dec (Richard R. Veit, Michael Higgiston). This constitutes the first record for New York State. Discovered by Dick Veit as he searched for Orange-crowned Warbler (*Vermivora celata*) and Nashville Warbler (*V. ruficapilla*) reported from the nursery a few days earlier. The MacGillivray's Warbler frequented weedy vegetation growing in and around some disused greenhouses but regularly ventured into scrubby vegetation surrounding a stand of Norway Spruce. Although elusive, the bird could be tracked through the vegetation by its regular calls. Mourning Warbler (*O. philadelphia*) was eliminated by the call note, throat color and shape of the white eye crescents. After review of museum specimens, Veit tentatively identified the bird as a hatching year male on the basis of the blackish rather than grayish lores. Over the next few days, the bird was seen by many local birders and recording made of the call note. See Veit and Taylor, 2000 for a detailed account of this sighting including two photographs by Steve Nanz. This species was long overdue in New York. In the Northeast, MacGillivray's Warbler has been recorded in Massachusetts (seven records) and New Jersey (one record). Specimen records from Rhode Island and Connecticut await ratification by the appropriate state committees.

**Nelson's Sharp-tailed Sparrow (*Ammodramus nelsoni*)**

1999-33-A/B/C One on Esker Brook Trail, Montezuma National Wildlife Refuge, Town of Tyre, Seneca Co., 11 Sep (Patricia Kocinski, Randi Minetor, Diane Henderson). Cumulatively these three descriptions made a convincing case for a first-year Nelson's Sharp-tailed Sparrow, adequately ruling out Saltmarsh Sharp-tailed Sparrow (*A. caudacutus*), LeConte's Sparrow (*A. leconteii*) and basic-plumaged Bobolink (*Dolichonyx oryzivorus*). Due to minor differences between the three descriptions, the reports required two rounds of review and the Committee was unable to conclude which subspecies of Nelson's Sharp-tailed Sparrow (*nelsoni*, *alterus* or *subvirgatus*) was involved. The status and distribu-

tion of Nelson's Sharp-tailed Sparrow in New York remains poorly understood and very little is known about the occurrence of each subspecies. NYSARC strongly encourages detailed documentation of candidates with special attention to subspecies. Photographic documentation is especially encouraged.

**Fox Sparrow (*Passerella iliaca*)**

1999-23-A One at Montezuma National Wildlife Refuge, Town of Tyre, Seneca Co., 9 Jul (Brendan Klick). An outstanding report which provided a careful analysis of the identification, in addition to the detailed description of the bird itself. The rusty coloration seemed consistent with the nominate subspecies *P. i. iliaca*, which is found commonly through the state during migration and near the coast during winter. Fox Sparrows are rare in New York after April and before October.

**Blue Grosbeak (*Guiraca caerulea*)**

1999-18-A Adult male at a private feeder near Hwy 96, Town of Spencer, Tioga Co., 30 May (Tom Dudones). The dates of this report suggests a spring overshoot of this more southerly species. The record was supported by several minutes of video by the homeowner. A second bird (possibly a female) was reported but no specific details were provided to the Committee. Interestingly, the summer of 1999 saw the second documented nesting record for the state, which occurred in Suffolk County, Long Island (Birol 1999).

**Painted Bunting (*Passerina ciris*)**

1999-8-A/B One in Prospect Park, Brooklyn, Kings Co., 25-30 Mar (Peter Dorosh, Dale Dyer). The detailed descriptions and supporting color photographs by Steve Nanz indicate an adult female or perhaps 1<sup>st</sup> winter male or female Painted Bunting. The bird showed no evidence of captivity such as band, long toe nails or damaged feathers, a concern given the popularity of this species as a cage bird in Mexico and elsewhere. During the last decade, most New York records of Painted Bunting have occurred during the winter, often in association with feeders. Presumably the early spring date of the Brooklyn bird is more unusual and suggests it might have wintered north of its normal range.

**Brewer's Blackbird (*Euphagus cyanocephalus*)**

1999-1-A One adult male in private yards, Neutral Avenue, Staten Island, Richmond Co., 31 Jan to 28 Feb (Henry F. Flamm). This cooperative adult male stayed in the same suburban setting for more than a month and was frequently heard singing from exposed positions such as treetops or roofs. The written report by finder Henry Flamm was supported by two color photographs, illustrating diagnostic features such as the shape and length of the bill and the contrasting green and purple sheens of the breast and head feathering. Thus Rusty Blackbird (*E. carolinus*) and other glossy icterid species could be eliminated. Although many local birders saw this individual during its extended stay, only one report was submitted.

**Hoary Redpoll (*Carduelis hornemanni*)**

1999-51-A One visiting a suburban yard, Winding Brook Drive, Guilderland, Albany Co., 10 Dec (Walter G. Ellison, Nancy L. Martin). Described in detail and supported by field sketches by Walter Ellison which carefully compared its structure and plumage to the accompanying Common Redpolls (*C. flammea*). A more northerly counterpart of the Common Redpoll, Hoary Redpolls of the subspecies *exilipes* are subject to periodic incursions into New York and surrounding states (Brinkley, 1998).

**1999 Reports Accepted But Origins Uncertain**

**Common Shelduck (*Tadorna tadorna*)**

1999-54-A One at the Fresh Kills Landfill, Staten Island, Richmond Co., 18 Dec (Richard R. Veit). A boldly marked and highly distinctive estuarine duck from western Europe. Details of the sighting were supported by color photographs by Dick Veit. Other colorful waterfowl including other shelducks could be readily excluded. In 1998 this individual was observed at the landfill at the same time of year but not reported in the interim. Common Shelducks are a familiar sight in coastal areas of Western Europe and have reached Iceland, the Azores and other Atlantic islands. The species is therefore a reasonable candidate for vagrancy to North America. Unfortunately, many are also kept in captivity, leaving the origins of the Staten Island bird uncertain. That said, NYSARC still welcomes documentation for this and similar Eurasian species.

**1998 Reports Accepted**

**Black-backed Woodpecker (*Picoides arcticus*)**

1998-53-A One adult male in a private yard on Point Street, Cape Vincent, Jefferson Co., 3 Oct (Mary and Brian Wood). This woodpecker was observed at close range and in good light as it moved from tree to tree. Although this is a relatively straightforward identification, the brevity of this report necessitated two rounds of review. Although the description was minimal, key points for acceptance were the solid dark back, pronounced yellow crown patch and constant loud 'pic' call.

**Hoary Redpoll (*Carduelis hornemanni*)**

1998-16-A One at the intersection of Rts 15A and 20A, Town of Livonia, Livingston Co., 10 Jan (Dave Tetlow); 1998-17-A One visiting a feeder on North Hamlin Road, Town of Hamlin, Monroe Co., 22 Jan (Paul Spindler). After two rounds of review, the Committee concluded that the key features were in place (Czaplak, 1995).

## 1997 Reports Accepted

### **Black Vulture** (*Coragyps atratus*)

1997-19-A One over the Braddock Bay Hawk Watch, Greece, Monroe Co., 5 May. Due to the brevity of the description, this report endured three rounds of review. Although some key features were missing, those given were correct for this species. Black Vultures are no longer a great rarity in the state and have been removed from the review list (NYSARC 2000).

## Reports Not Accepted

A number of factors may contribute to a record being denied acceptance. The most common is that the material submitted was judged as insufficient or simply too vague to properly document the reported occurrence and eliminate all other similar species. Written documentation or descriptions prepared entirely from memory weeks, months, or years after a sighting are seldom voted on favorably and the Committee cannot overstate the importance of taking field notes. These should be taken while the bird is under study or, if not possible, immediately afterwards. It is very helpful to include a photocopy of these notes with the formal report.

Advice on report preparation is available on our web site (see above) or in Dittmann and Lasley 1992. The key elements are the description of the bird (as detailed a description as possible), the names and contact details of the observers, location and date of the sighting and lastly an explanation of how the identification was made. This last category is most frequently omitted. Ask yourself the following: What features led you to this conclusion? What other species might this bird be confused with and how can these possibilities be eliminated? By necessity, the preparation of a good report takes some time and effort. It is not enough to scribble a few disjointed lines of description. Once the description of what you saw is down on paper, it may be necessary to consult reference books or tapes. Can you determine the age and sex of the bird? Are there identifiable subspecies? Are there similar species? Re the latter it is worth considering and discussing exotic possibilities (e.g. other species of white pelican, exotic finches or wild fowl).

It is relatively uncommon for records to be rejected because the bird was obviously misidentified. We make every effort to be as fair and objective as possible but if the Committee is unsure about any particular submission it tends to err on the conservative side, preferring not to accept a good record rather than validate a bad one. All records, whether accepted or not, remain on file and can be re-submitted to the Committee if additional substantive material is presented. In such cases, please contact the Secretary at the address given above.

## 1999 Reports Not Accepted

### **Pacific Loon** (*Gavia pacifica*)

1999-16-A One near Iona Island, Rockland Co. 15 May. A moribund loon was initially spotted some fifty yards offshore but drifting to the shoreline with the tide where it died. The observer and spouse took some close-up color photographs (four submitted) of the live bird and also recovered the specimen, which was taken to the Croton Point Nature Center. After reviewing the photographs, the committee concluded that this bird was in fact a Red-throated Loon (*G. stellata*) in basic-plumage with a slightly deformed bill. This conclusion is based on the pale gray cap which did not reach the eye, the very slender bill, the extensive white sides to the neck, extensive white speckles on the wing and uppertail coverts and distinctive peak at the rear of the head, evident in most of the photos.

### **Little Egret** (*Egretta garzetta*)

1999-10-A One on the Weesuck Creek and Shinnecock Bay in East Quogue, Suffolk Co. 25 Apr. This was a single observer report of a species that would constitute the first record for New York State, submitted without photographs or other supporting documentation. Seen only once at a distance, the description could not definitely rule out an aberrantly plumaged Snowy Egret (*E. thula*).

### **Ross's Goose** (*Chen rossii*)

1999-6-A Two or three Fort Miller, Washington Co. on 21 Mar. This report lacked sufficient detail to exclude hybrid Ross's x Snow Goose (Trauger et al. 1971; Roberson 1993).

### **Thayer's Gull** (*Larus thayeri*)

1999-3-A One at Phoenix, Oswego Co., 3 Feb 1999-7-A One on the Chemung River at the Elmira Dam, Chemung Co. 25 Mar. Perhaps more than any other species, Thayer's Gull presents unique difficulties. To quote a recent article on this perplexing taxon, "field identification [of adult Thayer's Gull] is among the most problematic issues facing birders in North America and Europe" (Howell and Elliott 2001). Most significantly, these authors have suggested that the criteria outlined in classic treatments (such as Zimmer 1990, 1991) and also reiterated in popular field guides, may not be sufficient for accurate identification of this species. Subadult plumages are similarly confusing. The Committee has engaged in extensive debate in the hope of establishing firm criteria for the evaluation of Thayer's Gull reports. A detailed announcement of NYSARC's policy towards sight reports of Thayer's Gull will be published in the near future. The Committee has followed a conservative approach, accepting only extremely well-documented individuals that match the classical Thayer's Gull profile in all respects.

**Black Phoebe (*Sayornis nigricans*)**

1999-15-A One at the Mohonk Lake, Ulster Co., 11 May. This brief description of a highly contrasting flycatcher relied on reference to a field guide illustration and did not clearly eliminate (or mention) Eastern Phoebe (*S. phoebe*). There are currently no accepted records of Black Phoebe for New York State or northeastern North America.

**Fork-tailed Flycatcher (*Tyrannus savana*)**

1999-28-A One near the intersection of Mineah and Mt. Pleasant Roads, Town of Freeville, Tompkins Co., 13 Aug. This report from a traveling birder lacked several critical details and could not satisfactorily eliminate commoner species such as Eastern Phoebe (*Sayornis phoebe*) or Eastern Kingbird (*T. tyrannus*) with aberrant tail feathers.

**Northern Wheatear (*Oenanthe oenanthe*)**

1999-34-A One Forked Lake Campground off North Point Road, Town of Arietta, Hamilton Co., within the Adirondack Park, 4 Oct. Several details of this very brief report were inconsistent with a wheatear of any kind.

**Le Conte's Sparrow (*Ammodramus leconteii*)**

1999-27-A One in East Quogue, Suffolk Co., 10 Aug. This *Ammodramus* sparrow was described in detail, although it was studied for an estimated total of six seconds. The Committee was troubled by the surprisingly early date (assuming a fall migrant) and felt that the report did not adequately address the likely potential for confusion with juvenile plumages of other *Ammodramus* species also present in this area in late summer.

**Blue Grosbeak (*Guiraca caerulea*)**

1999-13-A One at a private residence Town of Chatham, Columbia Co., 9 May. This weak report provided almost no detail of the bird's plumage, bill or size and made it impossible to exclude similar species such as Indigo Bunting (*Passerina cyanea*).

## 1998 Reports Not Accepted

**Yellow-nosed Albatross (*Thalassarche chlororhynchos*)**

1998-43-A One approximately 21 miles southeast of Fire Island Inlet (coordinates 26435.1, 43676.5) Suffolk Co., 12 Jul. This report was submitted by a birder on a scuba diving trip. The bird approached the anchored dive boat and was studied for about two minutes before flying off. The report did not describe the flight style and made a casual reference to a 'second bird' which was not described further. After two rounds of review, the Committee concluded that the details provided were insufficient to unequivocally identify this as an Yellow-nosed Albatross. That said, several Committee members felt that the description was consistent with one of the small albatrosses.



**Sandhill Crane (*Grus canadensis*)**

1998-79-A, One at Mendon Ponds Park, Mendon, Monroe Co., 17 May. This report comes from an experienced observer and may well have been correct. However, the bird was heard calling several times but not seen. While the vocalizations of Sandhill Cranes are relatively distinctive, Committee members were troubled by the description of this call as 'rattling'. It is also unclear whether exotics such as Common Crane (*Grus grus*) or Common x Sandhill Crane hybrids can be eliminated on call alone.

**Rough-legged Hawk (*Buteo lagopus*)**

1998-34-A One off Route 78 between Java Village and Strykersville, Co., 10 Jul. This was a very brief sighting made from a moving vehicle. Relatively common during the winter months, records of this species in the summer are exceptional. The Committee felt that under these unusual circumstances the details supplied in the report were insufficient to eliminate other buteos, particularly first-year Red-tailed Hawk (*B. jamaicensis*).

**Gyr Falcon (*Falco rusticolus*)**

1998-54-A One in East Quogue, Town of Southampton, Suffolk Co., 5 Oct. This bird was observed very briefly as it flew past the observer using shallow flaps interspersed with longish glides on set wings. The Committee was troubled by the relatively early date, the incomplete description and failure to consider alternatives such as Northern Goshawk (*Accipiter gentilis*) or escaped falconry birds.

**American Avocet (*Recurvirostra americana*)**

1998-47-A One on Myer's Point, Tompkins Co., 24 Aug. Although this should be a straightforward identification, the Committee was forced to reject the report after two rounds of review. The stumbling block was the perplexingly thin description. Neither the written description nor the sketch that was provided made any reference to an upturned bill, a hallmark of this species. Sadly, this bird was seen by multiple observers but no additional reports were received. This is a prime example of why multiple submissions, when possible, are so essential.

**Thayer's Gull (*Larus thayeri*)**

1998-1-A One first basic at Oswego Harbor, Oswego Co., 25 Jan; 1998-11-A One adult on the Seneca River, Baldwinsville, Onondaga Co., 28 Jan; 1998-23-A One immature bird on Long Pond, Greece, Monroe Co., 10 Mar; 1998-42-A One at the Shinnecock Inlet, Suffolk Co., 6-8 Jun. As discussed above, the identification of Thayer's Gulls presents a unique problem for birders in eastern North America. The criteria needed for separation of true Thayer's Gulls from intergrades with the Kumlien's form of Iceland Gull (*L. glaucooides*) are still poorly understood. It is the belief of the Committee that a feather by feather analysis, preferably supported by a suite of photographs, is required for safe identification. A more thorough analysis of this vexing identification and taxonomic problem and justification of the rigorous stance taken by the current Committee will be published at a future

date. We wish to commend the observer of the Oswego and Seneca River birds for a notably valiant attempt at documenting these difficult but fascinating gulls.

**California Gull (*Larus californicus*)**

1998-3-A One at the southwest corner of Seneca Lake, Schuyler Co., 11 Feb. Described as an adult in transition from basic to alternate plumage. After two rounds of review, the Committee concluded that the report contained insufficient description of wing tip pattern and head/neck streaking and relied too heavily on the bill pattern and presence of a dark eye, neither of which are definitive. The Committee was also concerned by the similarity of the bird's size and mantle coloration to Ring-billed Gull (*L. delawarensis*).

**Summer Tanager (*Piranga rubra*)**

1998-37-A One Point Street, Cape Vincent, Jefferson Co., 15 May. Described as an immature male, the identification was based primarily on bill size. No details of the wings, mantle color or bill shape were provided.

### 1997 Reports Not Accepted

**Brewer's Blackbird (*Euphagus cyanocephalus*)**

1997-16-A One near Mecklenburg, Schuyler Co., 7 and 10 Apr. The Committee was troubled by causal references to multiple occurrences of this species and the subspecies of Common Grackle (*Quiscalus quiscula stonei*), sometimes referred to as the "purple" grackle, which is rare so far inland. Although the bird was photographed, copies have not been made available to the Committee.

### Reports Pending

The following reports are retained for a third circulation. This means the Committee has not yet reached a final decision on these reports:

**Pacific Loon (*Gavia pacifica*)**

1998-75-A, One, Black River Bay, Township of Hounsfield, Jefferson Co., 29 Dec 1998.

**American White Pelican (*Pelecanus erythrorhynchos*)**

1999-24-A Two over Cornell University, Ithaca, Tompkins Co., 12 Jul 1999.

**Sandhill Crane (*Grus canadensis*)**

1998-80-A, One off Redman Road, Brockport, Monroe Co., 23 May 1998.

**Black Vulture (*Coragyps atratus*)**

1998-24-A One over Braddock Bay, Greece, Monroe Co., 27 Mar 1998.

**Thayer's Gull (*Larus thayeri*)**

1999-48-A Two on Niagara River, Robert Moses Power Plant, Town of Lewiston, Niagara Co., 29 Nov 1999; 1999-50-A One on Niagara River, Goat Island, Niagara Falls, Niagara Co., 6 Dec 1999.

**Ivory Gull (*Pagophila eburnea*)**

1999-5-A One at Kenny's Beach, Town of Southold, Suffolk Co., 13 Mar 1999.

**Loggerhead Shrike (*Lanius ludovicianus*)**

1999-29-A One off Road 60, Town of Van Buren, Onondaga Co., 13 Aug 1999.

Submitted on behalf of the New York State Avian Records Committee,

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# Two Great White Herons (*Ardea (herodias) occidentalis*) in New York, Sep-Nov 2001

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## Abstract

Two Great White Herons (*Ardea (herodias) occidentalis*), the white-plumaged heron breeding in extreme southern Florida and presently considered a subspecies of Great Blue Heron, were observed in New York State during the fall of 2001. The only prior published occurrences of this form in NY were single post-hurricane individuals, perhaps the same bird, observed at two Long Island locations Sep-Oct 1949. This article provides accounts and descriptions of both 2001 birds, a summary of Great White Heron records north of Florida (including a previously unpublished report from NY in 2000), and a brief discussion of why such individuals should be regarded as rare (but increasing?) examples of postbreeding dispersal by authentic *occidentalis* Great White Herons and not as variant or aberrant Great Blue Herons.

## I. Records from New York State during the fall of 2001.

- A. One hatching year (HY) at Wolfe's Pond Park and several nearby sites in southern Staten Island, Richmond County, from 2 Sep (C. and L. Nuzzi, D. Eib) at least through 4 Nov 2001 (C. Nuzzi, pers. comm.). See Fig. 2.

The authors saw this bird on 17 Sep 2001 at Wolfe's Pond Park, between 10:30 and 11:45 EDT. We observed it resting near several Great Blue Herons, flying, and feeding in salt marsh habitat in the company of a Great Egret (*A. alba*) – and we recorded the following description:

Overall size and shape similar to two nearby immature Great Blues and much more massive than Great Egret, with thicker neck, thicker legs, and greater overall length and height than latter. Bill massive and deep-based – similar to Great Blue's, and much larger and heavier than Great Egret's.

Plumage wholly white, save for hints of a buffy or off-white wash, most conspicuous on lower neck and upper breast. This buffy color was most evident when the bird was alongside the Great Egret, at which times shaded areas of the plumage in particular appeared subtly creamy or buffy rather than grayish or bluish as was true of shaded areas of the Great Egret's plumage visible in same scope view. No head or breast plumes, but

crown slightly shaggy and lower neck somewhat shaggy or fluffy – closely resembling nearby immature Great Blue.

Upper mandible gray, slightly paler toward tip. Lower mandible dull flesh-yellow. Lores gray. Iris yellow. A thin dark line extended back from the gape to a point slightly posterior to and below the eye. Tibiotarsi dull greenish-yellow; tarsometatarsi dull gray. These colors merged imperceptibly across the joints. Tops of toes appeared dull gray, whereas undersides of feet and toes were slightly paler and yellower.

We believe this individual was a juvenile on the basis of its buffy plumage tones, relatively dull leg color, and fluffy-looking feathering on the head, neck, and breast.

- B. One immature (HY or older subadult) present at Gilgo Beach, Babylon, Suffolk County from 8 Oct 2001 (G. and J. Fritz), through at least 24 Oct 2001 (P. A. Buckley). See Fig. 1.

JF reports the following account of his discovery of this bird.

“On the morning of October 8<sup>th</sup>, I was on my routine patrol of the Jones Beach strip searching the bird population in all the usual migrant traps. Upon entering the main parking lot of the tiny coastal community of Gilgo, my attention was drawn to a large white wader vigorously shaking a white bird of some sort. Assuming the wader to be a Great Egret, I tried to ascertain the identity of its unlucky prey. From across the lagoon it appeared to be a medium-size tern. This impression later proved to be correct when the immature Forster’s Tern (*Sterna forsteri*) drifted to the near side, after being dropped by the heron.

With my attention riveted on identifying the prey, it wasn’t until the predator relinquished the now dead bird, that I realized that the bill color of the “egret” was not bright yellow. Having recently seen and studied The Great White Heron in Staten Island, this bird’s identity was immediately apparent. My initial thought was that the Staten Island bird had left its haunts, but further study and note-taking indicated that this bird differed in several respects from the one frequenting the south shore of Richmond County.”

The Gilgo individual was clearly distinct from the one at SI by virtue of its brighter and more extensively yellow legs and in view of the overlapping dates of occurrence. It was seen by many observers, generally in one of two specific locations: 1) feeding along the north edge of the channel, just a few meters from the eastern end of Gilgo’s wharf; and 2) resting in the marsh in the shelter of a line of low groundsel bushes (*Baccharis halimifolia*) trending roughly east and west, ~100 m north of the middle of the wharf. Photos of this individual by R. Stanford and P.A. Buckley have been studied by the authors.



Fig. 1. Great White Heron 12 Oct 2001 Gilgo, Suffolk Co.  
P.A. Buckley

## II. Previous records of Great White Herons outside Florida

### **New York**

Bull (1964: p. 475) describes the first NY record(s) as follows: "On Sept. 3, 1949, shortly after the Florida hurricane of Aug 29, a large white heron with yellowish bill and legs appeared at Tobay Pond, Jones Beach (Bull). It was seen in direct comparison with Great Blue Herons and Great Egrets. The same or another individual was observed later at Mecox Bay, and noted several times from Sept. 17 to Oct. 15 (Helmuth and McKeever)."

In the course of preparing this article, an additional, previously unpublished, NY record was brought to the authors' attention by S. Schiff: one of unknown age observed closely and photographed at the Oceanside Marine Nature Study Area, Oceanside, Nassau County, 7 Oct 2000 (M. Farina). The photographs have been examined by the authors.

### **Ontario**

One undocumented report at Long Point, Apr 2000 (Margaret Bain, pers. comm.).

### **Nova Scotia**

Two singles during the spring of 1984: one at sea late Mar, and one at St. Margaret's Bay 17 May (McLaren 1984).

One at Three Fathom Harbor, Halifax County, 20-23 May 1985 (McLaren 1985).

One undocumented report from Guysborough County during the summer of 2001 (I. A. McLaren, pers. comm.).

### **Massachusetts**

One of unknown age was present at Nauset Marsh, Eastham, Barnstable from 9 Jul (Petersen 1996) through 14 Oct 1996 (Ellison and Martin 1997).

### **Rhode Island**

R. Ferren (in litt.) writes: "A report exists of an all-white heron present intermittently 9/4-29/83 at Weekapaug [a coastal marsh in Westerly, Washington County] that was the size of a Great Blue, and possessed a yellow bill and 'bright yellow' legs (A. C. Anthony, A. Spicer)."

### **New Jersey**

An immature/juvenile was carefully studied at Nummy's Island, Cape May County, 9-18 Sep 2000 (Paxton et al. 2001).

Another, different juvenile was present in Blauwenburg, near Princeton, 26 May-7 Jun 2001. Both of these records were accepted by the New Jersey Bird Records Committee in Nov 2001 (P. A. Buckley, P. Lehman, pers. comm.).



## **Pennsylvania**

McWilliams and Brauning (2000) list three records, all from Pymatuning Lake: adult female collected 14 May 1938 and preserved at the Carnegie Museum; one, age unspecified, at the same location, Oct 1938 (perhaps hurricane-related); and a third, age unspecified, at the same location, 29 Jul-9 Aug 1961.

## **Delaware**

One was discovered by M. Barnhill at Bombay Hook NWR 24 Nov 2001 and was present through at least 3 Dec, when photographed by M. Gustafson (M. Gustafson, pers. comm.). A bird observed there as recently as 1 Jan 2002 (M. Gustafson, pers. comm.) was undoubtedly the same individual.

## **Maryland**

One was discovered at Fort McHenry on 26 Sep 2001 by J. Peters and seen in the area through 30 Sep 2001 (M. Iloff, pers. comm.). The range of dates rules out the possibility that this bird was the same individual as that observed at SI, and M. Iloff's detailed description (e.g., legs "entirely dull gray-pinkish") implies that it was distinct from the one observed at Gilgo.

## **Southeastern USA**

Great White Herons have strayed to coastal Alabama, Mississippi, and Louisiana (M. Iloff, pers. comm.) and have been reported at least ten times on the Texas coast (Oberholser and Kinkaid 1974: 100; G. Lasley, pers. comm.). Furthermore, they are regular coastal vagrants north to Georgia and South Carolina (at least ten and seven records, respectively: M. Iloff, pers. comm.) and have strayed to North Carolina at least several times (P. A. Buckley, pers. comm.; M. Iloff pers. comm.).

### **III. How should these records be interpreted?**

Great White Heron was until the late 1950's regarded as a species in its own right, differing from Great Blue Heron in several characters, including greater size, shorter breeding plumes, and a preference for saltwater habitats. It was subsequently lumped with Great Blue Heron on the basis of occasional hybridization where the two forms are sympatric in extreme southern Florida (Mayr 1956, Meyerriecks 1957), during an era when even limited hybridization was regarded as proof of conspecificity. Further confusion arose when patterns of plumage variation in and near South Florida were described by some authors (e.g., Peterson 1980, McHenry and Dyes 1983) in terms of "color morphs" or "color phases" – terms that should be restricted to instances of widespread polymorphism within genetically cohesive populations.

In fact, the view that Great White Heron is merely a color morph of Great Blue Heron cannot be justified on the basis of a few mixed pairings in extreme



Fig. 2. Great White Heron  
22 Sep 2001 Staten Island, Richmond Co.  
Angus Wilson

southern Florida or on the basis of still fewer mixed broods of white and blue nestlings – attributed in several instances to mixed pairs in the Florida Keys (Mayr 1956, Meyerriecks 1957), in one instance to two white parents in the Florida Keys (Meyerriecks 1957), and in another to two blue parents in Galveston Bay, Texas (McHenry and Dyes 1983). In neither of the latter two cases were the putative parents positively linked to the broods in question. In short, all published examples of mixed pairs or broods have occurred in or near a restricted area of sympatry and thus are more consistent with hybridization or limited genetic introgression than with widespread polymorphism such as that familiar in Snow Geese (*Anser caerulescens*) or Eastern Screech-Owls (*Otus asio*).

The fact that even the most recent field guides (e.g., National Geographic Society 1999, Sibley 2000) have perpetuated the ill-chosen “color-morph” wording has not helped to promote awareness of or interest in the distribution and identification of Great White Herons outside their expected range. Nevertheless, a pattern of long-distance vagrancy has emerged despite these obstacles to detection and record keeping. As described above, reports of Great White Herons in the Northeast have tended to come from saltwater habitats during late summer/early fall – when many southern ciconiiforms tend to disperse northward. Significantly, this fall the Northeast witnessed not only the spate of Great White Herons listed above, but also the largest influx of Wood Storks (*Mycteria americana*) in decades (Sherony 2001).

These facts are inconsistent with the interpretation that extralimital Great White Herons represent leucistic, albinistic, or otherwise aberrant individuals originating in populations of typical Great Blue Herons. Rather, given the near absence of empirical data demonstrating that such “white Great Blue Herons” have ever occurred anywhere within the normal range of typical Great Blue Herons – and considering the robust empirical support for long-distance vagrancy among genuine Great White Herons – observers should be receptive to future appearances of Great White Herons in New York and beyond.

## Acknowledgments

We are indebted to C. Nuzzi, L. Nuzzi, and D. Eib for reporting their discovery of the Great White Heron on Staten Island. Photos of this and the Gilgo bird were furnished by A. Wilson and P. A. Buckley, respectively. We also wish to thank P. A. Buckley and E. Levine for providing many helpful comments on the manuscript, and K. Arnold, M. Bain, A. Bernick, T. Brown, P. A. Buckley, T. Burke, M. Farina, R. Ferren, B. Freeman, M. Gustafson, M. Iliff, G. Lasley, P. Lehman, I. A. McLaren, H. A. Patton, S. Schiff, J. Stasz, R. Stanford, R. Veit, A. Wilson, and D. Wingate for providing information of various kinds.

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# AN ADULT *ARDEA HERODIAS WARDI* FROM THE NORTHEAST

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Northward, postnesting, dispersal of immatures of the southeastern nesting subspecies of the Great Blue Heron (*Ardea herodias wardi*) was recently demonstrated (Dickerman 1992). Unfortunately through *lapsus* (both the author and editor take responsibility) in the table of measurements presented, the measurements of adult females were repeated for adult males. That error is corrected here (Table 1). It must be stressed that the maximum measurements for immature *herodias* from the northeast undoubtedly represent wandering *wardi* for which no one measurement was diagnostic, and so they could not be ruled out of the series. Immatures do not differ in color the extent that adults do, and so that character can not be used in the identification of migrants.

The last American Ornithologists' Union checklist that included subspecies (1957), cited five subspecies for the United States and Canada. Later Payne (in Mayer and Cottrell 1979) reduced this to two, lumping the three pale southern and western subspecies (*wardi*, *treganzi* and *hyperonca*) into *herodias*. I believe this does not recognize the distinctiveness of those populations, and have recommended that they be recognized as *wardi* (Dickerman mms.) They vary slightly in size, with those of the southeast being the largest. Among the Great Blue Herons received by the American Museum of Natural History from the New Jersey Raptor Trust in 1993 were three birds that can only be identified as of the southeastern population (Table 2). These are the first specimens of *wardi* from New Jersey, and the first adult from the northeast. The later is noteworthy for the early date, 9 June. Nesting in Florida is in the late winter to early spring (Stevenson and Anderson 1994). This adult demonstrates the need for caution in assuming that "nesting season" birds represent the local nesting population! All other records of *wardi* from the northeast are of immatures, their dates are from 28 July to 5 January, with eight of the eleven being from August to October. No two previous records have been from the same year, but that was perhaps because they were not searched for. It should be noted that tarsal length appears to be the best measurement character for separating *herodias* from southeastern *wardi*.

## Acknowledgments

I wish to sincerely thank Dr. Soucy and the personnel of the New Jersey Raptor Trust for their continued cooperation in preserving salvaged birds with full data for the American Museum of Natural History.

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**Table 1.** Measurements in millimeters of adult, mostly nesting season, Great Blue Herons from the northeastern states (*Ardea h. herodias*), and from Florida (*A. h. wardi*), and of immature birds of the northeastern population, with range, mean and standard deviation (SD).

Wing chord	Culmen	Tarsus	Tail
<b>Females</b>			
<b>Adult <i>herodias</i></b>			
431-480 (452.8) n=34 SD=9.2	124-145 (134.5) n=32 SD=5.0	150-175 (166.5) n=19 SD=7.3	161-188 (171.0) n=34 SD=6.0
<b>Immature <i>herodias</i></b>			
425-460 (442.4) n=30 SD=9.4	112-135 (124.6) n=31 SD=6.7	140-173 (159.6) n=25 SD=9.5	150-172 (164.4) n=31 SD=5.2
<b>Adult <i>wardi</i></b>			
452-505 (476.2) n=19 SD=16.5	138-157 (144.0) n=20 SD=6.6	181-226 (193.8) n=21 SD=13.4	169-194 (178.4) n=20 SD=6.2
<b>Males</b>			
<b>Adult <i>herodias</i></b>			
441-496 (470.3) n=35 SD=12.6	128-155 (144.1) n=33 SD=6.1	169-188 (179.8) n=24 SD=5.7	165-192 (177.9) n=32 SD=5.8
<b>Immature <i>herodias</i></b>			
435-480 (452.8) n=27 SD=10.5	123-144 (132.7) n=28 SD=6.1	157-181 (173.5) n=22 SD=7.1	168-180..(169.2) n=27 SD=5.7
<b>Adult <i>wardi</i></b>			
470-533 (493.0) n=28 SD=13.8	140-172 (154.6) n=27 SD=8.5	180-223 (202.8) n=18 SD=14.6	171-195 (182.7) n=22 SD=5.6

**Table 2.** Data and measurements in millimeters of three additional northeastern specimens identified as *Ardea herodias wardi*. Measurements more than one standard deviation above the maximum measurement for age/sex of *Ardea herodias herodias* are in **boldface**, and measurements larger than the maximum are in *italics*.

Specimen	Locality	Wing chord	Culmen	Tarsus	Tail
AMNH 21432 (skeleton) Adult female	New Jersey: Somerset Co. 9 June 1993	474	137	<b>18</b>	184
AMNH 831278 (skin) Immature male	New Jersey: Hunterdon Co. East Amwell 6 August 1993	<i>481</i>	143	<b>198</b>	175
MSB 18921 (skeleton) Immature male	New Jersey: Hunterdon Co. Clinton 15 September 1993	464	<i>148</i>	<b>197</b>	167

Museum initials:

AMNH – American Museum of Natural History

MSB – Museum Southwestern Biology, University of New Mexico

Albuquerque, NM 87131

**Long-billed Murrelet (*Brachyramphus perdix*)  
at Ithaca, New York  
17-20 Dec 2001**

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It was a cold and rainy Monday morning when Taylor and I set off to school and work on 17 Dec 2001. We made our daily stop at Stewart Park, located on the southwestern end of Cayuga Lake in the city of Ithaca, Tompkins Co., to census the birds at the park for BasinBirds (<http://woodpecker.ornith.cornell.edu/BasinBirds/>) a Cornell Lab of Ornithology project whose purpose is to inventory the bird life of the Cayuga Lake Basin. On our way to the park I mentioned that I thought this was a great way to start the week as it was one of the few times during the balmy fall that a major cold front was sweeping out of the northwest. I knew this weather pattern would occasionally bring unusual birds to the south end of Cayuga Lake, but I certainly did not think we would see anything as unusual as New York's second record of Long-billed Murrelet (*Brachyramphus perdix*)(Levine 1998), a bird that has been seen less than 50 times in all of North America.

We were scanning the waterfowl when I observed a bird diving in a manner different from the many diving ducks in the area. Smaller than the other nearby waterfowl, it would lithely raise its body out of the water and spread its wings to begin its dive. I watched this individual repeatedly dive, spending more time below than on the surface. From the distance I was viewing, (about 400 meters) the overall coloration of the bird was dark with gray flecking on the sides. It had a dark head and white throat and breast. Based on its size, and profile, and that it was spreading its wings before it dove, and knowing that alcids "fly" underwater, propelling themselves with partially outstretched wings I realized that I was looking at a murrelet. I watched the murrelet for approximately ten minutes, made several phone calls alerting the local bird community and left the park.

The bird was not relocated until late in the morning, when Gerard Phillips and others positively identified it as a Long-billed Murrelet. It was not until late in the afternoon that I was able to return to Stewart Park. Once there, Kevin and Jay McGowan directed us to the bird, which was less than 50 yards offshore, and I was able to easily observe the bird. It was appreciably smaller than the many ducks near it, appearing more similar in size to a phalarope than the many Hooded Mergansers. When the bird was floating on the surface the white scapulars produced a broad white crescent over the dark wings. Its crown and nape were very dark and the throat, belly and flanks were white. This created a distinct demarcation, from the bill through the eye and along the neck, between the dark upperparts and light underparts. The bill was long, black, and pointed.



Based on the size of the bird, larger alcids such as Common Murre or Razorbill were eliminated. The overall color and shape and especially the broad white crescent above the wing eliminated most of the other small alcids, leaving only the three *Brachyramphus* murrelets, Kittlitz's, Marbled and Long-billed. Since Kittlitz's Murrelet has more extensive white on its face and paler gray upperparts, it was eliminated. The Marbled Murrelet and Long-billed Murrelet are very similar in appearance and habits. In fact, Long-billed Murrelet was considered a subspecies of Marbled Murrelet until 1997 when it was elevated to a full species (AOU 1997). The major distinction between the Long-billed and Marbled murrelets is the color of the nape. The Long-billed has a dark nape to the neck while on the Marbled it is white. The bird observed off Stewart Park had a dark nape.

The Long-billed Murrelet is known to breed from Japan (Hokkaido Island) north along the Kamchatka Peninsula of Siberia, and is suspected to breed in the Commander Islands near the Aleutians (Nelson 1997). They winter in the waters off Japan and Korea. Interestingly, all inland and eastern North American records of Marbled/Long-billed Murrelets have turned out to be Long-billed Murrelets (Mlodinow 1997).

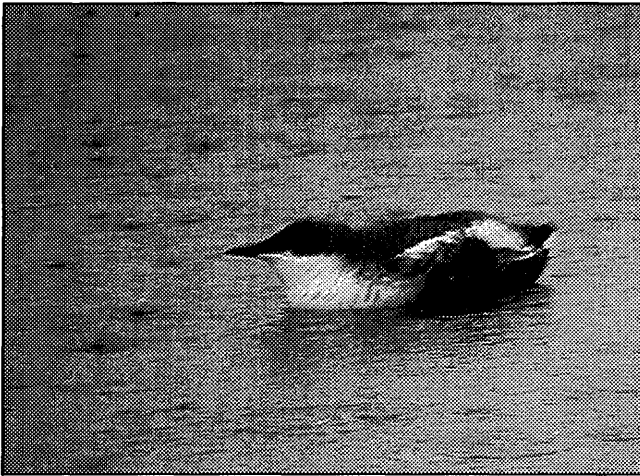
How did the Long-billed Murrelet end up on Cayuga Lake? We believe that the bird's journey may have begun when a storm occurred off eastern Asia. Almost all of the Long-billed Murrelet sightings in North America are correlated with major weather fronts passing through the North Pacific several days prior to their observation. (Mlodinow 1997). Once in North America the bird may have taken a route similar to other waterfowl and shorebirds, which passes through the Finger Lakes Region of upstate New York. These fall migrants begin their migration in northern Alaska and northwestern Canada. They follow the chain of lakes that stretch from Alaska south and east through Canada to the Great Lakes. Some of these migrants continue east over the Great Lakes and then head south over the Finger Lakes, eventually reaching their wintering waters of Chesapeake Bay. For example, the largest flights of Common Loons in North America have been documented over Cayuga Lake during November and early December (Evans et al. 1994). We speculate that once the Long-billed Murrelet reached North America it followed this same general route taken by many shorebirds and waterfowl during their fall migration and ended up on the south end of Cayuga Lake.

The Long-billed Murrelet remained through 20 Dec. This follows the general trend of most Long-billed Murrelet sightings in North America in that they typically remain in one location for 3 or 4 days before disappearing (Kevin McGowan pers.comm.). It was an exciting several days along the south shore of Cayuga Lake, as many birders keen to see the murrelet visited the region. To view images of the bird please visit the McGowan's website (<http://birds.cornell.edu/crows/lbmurrelet.htm>).

Taylor and I continue to do regular counts of the birds along the south end of Cayuga Lake. While the excitement of those December days when we saw the murrelet has diminished, each morning we take a little extra time searching the waves off of Stewart Park.

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Long-billed Murrelet  
18 Dec 2001 Ithaca, NY  
Jay and Kevin McGowan

## NOTES AND OBSERVATIONS

### **White-winged Dove (*Zenaida asiatica*) on Long Island 13-27 Oct 2001**

**Cindy Wodinsky**

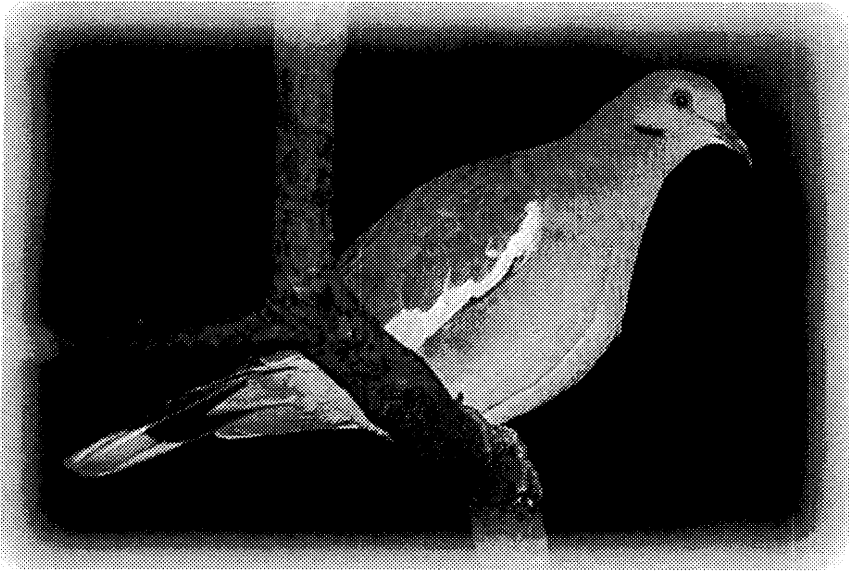
411 Oxford Ct. Cedarhurst, NY 11516

On Saturday, 13 Oct 2001, I was casually looking out at a large flock of Mourning Doves milling about the large pole-mounted hopper feeder in my backyard in Cedarhurst (Nassau Co.) New York. Among the doves sitting on the roof of the feeder was one showing a distinct white edge along the bottom of its folded wing, which in flight would show as a white wing-patch. It only took me a moment to realize that what I was looking at was no mere variation of the common Mourning Dove species, but an altogether different bird – a White-winged Dove! Having already seen this species elsewhere (Florida and Point Pelee National Park, Ontario, May 1999), the identification was easy and immediate. I grabbed my 12-year-old son who was standing beside me and excitedly pointed out the bird to him, and we both enjoyed good looks at the bird, which was no more than 20 feet away from where we were standing.

My backyard is rather small, landscaped simply with grass and two huge catalpa trees. These trees, are old and ridden with insects, and attract a large number of birds, especially during fall migration. I get quite an extensive variety for such a suburban location along Long Island's South Shore. Thinking this would be just an errant fly-by, I observed the bird throughout the afternoon and didn't expect to see it again. However, it was there the next morning with the same flock of approximately 16 Mourning Doves. At this point I contacted the New York RBA and invited any and all to both confirm and share my sighting.

The dove appeared daily over the course of the next week-and-a-half, developing a sort of a schedule by which I could predict its arrivals and departures, and I was able to advise visitors as to the most likely times the bird would be in the yard. On one Sunday afternoon several well-known birders showed up to add this species to their New York State lists, including Angus Wilson of the NYSARC and Joseph DiCostanzo of The Linnaean Society, and some fine photographs were taken by Dr. Michael Stubblefield and put up on the Linnaean Society's web site.

The White-winged Dove remained until a cold front moved into the area 14 days later, after which it was not seen again. Its 13 day appearance, however, established a new state record for the longest stay of a bird of this species to date.



White-winged Dove  
21 Oct 2001 Cedarhurst, Nassau Co  
Michael D. Stubblefield

**Editor's note:**

Referring to the species account in *Bull's Birds of New York State* (Levine 1998), it is interesting to note that the five accepted records of this casual vagrant were all from the South Shore of Long Island. Since publication of this book, there have been sightings in the Northeast at an accelerated pace. The probable source is the introduced Florida population. It is also quite unique that the observer had previously seen this same species in Pt. Pelee, Ontario, where it is also a vagrant.

# HIGHLIGHTS OF THE FALL SEASON 2001

**Willie D'Anna**  
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## **Weather Effects**

“Very warm and dry” summarizes the weather throughout the state this fall, with only very localized exceptions. November exemplified the season. It was the warmest November on record at New York City, the second warmest at Syracuse, and the fourth warmest at Buffalo with most Regions averaging over five degrees above normal. By the end of the period, Plattsburgh in Region 7 had received only two-thirds of normal annual precipitation and concern about drought and low reservoirs was expressed in Regions 4 and 9, respectively. Without any really cold air, there could not be much snow and none in Buffalo marked a first for the fall season in 122 years! The lack of snow was quite uniform: none in Albany, 0.1 inches in Rochester, and 0.7 inches in Syracuse. The warm conditions helped eight species to set new Regional record late departure dates in Region 3. However, it also prevented water bodies further north from freezing, providing late arriving waterfowl an opportunity to linger and thus probably causing the reduced numbers noted in Regions 3 & 5 this season. A lack of wild foods was noted in Regions 5, 7, & 8. As suggested by Regional Editor Peterson, this caused the unusual observations of Ruffed Grouse at feeders in Region 7.

## **Big Counts**

Outside of Region 7 the highest count for Snow Goose was only “3000+” in Region 8 and less than 300 anywhere else. As suggested above these birds were lingering further north, specifically in Region 7 where a mind-boggling 45000 on 25 October were counted, apparently a new state maximum. Enormous counts of Wood Ducks have occurred before in central New York but a count of 1900 in Region 9 still is worthy of mention. It is reassuring to see that this beautiful species, a common breeder in the state, doing so well. The small race of Canada Goose known as Richardson’s has been documented with increasing frequency and numbers in the state. Region 1 Editor Morgante in particular has been receiving previously unheard of numbers of this goose at Iroquois NWR. This season’s high count of 33 is another record. Add in one each from Regions 7 & 10 and it seems that this small subspecies has established a presence during migration. Whether this is a recent change or the result of increased

birder awareness is unknown but it is interesting and hopefully their status will continue to be monitored.

## Raptors

Excellent numbers of Northern Goshawk were noted in six Regions. Unfortunately, the ages of these birds were not recorded.. It is a rare event when No. Goshawks irrupt ,roughly every ten years, presumably due to population crashes of the snowshoe hare and grouse (Terres 1982). Age data should be recorded for this species as adults are much less common than immatures. Also, reported immature No.Goshawks are not infrequently misidentified Cooper's Hawks, presumably large females. This latter problem is not so much a concern at established hawkwatches with experienced counters as it is with less knowledgeable birders. However, even veterans should not attempt identification based only upon perceived size. We know more about accipiter identification than we did twenty years ago but it still is not a cut-and-dried matter.

Snowy Owls were also widespread this season, turning up in seven Regions with over twenty individuals. With a shorter cycle than that of the goshawks, about every four years, this species' irruptions are more closely tied to the populations of lemmings and mice (Terres 1982).

For hawkwatch junkies, there is a lot to read this season. Region 4 summarizes Franklin Mountain, which had record coverage. New highs were established for Bald Eagle and Cooper's Hawk and a daily record for the state was set for Golden Eagle (28). While on the subject of this species, readers are encouraged to check out the interesting *corrigendum* in the Region 7 report. Though fewer in number, the 54 Cooper's Hawks at Region 8's Camp Pinnacle Hawkwatch was actually higher on a percentage basis of all hawks than at Franklin Mountain. This species appears to be doing very well. The highest Broad-winged Hawk counts this fall were at Region 9's Hook Mountain, maxxing out at over 9000. In Region 5 a new hawkwatch had some fair counts despite very limited coverage.

## Inland Shorebirds

We expect shorebirds from coastal areas but inland only Montezuma NWR, where the habitat is actively managed, has consistently attracted them. This season the dry conditions of summer and fall created ample shorebird habitat across the state. Although known more as the center of birders' attention during the dog days of summer, observers still sought out and found significant numbers and variety this season. But as is often the case with this group, success varied widely, with Regions 5, 7 & 8 lamenting the relatively few birds. Most impressive

were the reports totaling 11 Hudsonian Godwits in Regions 1, 2, 3 & 5 and 40 Long-billed Dowitchers in Regions 1, 2 & 3. Very uncommon lakeshore birds, like Ruddy Turnstone (8 locations), Red Knot (3 locations) and Sanderling (8 locations) were unusually widespread. In addition White-rumped Sandpipers were found in six locations with a record 66 in Region 1, Baird's Sandpipers in seven locations, and Western Sandpipers in Regions 1, 2 & 3. Only two Wilson's Phalaropes were found inland but 33 Red-necked in Regions 1, 2 & 3, and 10 Red in Regions 1 & 2 were very high total numbers. Even habitat-poor Region 4 got into the act with reports of Regional rarities American Golden-Plover, Semipalmated Plover, and Semipalmated Sandpiper. Other reports of note were Region 8's fourth Buff-breasted Sandpiper, Rockland County's (Region 9) first American Avocet, a count of 300 Dunlins in Region 3, and a Purple Sandpiper in Cattaraugus County in Region 1, one of very few inland in the state away from the Great Lakes and the Niagara River.

### **Winter Finches**

Numbers of most species of winter finches showed in every Region this season. Although American Goldfinches were exceptionally numerous in Regions 4, 5 & 10, it was the normally scarce Pine Grosbeak that stole the show in most Regions. Flocks appeared in the northern two-thirds of the state with maximum counts of 66 in Region 1, 14 in Region 2, 3 in Region 3, 86 in Region 5, 24 in Region 7, and 30 in Region 8. This qualifies as one of largest movements in decades, if not of all time. Although in generally smaller numbers than Pine Grosbeaks, White-winged Crossbills staged a widespread movement, appearing in all Regions. It was particularly unusual that so many were seen at feeders, no doubt due to a poor cone crop in much of New York as well as in Canada, from where most likely originated.

### **Interesting Tidbits**

From Region 7, banding recoveries since the first Four Brothers Islands birds were banded in 1984, are summarized. All but one were found along the Atlantic Coast and all were well south of New York. The horrific events of 11 Sep in lower Manhattan have caused the indefinite closure of one of New York's best birding hotspots – the EIC in Region 5. Gullwatchers near the power plants on the Niagara River in Region 1 experienced increased scrutiny. On the Canadian side of the river, one birder was questioned by the Ontario Provincial Police while this writer was almost kicked out of the Power Vista on the American side. However, the plant personnel quickly settled down after I explained my behavior and allowed them to look through my scope. No doubt, similar scenarios have played out across the country. Type E botulism was again a major source of concern on Lake Erie. Thousands of birds have likely been killed by this

outbreak. In Region 8 plans are being laid to disperse a huge crow roost in yet another human/bird confrontation. In Region 3 a wonderful concentration of swallows contained an estimated *one million* birds, mostly Tree. Apparently, this spectacle is an annual event in the Montezuma wetlands complex. Finally from Region 7, a most unusual observation of a Red Squirrel capturing and eating a Black-capped Chickadee!

## Rarities

As usual Region 10 had the rarest birds this fall, it being difficult to compete with the coastal influence that area enjoys. However, the inland Regions turned in a remarkable set of exciting birds as well, including as many as five Eared Grebes (Regions 1 & 2), nine Cattle Egrets (Regions 1, 2, 3 & 5), four Greater White-fronted Geese (Regions 1, 3 & 5), 73 jaegers (Regions 1, 3, 5 & 7), 10 Sabine's Gulls (Regions 1,2 & 5), eight Connecticut Warblers (Regions 1, 2, 4 & 9) , Bohemian Waxwings in Regions 1, 2, 4, 5, 8 and several flocks in Region 7. Combined with the shorebirds mentioned above, these many discoveries indicates to me that (1) the weather was conducive to birders getting out into the field, (2) the weather brought birds to the state and tempted many of them to linger, (3) birders are getting more and more savvy at finding rarities, and most importantly, (4) we were just plain lucky!

In addition to all those just listed, there were many others. Region One's "gull capital of the world", the Niagara River, produced California Gull for the tenth consecutive year. Black-headed and Franklin's gulls were also found in that Region as well as in Region 2, where those diligent lakewatchers at Hamlin Beach S. P. not infrequently produce a seasonal list of gulls as long as the Niagara River's. Region 1's long overdue first Great Cormorant may have been at the expense of Region 5, where it was missed for the first time in six years. The second Regional Rufous Hummingbird and first Nelson's Sharp-tailed Sparrows since 1983 rounded out a spectacular season in Region 1. Although many of Region 2's rarities are simply "fly-bys" on Lake Ontario, the following list of scintillating birds shows that that area has much more to offer. Last season's Bird-of-the-Season winners, the Wood Storks, lingered into the fall while Great Cormorant, an ibis species, Common Eider, Sandhill Crane, Barn Owl, White-eyed Vireo, and Brewer's Blackbird showed up. Enhancing their fabulous season were a banded Bicknell's Thrush, Nelson's Sharp-tailed Sparrow, a very rare LeConte's Sparrow, and two Cave Swallows! There are only a handful of records of the latter in New York, with all but one being in the last five years. Region 3 added a Black Vulture, Sandhill Crane, Yellow-breasted Chat, and Clay-colored Sparrow. Their best, however, was a Piping Plover, one of very few found away from the ocean and Great Lakes in the state. The expanding numbers of Lesser Black-backed Gulls in this country have been



widely documented. Sightings in two locations in Region 4, where this species is still quite rare, indicate a continuation of that trend. A Black-backed Woodpecker in that Region is much more remarkable, especially considering the September dates. Hopefully, this NYSARC review species (outside the Adirondacks) is well- documented. Black-legged Kittiwakes are good but not great finds on Lake Ontario. However, adults of the species are decidedly rare that three in Region 5 is very unusual. Gulls highlighted the Region 7 report, including Little and the second Regional Laughing Gull. Region 8 gets Great Cormorant with regularity and that trend continued this fall. A Black Vulture and a Snowy Egret rounded out their rarities. Better advertised on the Internet than Region 1's bird, a Rufous Hummingbird in Region 9 was well- photographed.

Finally, we have reached Region 10 where the paragraph could be as lengthy as for the rest of the state if I let myself get carried away! In short the list is long and it is remarkable. It includes four White-faced Storm Petrels, two individuals of the Great Blue Heron subspecies "Great White Heron" which may represent only the second and third ever in New York, an American White Pelican, a Barnacle Goose (origin is always open to question with this species), Northern Wheatear, Ruff, two Arctic Terns, "Audubon's" Yellow-rumped Warbler, an apparent "Pink-sided" Dark-eyed Junco, and another Cave Swallow, this one believed to be of the Caribbean race! In addition there was one more report for each of the following three species which have been found with amazing consistency in recent years: "Eurasian" Green-winged Teal, White-winged Dove, and Ash-throated Flycatcher. A reported Virginia's Warbler, identified after review and discussion, will undergo close NYSARC scrutiny as it would be a first for the state if accepted.

With the long and rich ornithological history that this state has enjoyed, finding first records is becoming more and more difficult. Perhaps the best way to achieve such a goal is to study the "common" birds and determine if they could actually be a much rarer but very similar "sister species". In the not too distant past, late hummingbirds and *Empidonax* flycatchers were usually assumed to be one of the common species (Ruby-throated Hummingbird and Least Flycatcher, for example). Today's birders are too savvy to accept that and they scrutinize anything that is in the least out of the ordinary, such as an unusually late individual. That was the strategy that worked with two western species in Region 10 this season, a Hammond's Flycatcher and two Calliope Hummingbirds!! Both species were carefully photographed and the latter birds were viewed by hundreds. If accepted by NYSARC they both will be additions to the state list and they are my choices for the BOTS award this season. Calliope Hummingbirds have become a regular and increasing fall and winter visitor to the southeastern United States during the last decade, with an accepted record from as close as New Jersey

I am aware of only three accepted records for Hammond's Flycatcher in the Northeast. One was a bird in Rhode Island in late November of 1995, one in Pennsylvania in 1996, and another in Pennsylvania in 2000 (see lead article this *Kingbird* issue for full documentation.) While the relative recentness of these Hammond's Flycatcher sightings could herald a change in status, I am inclined to believe that it is the savvy birders as much as the birds themselves that are the reason for the potential addition to the state checklist.

### **Literature Cited**

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## REGION 1 – NIAGARA FRONTIER

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The warm and dry summer weather continued until the last week of September, including a rare 90°F day on the 9th. The average temperature for the month was 62.7°, 0.8° above normal. Monthly precipitation at Buffalo-Niagara International Airport was 3.45" (normal), but nearly all of it occurred with heavy lake effect rain between the 24th and 27th.

October was warm during the first and third weeks, with early season chill during the second week and some strong winds on several occasions. The average temperature was 53°, 1.9° above normal, and the monthly precipitation was 4.34", 1.25" above normal, but with several towns south and east of Buffalo recording significantly more from lake effect rain events. On the 8th, frost arrived early in areas away from the Great Lakes. There were strong southwest winds on the 15th to 17th and a deep low pressure system to the north brought strong westerly winds and sleet on the 25th and 26th. Birders tallied many wind-blown birds in Hamburg and Buffalo on those days. A cold and windy day on the 14th made viewing conditions less than desirable for the Buffalo Ornithological Society's (BOS) October count.

November was extremely mild, the fourth warmest on record. More incredibly, this was the first snow-free November in 122 years of Buffalo weather history. The average temperature was 46.9°, 6.4° above normal, including nine days above 60°. The monthly precipitation was 3.35", 0.48" below normal, and no snow was 10.4" below normal.

The September to November period was the warmest since 1931 and fourth warmest ever in Buffalo. Fall migration was steady during the calm September when warblers and other passerine migrants were recorded in fair, but not large, numbers each day. The strong storms and wind events during October pushed many birds on Lake Erie toward Buffalo and Hamburg and resulted in sightings of storm-driven jaegers, Sabine's Gulls and phalaropes. The extremely mild November allowed many birds to linger and was likely responsible for fewer gulls than normal on the Niagara River.

Waterfowl migration seemed typical on Lake Ontario and inland locations. High numbers of Northern Shoveler, Ring-necked Duck and Ruddy Duck continued from Batavia Wastewater Treatment Plant. "Richardson's" Canada Geese (*B. c. hutchinsii*) were observed on several occasions in good numbers at Iroquois National Wildlife Refuge, similar to the previous two fall seasons; one was also at Batavia WWTP.

Similar to fall 2000, piscivorous waterbirds along Lake Erie were affected by a severe outbreak of Type E botulism, a disease caused by ingestion of a neurotoxin produced by the bacterium *Clostridium botulinum*. Only two previous outbreaks

of Type E botulism have been recorded in North America, both on the Great Lakes. Extensive gull mortality occurred in summer 2001 and continued into the fall, with diving ducks and shorebirds also affected. The impact on migrating waterfowl, in particular Common Loons, with nearly 3000 projected dead over two years on the New York shoreline alone, has been severe. The stomachs of the birds most commonly contained bones of Round Goby and Mudpuppy. The NYSDEC is very concerned about the spread of this outbreak to Lake Ontario, the Finger Lakes and other large bodies of water in the state.

The NYSDEC again conducted counts of dead birds at 65 one-hundred-meter transects to document the number killed by species and to make mortality projections for the entire New York State Lake Erie shoreline. One hundred forty-seven birds of thirteen species were found dead during the transect surveys conducted between 4 October and 21 December. The counts and projected mortality included: 57 Common Loons (projected mortality 1039), 27 Ring-billed Gulls (492), 22 Herring Gulls (401), 14 Long-tailed Ducks (255), 7 Great Black-backed Gulls (128), 5 Red-breasted Mergansers (91), 5 Double-crested Cormorants (91), 1 Bonaparte's Gull (18), 1 Sabine's Gull (18), 1 Common Tern (18), 1 American Coot (18), 1 Greater Scaup (18) and 1 Belted Kingfisher (18). Other species found dead during the period outside of transects included a Bald Eagle, found dead 5 September near Ripley, an unidentified jaeger, 25 Sanderlings, Semipalmated Sandpiper and Dunlin.

Region 1 typically has poor conditions for fall shorebird viewing. However, this year was an exception. Dry summer weather exposed more shoreline along Lake Erie and inland locations such as Ischua Creek Dam in Machias. Cayuga Pool at Iroquois NWR had good shorebird habitat due to the dry weather and maintenance drawdowns. Birders flocked there after **Hudsonian Godwits** and **Long-billed Dowitchers** were found late in September. Besides these regional rarities, a record count of White-rumped Sandpipers was made and numbers and diversity of shorebirds were far better than usual. All three phalarope species were recorded this season for the second year in a row.

The "great gull show" on the Niagara River was below average for November, likely because of few cold fronts to bring the gulls in. Overall numbers were low, but the diversity was typical. Twelve species were present on the river, highlighted by **Black-headed Gull** and **California Gull**, while two more, Franklin's and Sabine's, were recorded on Lake Erie during the strong wind events. California Gull has now been documented for ten consecutive years.

Snowy Owls made their best showing in the last few years. At least seven were present during the season. Dave Junkin proved his remarkable Northern Saw-whet Owl bandings last year were not a fluke as he banded ten on the night of 22 October this year.

Don Roberson witnessed a fallout of warblers at Goat Island on 15 October, including an impressive five "**Yellow**" **Palm Warblers**. This subspecies has never been recorded in the Region in such numbers. Roberson observed the five birds together and saw a group of four "Western" Palm Warblers nearby. This sighting

comes on the heels of numerous reports of this subspecies west of the Region in Ontario. Out of season warblers are infrequently recorded in Region 1, so the record late November reports of Blue-winged Warbler and Wilson's Warbler are quite notable.

"Winter finches" were well reported this fall. A modest movement of Pine Siskins started in September. White-winged Crossbills, Common Redpolls and Evening Grosbeaks were recorded frequently in late October and November. Pine Grosbeaks were observed in the highest numbers and reports in nearly three decades. Eighty of them were counted along the Lake Ontario Plain on 18 November alone.

In a season with many rare sightings and high counts, the most notable were Great Cormorant, Rufous Hummingbird and Nelson's Sharp-tailed Sparrow. Brett Ewald found the Region's first **Great Cormorant**, an adult on Lake Ontario at Wilson Harbor. The cormorant was considered overdue as the species is recorded nearly annually immediately west and east of Region 1. The **Rufous Hummingbird**, which appeared at a feeder in Panama for more than a week in late October, is the Region's second. Jack Skalicky found two **Nelson's Sharp-tailed Sparrows** at Cayuga Pool on 7 October. This species, also considered overdue, had not been reported in the Region since 1983.

The 66th annual BOS October Count was held on the 14th and compiled by Mike Hamilton. The count recorded 151 species with no record high counts and one record low count, only two Horned Grebes. The following species had high counts for the last ten years: Northern Pintail 105, Ring-necked Duck 397, Common Merganser 253, Red-breasted Merganser 63, Bald Eagle 7, Sharp-shinned Hawk 37, Greater Yellowlegs 94, Lesser Yellowlegs 70, Chimney Swift 89, Tufted Titmouse 115, American Tree Sparrow 11. Decade lows were: Bonaparte's Gull 126 and Great Black-backed Gull 138.

Other significant sightings not previously mentioned included: Eared Grebe, Cattle Egret, Greater White-fronted Goose, Western Sandpiper, Pomarine Jaeger, Bohemian Waxwing and "Oregon" Junco.

Special thanks go to Ken Roblee of NYSDEC for providing information on the botulism outbreak for this report. Weather information was obtained from National Weather Service monthly summaries (S. McLaughlin).

## CONTRIBUTORS

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## ABBREVIATIONS

AmSP – Amherst SP, ERIE; BOSOC – Buffalo Ornithological Society October Count, 14 Oct; BuSP – Buckhorn I SP, ERIE; BWWTP – Batavia Waste Water Treatment Plant, GENE; DH – Dunkirk Harbor, CHAU; FMCSP – Four Mile Creek SP, NIAG; FNSP – Fort Niagara SP, NIAG; GHSP – Golden Hill SP, NIAG; GI – Goat I, NIAG; INWR – Iroquois NWR, GENE/ORLE; LBSP – Lakeside Beach SP, ORLE; NF – Niagara Falls, NIAG; NPP – Niagara Power Project on Niagara R, Lewiston, NIAG; NR – Niagara River; OOWMA – Oak Orchard WMA, GENE; SPNS – Sinking Ponds Nature Sanctuary, East Aurora, ERIE; TBNP – Times Beach Nature Preserve, Buffalo, ERIE; Tiff NP – Tiff Nature Preserve, Buffalo, ERIE; WoBSP – Woodlawn Beach SP, ERIE; WTSP – Wilson-Tuscarora SP, NIAG.

### LOONS – DUCKS

**Red-throated Loon:** arr 2 Yates ORLE 20 Oct (WD); max 250 GHSP 24 Nov (KF).

**Com. Loon:** max 74 Yates ORLE 28 Oct; for details on botulism impact see intro.

**Horned Grebe:** BWWTP 16 Sep, early; 2 BOSOC, record low; max 49 Mayville CHAU 21 Nov.

**Red-necked Grebe:** arr Hamburg ERIE 2 Nov; 4 other Nov reports.

**EARED GREBE:** 2 BWWTP 1 Sep thru 27 Oct (MM! WW! et al), 3 at this location 20 Oct (KF!), last 1 observed 4 Nov (MM!); present since summer.

**GREAT CORMORANT:** ad Wilson Harbor NIAG 23 Oct (BE!), first for Reg.

**Double-crested Cormorant:** 1345 BuSP 5 Sep; max 1462 BOSOC; 1200 Buffalo Harbor ERIE 26 Oct, storm driven.

**Am. Bittern:** last INWR 8 Oct (MT).

**Great Egret:** max 45 INWR 3 Sep (S&TO!), record count; numbers dwindled to zero at this location by mid Oct.

**CATTLE EGRET:** Yates ORLE 16 Oct (BE!); Kuckville ORLE 24 Oct (BE!); Newstead ERIE 28 Oct (BK!); best fall showing.

**Turkey Vulture:** last 2 Pomfret CHAU 19 Nov (TM!), late.

**GR. WHITE-FRONTED GOOSE:** INWR 16 Nov (BK!), only report.

**Snow Goose:** arr OOWMA 29 Sep

(WW!), early; 5 SPNS 28 Oct (LH); max 9 INWR 11 Nov; Olean CATT 17 Nov.

**Canada Goose (*B. c. hutchinsii*):** BWWTP 4 Nov (MM!); 10, 33 INWR 11, 18 Nov (MM!); in same location in similar numbers to last fall; 33 is record count.

**Brant:** arr Silver Creek CHAU 29 Sep (DN), early; 14 Yates ORLE 6 Oct (BK!), early; 2 GHSP 28 Oct; 2 Yates ORLE 28 Oct; 2 Buffalo NR 10 Nov; only reports.

**Mute Swan:** 7 Olcott NIAG 3 Sep (BK), record count (believe it or not!); BOSOC; 4 Barcelona Harbor CHAU 14 Nov (FR), only reports.

**Trumpeter Swan:** banded birds from release program OOWMA in Sep and Oct.

**Tundra Swan:** arr BOSOC; max 228 Dewittville CHAU 28 Nov (FR); low number of reports.

**Gadwall:** max 65 INWR 21 Oct.

**Am. Wigeon:** max 599 BOSOC.

**Am. Black Duck:** max 95 BOSOC; 62 BWWTP 4 Nov.

**N. Shoveler:** max 249 BWWTP 4 Nov.

**N. Pintail:** max 105 BOSOC.

**Green-winged Teal:** max 223 BOSOC.

**Canvasback:** arr BOSOC; 144 Mayville CHAU 21 Nov (BK).

**Redhead:** arr 8 BOSOC; 47 BWWTP 17 Nov.

**Ring-necked Duck:** arr 8 BWWTP 16 Sep; max 622 BWWTP 4 Nov (MM), good count; 82 Attica Res WYOM (BK)

17 Nov.

**Greater Scaup:** arr 6 BWWT 29 Sep; max 500 LBSP 18 Nov.

**Surf Scoter:** arr 5 Athol Springs ERIE 17 Oct (RA); max 31 Yates ORLE 28 Oct; BWWT 4 Nov (MM), unusual inland.

**White-winged Scoter:** arr 79 BOSOC.

**Black Scoter:** arr 2 Somerset NIAG 27 Oct; max 55 Yates ORLE 28 Oct (BK).

**Long-tailed Duck:** arr 2 Yates ORLE 6 Oct (BK!), early.

**Bufflehead:** arr 3 BWWT 30 Sep (BK!), early; max 430 Mayville CHAU 21 Nov (BK).

**Com. Goldeneye:** arr 4 BOSOC.

**Hooded Merganser:** 104 Attica Res WYOM 17 Nov (BK); max 112 S. Dayton CATT 24 Nov (BK); high counts.

**Ruddy Duck:** max 1569 BWWT 27 Oct (KF); 104 Mayville CHAU 28 Nov.

#### HAWKS – ALCIDS

**Osprey:** Farmersville CATT 1 Nov (MD!); Amity L ALLE 5 Nov (VP); late.

**Bald Eagle:** reports from 8 locations; found dead Ripley CHAU 5 Sep (NYSDEC). see intro.

**N. Goshawk:** Sheridan CHAU 17 Nov (CRB), only report.

**Red-shouldered Hawk:** INWR 8 Oct (MT); 2 BOSOC; few reported in fall.

**Rough-legged Hawk:** arr S. Dayton CATT 6 Nov.

**Merlin:** Carlton ORLE 6 Oct (BK); SPNS 8 Oct (LH); Somerset NIAG 27 Oct (WD!); 2 NIAG 28 Oct (PY!); 2 Buffalo ERIE 29 Oct (PY!), return to winter roost area; Somerset NIAG 11 Nov (JS!); increasing reports.

**Peregrine Falcon:** INWR 29 Sep; Chautauqua L CHAU 27 Oct (TS); Amity L ALLE 11 Nov (VP!); 2 Buffalo ERIE at nesting location 30 Nov (WB!).

**Am. Coot:** max 843 BOSOC; 800 Mayville CHAU 28 Nov (FR).

**Am. Golden-Plover:** max 7 BOSOC, low numbers in Sep and Oct.

**Gr. Yellowlegs:** 45 INWR 30 Sep; 3

INWR 11 Nov.

**Lesser Yellowlegs:** last 2 INWR 28 Oct. **HUDSONIAN GODWIT:** 3 INWR 29 Sep (BK! et al), seen almost daily until last 1 BOSOC; rare for Reg.

**Ruddy Turnstone:** max 8 BWWT 2 Sep (JS); 3 BWWT 16 Sep; S. Dayton CATT 21 Sep (BK); INWR 22 & 29 Sep (WD,BK); good showing, especially since all inland locations.

**Red Knot:** WTSP 3 & 4 Sep (BK,WW); DH 20 Sep (JGu); unusual in fall.

**Sanderling:** 2 WoBSP 3 Sep; WTSP 3 Sep; 2 BWWT 8 Sep; BWWT 29 Sep; only reports.

**WESTERN SANDPIPER:** BWWT 29 Sep (WW!), 2nd consecutive fall at this location.

**White-rumped Sandpiper:** 66 INWR 29 Sep (BK), record count; last INWR 11 Nov.

**Baird's Sandpiper:** max 4 BWWT 1 Sep; 2 BWWT 29 Sep; 2 INWR 1 Sep; TBNP 8 Sep.

**Pectoral Sandpiper:** max 40 INWR 6 Oct (WW); last INWR 11 Nov.

**Purple Sandpiper:** NF 21 Nov (DD); S. Dayton CATT 23 Nov (DH), first record inland.

**Dunlin:** max 80 Wilson NIAG 23 Oct (BE); 23 INWR 21 Oct; last GHSP 18 Nov.

**Stilt Sandpiper:** Machias CATT 22 Sep (MD); 8 INWR 30 Sep (WW); only reports.

**LONG-BILLED DOWITCHER:** Machias CATT 12-22 Sep (MD!), first for county; 3 INWR 29-30 Sep (BK!), frequent Oct reports from this location with max 9 on 21 Oct (BK!); 2nd consecutive fall with multiple reports.

**Com. Snipe:** max 34 Machias CATT 12 Oct (MD).

**Wilson's Phalarope:** INWR 29 Sep (BK!), late.

**Red-necked Phalarope:** Sheridan CHAU 26 Sep (DN); Pomfret CHAU 26 Sep (DM); 2 INWR 8 Oct (BK); Tiff NP 10

Oct (RA); good showing.

**Red Phalarope:** Hamburg ERIE 25 Oct (DH); GHSP 27 Oct (KF); reported less than annually.

**POMARINE JAEGER:** WoBSP 17 Oct (WW!), rarely documented in Reg but 2nd consecutive fall.

**Parasitic Jaeger:** 2 Somerset NIAG 21 Oct (MM!); Athol Springs ERIE 26 Oct (RA!); Hamburg ERIE 26 Oct (FR!); GHSP 11 Nov (MM!).

**jaeger sp.:** WoBSP 17 Oct (WW!); 2,5,7 Athol Springs ERIE 17,25,26 Oct (MT,PY,RA), storm driven; Yates ORLE 11 Nov (BK!); good showing for jaegers this fall.

**FRANKLIN'S GULL:** Hamburg ERIE 25 Oct (DH), only report for year.

**Little Gull:** max 14 Hamburg ERIE 23 Oct (RA); 5 Somerset NIAG and Yates ORLE 27 Oct (WD); DH 20-27 Nov; 5 NR 20 Nov, max reported on NR this season.

**BLACK-HEADED GULL:** Lewiston NR 26 Nov (GB); NF 27 Nov (MH!); likely same bird.

**Bonaparte's Gull:** 4 BWWTP 29 Sep; max 5000 Buffalo NR 25 Oct (NL); 3760 NR 20 Nov (GB), as counted at Niagara-on-the-Lake flypast; 36 Mayville CHAU 21 Nov (BK), good inland count.

**CALIFORNIA GULL:** ad NPP 11 Nov (WD!); 10th consecutive year on NR.

**Thayer's Gull:** a few NPP and NF in Nov.

**Iceland Gull:** arr NF 10 Nov.

**Lesser Black-backed Gull:** 5 NF 23 Oct; max 9 NF-NPP 21 Nov.

**Glaucous Gull:** arr NPP 22 Nov.

**Sabine's Gull:** 2,2,3 Athol Springs ERIE 17,25,26 Oct (RA,DH,BK et al), storm driven.

**Black-legged Kittiwake:** juv Lewiston NR 10, 25 Nov (DH, GB).

**Forster's Tern:** 2 WoBSP 3 Sep (MM), only report.

**Black Tern:** 2 BWWTP 1 Sep, only report.

## DOVES – WOODPECKERS

**Black-billed Cuckoo:** Gl 1 Sep (DR), fall reports unusual.

**Snowy Owl:** arr Angola ERIE 6 Nov (BM); Sunset Bay ERIE 14 Nov (FR); max 3 Buffalo Harbor ERIE 17 Nov (MM), 1-2 most of month at this location; NF 17 Nov (TH); Wilson NIAG 27 Nov (BE), best showing in last few years.

**N. Saw-whet Owl:** 10 banded Wethersfield WYOM 22 Oct (DJ); follows exceptional numbers banded last year.

**Com. Nighthawk:** max 61 Kenmore ERIE 9 Sep (JT).

**Chimney Swift:** last 89 BOSOC.

**RUFIOUS HUMMINGBIRD:** Panama CHAU 18-28 Oct (DM, JB, BS), ph and report to NYSARC; 2nd for Reg.

**Red-headed Woodpecker:** 2 ad + juv Como P ERIE 3-15 Sep (MM); 2 FNNSP thru 16 Nov; only reports.

## FLYCATCHERS – WAXWINGS

**Olive-sided Flycatcher:** INWR 22 Sep (BK!), late.

**Gr. Crested Flycatcher:** last Tiffit NP 23 Sep.

**E. Kingbird:** last INWR 1 Sep.

**N. Shrike:** arr Somerset NIAG 27 Oct; Gasport NIAG 28 Oct; 5 Nov reports.

**Yellow-throated Vireo:** last 2 INWR 16 Sep.

**Blue-headed Vireo:** last Lancaster ERIE 26 Oct.

**Philadelphia Vireo:** 8 Sep reports; well reported.

**Com. Raven:** reports from 6 ALLE, CATT locations.

**Tree Swallow:** last 5 BWWTP 27 Oct.

**N. Rough-winged Swallow:** 2 NF 27 Nov (MH!), late.

**Carolina Wren:** reported from 11 locations, good showing.

**House Wren:** last 4 BOSOC.

**Ruby-crowned Kinglet:** arr Snyder ERIE 14 Sep.

**Gray-cheeked Thrush:** 11 reports; last Tonawanda ERIE 28 Oct (WW!), record



late.

**Gray Catbird:** Amity L ALLE 8 Nov. on the late side.

**Brown Thrasher:** last BOSOC.

**Am. Pipit:** arr 2 BWWTP 8 Sep; max 30 WoBSP 30 Sep.

**BOHEMIAN WAXWING:** 2 FNPS 10 Nov (DH); 4 Somerset NIAG 11 Nov (MM!); typical locations for this sp.

#### WARBLERS

**Blue-winged Warbler:** Tift NP 7 Nov (WW!), record late.

**Golden-winged Warbler:** GI 22 Sep (DR), late, only report.

**“Brewster’s” Warbler:** Tift NP 27 Sep (WW!), late.

**Orange-crowned Warbler:** 5 reports Sep and Oct.

**Magnolia Warbler:** max 18 GI 20 Sep (DR).

**Cape May Warbler:** max 10 GI 20 Sep (DR), very high count.

**“Yellow” Palm Warbler (*D. p. hypochrysea*):** 5 GI 15 Oct (DR!), record count, observed during fallout with 4 “Western” Palms; subspecies was recorded with increased frequency this fall west of Reg in Ontario.

**Connecticut Warbler:** SPNS 16 Sep (LH), only report.

**Wilson’s Warbler:** last Somerset NIAG 18 Nov (MM!), record late.

**Yellow-breasted Chat:** Sherman CHAU 2 Sep, only report this year.

#### TANAGERS – WEAVERS

**Am. Tree Sparrow:** arr BOSOC.

**Chipping Sparrow:** last Colden ERIE 10-11 Nov (JW).

#### NELSON’S SHARP-TAILED

**SPARROW:** 2 INWR 7 Oct (JS!), up to 3 in following days; first Reg report since 1983.

**Fox Sparrow:** arr INWR 10 Oct; max 15 Tonawanda ERIE 28 Oct (WW), impressive count; last 3 Colden ERIE 14 Nov.

**Lincoln’s Sparrow:** arr AmSP 6 Sep; last BOSOC.

**White-throated Sparrow:** arr GHSP 1 Sep (MM), early for migrant.

**Dark-eyed “Oregon” Junco (*J. h. oregonus*):** Eden ERIE 1 Nov thru (RA!), 2 wintered at same feeder last year.

**Lapland Longspur:** arr INWR 8 Oct; 18 BOSOC; 6 Yates ORLE 17 Nov.

**Snow Bunting:** arr BWWTP 21 Oct; max 550 Somerset NIAG 28 Oct (WD).

**Rose-breasted Grosbeak:** Franklinville CATT 25 Oct (MD!), late.

**Rusty Blackbird:** max 3000 INWR 10 Oct (KF).

**Pine Grosbeak:** arr FMCSP 9 Nov (BK); 4 AmSP 13 Nov (BRBA); 2 Tift NP 14 Nov (DH); 7 Yates ORLE 17 Nov (BE); 66 Somerset NIAG & Yates ORLE 18 Nov (MM), multiple groups migrating west, highest count since 1973; 14 WTSP 18 Nov (WD); 6 Youngstown NIAG 26 Nov (MH); best showing since early 1970s.

**Purple Finch:** 15 INWR 22 Sep (BK), impressive count for location; fewer reports this fall.

**White-winged Crossbill:** arr Wheatfield NIAG 29 Oct; 3 Silver Creek CHAU 9 Nov; 2 FMCSP 9 Nov; 3 Jamestown CHAU 10 Nov; 3 Somerset NIAG 11 Nov; 2 FNPS 18 Nov; 4 Alfred ALLE 22 & 24 Nov; good showing.

**Com. Redpoll:** 2 Buffalo ERIE 20 Oct (PY), early; 25 Olcott NIAG 28 Oct; 220 Somerset NIAG to Carlton ORLE 18 Nov (MM); 220 FNPS 18 Nov (BK); many Nov reports.

**Pine Siskin:** arr 2 GHSP 13 Oct; max 32 Darien GENE 1-30 Nov (TH); numerous reports in Oct and Nov.

**Evening Grosbeak:** arr 2 BOSOC; max 29 Amity L ALLE 1-30 Nov (VP); 10 other reports.

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## REGION 2 – GENESEE

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Once again we experienced a most interesting fall season. Fall is always one of the interesting times due to the extended period of the migration. September started off with a continuation of the dryness of the summer season. Uncharacteristically high temperatures were experienced in the early portions of the month. During this time migration was generally slow. As the month approached its final week, major weather fronts finally brought more typical September weather and much better birding. By the end of the month the average temperature was 0.5°F below normal at 61.2°. Precipitation was scant in the early part of the month, but picked up with some major rainfalls from the 24th to the 27th. The final total was 0.18" above normal at 3.15".

October proved to be less dramatic. It was indeed a comfortable month, with an average temperature of 52.4°, which was 1.3° above normal. Westerly systems dominated but brought no inclement weather of note. Precipitation was just slightly below normal at 2.27". Birding was good, with many pleasant field days and decent flights.

November proved to be a mild month. The average temperature was 6.6° above normal at 47.1°. On 24 days, the high temperature eclipsed the norm for those days. Precipitation amounted to a paltry 1.90". This was 1.02" below normal. Snowfall was barely measurable at 0.1". The avian variety was quite good, with excellent birding conditions and a significant number of birders scouring the countryside.

The seasonal species total was buoyed by a few human factors. Dave Tetlow once again sought to eclipse the 300 mark for the year, and his diligent efforts turned up a number of good birds. Bill Symonds and a core of other birders manned the lakewatch at Hamlin Beach State Park and kept waterbird coverage at a high level. Braddock Bay Bird Observatory (BBBO), under the skillful direction of Betsy Brooks, provided a good picture of the passerine migration. After completing his Civil War book, Bob Marcotte once again ventured into Badgerow Park for a fall warbler count.

Somewhat puzzling was the early arrival of some species. This didn't seem to mesh with the mild weather patterns. There were decent Brant flights very early, as well as Harlequin Duck reports. Bohemian Waxwing, Fox Sparrow, White-throated Sparrow and Lapland Longspur all put in September appearances. All of the winter finches were reported early in small numbers. Wild food sources were limited, so extended stays were few.

The loon movement was relatively weak early but picked up and continued through the season. A very large Red-throated Loon flight was tallied on 21 November. Grebes were just average, but two Eared Grebes in October were a highlight. The cormorant reduction program seems to be having some effect as

numbers are down from historical totals. Great Cormorant is a good find anytime. Great Egret, Snowy Egret and Cattle Egret all put in late appearances this fall. Great Blue Heron continued to be reported through the end of the season as was to be expected. The summer **Wood Storks** lingered in the area, with the last documented report on 5 September. Waterfowl were generally early but not significantly high in number. Of interest were the higher counts of **Common Eider** than King Eider. Eurasian Wigeon in October was a plus. An absence of the usual good rafts of scaup was noted.

Few trends or highlights were recognized in the raptor movements. Northern Goshawk reports were up slightly. There were scattered reports of Rough-legged Hawks but no real numbers. Merlin and Peregrine Falcon were reported through the season. In the shorebird department, things were pretty good. We finally seemed to have some decent habitat and reports were good. Of special interest were the sightings of Hudsonian Godwit and Red Knots, which have been scarce in recent years. It was one of the best years for flights of phalaropes, mainly at the lakewatch. Jaeger reports lasted through the season, with good September totals of Parasitic. Pomarine totals were low, but a Long-tailed Jaeger in September was a highlight. Gulls in general were not very good, but sightings of Franklin's, Black-headed, Thayer's and Sabine's were noteworthy. Tern reports for the fall were about average.

Owls were quite good for the most part. Barn Owl is a rarity anymore, so the Hogan Point report was a plus. Of special interest is the increased number of Northern Saw-whet Owl reports. Snowy Owls showed up in early November and were sighted pretty much through the end of the season. The only Whip-poor-will was one banded at the BBBO Kaiser-Manitou station. Common Nighthawks once again were significantly fewer than historical numbers. A record late bird was reported from Hogan Point on 19 October. Of special note was the count of 80 Chimney Swifts by Jim Kimball in York on 14 October.

Flycatchers were pretty typical. Northern Shrike was reported in small numbers. Vireos were about normal, with some species lingering into October. A late White-eyed Vireo was banded in October. Fish Crow and Common Raven carried on the recent trends with sightings during the season. The birds of the season were most likely the **Cave Swallows** found by Dave Tetlow and seen by many observers on Long Pond and in adjacent areas in Greece. This seems to be part of the increased reports from eastern parts of the USA. Documentation of this species has been on the increase. A very good Black-capped Chickadee movement was noted in October, but Red-breasted Nuthatch, Winter Wren and kinglet numbers appeared to be down a bit. Thrushes in general seemed a bit down, but two **Bicknell's Thrushes** banded at Kaiser-Manitou were a highlight. Bohemian Waxwing in September at Hamlin Beach was a real surprise.

The warbler flight was good this season. There was an increased number of reports of Connecticut Warbler, with up to five individuals in September. Cape May and Pine warblers lingered into November. Magnolia and Wilson's totals were quite good.

The sparrow picture was interesting, with reports of **LeConte's** and Nelson's Sharp-tailed sparrows. The latter has become established as a regular fall migrant with the increased coverage from birders actively seeking this species. This trend was spearheaded by Mike Davids a number of years ago and has continued. This season was rather difficult due to the deep plowing, then overgrowth, of a field where they are traditionally located. This made walking the area relatively hazardous. The rest of the sparrows were only fair. American Tree Sparrow was on time but numbers were generally low. White-throated and White-crowned peak numbers were reported in a narrow range of time with few lingerers. Snow Bunting and Lapland Longspur were a tad early, but conditions seemed to keep them from hanging around and numbers tended to be low. The only report of large numbers of Snow Buntings was 2500 from the lakewatch at Hamlin Beach. A Rose-breasted Grosbeak reported by Dick O'Hara in November was very late.

The only real blackbird highlight was the three male **Brewer's Blackbirds** discovered by Dave Tetlow in Hamlin. This species occurred regularly for a number of years in the 1980s but sightings dropped off in the 1990s to the present.

All of the winter finches were reported during the season, but few seemed to hang around in any numbers. The Pine Grosbeak totals were pretty good early and Common Redpolls held on through the season, but numbers were not large.

The season ended with a total of 253 species. Of those, 28 were new for the year and brought the yearly total to 299.

## CONTRIBUTORS

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## ABBREVIATIONS

B – Butler, WAYN; BB – Braddock Bay, MONR; Badgerow P, MONR; C – Clyde, WAYN; CH – Charlotte (Ontario Beach), MONR; G – Greece, MONR; H – Hamlin, MONR; HB – Hamlin Beach SP, MONR; HP – Hogan Pt, MONR; IB – Irondequoit Bay, MONR; M – Manitou, MONR; MP – Mendon Ponds County P, MONR; P – Parma, MONR; PE – Perinton, MONR; SC – Salmon Creek, MONR.

## LOONS – DUCKS

**Red-throated Loon:** arr HB 8 Oct; max 3785 HB 21 Nov, state record high count.

**Com. Loon:** max 750 HB 20 Oct.

**Horned Grebe:** arr HB 15 Sep.

**Red-necked Grebe:** arr HB 16 Sep.

**EARED GREBE:** IB 2 Oct (DT); HB 21 Oct (mob).

**GREAT CORMORANT:** G 19 Oct (DT).

**Great Egret:** last H 3 Oct.

**Snowy Egret:** arr P 14, 16 Sep (DT).

**Cattle Egret:** HB 16 Oct; 2 G 25 Oct; HB 14 Nov.

**Green Heron:** last Byron 1-23 Nov (WS), late.

**ibis sp.:** BB 20 Oct (JBa).

**WOOD STORK:** 16 C 1-5 Sep (mob).

**Snow Goose:** arr IB 15 Sep; 15 HB 28 Sep.

**Canada Goose:** 32,110 HB 28 Sep (DT, JBo), excellent total.

**Brant:** arr 63 HB 25 Sep (DSh, JBo), record early; max 179 28 Sep, high for date, low for a seasonal high.

**Trumpeter Swan:** G 27 Nov, origin unknown.

**Tundra Swan:** arr 3 HB 29 Oct.

**EURASIAN WIGEON:** G 17 Oct (DT).

**Canvasback:** arr 2 HB 21 Oct.

**Redhead:** arr 2 HB 7 Oct.

**King-necked Duck:** arr 4 HB 2 Oct.

**King Eider:** imm/fem HB 28 Nov (DT).

**COMMON EIDER:** 3 imm/fem HB 18 Oct (DT, SS); imm/fem HB 20 Oct (DT, MD); 3 imm/fem HB 12, 17 Nov (WS, DT).

**Harlequin Duck:** 2 fem/subad male HB 28 Sep (DT, JBo); ad male HB 19 Sep (RS).

**Black Scoter:** arr HB 23 Sep; max 460 HB 28 Oct.

**Long-tailed Duck:** arr 2 HB 18 Sep.

**Bufflehead:** arr 14 HB 18 Oct.

**Com. Goldeneye:** arr 5 HB 18 Oct.

## HAWKS – ALCIDS

**Bald Eagle:** 2 imm Rochester 11 Oct

(TH).

**N. Goshawk:** BB 3 Sep, early; BB 6 Oct, banded; Pittsford; BB 13 Oct, banded; 10 reports Nov.

**Rough-legged Hawk:** arr BB 6 Oct.

**Peregrine Falcon:** Irondequoit 30 Nov, only report.

**Sandhill Crane:** 2 B 8 Sep.

**Am. Golden-Plover:** last HB 4 Nov.

**Greater Yellowlegs:** last BB 1 Nov.

**Spotted Sandpiper:** last IB 2 Oct.

**Upland Sandpiper:** last 5 Monroe County Airport 5 Sep.

**Hudsonian Godwit:** arr SC 28 Sep (DT); HB 29 Sep (DT); G 11 Oct (WD, BP).

**Ruddy Turnstone:** last 2 HB 17 Oct.

**Red Knot:** 4 HB 1 Sep.

**Sanderling:** last BB 24 Nov.

**Western Sandpiper:** HB 4-10 Sep.

**White-rumped Sandpiper:** arr 2 G 20 Sep, late; last 3 BB 3 Nov.

**Pectoral Sandpiper:** last IB 17 Nov.

**Purple Sandpiper:** arr IB 14 Nov (GC); 1-3 HB 17-30 Nov (mob); CH 22 Nov (KG); 2 BB 24 Nov (DT, MD).

**Dunlin:** arr 1 IB, 2 SC 22 Sep; max 300 SC 1 Nov (DT, MD).

**Stilt Sandpiper:** arr 14 SC 13 Sep, late; last SC 1 Nov.

**Buff-breasted Sandpiper:** arr P 1 Sep (DT), only report this year.

**Long-billed Dowitcher:** arr IB 20 Sep; IB 2 Oct; 2 G 11 Oct; 2 BB 18-26 Oct; last SC 1 Nov.

**Red-necked Phalarope:** 5 HB 8 Oct (mob); max 18 HB 18 Oct (DT, SS); IB 27 Oct (J&PS); HB 6 Nov (DT); 2 HB 12 Nov (WS).

**Red Phalarope:** arr IB 28 Sep (DT, JBo, DSh); 3 HB 8 Oct (WS, DT); HB 30 Oct (DT); 2 HB 5 Nov (WS, MD); HB 13 Nov (WS, CC).

**Pomarine Jaeger:** arr HB 28 Sep; 2 HB 5, 11, 12 Nov (WS, MD); Chimney Bluff, Sodus 7 Nov (DT).

**Parasitic Jaeger:** max 13 HB 1 Sep; 2 Chimney Bluff, Sodus 7 Nov (DT).

**LONG-TAILED JAEGER:** subad HB

10 Sep (DT, JBo), 5th bird for this fall.  
**FRANKLIN'S GULL:** juv G 14 Nov (DT).  
**Little Gull:** arr HB 18 Oct.  
**Black-headed Gull:** imm HB 21 Oct (WS, DT); imm HB 12 Nov (WS, JBo).  
**THAYER'S GULL:** ad HB 18 Nov (DT).  
**Iceland Gull:** arr PE 28 Nov.  
**Lesser Black-backed Gull:** ad G 29 Oct, (KG; ad CH 22 Nov (DT, MD, KG)).  
**Black-legged Kittiwake:** arr imm HB 27 Oct; HB 11, 26 Nov.  
**SABINE'S GULL:** imm HB 30 Oct (DT).  
**Caspian Tern:** last IB 4 Oct.  
**Com. Tern:** last 4 HB 18 Oct.  
**Forster's Tern:** last HB 20 Oct.

### DOVES – WOODPECKERS

**BARN OWL:** HP Oct 11 (D&KT).  
**Snowy Owl:** arr G 6 Nov.  
**Short-eared Owl:** arr HB 3 Nov.  
**N. Saw-whet Owl:** M 3 Oct, banded; M 24 Oct, banded.  
**Com. Nighthawk:** G 11 Oct; G 19 Oct (DT), record late.  
**Whip-poor-will:** M 13 Sep, banded, only fall report.  
**Chimney Swift:** max 80 York 14 Oct (JK); last 2 BB 26 Oct.  
**Ruby-throated Hummingbird:** last HB, Bushnells Basin 23 Sep.

### FLYCATCHERS – WAXWINGS

**Olive-sided Flycatcher:** last South Bristol 3 Sep.  
**E. Wood-Pewee:** last 2 WAYN 8 Sep.  
**Yellow-bellied Flycatcher:** max 7 M 2 Sep.  
**Willow Flycatcher:** last HP 30 Sep.  
**Least Flycatcher:** last C 8 Sep.  
**Great Crested Flycatcher:** last HP 30 Sep.  
**E. Kingbird:** last H 23 Sep.  
**N. Shrike:** arr 3 West Lakeshore 1 Nov.  
**White-eyed Vireo:** last M 30 Oct (RMc), banded.  
**Yellow-throated Vireo:** B 1 Sep.  
**Blue-headed Vireo:** last M 18 Oct,

banded.  
**Warbling Vireo:** last G 30 Sep.  
**Philadelphia Vireo:** last BP 1 Oct.  
**Red-eyed Vireo:** last HB 13 Oct.  
**Com. Raven:** South Bristol 19 Nov (J&PS).  
**Purple Martin:** last 3 HB 28 Sep.  
**Tree Swallow:** 50 G 9 Oct, good late total.  
**Bank Swallow:** last 30+ WAYN 8 Sep.  
**Cliff Swallow:** last WAYN 8 Sep.  
**CAVE SWALLOW:** 2/1 Long Pd, G 8/9 Oct (DT, mob); Buck Pd, G 9 Oct (DT, DSh).  
**Barn Swallow:** last G 4 Oct.  
**Black-capped Chickadee:** max 380 M 13 Oct, banded.  
**House Wren:** last 2 M 30 Sep.  
**Gray-cheeked Thrush:** arr M 12 Sep.  
**BICKNELL'S THRUSH:** M 16 Sep (BBBO), banded; M 21 Sep (BBBO), banded.  
**Swainson's Thrush:** last 2 M 19 Oct, banded.  
**Bohemian Waxwing:** HB 22 Sep (DT, RS), record early; 1-3 in various locations all Sep.

### WARBLERS

**Blue-winged Warbler:** last M 13 Sep.  
**Golden-winged Warbler:** last M 3 Sep.  
**Tennessee Warbler:** last BP 6 Oct.  
**Orange-crowned Warbler:** arr HB 4 Sep.  
**Nashville Warbler:** last BP 25 Oct.  
**N. Parula:** last M 28 Sep.  
**Yellow Warbler:** last IB 30 Oct, late.  
**Magnolia Warbler:** max 100 M 2 Sep, banded; last BP 12 Oct.  
**Cape May Warbler:** last HP 1 Nov, very late.  
**Black-throated Blue Warbler:** last MP 20 Oct.  
**Black-throated Green Warbler:** last BP, MP 7 Oct.  
**Blackburnian Warbler:** last BP 27 Sep.  
**Pine Warbler:** HB 17 Nov, wintering?  
**Palm Warbler:** arr G 1 Sep; last MP 20 Oct.

**Bay-breasted Warbler:** last Brighton 28 Sep.  
**Blackpoll Warbler:** last M 11 Oct, banded.  
**Black-and-white Warbler:** last M 13 Oct, banded.  
**Am. Redstart:** last IB 28 Oct.  
**Ovenbird:** last M 3 Oct, banded.  
**N. Waterthrush:** last 13 Sep.  
**Connecticut Warbler:** 2 HB 3 Sep (R&SS); M 18 Sep (BBBO), banded; M 19 Sep (BBBO), banded; HB 29 Sep (DSh, GC).  
**Wilson's Warbler:** 70 banded Kaiser-Manitou Sep.  
**Canada Warbler:** last West Lakeshore 20 Sep.  
**Yellow-breasted Chat:** HB 15 Sep (DT, MD).

#### TANAGERS – WEAVERS

**Scarlet Tanager:** last BP 8 Oct.  
**Am. Tree Sparrow:** arr 2 West Lakeshore 20 Oct.  
**LECONTE'S SPARROW:** HB 21 Nov

(MD, DT, KG).  
**Nelson's Sharp-tailed Sparrow:** arr 2 HP 30 Sep (DT, MD).  
**Fox Sparrow:** arr BP 29 Sep; M 29 Sep, banded.  
**Lincoln's Sparrow:** last M 7 Oct, banded.  
**White-throated Sparrow:** max 110 M 23 Sep, banded.  
**White-crowned Sparrow:** arr BP 27 Sep.  
**Lapland Longspur:** arr HB 23 Sep.  
**Snow Bunting:** arr 3 HB 15 Oct; max 2500 HB 28 Oct.  
**Rose-breasted Grosbeak:** G 3-17, 25 Nov (RO), very late.  
**Indigo Bunting:** last 2 WAYN 8 Sep.  
**Bobolink:** last 3 HB 9 Sep.  
**Rusty Blackbird:** arr H 13 Sep.  
**BREWER'S BLACKBIRD:** 3 H 17 Oct (DT).  
**Baltimore Oriole:** last 3 Kendall 3 Sep.  
**Pine Grosbeak:** arr HB 6 Nov; max 14 Webster 18 Nov.  
**Red Crossbill:** arr BB 1 Nov.

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## REGION 3 – FINGER LAKES

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Overall, fall 2001 was drier and warmer than normal. September, however, managed to contradict both those assessments. The average temperature in September was just 0.1° F cooler than normal. A storm, 24-26 September, dropped just over 4" of rain on the Ithaca area and more than 3" on the Elmira area. Total precipitation for the month was nearly 2.5" above normal in Ithaca and 1" above normal in Elmira. Precipitation was 55% of normal in October and 70% in November. There was no measurable snowfall in the entire season. October temperatures were 2.5° warmer than normal. November temperatures were 5.9° warmer than normal, and the last seven days of the month averaged 14° warmer than normal. The warm weather undoubtedly led to the Regional record late departures reported for eight species.

The following account includes comparisons of bird populations in the Region between fall 2001 and fall 2000, with occasional reference to a species' status in prior years. Unless otherwise noted, the cited comparisons showed statistically significant changes ( $X^2 > 3.84$ ;  $P = 0.05$ ). A discussion of my methodology and its limitations can be found in the Region 3 report that appeared in the December 1999 issue of *The Kingbird*.

Both Red-throated and Common loons were up this fall from last year. Observers at the Cayuga Lake Loon Watch counted a total of 6285 Common Loons between 15 October and 30 November, up from 4563 over the same period last year, but well below the record 12,446 recorded in 1995. Horned Grebes were also up in numbers. For the third year in a row, Red-necked Grebes appeared on Cayuga Lake on 20 October. Unlike the last two years, however, there were two instead of one. Also unlike the last two years, two more showed up on 24 November. Double-crested Cormorants were down about 20% from last year when the numbers were normal. This may reflect some success in efforts to manage the species' nesting population on Lake Ontario.

Large numbers of Great Blue Herons at Montezuma NWR and elsewhere in the Montezuma Wetlands Complex boosted their numbers to nearly 50% more than last fall. In contrast, Black-crowned Night-Herons were sharply down. The Matts Montezuma Muckrace team and the Spahn/Strong team spotted Least Bittern on race day. Matt Victoria also found one at Montezuma 18 September. Fall sightings of the species are rare in the Region. A Black Vulture in Dryden was reported to the Laboratory of Ornithology's new online database, BasinBirds. Virtually all of the database's records from the fall were contributed by Lab staff prior to the database's exposure to the general public.

Most waterfowl species were down in numbers. The warmer temperatures and complete lack of wintry conditions may have allowed swans, geese and ducks to linger farther north. Exceptions were Canada Goose, Green-winged Teal, American Wigeon, Long-tailed Duck and Common and Red-breasted mergansers, all increasing. It was the second straight year of increases for the American Wigeon. Mallards declined for the second consecutive year. Greater White-fronted Geese were again found in the Region, but there were no reports of Ross's Goose, whose usual companions, the Snow Geese, were 80% fewer than last year.

The reported numbers of Sharp-shinned and Red-tailed hawks were the only diurnal raptor numbers to change, both increasing. All of the gallinaceous species increased. Common Moorhens were up, but American Coots were down. While Sandhill Cranes have been appearing regularly in the Montezuma Wetlands Complex the last few years, the one found by Dave Neveu, David Prill and Chris Tessaglia-Hymes was a rare find in the Region 3 portion of the Complex.

Most shorebird species showed increases or no change from last year. Solitary, Western, Least and White-rumped sandpipers were all down. The Least Sandpiper is the only species in any family to decline three years in a row in this Region. The most exciting species of the season was the Piping Plover that remained at Myers Point 15-22 September. All of the Region's common gull species showed changes



in numbers. Ring-billed Gull numbers declined by about 20% while Herring Gull numbers more than doubled and Great Black-backed Gull numbers more than quadrupled. Black Terns lingering into the fall in the Region are unusual. Allison and Jeff Wells's report of one at Montezuma NWR on 1 October was a Regional late record.

Both Rock and Mourning doves were down more than 40% from last year. Owl numbers do not usually show much fluctuation from year to year, but this year Eastern Screech-Owls more than tripled. The lone Snowy Owl report was down from the total of five last year. Chimney Swifts were down about 85%. This may be a species to watch as the number of chimneys available as nest sites declines. Many homeowners are upgrading to more fuel-efficient furnaces with chimney liners and caps.

Among woodpeckers, only Yellow-bellied Sapsucker showed a significant change, more than doubling in number. None of the flycatcher species demonstrated changes in number. Among the vireos, only the increase in Blue-headed was a significant change. Swallows, however, were up markedly, due in large measure to Robert Spahn's willingness to hazard estimates of the huge numbers at Montezuma NWR on Muckrace day. Bob estimated a total of one million, with about 90% being Tree Swallows. The occurrence of these large numbers is an annual event at the Refuge, but few observers offer estimates of their numbers. Even without regard to the importance of the Refuge to other avian species, the site well deserves its designation as an Important Bird Area based solely on its provision of food, water, cover and space to the Tree Swallow. One wonders from what part of this species' breeding range the Montezuma birds derive? Are they solely from Montezuma and points farther north, or is there a significant gathering from the south as well?

Blue Jay numbers were up this fall. Another good crop of acorns may have spurred more acorn storage flights by the birds, exposing them to greater observation by birders. American Crows were down about 45%. Though West Nile Virus did not receive the publicity this year that it has in the past, it may be an important factor. It is interesting, however, that the crow population was down about the same percentage as its cornfield companions, Rock Dove and Mourning Dove.

Black-capped Chickadees, Tufted Titmice, White-breasted Nuthatches and Golden-crowned Kinglets were all up. House Wrens and Blue-gray Gnatcatchers were both down. The only thrush to decline was Eastern Bluebird. All of the others increased, though the increases for Swainson's and Hermit were not significant. The increases among the woodland thrushes were mostly due to greater effort by Ithaca birders to listen for night migrants. The increase for Wood Thrush was the second consecutive one for the species.

Gray Catbirds and Northern Shrikes decreased in numbers this fall. American Pipits, Cedar Waxwings and European Starlings increased. Most warbler species were unchanged. Yellow-rumped and Palm warblers and Common Yellowthroat declined in number. Black-throated Green and Canada warblers increased. Jeff

Gerbracht and Meena Haribal located a Yellow-breasted Chat at Montezuma NWR for a rare fall report of this species.

Rose-breasted Grosbeaks were down about 50% from last year. Among the sparrows there were many significant changes. Field, Vesper, Savannah, Fox and White-throated sparrows and Dark-eyed Junco were all up. Song and Swamp sparrows were both down, perhaps influenced by the summer drought conditions in parts of the Region. John and Sue Gregoire banded a Clay-colored Sparrow at Kestrel Haven Avian Migration Observatory in Hector. The numbers of early arriving Lapland Longspurs and Snow Buntings were both down this fall. Bobolinks and Common Grackles were up. Red-winged Blackbirds, Eastern Meadowlarks and Brown-headed Cowbirds were down. In anticipation of an interesting winter, all of the winter finch species except Red Crossbill were up, as were all of the locally breeding finch species. For both Purple Finch and American Goldfinch, this was the third consecutive increase in fall numbers. Purple Finches may be taking advantage of the lessened competition from the conjunctivitis plagued House Finch. Though not yet close to its former numbers, House Finch also increased this fall. Finally, House Sparrow decreased by about one third.

Sixty-nine species increased in numbers from last fall to this fall. Forty-five decreased. Eighty species showed no significant change.

## CONTRIBUTORS

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## ABBREVIATIONS

AuB – Aurora Bay, CAYU; CayL – Cayuga L; CLB – Cayuga L Basin; CorU – Cornell University; CVT – Catharine Valley Trail, SCHU; DryL – Dryden L; GMFB – Gleason Meadows/Frenchman’s Bluff, CHEM; HH – Hog Hole, TOMP; HHP – Harris Hill P, CHEM; JCAP – Jacksonville Community Association P, TOMP; KH – Kestrel Haven Avian Migration Observatory, SCHU; LoPd – Lowe Pd, CHEM; MNWR – Montezuma NWR; MWC – Montezuma Wetlands Complex; MtPl – Mt. Pleasant, TOMP; MyPt – Myers Pt, TOMP; PS – Park Station, CHEM; SaW – Sapsucker Woods, TOMP; SCNC – Spencer Crest Nature Center, STEU; StP – Stewart Park, TOMP; TCAH – The Center at Horseheads, CHEM; TF – Tanglewood Forest, CHEM; TFSP – Taughannock Falls SP.

### LOONS – DUCKS

**Red-throated Loon:** arr 2 StP 27 Oct; max 8 TFSP 28 Oct; last StP 27 Nov.  
**Com. Loon:** max 1829 TFSP 9 Nov.  
**Horned Grebe:** arr AuB 21 Oct; max 12 AuB 28 Oct (CT), high.  
**Red-necked Grebe:** arr 2 MyPt 20 Oct (BF, PH, MMe); max & last 2 CayL 24 Nov (BB).  
**Am. Bittern:** MNWR 22 Sep; last MNWR 4 Oct.  
**Least Bittern:** MNWR 8 Sep (MMe, MSa, MWs, MY); last MNWR 18 Sep.  
**Great Blue Heron:** max 200 MNWR 30 Sep (DR), high.  
**Great Egret:** max 28 MWC 8 Sep; last TFSP 16 Nov.  
**CATTLE EGRET:** arr Romulus 21 Nov (FS); last Romulus 22 Nov.  
**Green Heron:** max 18 TCAH 5 Sep; last West Danby 29 Sep.  
**Black-crowned Night-Heron:** max 4 MWC 8 Sep.

**BLACK VULTURE:** Dryden 14 Nov (BB), only report.  
**Turkey Vulture:** max 101 MyPt 13 Oct; last 2 Dryden 14 Nov.  
**GREATER WHITE-FRONTED GOOSE:** arr MWC 29 Sep (GDa), early; max 2 MNWR 7 Oct (BGu, LJ, LL); last MNWR 22 Oct.  
**Snow Goose:** arr MNWR 18 Sep; max 200 MWC 3 Nov; last 150 MNWR 24 Nov.  
**Canada Goose:** max 20,000 MNWR 30 Sep (DR), high.  
**Brant:** arr & max 9 Pyramid Mall TOMP 29 Sep, early & low; last 3 MyPt 19 Nov.  
**Mute Swan:** arr & max 2 Clute Memorial P SCHU 20 Sep, late; last Dryden 19 Nov.  
**Tundra Swan:** arr 2 MWC 8 Oct (BGu), early; max 350 MNWR 24 Nov.  
**Wood Duck:** max 40 MWC 8 Sep; last Dryden 19 Nov.  
**Gadwall:** arr MNWR 13 Oct; max 60 MNWR 21 Oct.

**Blue-winged Teal:** max 20 MNWR 25 Sep; last 2 MWC 3 Nov.  
**N. Shoveler:** arr MNWR 1 Sep; max 40 MNWR 21 Oct; last Seybolt Rd Bait Pds 24 Nov.  
**N. Pintail:** arr 6 MNWR 30 Sep, late; max 100 MWC 13 Oct; last 15 MWC 24 Nov (JGe, WH, SK), late.  
**Green-winged Teal:** arr MNWR 3 Sep; max 101 MWC 8 Sep; last 8 MNWR 24 Nov.  
**Canvasback:** arr MNWR 19 Oct; max 26 MWC 3 Nov.  
**Redhead:** arr StP 9 Oct; max 26 MWC 3 Nov.  
**Ring-necked Duck:** arr 20 MWC 13 Oct, late; max 501 MWC 3 Nov.  
**Greater Scaup:** arr Newtown Creek CHEM 4 Nov; max 2 PSt 25 Nov; last 2 PSt 25 Nov.  
**Lesser Scaup:** arr DryL 7 Oct; max 10 MyPt 27 Oct.  
**Surf Scoter:** CayL 28 Oct (CT), only report.  
**White-winged Scoter:** arr 2 StP 20 Oct; max 10 Red Jacket Yacht Club SENE 16 Nov; last 2 MyPt 30 Nov (BB), late.  
**Black Scoter:** arr 2 StP 28 Oct, late; max 35 TFSP 30 Oct; last StP 28 Nov (SK), late.  
**Long-tailed Duck:** arr MyPt 27 Oct; max 41 DryL 28 Oct; last StP 15 Nov.  
**Bufflehead:** arr MNWR 19 Oct; max 54 MNWR 21 Nov.  
**Com. Goldeneye:** arr StP 28 Oct; max 7 CayL 24 Nov.  
**Hooded Merganser:** max 31 StP 12 Nov.  
**Red-breasted Merganser:** arr & max 4 StP 7 Oct; last TFSP 17 Nov.  
**Ruddy Duck:** arr StP 27 Sep (DA, JGe, MH, BoMc), early; max 6 MWC 3 Nov, low.

#### HAWKS – ALCIDS

**Osprey:** max 5 MWC 8 Sep; last Coming 27 Oct.  
**Red-shouldered Hawk:** max 2 KH 17 Oct; last Caroline 17 Nov (SK), late.

**Broad-winged Hawk:** SCNC 2 Sep; last Dryden 24 Sep.  
**Rough-legged Hawk:** arr MtPl 11 Oct; max 3 Summerhill 17 Nov.  
**Golden Eagle:** arr Caroline 10 Oct; Veteran 10 Nov.  
**Peregrine Falcon:** max 2 MNWR 13 Oct; last KH 15 Nov.  
**Ring-necked Pheasant:** max 8 CLB 24 Nov (JGe, WH, SK), high.  
**Sora:** max & last 2 MNWR 22 Sep.  
**Com. Moorhen:** max 50 MWC 8 Sep (RSp, ASt), high; last CLB 22 Oct.  
**SANDHILL CRANE:** MWC 16 Sep (DNe, CT, DPr).  
**Black-bellied Plover:** max 30 MNWR 30 Sep (DR), high; last 9 MNWR 21 Nov (BB), Reg record late.  
**Am. Golden-Plover:** max 12 MNWR 18 Sep; last MNWR 14 Oct.  
**Semipalmated Plover:** max 40 MNWR 15 Sep; last 3 MNWR 21 Oct.  
**PIPING PLOVER:** arr MyPt 15 Sep (PH, MMe, mob, ph); last MyPt 22 Sep (BT).  
**Killdeer:** max 76 MWC 8 Sep; last MyPt 16 Nov.  
**Greater Yellowlegs:** max 100 MNWR 25 Sep (BB), high; last 3 MNWR 24 Nov.  
**Lesser Yellowlegs:** max 101 MWC 8 Sep; last 3 MNWR 21 Nov (BB), ties Reg late record.  
**Solitary Sandpiper:** MWC 8 Sep (RSp ASt), only report.  
**Spotted Sandpiper:** SaW 8 Sep; last HH 21 Oct.  
**Hudsonian Godwit:** arr & max 3 MNWR 25 Sep (BB); last CLB 22 Oct (BB).  
**Ruddy Turnstone:** max 2 StP 10 Sep (BE, MSa, MWs), only report.  
**Sanderling:** max 4 MNWR 14 Sep; last MyPt 18 Sep.  
**Semipalmated Sandpiper:** max 80 MNWR 25 Sep; last 12 MNWR 3 Nov.  
**W. Sandpiper:** arr MNWR 1 Sep; last MNWR 20 Oct.  
**Least Sandpiper:** max 31 MWC 8 Sep (RSp, ASt); last 23 MNWR 21 Nov (BB),

ties Reg late record.

**White-rumped Sandpiper:** max 10 MNWR 18 Sep; last 3 MNWR 21 Oct.

**Baird's Sandpiper:** max 5 MNWR 1 Sep; last MNWR 22 Sep.

**Pectoral Sandpiper:** max 101 MNWR 23 Sep; last 3 Tyre 3 Nov.

**Dunlin:** arr MNWR 23 Sep; max 105 MNWR 3 Nov; last 5 MNWR 24 Nov.

**Stilt Sandpiper:** max 21 MNWR 22 Sep; last 3 MNWR 3 Nov (PH), late.

**Buff-breasted Sandpiper:** last MNWR 20 Sep.

**Short-billed Dowitcher:** max & last 3 MNWR 14 Sep.

**Long-billed Dowitcher:** max 20 MNWR 21 Oct (AM&TJ), high; last 4 MNWR 3 Nov (SUNY, BC, MY), late.

**Com. Snipe:** max 41 MWC 8 Sep; last Tyre 3 Nov.

**Am. Woodcock:** max 4 Etna 11 Sep (SA), high; last Beam Hill 16 Oct.

**Wilson's Phalarope:** MNWR 11 Sep (CSa), only report.

**Red-necked Phalarope:** last MNWR 18 Sep (BF).

**Bonaparte's Gull:** max 2 DryL 5 Nov; last TFSP 20 Nov (mob), late.

**Lesser Black-backed Gull:** arr MNWR 14 Sep; MNWR 13 Oct.

**Caspian Tern:** max 4 CVT 1 Sep; last MNWR 15 Sep.

**Com. Tern:** arr & max 8 MNWR 13 Oct (BB), late & high.

**Black Tern:** max 2 MNWR 14 Sep (BF, PH), high; last MNWR 1 Oct (A&JWe), Reg late record.

#### DOVES – WOODPECKERS

**Black-billed Cuckoo:** Mark Twain SP 9 Sep (DR), only report.

**Yellow-billed Cuckoo:** TF 2 Oct (BO), only report.

**Great Horned Owl:** max 6 KH 23 Sep (J&SGrg), high.

**Snowy Owl:** Phelps 7 Nov (BGu, C&JSI), only report.

**Barred Owl:** max 2 Caroline 4 Nov

(MGr), high.

**Short-eared Owl:** arr & max 2 Ledyard 21 Nov.

**N. Saw-whet Owl:** Summerhill 11 Nov.

**Com. Nighthawk:** max 6 Elmira 4 Sep; last MNWR 8 Sep, early.

**Chimney Swift:** max 5 SaW 8 Sep; last 2 Mark Twain SP 23 Sep.

**Ruby-throated Hummingbird:** max 12 KH 2 Sep (J&SGrg), high; last KH 28 Sep.

**Red-headed Woodpecker:** last LoPd 22 Sep (BO, DR).

**Red-bellied Woodpecker:** max 3 MWC 8 Sep (RSp, ASt), high.

**Yellow-bellied Sapsucker:** max 6 CorU 29 Sep (JEl, MH), high; last 2 Covert 24 Nov.

**N. Flicker:** max 10 MWC 8 Sep, low.

#### FLYCATCHERS – WAXWINGS

**E. Wood-Pewee:** max 5 MWC 8 Sep; last StP 29 Sep.

**Yellow-bellied Flycatcher:** max 2 Hector 5 Sep (J&SGrg), high; last CorU 29 Sep.

**Alder Flycatcher:** KH 23 Sep; last KH 25 Sep.

**Willow Flycatcher:** KH 23 Sep; last KH 25 Sep.

**Least Flycatcher:** KH 6 Sep; last KH 10 Sep.

**E. Phoebe:** max 6 SCNC 15 Sep; last JCAP 29 Oct.

**Great Crested Flycatcher:** SaW 8 Sep; last CorU 14 Sep.

**E. Kingbird:** max 2 SaW 8 Sep (BB); last KH 28 Sep.

**N. Shrike:** arr T Ithaca P 28 Oct; Halderman Hollow CHEM 6 Nov.

**Yellow-throated Vireo:** max 2 MWC 8 Sep; last SCNC 29 Sep.

**Blue-headed Vireo:** max 6 CorU 15 Sep; last SaW 6 Nov (GDe JGe), Reg record late.

**Warbling Vireo:** max 2 KH 6 Sep; last KH 10 Sep.

**Philadelphia Vireo:** arr Sullivanville Dam CHEM 11 Sep, late; max 2 HHP 13 Sep;

last Caroline 21 Sep.

**Red-eyed Vireo:** max 12 Newtown Battlefield Reservation CHEM 10 Sep (BO); last KH 21 Oct.

**Fish Crow:** max 15 StP 24 Oct (J&KMc), high.

**Horned Lark:** max 75 DryL 18 Nov, low.

**Purple Martin:** max 101 MWC 8 Sep (RSp, ASt), only report.

**Tree Swallow:** max 900,000 MWC 8 Sep (RSp, ASt), high; last 30 MWC 21 Oct.

**N. Rough-winged Swallow:** max 60,000 MWC 8 Sep (RSp, ASt), high; last 20 MWC 21 Oct.

**Bank Swallow:** max 30000 MWC 8 Sep (RSp, ASt), high.

**Cliff Swallow:** max 4 StP 27 Sep (DA JGe, MH, BoMc), high; last 4 StP 27 Sep.

**Barn Swallow:** max 10,000 MWC 8 Sep (RSp, ASt), high; last 5 MWC 21 Oct.

**Tufted Titmouse:** max 8 SCNC 16 Sep (BB), high.

**White-breasted Nuthatch:** max 18 SCNC 22 Sep (BB), high.

**Brown Creeper:** max 6 CorU 15 Sep (MH), high.

**House Wren:** Caroline 3 Sep; last TF 2 Oct, early.

**Winter Wren:** max 6 StP 17 Oct (BE), high; last Elmira 31 Oct.

**Marsh Wren:** max 6 MNWR 22 Sep (BT), high; last Lansing 13 Oct.

**Ruby-crowned Kinglet:** arr 2 SaW 8 Sep; max 21 Lansing 29 Sep; last SCNC 11 Nov.

**Blue-gray Gnatcatcher:** CVT 1 Sep; last StP 6 Sep.

**Veery:** max 50 MtPl 11 Sep (CT), high; last HHP 4 Oct.

**Gray-cheeked Thrush:** arr MtPl 10 Sep; max 11 West Danby 29 Sep (GK), high; last 2 Arnot Forest TOMP 28 Oct (PH), late.

**Swainson's Thrush:** max & last 75 West Danby 29 Sep (GK), high.

**Hermit Thrush:** max 3 SCNC 13 Oct; last KH 29 Oct.

**Wood Thrush:** max 50 MtPl 11 Sep (CT),

high; last Caroline 5 Oct.

**Am. Robin:** max 400 SaW 5 Nov (KR), high.

**Gray Catbird:** max 11 Lansing 29 Sep; last Dryden 4 Nov.

**Brown Thrasher:** max 3 Lansing 29 Sep (MSa, MSt), high; last Lansing 20 Oct.

**Am. Pipit:** arr MNWR 18 Sep; max 75 Dryden 28 Oct; last MWC 24 Nov.

## WARBLERS

**Blue-winged Warbler:** last SCNC 15 Sep.

**Tennessee Warbler:** max 3 CorU 15 Sep; last StP 29 Sep.

**Orange-crowned Warbler:** arr Lansing 29 Sep; max & last 2 MWC 21 Oct (CT), high.

**Nashville Warbler:** max 10 SCNC 15 Sep (BB), high; last KH 27 Oct.

**N. Parula:** arr CorU 12 Sep; max 3 CorU 14 Sep; last Beam Hill 16 Oct.

**Yellow Warbler:** max & last 2 SaW 8 Sep (BB), high.

**Chestnut-sided Warbler:** max 12 CorU 14 Sep (PH), high; last KH 10 Oct (J&SGrg), Reg late record.

**Magnolia Warbler:** max 12 CorU 14 Sep (PH), high; last KH 10 Oct.

**Cape May Warbler:** last StP 29 Sep (MH).

**Black-throated Blue Warbler:** max 2 HHP 22 Sep; last SaW 4 Oct.

**Yellow-rumped Warbler:** max 27 HHP 13 Sep; last 5 CLB 16 Nov.

**Black-throated Green Warbler:** max 10 CorU 29 Sep (JEL, MH), high; last HH 24 Oct.

**Blackburnian Warbler:** max 2 SCNC 1 Sep; last SCNC 15 Sep.

**Pine Warbler:** max 6 HHP 22 Sep (CVAS), high; last TF 5 Oct.

**Prairie Warbler:** last LoPd 22 Sep.

**Palm Warbler:** arr KH 12 Sep; max 6 StP 29 Sep; last E Shore P TOMP 3 Nov (GB, CaBC), late.

**Bay-breasted Warbler:** max & last 2 TF 20 Sep.

**Blackpoll Warbler:** arr 2 SaW 8 Sep; max 5 HHP 13 Sep; last KH 29 Oct (J&SGrg), Reg late record.  
**Black-and-white Warbler:** max 3 CorU 15 Sep (MH), high; last Southport 30 Sep.  
**Am. Redstart:** max 5 SaW 8 Sep; last Beam Hill 30 Sep.  
**Ovenbird:** max 2 SaW 8 Sep; last GMFB 28 Sep.  
**N. Waterthrush:** last StP 29 Sep (MH), Reg late record.  
**Mourning Warbler:** last KH 25 Sep.  
**Com. Yellowthroat:** max 11 Lansing 29 Sep; last KH 17 Oct.  
**Hooded Warbler:** last Southport 30 Sep.  
**Wilson's Warbler:** arr KH 9 Sep; max 2 CorU 12 Sep; last StP 28 Sep.  
**Canada Warbler:** max & last 2 SCNC 15 Sep (BB), high.  
**YELLOW-BREASTED CHAT:** MNWR 3 Sep (JGe, MH), only report.

#### TANAGERS – WEAVERS

**Scarlet Tanager:** max 3 TF 17 Sep; last KH 29 Sep.  
**E. Towhee:** max 17 GMFB 28 Sep; last Lansing 20 Oct.  
**Am. Tree Sparrow:** arr 2 HH 28 Oct; max 16 Lindsay-Parsons Biodiversity Preserve TOMP 28 Oct.  
**Chipping Sparrow:** max 47 HHP 4 Oct; last KH 25 Nov.  
**CLAY-COLORED SPARROW:** KH 8-9 Oct (J&SGrg).  
**Field Sparrow:** max 12 PSt 4 Oct; last GMFB 3 Nov.  
**Vesper Sparrow:** max 5 HHP 8 Oct (JSc, ATh), high; last MNWR 21 Nov (BB), late.  
**Savannah Sparrow:** max 10 Dryden 30 Sep; last 6 CLB 24 Nov, late.  
**Fox Sparrow:** arr Lansing 13 Oct; max 8 GMFB 3 Nov; last 4 SCNC 11 Nov, early.  
**Lincoln's Sparrow:** arr KH 1 Sep (J&SGrg), early; max 5 KH 15 Sep; last

KH 29 Oct.  
**Swamp Sparrow:** max 20 DryL 30 Sep; last KH 31 Oct, early.  
**White-crowned Sparrow:** arr 2 LoPd 27 Sep; max 11 LoPd 11 Oct; last KH 16 Nov.  
**Dark-eyed Junco:** max 120 Dryden 27 Oct (LS), high.  
**Lapland Longspur:** arr & max 2 DryL 18 Nov (BB), late.  
**Snow Bunting:** arr 15 Union Springs CAYU 26 Oct; max 40 MNWR 24 Nov.  
**Rose-breasted Grosbeak:** max & last 6 Ithaca 28 Sep, low.  
**Indigo Bunting:** max 6 Dryden 30 Sep; last 2 Hector 29 Nov (J&SGrg), late.  
**Bobolink:** max 4 MWC 8 Sep; last StP 29 Sep.  
**Red-winged Blackbird:** max 10,000 MWC 30 Sep; last 3 DryL 18 Nov.  
**E. Meadowlark:** max 2 PSt 23 Sep; last Summerhill SF CAYU 2 Nov.  
**Rusty Blackbird:** arr CayL 16 Sep; max 75 Ithaca 3 Nov; last PSt 10 Nov, early.  
**Com. Grackle:** max 10,000 MNWR 30 Sep; last E. Corning 17 Nov.  
**Brown-headed Cowbird:** max 1000 TCAH 13 Sep; last KH 18 Oct, early.  
**Baltimore Oriole:** last GMFB 5 Sep.  
**PINE GROSBEAK:** arr & max 3 Ithaca College 24 Nov (St&SuF).  
**House Finch:** max 75 CLB 24 Nov (BB), high.  
**Red Crossbill:** arr Summerhill 2 Nov; max 2 Dryden 4 Nov.  
**White-winged Crossbill:** arr 4 Summerhill 2 Nov; max 10 Ithaca 7 Nov.  
**Com. Redpoll:** arr Dryden 29 Oct; max 150 KH 25 Nov (J&SGrg), high.  
**Pine Siskin:** arr Dryden 14 Oct; max 33 Summerhill 2 Nov (MY), high.  
**Evening Grosbeak:** arr 2 Beam Hill 30 Sep; max 51 Hector 29 Nov.

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## REGION 4 – SUSQUEHANNA

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The Fall 2001 season was a dry one in the Region. Most of the area was under a drought watch for the period, with the Delaware River basin headed for a drought emergency. Precipitation in September was above normal, according to statistics from the Binghamton weather station, but fell back in October and November, exacerbating low water levels in reservoirs and other water bodies. Temperatures were near normal for September and October, but November was a full 6°F above average. A benign hurricane season kept major weather away, with a 24-25 September storm that dropped 2.2" of rain in Binghamton with strong southerly winds being the only significant meteorological event.

The low water levels and resulting exposed mud flats may have contributed to a flush of unusual shorebird sightings in the Region. Black-bellied Plover, American Golden-Plover, Semipalmated Plover, Semipalmated Sandpiper, Pectoral Sandpiper and Dunlin all made appearances. This particular lineup hasn't been seen in many years. However, variety did not equal volume as standbys such as Killdeer and Spotted Sandpiper were at or below normal numbers.

Meanwhile, high overhead, the raptors were having a field day. The Franklin Mt. Hawkwatch near Oneonta reported 13 of the 15 regularly seen species at numbers above the 13 year average, with the remaining two species down only slightly. Part of the explanation for the good numbers may be a doubling of hours covered at the site. However, on an hourly basis, 4.9 raptors were sighted this Fall versus the 13 year average of 8.4 hawks per hour, so the added coverage was likely a wash in the totals. Highlights at Franklin Mt. included new seasonal records for Bald Eagle and Cooper's Hawk plus a new daily high of 28 Golden Eagles on 9 November. Elsewhere in the Region, Bald Eagles and Cooper's Hawks were also widespread.

Gail Kirch of the Vestal banding station reported "excellent banding" in September and October, with many days of capturing 20 or more individuals. Noted as very high were White-throated Sparrow, Dark-eyed Junco and American Goldfinch. Also noted as high were Red-eyed Vireo and Gray Catbird. In addition, a Savannah Sparrow banded 1 September was a first for the station in over three decades of operation. Spot-breast thrush numbers were average at the site, excepting Veery and Wood Thrush, which continue low.

The season also brought a taste of a possible finch invasion. Purple Finch, White-winged Crossbill and Evening Grosbeak all made good showings from October on. Common Redpoll and Pine Siskin numbers were more modest, but promising. The Pine Grosbeaks reported elsewhere in the state had not reached the Region by the end of the reporting season, however.

Low counts were noted for Common Loon, Am. Black Duck, Green-winged Teal, Bay-breasted and Blackpoll warblers, Ovenbird and Grasshopper Sparrow.



Other reports of note included Black-backed Woodpecker at a Plymouth, Chenango County feeder and, showing potential of a regular presence in the Region, Lesser Black-backed Gulls at Whitney Point Reservoir and Cincinnatus Lake.

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## ABBREVIATIONS

BPd – Boland Pd, BROO; BUNP – Binghamton University Nature Preserve, BROO; CinL – Cincinnatus L, CHEN/CORT; CoP – Cole P, BROO; DOAS – Delaware-Otsego Audubon Sanctuary, DELA; DorP – Dorchester P, BROO; FHNC – Finch Hollow Nature Center, BROO; FMHW – Franklin Mt. Hawkwatch, DELA; GLn – Greybark Lane, BROO; GrP – Greenwood P, BROO; JC – Johnson City, BROO; OtsL – Otsego L, OTSE; WeB – West Burlington, OTSE; WPR – Whitney Pt Res, BROO; UL – Upper Lisle, BROO; VBS – Vestal banding station, BROO.

### LOONS – DUCKS

**Com. Loon:** 2 OtsL 20 Oct; DorP 30 Nov; low.

**Red-throated Loon:** OtsL 27 Oct (BD), unusual.

**Pied-billed Grebe:** DorP 25 Sep; UL 30 Sep & 7 Oct; 2 BPd 19 Oct; 3 UL 31 Oct; 2 CinL 2 Nov; BPd 6 Nov; 2 BPd 17 Nov.

**Great Egret:** WPR 3 reports early Sep; Port Crane BROO 13 Sep; 2 BPd 25 Sep; 6 Chenango Towpath BROO 26 Sep; 4 WPR 26 Sep; above avg.

**Turkey Vulture:** total 143 FMHW, 50% above avg.

**Brant:** 1-3 DorP 19 Oct - 26 Nov; 3 CinL 12 Nov; CinL 14 Nov; no large flocks except FMHW flyovers.

**Wood Duck:** UL Sep through 11 Nov; 12 Industrial P Pd BROO 5 Sep; 8 BPd 13 Sep; 6 WPR 23 Sep; 4 BPd 25 Sep; 2 Vestal BROO 11 Oct; small flocks but widespread.

**Am. Black Duck:** UL 27 Oct; 2 Mirror L TIOG 12 Nov; DorP 13 Nov; 4 CinL 14 Nov; BPd 17 Nov; low.

**N. Shoveler:** 2 DorP 25 Sep (JW), unusual.

**N. Pintail:** BPd 17 Nov (JW), often not reported in fall.

**Green-winged Teal:** 5 DorP 25 Sep, low.

**Long-tailed Duck:** DorP 29 Oct (MP); 4 WPR 11 Nov (JW, JIW); 3 WPR 12 Nov (B&SL); unusual.

**Bufflehead:** max 40 WPR 12 Nov, large

flock.

**Com. Goldeneye:** CinL 14 Nov; 2 CinL 23 Nov (JW, MP); not always reported in fall.

**Hooded Merganser:** max 18 CinL 2 Nov.

**Com. Merganser:** max 100+ UL 4 Nov.

**Ruddy Duck:** DorP 2 Nov, not always reported in fall.

#### HAWKS – ALCIDS

**Osprey:** total 121 FMHW, 58% above avg; Pittsfield OTSE 17 Sep; WPR 26 Sep; DorP 27 Sep; Delhi DELA 10 Oct.

**Bald Eagle:** total 52 FMHW, excellent count, more than double avg; Goodyear L OTSE 16 Sep; WPR 4 Oct; Delancey DELA 7 Oct; CoP 15 Oct; 2 DorP 24 Oct; Whitney Pt BROO 2 Nov; DorP 8, 11 Nov; Cooperstown OTSE 28 Nov; Oneonta OTSE 28 Nov; regular in vicinity of nests.

**N. Harrier:** total 66 FMHW, modest increase; Springfield Cen OTSE 3 Sep, 21 Oct; Lisle BROO 9 Sep, 16 Oct; Meredith DELA 2 Oct; 2 Lisle BROO 30 Oct, 4-22 Nov; WeB 7 Nov; Catatunk Cr Rd TIOG 21 Nov.

**Sharp-shinned Hawk:** total 485 FMHW, 35% increase over avg, continuing recent upward trend; Glen Aubrey BROO 1 Sep; DorP 15 Sep; 2 UL 22 Sep; UL 30 Sep; FHNC 3 Oct; JC 1 & 27 Nov; GLn 5 & 16 Nov; Middlefield OTSE 30 Nov.

**Cooper's Hawk:** total 77 FMHW, 74% above avg; DorP 20 Sep; Glen Aubrey BROO 30 Sep; UL 30 Sep; GLn 4 Oct; Maine BROO 19 Oct; Lisle BROO 21 Oct; Norwich CHEN 24 Oct, 8 Nov; DorP 30 Oct; good numbers throughout Reg.

**N. Goshawk:** total 29 FMHW, 50% above avg; WeB 7 Nov.

**Red-shouldered Hawk:** total 49 FMHW, slightly down.

**Broad-winged Hawk:** total 724 FMHW, 15% above avg.

**Red-tailed Hawk:** total 1816 FMHW, 17% above avg, dispersed thru season with only one large flight, 295 on 27 Oct.

**Rough-legged Hawk:** total 8 FMHW, slightly down; GLn 5 Nov; WeB 6-7 Nov; 7 reports Lisle BROO 6-24 Nov.

**Golden Eagle:** total 127 FMHW, excellent count, well above avg; Margaretville DELA 25 Oct; WeB 10 Oct; 2 WeB 7 Nov; CinL 12 Nov; 2 Meredith DELA 13 Nov.

**Am. Kestrel:** total 66 FMHW, slightly down; Glen Aubrey BROO 1, 27 Sep; Lisle BROO 9 Sep; Whitney Pt BROO 9 Sep, 6 Oct; UL 21 Oct.

**Merlin:** total 12 FMHW, small increase above avg.

**Peregrine Falcon:** total 10 FMHW, small increase above avg; 2 Binghamton BROO 10 Sep thru, resident pair.

**Wild Turkey:** max 40 Guilford CHEN 2 Nov; few large flocks visible, possibly due to good wild fruit crop.

**Am. Coot:** BPd 17 Nov; 100 Cooperstown OTSE 18 Nov, large flock now regular at this location.

**Black-bellied Plover:** DorP 18-28 Oct (JW), uncommon, record late.

**Killdeer:** max 40+ CoP 6 Oct.

**AM. GOLDEN-PLOVER:** 2 DorP 25, 26 Sep (JW, MP!), rare.

**Semipalmated Plover:** Springfield Cen OTSE 3 Sep (BD), rare.

**Greater Yellowlegs:** DorP 17, 25, 28 Oct; Cincinnatus CORT 6 Nov; CinL 12 Nov, late.

**Spotted Sandpiper:** DorP 15 Sep-20 Oct; WPR 23 Sep; low.

**Semipalmated Sandpiper:** WPR 26 Sep (MP), rare.

**Pectoral Sandpiper:** 2 DorP 25 Sep (JW), uncommon.

**Dunlin:** DorP 19, 20, 25 Oct (JW); 20 DorP 23 Oct (MP, KC, DD); rare.

**Com. Snipe:** Springfield Cen OTSE 3 Sep; TIOG 20 Oct; 3 CinL 14 Nov; 5 CinL 23 Nov; good count, uncommon in fall.

**Bonaparte's Gull:** DorP 17 Oct (JW), 24 Oct (MP), uncommon but becoming more regular.

**LESSER BLACK-BACKED GULL:** DorP 20 Oct, 5 Nov, 2 on 30 Nov (JW); CinL 12 Nov (B&SL); rare; also sighted in 2000, possibly increasing due to range expansion.  
**Com. Tern:** DorP 25 Sep (JW), rare.

#### DOVES – WOODPECKERS

**E. Screech-Owl:** WeB 20 Nov; low.  
**Great-horned Owl:** Glen Aubrey BROO 3 Sep; Walton DELA 18 Nov; low.  
**N. Saw-whet Owl:** VBS 12 Oct, uncommon in fall.  
**Com. Nighthawk:** Norwich CHEN 4 Nov (DW); continued very low numbers.  
**Ruby-throated Hummingbird:** last UL 16 Sep.  
**BLACK-BACKED WOODPECKER:** Plymouth CHEN 2-16 Sep (Francis Haley), urged to report to NYSARC.

#### FLYCATCHERS – WAXWINGS

**Yellow-bellied Flycatcher:** total 4 VBS 4-9 Sep, typically only reporting site.  
**N. Shrike:** Glen Aubrey BROO 29 Oct, 8 Nov; Middlefield OTSE 29 Oct; WeB 7 Nov; Lisle BROO 8 Nov thru (JW).  
**Red-eyed Vireo:** total 32 VBS, high.  
**Fish Crow:** TIOG all season, becoming regular.  
**Com. Raven:** 2 Glen Aubrey BROO 1 Sep; Margaretville DELA 21 Sep; max 5 FMHW 19 Oct; Bunn Hill Rd Vestal BROO 13, 15 Nov.  
**Horned Lark:** max 50 Lisle BROO 23, 24 Nov.  
**Tree Swallow:** last 2 Glen Aubrey BROO 27 Sep.  
**Red-breasted Nuthatch:** JC 18 Sep; VBS 18 Sep, 19, 22 Oct; BUNP 10 Oct; WeB 21 Oct; 3 Springfield Cen OTSE 22 Oct; Oneonta OTSE 22 Oct; Margaretville DELA 27 Oct; Glen Aubrey BROO 29 Oct, 24 Nov; Vestal BROO all Nov.  
**Carolina Wren:** Brick Pd TIOG 12 Oct; Endwell BROO 19 Oct; VBS 22 Oct; JC 10, 19 Nov; historically lower counts now appear normal.

**Golden-crowned Kinglet:** Glen Aubrey BROO 9, 29 Oct, 3 on 18 Nov; Margaretville DELA 27 Oct; DorP 31 Oct; Middlefield OTSE 18 Nov; Masonville DELA 20 Nov; Tholen Rd TIOG 21 Nov; 2 Lisle BROO 23 Nov; good count, widespread.

**Swainson's Thrush:** total 10 VBS 9 Sep-13 Oct; TIOG 20 Oct.  
**Hermit Thrush:** total 9 VBS 5 Sep-22 Oct; Middlefield OTSE 27 Oct; Hamden DELA 1 Nov; Oxford CHEN 12 Nov.  
**Wood Thrush:** VBS 18, 23 Sep.  
**Gray Catbird:** last Magnolia P BROO 17 Oct; total 64 VBS, high.  
**Brown Thrasher:** GLn 9, 24, 30 Sep, 2 on 16 Sep; UL 16, 30 Sep; modest gain over recent low counts.  
**Am. Pipit:** Glen Aubrey BROO 24 Oct; 10 DorP 25 Oct; Lisle BROO after 28 Oct; max 42 Lisle BROO 24 Nov (JW, DW); good count.

**Bohemian Waxwing:** UL 31 Oct; uncommon.  
**Cedar Waxwing:** max 300 Vestal BROO 8 Nov.

#### WARBLERS

**Blue-winged Warbler:** 2 JC 9 Sep.  
**Tennessee Warbler:** VBS 28 Sep, 13 Oct.  
**Orange-crowned Warbler:** VBS 24, 30 Oct; uncommon.  
**Nashville Warbler:** total 7 VBS 15 Sep-13 Oct; GrP 19 Sep.  
**N. Parula:** UL 15 Sep (JW); uncommon.  
**Magnolia Warbler:** 2 Glen Aubrey BROO 1 Sep; 2 UL 8, 16 Sep; total 37 VBS, high.  
**Black-throated Blue Warbler:** UL 8, 9, 16 Sep; total 4 VBS 9-30 Sep.  
**Yellow-rumped Warbler:** max 20 Brick Pd Owego BROO 12 Oct.  
**Palm Warbler:** VBS 24 Sep, 21 Oct.  
**Bay-breasted Warbler:** VBS 22 Sep, low.  
**Blackpoll Warbler:** UL 23 Sep, low.  
**Am. Redstart:** last Magnolia P BROO 17

Oct, late.

**Ovenbird:** Guilford CHEN 22 Sep; low.

**Connecticut Warbler:** VBS 11 Sep; rare.

**Com. Yellowthroat:** last UL 18 Nov;  
total 45 VBS, high.

**Wilson's Warbler:** 5 VBS 3-22 Sep; UL  
8, 16 Sep.

**Canada Warbler:** UL 9 Sep; GLn 24  
Sep.

#### TANAGERS – WEAVERS

**Am. Tree Sparrow:** arr GLn 22 Oct;  
small numbers scattered across Reg thru.

**Chipping Sparrow:** last Glen Aubrey  
BROO 27 Nov, late.

**Savannah Sparrow:** VBS 2 Sep, first  
record for this station going back to  
1960s; Lisle BROO 9 Sep, 16 Oct;  
“several” Reynolds Rd JC 18 Sep.

**Grasshopper Sparrow:** Springfield Cen  
OTSE 3 Sep (BD); scarce.

**Fox Sparrow:** total 10 VBS 21 Oct-19  
Nov; Vest 22 Oct; GLn 28, 30 Oct; UL 31  
Oct, 4 Nov; DOAS 7 Nov; Maryland  
OTSE 23 Nov.

**White-throated Sparrow:** total 142 VBS,  
2nd highest in 12 yrs.

**Dark-eyed Junco:** total 177 VBS, highest  
in 12 yrs; max 100 Margaretville DELA  
30 Oct.

**Snow Bunting:** sm flock Franklin DELA  
30 Oct; UL 31 Oct; 12 Lisle BROO 6  
Nov; DorP 13-26 Nov; max 26 DorP 26  
Nov; good fall showing.

**Rose-breasted Grosbeak:** Lisle BROO 9  
Sep; low.

**Indigo Bunting:** 2 VBS 28 Sep; last UL  
11 Nov, late.

**E. Meadowlark:** max 3 Glen Aubrey  
BROO 27 Sep, low.

**Purple Finch:** widespread; total 25 VBS  
9 Sep-17 Nov; UL 8, 30 Sep, 31 Oct; Glen  
Aubrey BROO 29 Sep; 2 GLn 30 Sep; 2  
FHNC 3 Oct; 3 GLn 4, 22 Oct, 5, 16 Nov;  
2 BUNP 10 Oct; 2 JC 27 Oct.

**White-winged Crossbill:** Norwich CHEN  
25 Oct (DW); TIOG 30 Oct (GW); 3  
DOAS 4 Nov; 2 Gilbertville OTSE 15  
Nov; 4 Hillcrest BROO 17, 18 Nov; 4  
Laurens OTSE 25 Nov; good fall  
showing.

**Com. Redpoll:** Middlefield OTSE 15  
Nov; 20 Hemlock Hill Rd CORT 23 Nov  
(JW, MP); modest fall flight.

**Pine Siskin:** 3 Norwich CHEN 21 Oct; 12  
Web 21 Oct; Walton DELA 22 Oct; 6  
Margaretville DELA 14, 19 Nov; modest  
fall flight, but possibly overshot Reg.

**Am. Goldfinch:** total 132 VBS, very high;  
large flocks Sep & Oct, much lower Nov.

**Evening Grosbeak:** Middlefield OTSE 1  
Oct; 2 Masonville DELA 22 Oct; 2  
Walton DELA 22 Oct; 20 Glen Aubrey  
BROO 24 Oct; TIOG 28 Oct; 15  
Davenport DELA 29 Oct; 6 Franklin  
DELA 3 Nov; 30 DOAS 7 Nov; 11  
Gilbertville OTSE 7 Nov; 3 Margaretville  
DELA 16 Nov; 5 GLn 20 Nov; best fall  
showing in several years.

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## REGION 5 – ONEIDA LAKE BASIN

**Bill Purcell**

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The season was very warm, somewhat drier than usual, and virtually snow-free. The September average temperature of 62.3°F was 0.8° above normal and the 4.05" of rain was 0.26" above normal. October had an average temperature of 53.3°, 2.6° above normal, and only 2.15" rain, 1.09" below average. The November average of 47.3° was 6.8° degrees above normal, the second warmest November on record, and the 2.93" of precipitation was 0.79" below average. The 0.7" of snow for the season as recorded in Syracuse was the second lowest total since 1903.

Migrant loon numbers were quite low this season and Red-necked Grebe was missed completely, but Horned Grebe numbers were quite good along Lake Ontario. One or two Great Cormorants had arrived in Oswego in November since 1997 but none were seen this year. A Cattle Egret showed up at a Skaneateles farm in late October but was not reported to anyone until the end of the season. Great Egrets stayed into October and Black-crowned Night-Herons lingered at Onondaga Lake.

The warm weather seemed to affect waterfowl migration, possibly delaying the late migrants. Daily maxima for Snow Goose, *Aythya* species and mergansers were generally low. Cold fronts brought a large Canada Goose migration in late September and two good Brant flights in October. Encouraging numbers of dabbling ducks, especially American Black Ducks and Northern Pintails, were also seen on those fronts, along with Long-tailed Ducks and scoters. A Greater White-Fronted Goose, seen for a single day, was the lone rarity in the waterfowl category, although untagged Trumpeter Swans with young, a species not yet on the state checklist, were again seen at Fair Haven.

There was a good hawk migration at the end of September near Pulaski at a site that probably deserves more attention than most observers can devote to it. Accipiters and falcons were numerous across the Region. There were few reports of Northern Harrier toward the end of the season despite the lack of snow and there were no concentrations of Rough-legged Hawks. Snowy Owls moved into the Region in November, with all reports coming from the Lake Ontario shore. Short-eared Owl was searched for at several locations but only one was found.

The shorebird migration was ordinary at best. No large numbers were reported from Sandy Pond or Delta Lake where there were extensive mudflats this year. Highlights were several Stilt and Purple sandpipers, a single Hudsonian Godwit and two late American Woodcocks. Species not found included Solitary Sandpiper, Red Knot, both dowitchers and the phalaropes. It seems as if we have somehow lost the art of finding phalaropes in the Region.

There were several days with good flights of Parasitic Jaegers at Derby Hill; three Pomarine Jaegers were reported as well. Gulls included one Little Gull, two Sabine's Gulls, only minutes apart, and three adult Black-legged Kittiwakes, which

are much more unusual than the first-year birds we typically see. There was a large Herring Gull flight in November but no concentration of large gulls by season's end. No Iceland or Glaucous gulls were seen.

Flycatcher, vireo and swallow reports were few, with low species counts. Northern Shrike arrived at the end of October, with several of them persisting in favored locales. The peak warbler migration number was 16 species on Howland Island on 8 September. For all species, except Yellow-rumped and Black-throated Green, maximum counts were usually one or two per day. Highlights included three Cape May and two Orange-crowned warblers.

Fruit and berry production was down after the summer drought. As a result, lingering American Robins seemed fewer in November than usual. Flocks of Cedar Waxwings, dependant on much the same food as robins, were common, but there was only one report of Bohemian Waxwing. Species often poorly reported in fall, such as Veery, Gray-cheeked Thrush, Wood Thrush and Brown Thrasher, were found in better numbers than in recent years. Carolina Wren continues to do well.

A slow-moving low pressure system on 25–27 October brought finches and Fox Sparrows. The latter species seemed to have a very short flight period with most reported in the last week of October. Lincoln's Sparrow was found at more sites than usual, while other sparrows were seen in generally low numbers.

Finches were certainly a seasonal highlight. They started moving in mid October, with Purple Finches, Pine Siskins and Evening Grosbeaks showing up at feeders throughout the Region. Pine Grosbeaks moved through in large numbers and were often found feeding in crabapple and other ornamental fruit trees. They lingered at sites across the Region but were most numerous at higher elevations. Small numbers of White-winged Crossbills were seen at many feeders, usually for only a day or two, and a few Red Crossbills were also moving about. Purple Finches mostly left the area by late October.

In the aftermath of the terrorist attacks of 11 September, many sensitive areas were closed to the public, including the Energy Information Center at Nine Mile Point in Oswego County. The EIC had long been a winter and spring birding site and over the past two years had gained recognition as a fall birding site as well. As of this writing, it is not known when the area might be reopened.

The 220 species for the season was lower than most years due to many early migrants not being found, several common fall migrants missed and a general lack of rarities. Besides those species already mentioned, birds missed included Forster's Tern, cuckoos, Eastern Kingbird, Rough-winged and Cliff swallows and Yellow and Canada warblers. The best birds for the season were Cattle Egret, Greater White-fronted Goose, Trumpeter Swan, Hudsonian Godwit, Sabine's Gull, Cape May Warbler and Orange-crowned Warbler.

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## ABBREVIATIONS

BRH – Bishop Road Hawkwatch, Pulaski; BRSta – Beaver River Station, n. HERK; CM – Clay Marsh; DH – Derby Hill; DL – Delta Lake; FH – Fair Haven, Little Sodus Bay and vicinity; GSC – Great Swamp Conservancy, n. MADI; HIWMA – Howland Island WMA; LOL – L Ontario Littoral; OneiL – Oneida L; OnonL – Onondaga L; SFWS – Spring Farm Wildlife Sanctuary, Kirkland; SPd – Sandy Pd; SSSP – Selkirk Shores SP; StM – Saint Mary's Cemetery, Dewitt; SVB – Sylvan and Verona Beach; Syr – Syracuse; TRWMA – Three Rivers WMA; UM – Utica Marsh.

### LOONS – DUCKS

**Red-throated Loon:** 1-2/day Oswego and FH 10 Nov thru.

**Com. Loon:** arr OneiL 28 Sep; max 8 DH 7 Oct.

**Pied-billed Grebe:** max 7 FH 19 Oct.

**Horned Grebe:** arr DH 7 Oct; max 88 FH 23 Nov; 50+ LOL 21, 27 Oct.

**Double-crested Cormorant:** max 150 SPd 15 Sep.

**Am. Bittern:** HIWMA 8 Sep; GSC 16 Sep.

**Great Blue Heron:** max 27 DL 23 Sep.

**Great Egret:** max 9 DL thru 23 Sep; last 3 DL Oct; 2 UM 6 Sep, only other site.

**CATTLE EGRET:** Skaneateles last week Oct, thru.

**Green Heron:** max 5 GSC 16 Sep; last GSC 29 Sep.

**Black-crowned Night-Heron:** 2 ad, 1 imm OnonL thru Sep.

**Turkey Vulture:** max 184 BRH 29 Sep; to 3/day Dewitt thru Nov.

### GREATER WHITE-FRONTED

**GOOSE:** Van Buren 28 Oct (KM, JB, BH).

**Snow Goose:** max 250 W Winfield 19 Nov, including 100 blue morph.

**Canada Goose:** peak flight across Reg 29-30 Sep.

**Brant:** arr 50 LOL 29 Sep; 3270 DH 7 Oct; max 5640 DH 27 Oct; several late

Nov stragglers.

**Mute Swan:** 2 FH Nov, presumably thru; 2 Woodman Pd, typical.

**TRUMPETER SWAN:** 2 ad, 2 imm FH 12 Nov (MR, report to NYSARC).

**Tundra Swan:** max 4 FH 14 Nov.

**Wood Duck:** max 35 DL 23 Sep.

**Gadwall:** 8 DL 23 Sep; max 32 FH 23 Nov.

**Am. Wigeon:** max 250 FH 12 Nov.

**Am. Black Duck:** max 420 DH 27 Oct.

**Mallard:** max 431 FH 23 Nov.

**Blue-winged Teal:** max 100 DL 18 Sep; last 5 DH 7 Oct.

**N. Shoveler:** arr SVB 15 Sep; max 20 FH 23 Nov.

**N. Pintail:** max 356 DH 7 Oct.

**Green-winged Teal:** max 135 DL 23 Sep.

**Canvasback:** max 5 Beaver L 4 Nov, only report.

**Redhead:** max 4 FH 19 Oct; 2 DeRuyter 14 Nov, only reports.

**Ring-necked Duck:** max 25 DeRuyter L 30 Nov.

**Greater Scaup:** arr 7 SPd 22 Sep; max 18 DH 27 Oct.

**Lesser Scaup:** arr SPd 22 Sep; max 7 DH 27 Oct.

**Surf Scoter:** max 78 DH 7 Oct.

**White-winged Scoter:** max 260 DH 27 Oct.

**Black Scoter:** 7 Hinckley Res 8 Oct.

unusual; max 50 DH 7 Oct.

**Long-tailed Duck:** arr 30 DH 7 Oct; max 600 DH 27 Oct.

**Bufflehead:** max 33 FH 23 Nov.

**Com. Goldeneye:** arr 12 DH 27 Oct; max 54 DH 14 Nov.

**Hooded Merganser:** max 15 DL 2 Nov.

**Com. Merganser:** max 40 SPd 22 Sep; 40 DL 26 Nov.

**Red-breasted Merganser:** max 100 Oswego 21 Sep.

**Ruddy Duck:** max 23 Minoa 26 Oct.

#### HAWKS – ALCIDS

**Osprey:** 1-2/day to 30 Sep, low numbers, early departure.

**Bald Eagle:** max 4 BRH 29 Sep; 1-2/day along major waterways; now expected in fall.

**N. Harrier:** max 10 BRH 29 Sep.

**Sharp-shinned Hawk:** max 28 BRH 29 Sep; 25+ other reports.

**Cooper's Hawk:** max 7 BRH 28 Sep; 18 other reports.

**N. Goshawk:** 9 for season is a good count.

**Red-shouldered Hawk:** max 7 Parish 30 Sep; last Durhamville 28 Oct.

**Broad-winged Hawk:** max and last 7 BRH 28 Sep.

**Red-tailed Hawk:** max 284 BRH 29 Sep.

**Rough-legged Hawk:** arr DH 7 Oct; max 4 DH 2 Nov.

**Golden Eagle:** Redfield 7 Nov; 2 BRSta 11 Nov.

**Am. Kestrel:** max 21 BRH 29 Sep.

**Merlin:** 8 singles to 21 Oct; 1 Syr winter site 3 Nov.

**Peregrine Falcon:** max 3 DH 7 Oct; DL 14-19 Sep; SPd 23 Sep; SFWS 27 Sep; 2 BRH 29 Sep.

**N. Bobwhite:** 1 Hastings 22 Sep, wary but presumed release.

**Ring-necked Pheasant:** 6 singles.

**Ruffed Grouse:** max 5 Pratts Falls 6 Sep.

**Wild Turkey:** max 100 DL 26 Nov; flocks of 20-40 common at feeders and in fields.

**Com. Moorhen:** 2 W Monroe 3 Sep, only report.

**Am. Coot:** max 50 FH 19 Oct.

**Black-bellied Plover:** max 8 SPd 29 Sep; last 2 FH 19 Oct.

**Am. Golden-Plover:** 3 Syr Fairgrounds 12 Sep; 4 SPd 22 Sep; last BRH 28 Sep.

**Semipalmated Plover:** max 20 DL 8 Sep; 2-3 per day thru Sep.

**Killdeer:** max 65 DL 8 Sep.

**Greater Yellowlegs:** max 18 DL 23 Sep; last DL 29 Oct.

**Lesser Yellowlegs:** max 23 DL 23 Sep.

**Spotted Sandpiper:** SVB 15 Sep; DL 23 Sep.

**Hudsonian Godwit:** FH 28 Sep, only report (Mike Ameigh, ph).

**Ruddy Turnstone:** max 3 SVB 14-16 Sep; scattered singles FH & SPd to 22 Sep.

**Sanderling:** max 36 SPd 19 Oct.

**Semipalmated Sandpiper:** max 27 DL 8 Sep; last 4 FH 21 Sep.

**Least Sandpiper:** max 20 SVB 1 Sep; last 3 FH 21 Sep.

**White-rumped Sandpiper:** max 4 OnonL 9 Sep; 4 SPd 22 Sep.

**Baird's Sandpiper:** 1/ day DL, FH, SPd to 23 Sep.

**Pectoral Sandpiper:** max 20 DL 15 Sep.

**Purple Sandpiper:** arr 2 DH 16 Oct; 2 FH 7 Nov; 1-2/ day FH thru 23 Nov.

**Dunlin:** max 17 SPd 29 Sep; last FH 10 Nov.

**Stilt Sandpiper:** FH 6 Sep; SPd 22 Sep; DL 8, 23 Sep.

**Com. Snipe:** max 6 GSC 8 Sep; last 2 DeRuyter Res 31 Oct.

**Am. Woodcock:** 5 reports thru 19 Oct; singles Hamilton and W Winfield at end of season.

**Parasitic Jaeger:** 22 total DH: 7 on 6 Oct, 4 on 7 Oct, 6 on 16 Oct, 3 on 9 Nov, 2 on 16 Nov.

**Pomarine Jaeger:** DH 16 Oct; DH 9 Nov; DH 16 Nov.

**Little Gull:** ad SPd 15 Sep.

**Bonaparte's Gull:** max 300 SVB 8 Sep;



105 DH 27 Oct.

**SABINE'S GULL:** 2 DH 7 Oct, 1 ad & 1 imm 30 minutes apart (GS, BP).

**Black-legged Kittiwake:** 3 imm DH 7 Oct; 3 ad DH 16 Nov (MM, BP), adults uncommon.

**Caspian Tern:** max 14 SPd 5 Sep; 14 OnonL 9 Sep; last SPd 14 Oct.

**Com. Tern:** max 44 SVB 16 Sep; OneiL 8 Oct.

**Sterna sp:** DH 17 Nov, late.

#### DOVES – WOODPECKERS

**Mourning Dove:** max 115 Cicero 8 Sep; FLs at Parish feeder into Oct.

**E. Screech-Owl:** UM 11 Nov, where not found recently; 4 other reports.

**Great Horned Owl:** pairs Clinton & W Winfield; 3 singles reported.

**Snowy Owl:** arr FH 11 Nov; Oswego 12 Nov; max 3 Oswego 19 Nov; last FH 23 Nov.

**Barred Owl:** 7 reported.

**Short-eared Owl:** Verona 26 Nov, only report.

**Com. Nighthawk:** Syr 3 Sep; Parish 11 Sep; Jordan 23 Sep; low.

**Ruby-throated Hummingbird:** max 2 Williamstown 3 Sep; last HIWMA 16 Sep.

**Belted Kingfisher:** 2-4/ day thru Sep; numbers dropped quickly after that.

**Red-headed Woodpecker:** ad & imm Lysander 3 Sep (BH, JB); T Lee 21 Oct (MSt).

**Red-bellied Woodpecker:** max 11 HIWMA 10 Oct

**Yellow-bellied Sapsucker:** max 3 Pratts Falls 19 Sep.

**Black-backed Woodpecker:** Bald Mt 16 Sep.

**N. Flicker:** max 20 CAYU 2 Sep.

#### FLYCATCHERS – WAXWINGS

**Olive-sided Flycatcher:** HIWMA 8 Sep.

**E. Wood-Pewee:** max 4 HIWMA 16 Sep.

**Empidonax sp:** 2 Cicero 11 Sep; W Winfield 17 Sep; SPd 22 Sep.

**Yellow-bellied Flycatcher:** Hastings 4

Sep; TRWMA 12 Sep.

**E. Phoebe:** max 6 SPd 29 Sep; last DH 28 Oct.

**Great Crested Flycatcher:** 2 CAYU 2 Sep; HIWMA 16 Sep.

**N. Shrike:** reports from 6 sites after 31 Oct; 1 DeRuyter and 2 Mexico persistent.

**Yellow-throated Vireo:** max 3 CAYU 2 Sep; last HIWMA 16 Sep.

**Blue-headed Vireo:** max 3 SVB 22 Sep; last Van Buren 20 Oct.

**Warbling Vireo:** max 3 Cicero 9 Sep; last OnonL 14 Sep.

**Philadelphia Vireo:** max 2 SVB 15 Sep; 2 HIWMA 16 Sep; 4 other singles to 22 Sep.

**Red-eyed Vireo:** max 10 CAYU 2 Sep; last 30 Sep.

**Blue Jay:** migration first noted 15 Sep at many sites; max 283 Hastings 21 Sep.

**Am. Crow:** max 2422 StM 24 Nov.

**Fish Crow:** 1-2 heard Liverpool into Nov.

**Com. Raven:** DeRuyter 1 Oct; Parish 10, 30 Sep; Williamstown 23 Sep.

**Horned Lark:** max 25 Clinton 3 Nov.

**Purple Martin:** 1-2/day to 15 Sep; last 2 Hastings 21 Sep, late.

**Tree Swallow:** max 200 CAYU 2 Sep.

**Bank Swallow:** 2 OneiL 2 Sep, only report.

**Barn Swallow:** max 56 Cicero 4 Sep; FY Scriba 2 Sep; DH 2 Nov on south winds.

**Tufted Titmouse:** 3/day Hastings Nov; 2/day Parish Nov; 1-2/day DeRuyter; suggestive of acclimation to colder climes.

**Red-breasted Nuthatch:** migrant max 7 Nine Mile Pt 1 Sep; other migrants 1-2/day but many found in breeding areas in Nov.

**Brown Creeper:** max 3 Parish 27 Oct; 1-2/day many locations thru Oct.

**Carolina Wren:** max 6 Oneida 10 Sep; common Syr.

**House Wren:** 1-2/day; last Hastings 2 Oct.

**Winter Wren:** arr HIWMA 8 Sep; 1-2/day most sites; last 2 Pompey 4 Nov.

**Marsh Wren:** 2 CM 29 Sep.

**Golden-crowned Kinglet:** max 28 SPd 29 Sep.

**Ruby-crowned Kinglet:** arr 6 Sep; max 60 SPd 29 Sep.

**Blue-gray Gnatcatcher:** last HIWMA 8 Sep.

**E. Bluebird:** max 30 Sterling 27 Nov; flocks up to 7-8 common thru.

**Veery:** Lee 2 Sep; Hastings 3 Sep; last HIWMA 8 Sep.

**Gray-cheeked Thrush:** SPd 15 Sep; HIWMA 16 Sep; SFWS 21 Sep; DH 29 Sep.

**Swainson's Thrush:** arr and max 3 OnonL 14 Sep; last SFWS 12 Oct.

**Hermit Thrush:** max 6 StM 20 Oct; BRSta 12 Nov, late for Adirondacks.

**Wood Thrush:** 2 Sterling Nature Center 16 Sep; max and last 5 SFWS 23 Sep.

**Am. Robin:** low numbers Nov, lack of food?

**Gray Catbird:** max 12 StM 22 Sep; 5-10/day many locations to 29 Sep; last StM 20 Oct.

**Brown Thrasher:** 1-2/day to 3 Oct; at feeder BRSta 11-13 Nov, late, especially in Adirondacks.

**Am. Pipit:** arr FH 4 Sep; max 100 SPd 15 Sep; 40 Van Buren 1 Nov.

**Bohemian Waxwing:** 2 SFWS 13 Nov, only report.

**Cedar Waxwing:** max 200 Oneida 28 Nov; 60 Victory 28 Nov.

#### WARBLERS

**Blue-winged Warbler:** 4 reports; last Pompey 18 Sep.

**Tennessee Warbler:** max 3 Hastings 3 Sep; last 2 HIWMA 16 Sep.

**Orange-crowned Warbler:** Hastings 30 Sep; StM 13 Oct.

**Nashville Warbler:** 1-2/day to 1 Oct.

**N. Parula:** SVB 7 Sep; SSSP 9 Sep; ONON 15 Sep; Sterling Nature Center 16 Sep; 2 Clark Reservation SP 16 Sep.

**Chestnut-sided Warbler:** last 16 Sep.

**Magnolia Warbler:** max 4 Hastings 3 Sep; last at 3 sites 29 Sep.

**Cape May Warbler:** 3 reports; last Pompey 18 Sep.

**Black-throated Blue Warbler:** max 3 SFWS 22 Sep; last Moss L 7 Oct.

**Yellow-rumped Warbler:** max 80 SPd 29 Sep; 1 with mostly white head StM 20 Oct (GH); last Beaver L 30 Oct.

**Black-throated Green Warbler:** max 10 DL 15 Sep; 3-6/day thru Sep; last Nine Mile Pt 22 Oct.

**Blackburnian Warbler:** 5 reports to 22 Sep.

**Pine Warbler:** max 4 SVB 15 Sep.

**Palm Warbler:** arr 2 Van Buren 16 Sep; 1-2/day to last SFWS 24 Oct.

**Bay-breasted Warbler:** only 5 reports; last SVB 22 Sep.

**Blackpoll Warbler:** only 3 reports thru 21 Sep.

**Black-and-white Warbler:** 1-2/day to last 21 Sep.

**Am. Redstart:** only 6 reports; last SFWS 22 Sep.

**Ovenbird:** Hastings 3 Sep; StM 13 Oct.

**N. Waterthrush:** last 10 Sep.

**Mourning Warbler:** 2 Pompey 18 Sep, only report.

**Com. Yellowthroat:** max 7 Hastings 3 Sep; scarce; last Scriba 1 Oct.

**Hooded Warbler:** last Whiskey Hollow 23 Sep.

**Wilson's Warbler:** 6 reports to last 2 SPd 22 Sep.

#### TANAGERS – WEAVERS

**Scarlet Tanager:** max 4 HIWMA 16 Sep; last Hastings 30 Sep.

**E. Towhee:** max 6 TRWMA 23 Sep; last DeRuyter 26 Oct.

**Am. Tree Sparrow:** arr DH & Parish 27 Oct; max 16 SSSP 4 Nov; mostly 3-4/day.

**Chipping Sparrow:** max 25 CAYU 2 Sep; last Clinton 11 Nov.

**Field Sparrow:** max 20 TRWMA 23 Sep; last Van Buren 19 Oct.

**Vesper Sparrow:** 4 reports; last Mexico 9 Nov.

**Savannah Sparrow:** max 5 Tully 25 Sep;

last Van Buren 20 Oct.  
**Fox Sparrow:** arr SFWS 15 Oct; max 7 Durhamville 25 Oct; widespread reports 24-29 Oct.  
**Song Sparrow:** max 20 W Monroe 19 Oct.  
**Lincoln's Sparrow:** CAYU 2 Sep, early; max 3 TRWMA 29 Sep; ~15 reports to last FH 20 Oct.  
**Swamp Sparrow:** max 20 W Monroe 19 Oct.  
**White-throated Sparrow:** max 47 StM 20 Oct.  
**White-crowned Sparrow:** arr Hastings 21 Sep; max 20 SPd 29 Sep; last DH 27 Oct.  
**Dark-eyed Junco:** arr 2 SPd 15 Sep; max 60 DeRuyter 26 Oct; 30-40/day Lee 15-30 Oct.  
**Snow Bunting:** arr FH 22 Oct; max 86 LOL 14 Nov.  
**N. Cardinal:** Old Forge 14 Nov, unusual.  
**Rose-breasted Grosbeak:** 9 reports to last CM 29 Sep.  
**Indigo Bunting:** max and last 4 DL 23 Sep.  
**Bobolink:** 2 CAYU 2 Sep, only report.  
**Red-winged Blackbird:** max 2000 DH 25 Oct.  
**E. Meadowlark:** only 3 reports to 19 Oct.  
**Rusty Blackbird:** arr widespread 29 Sep; max 78 CM 10 Oct.  
**Com. Grackle:** max 1218 Pompey 21 Sep.

**Brown-headed Cowbird:** max 200 Port Byron 16 Sep.  
**Baltimore Oriole:** max and last 3 Hastings 3 Sep.  
**Pine Grosbeak:** arr 4 SFWS 13 Nov; 75 LOL 17 Nov; 86 LOL 18 Nov, record flight; up to 5/day lowlands and 15-20/day highlands late Nov.  
**Purple Finch:** max 25 Parish 25 Sep; 2-5/day many areas to late Oct.  
**House Finch:** fem feeding 3 y Hastings 2 Oct.  
**Red Crossbill:** 5 singles 4-20 Nov.  
**White-winged Crossbill:** small numbers at many feeders after 26 Oct; max 9 Sauquoit 27 Nov.  
**Com. Redpoll:** arr SPd 3 Nov; max 250 Highland Forest 30 Nov.  
**Pine Siskin:** DeRuyter 1 Oct; max 35 DH 2 Nov.  
**Am. Goldfinch:** max 105 Pompey 19 Sep.  
**Evening Grosbeak:** arr 4 DeRuyter 1 Oct; max 130 DeRuyter 30 Nov; small flight LOL 20 Oct-5 Nov.

#### CORRIGENDUM

Vol. 51. No. 3 p. 712. **Short-billed Dowitcher:** 2 SPd 29 May, only report. *should read:* 1 FH 20 May; 2 SPd 29 May.

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## REGION 6 – ST. LAWRENCE

No report received.

## REGION 7 – ADIRONDACK-CHAMPLAIN

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The drought continued through autumn. September was warmer and drier than normal, with Plattsburgh reaching 85°F on the 7th and Morrisonville at 80° on the 10th, the seventh day to reach into the eighties. A week of lovely days followed. Finally, on 20 September the first steady rain in months fell during the evening. Month's end was cooler, with Saranac Lake dropping to 28° on the 27th, followed by a high of just 54° at Plattsburgh the next day, and Saranac Lake back down to 24° on the 30th.

Half of the days in early October saw temperatures in the 70°s, and on the 14th a 20-acre forest fire broke out on Sunrise Mountain, between Whiteface and Lake Placid. Light snow began to fall in Saranac Lake on the evening of the 17th, and by the next morning the mountains were snow-covered. By the end of the month, this was declared the third driest year on record. There were a number of window strikes by Ruffed Grouse attracted to feeders by the absence of wild food.

On 13 November, Saranac Lake dropped to 5°, but throughout the month there were 16 days that reached 50° or higher. On 24 November for example, the high of 52° was 12 degrees above normal, and the next day Plattsburgh reached 67° amid rain and 45 mph winds. By the end of the month, annual precipitation was only 21.60", compared to the average 31.92", or more than 10" below normal. Lake Champlain stood at an extremely low 93.61'. The mice didn't mind, with 53 *Peromyscus* trapped in one farmhouse since mid-July. Perhaps the most interesting mammalian observation, however, involved bats. Debbie and Ed Kanze of Bloomingdale, Essex County, noted a Red Bat flying in daylight 3 November. At the time there was no snow cover and insects were still out, given the warm fall temperatures. These migratory bats should have been gone by October, so reports of several half-hardy bird species were perhaps not unexpected.

Double-crested Cormorants first nested on Four Brothers in 1984, and since the first nestling was banded in 1989, a total of 423 have left the islands wearing bands. On 2 September, the ninth recovery was made when a cormorant was caught by or due to entanglement in fishing gear at Currituck Sound, North Carolina, and released alive, the band removed. This bird had been banded 10 June 2000 by High Peaks Audubon Society. Except for one Mississippi recovery, all have been Atlantic coastal encounters: 2 Virginia, 3 North Carolina and 3 Florida, between 14 August and 18 February.

David Hoag estimated 45,000 Snow Geese at Point au Roche SP on the early morning of 25 October, "...larger than anything I've witnessed in Addison, Vermont, in its good years." This provides a new state maximum (spring or fall) for this attractive goose. Ring-necked Ducks were also noted in locally strong numbers, with 400 on Chasm Lake, 312 on Moody Pond and 150 on Hadley Pond, with the lake in Clinton County, while the ponds are on opposite sides of Essex County.

Shorebird variety, at just 13 species, was not great, given the amount of shoreline habitat available, but perhaps observers were busy with their Atlas 2000 records. The six larid species, however, included a **Laughing Gull**, only the 2nd record for the Region and Essex County. Warbler variety was also low at only 13 species. There were six reports of Bohemian Waxwings after the first arrived at Lake Placid 12 November, with the largest flock of 50 at Webb Royce Swamp on the 16th.

By season's end, an invasion of both Pine Grosbeaks and Common Redpolls was underway, and Evening Grosbeaks were noted in larger flocks than those seen in recent years. Numbers of Purple Finches, Pine Siskins and American Goldfinches began to thin, however, as the season progressed. Last winter's crossbill invasion was coming to an end, with no reports of Red Crossbill. Given the lack of a cone crop this fall, the few White-winged Crossbills were forced into feeders at Elizabethtown, Newcomb, Plattsburgh and Tupper Lake between 22 October and 29 November. The only similar appearance at Regional feeders took place following the Great Ice Storm of 1998.

A total of 156 species was reported, an improvement over last year's 143, but still well down from 171 in the Fall 1999 report, before the commencement of Atlas 2000. Perhaps if observers complete and submit their Annual Summary Forms by the deadline of **September 15th**, they'll have more time to devote to shorebirds and warblers in Fall 2002. One can only hope.

## CONTRIBUTORS

Ginny & Jim Alfano, Helen & Robert Booth, Matthew Booth, Paul Buhrke, Bernard Carr, Joan Collins, Charlicie Delehanty, John D. & Susan Delehanty, Michael DiNunzio, Elizabeth & Holland Fitts, Amy Freiman, Peter Galvani, Robert Gillis, Martin Greene, Judy & Roger Heintz, Candace Hess, David Hoag, Anne Hungerford, Kimberley Hunsinger, Debbie & Ed Kanze, Russ Koch, Ann Korths, Heidi Kretzer, Bill Krueger, Julie Lattrell, William Lenhart, Brian McAllister, Richard MacDonald, Theodore Mack, Larry Master, David Miskell, Charles Mitchell, Jamie Mittendorf, Jeff Nadler, Daniel Nickerson, Nancy Olsen, John & Susan Peterson, Gary Randorf, Dana C. Rohleder, David M. Rutkowski, Lucy Schneck, Nina Schoch, Sally J. Smith, Dean Spaulding, Susan Stewart, John & Patricia Thaxton, Gary Worthington.

## ABBREVIATIONS

AP – Ausable Pt WMA; BB – Bloomingdale Bog; CH – Cumberland Head; CP – Crown Pt peninsula; CR – Chazy Rivers; FBI – Four Brothers islands; KB – King's Bay; NP – Noblewood P; PtR – Point au Roche SP; TL – Tupper Lake; WB – Whallon's Bay; WM – Wickham Marsh; WRS – Webb Royce Swamp.

## LOONS – DUCKS

**Red-throated Loon:** 3 CH 26 Oct thru (MD); 2 Mooney Bay 17 Nov (J&RH).  
**Pied-billed Grebe:** max 6 AP 4 Oct (NO); 4 AP 8 Oct (J&RH).  
**Horned Grebe:** arr WB 26 Oct (DN); max 14 AP 12 Nov (J&RH).  
**Red-necked Grebe:** arr 2 NP 26 Oct (DN); WB 16 Nov (JP, J&PT)  
**Double-crested Cormorant:** Currituck Sound, NC, 2 Sep, banded FBI 10 Jun 2000 (JP); Moody Pd “7-10 days” Sep (CD); Beaver L HAMI, Sep (GL), far inland.  
**Great Egret:** 3 Ticonderoga ferry 4 Sep (SS); Scotion Cr 25 Sep (J&RH, NO).  
**Black-crowned Night-Heron:** juv KB 5 Sep; 2 juvs KB 13 Sep (BK, CM), uncommon.  
**Snow Goose:** arr 100+ CR 27 Sep (NO); max 45,000 PtR 25 Oct (DH); new NYS spring & fall, Reg 7, CLIN maxima; numerous other reports.  
**Canada Goose:** arr 100s Westport 8 Sep (J&SP); “Richardson’s” race PtR 22 Sep (BK) & 30 Sep (DH); max 400 WM 22 Oct (DCR).  
**Brant:** TL mun park 14-16 Oct (CD); Keene 16 Nov (RM), in country club swimming pool, taken to Ray Brook for rehab (NS).  
**Mute Swan:** 2 AP 12 Nov (J&RH); 2 WM 14-16 Nov (PB, DR); AP 25 Nov (DCR).  
**Blue-winged Teal:** CR 27 Sep (NO), only report.  
**Redhead:** 10 WM 22 Oct (DCR), new ESSE max.  
**Ring-necked Duck:** max 400 Chasm L CLIN, 29 Oct (NO); max 312 Moody Pd 6 Nov (HK), ESSE record; 150 Hadley Pd ESSE, 12 Nov (DR), excellent numbers.  
**White-winged Scoter:** 15 NP 26 Oct (DN), nice find in a lovely new birding area.  
**Long-tailed Duck:** CH 20 Oct (BK), only sighting.  
**Bufflehead:** arr 15 WM 22 Oct (DCR);

max 50 Westport 16 Nov (JP, J&PT).  
**Com. Goldeneye:** arr 2 WM 11 Nov; max 45 WM 17 Nov (DCR).  
**Hooded Merganser:** reports from AP, Barber Pd, Fern L, Hadley Pd, NP, Westport, WM; a strong showing.  
**Red-breasted Merganser:** NP & WM 26 Oct (DN); hen Essex 16 Nov (JP, J&PT), good finds.  
**Ruddy Duck:** 6 WM 22 Oct (DCR), new ESSE max.

## HAWKS – ALCIDS

**Bald Eagle:** 1 Ticonderoga, 2 Ti ferry 4 Sep (SS); 1-2 TL Sep-Oct (CD), only reports.  
**Rough-legged Hawk:** arr WB 2 Nov (J&PT), numerous thereafter.  
**Golden Eagle:** imm Coon Mt 3 Nov (J&PT), migrant.  
**Peregrine Falcon:** imm Keene 1 Sep (J&PT); Crown Pt Bridge Oct (VT RBA).  
**Ring-necked Pheasant:** CH 28 Sep (NO), 1st in 20 yrs; TL 10 Oct (CD); 3 PtR 29 Nov (NO).  
**Ruffed Grouse:** male Elizabethtown 28 Sep (JP), killed striking picture window; same farmhouse 17 Oct, another smashed out storm door. Delicious.  
**Wild Turkey:** 15 Elizabethtown 13 Sep (JP); hen Ticonderoga 22 Oct (SS); Wadhams Nov (SJS); max 32 Inlet 22 Nov (GL); now “barnyard fowl” TL feeders (CD).  
**Com. Moorhen:** juv CR 5 Sep (BK); CR 24 Sep (BK, CM); AP 4 Oct (NO), uncommon here.  
**Am. Coot:** AP 4 Oct & 2 Nov (NO), only sightings.  
**Black-bellied Plover:** arr KB 5 Sep (BK, CM); NP 19 Oct (JP, J&PT); PtR 22 Oct (J&RH).  
**Semipalmated Plover:** 4 KB 10 Sep (BK); Long L 18 Oct (PG), 2nd HAMI record; last CLIN 22 Oct (J&RH).  
**Greater Yellowlegs:** max 7 KB 10 Sep (BK); Long L 18 Oct (PG), 3rd HAMI record; CLIN 22 Oct (J&RH); 6 NP 26

Oct (DN).

**Lesser Yellowlegs:** 3 KB 10 Sep (BK); last NP 26 Oct (DN).

**Sanderling:** 6 NP 22 Sep (J&PT), also site of only Aug reports.

**Semipalmated Sandpiper:** 12 KB 18 Sep (BK, CM), only report.

**Least Sandpiper:** CLIN 4 Sep (J&RH), only report.

**Baird's Sandpiper:** KB 10 Sep (BK), always a good find.

**Pectoral Sandpiper:** arr 2 KB 10 Sep (BK); max 19 KB 7 Oct (BK, CM); last NP 26 Oct (DN).

**Dunlin:** arr Plattsburgh Bay 23 Sep (BK, CM); max 7 NP 26 Oct (DN).

**Com. Snipe:** max 12 KB 18 Sep (BK, CM); 6 AP 12 Nov (JH), late.

**jaeger sp.:** small, trim ad midlake CLIN 25 Sep (DH), Long-tailed?

**LAUGHING GULL:** FBI 4 Nov (DM, JM, RM), typical half-cap winter plumage, 2nd Reg & ESSE record.

**Little Gull:** CLIN 19-21 Oct, 25 Oct (DH), flew back & forth across NY-VT line; ad CH 20 Oct (BK, CM).

**Bonaparte's Gull:** max 400 Port Kent 26 Oct (DCR), with 6 other reports from NP, Westport, WM 22 Sep-16 Nov.

**Great Black-backed Gull:** max 24 NP 19 Oct (JP, J&PT).

#### DOVES – WOODPECKERS

**Snowy Owl:** Chateaugay 12 Nov (MB); Stafford Dr, Pir 26 Nov (J&RH, HK).

**Black-backed Woodpecker:** 4,100' Hough Mt 23 Sep (NO); L Placid 9 Nov (BM); fem Long L 16 Nov (JC).

#### FLYCATCHERS – WAXWINGS

**N. Shrike:** arr Miner Inst 29 Oct (NO).

**Blue-headed Vireo:** US 9 south 16 Oct (BK), late CLIN.

**Gray Jay:** BB 9 Oct (G&JA) & 22 Nov (WL); Long L early Nov (GL); FB 10 Nov (JC) & 16 Nov (JN), a good showing.

**Com. Raven:** 8 Hurricane Mt 16 Oct (KH), doing display flights.

**Horned Lark:** 3 Lyon Mt 1 Oct (NO), feeding on grit & seeds 3830' elevation; FBI "C" 4 Nov (DM, JM, RM), unexpected locales.

**Black-capped Chickadee:** Wadhams 18 Nov (SJS), captured & eaten by red squirrel at feeder.

**Boreal Chickadee:** BB; Hurricane Mt; Kempshall Mt; L Placid; McComb Mt; Pine Orchard, T Wells HAMI; Second Brother; Slide Mt; an excellent showing.

**Tufted Titmouse:** AP; Chilson; Rt 22 CLIN; Cook Mt; Newcomb (!); Port Kent; Rugar Woods; TL (!); WM; another excellent showing.

**House Wren:** Treadwell Bay 16 Oct (BK), late CLIN.

**Marsh Wren:** AP 27 Sep (BK, CM), only report.

**E. Bluebird:** max 25-50 Keene 11 Oct (G&JA); 30 AP 2 Nov (NO); others at Hadley Pd, Ticonderoga, Wadhams, Westport suggest abundance.

**Gray-checked Thrush:** Rand Hill 13 Oct (J&RH), an excellent find.

**N. Mockingbird:** pr PARC 20 Oct (NO); Plattsburgh Nov (H&RB), eating holly berries.

**Eur. Starling:** max 600 WM 22 Oct (DCR).

**Am. Pipit:** max 36 KB 18 Sep (BK, CM); last 12 KB 3 Oct (J&RH).

**Bohemian Waxwing:** arr L Placid 12 Nov (LM); 14 Paul Smiths 13 Nov (TM); max 50 WRS 16 Nov (JP, J&PT); 15 Keene Valley 16 Nov (RM); 4 Plattsburgh 18 Nov (J&RH); 24 Saranac L Nov (DK); suggestive of a good coming winter, if food supplies last.

#### WARBLERS

**Pine Warbler:** Peru 14 Oct (GW), late CLIN.

**Palm Warbler:** Plattsburgh 5 Oct (J&RH), only report.

**Bay-breasted Warbler:** 2nd & 3rd Brothers 7 Sep (J&PT), only report.

**Ovenbird:** max 8 Hadley Pd 1 Sep

(DCR), unusual.

#### TANAGERS – WEAVERS

**E. Towhee:** PtR 8 Oct (BK) & 10 Oct (E&HF), only reports.

**Am. Tree Sparrow:** arr Essex 2 Nov (J&PT); max 35-50 AP 20 Nov (JP, J&PT).

**Field Sparrow:** PtR 17 Oct (BK), only report.

**Savannah Sparrow:** WRS 19 Oct (JP, J&PT); apparent western subsp. Essex 21 Oct (J&PT).

**Fox Sparrow:** 1-6 TL 23 Oct-12 Nov (CD), only report.

**Dark-eyed Junco:** Keene 20 Oct (J&PT), all white tail.

**Snow Bunting:** arr 20 Miner Inst 30 Sep (NO); max 100 FBI 4 Nov (DM, JM, RM); 15 Cedar R Rd & 15 Indian L 17 Nov (DS), new max HAMI; others at Essex & Wadhams, a promising start.

**Rose-breasted Grosbeak:** Peru 19 Sep (GW), late CLIN.

**Rusty Blackbird:** 1 WRS 16 Nov (JP, J&PT) with flock of 50 Bohemian Waxwings.

**Com. Grackle:** max 125 TL 9 Sep (CD), ties FRAN record set by same observer at TL 2-3 Oct 1999.

**Pine Grosbeak:** arr 3 Forest Home Rd FRAN 4 Nov; max 24 Keene 18 Nov (J&PT); with other reports from AP, BB, CH, Elizabethtown, Inlet, Keene Valley, Keeseville, L Placid, Peru, Saranac L, Speculator, TL, Valcour, Westport, only a

hint of numbers undoubtedly present.

**Purple Finch:** scarce after Oct.

**White-winged Crossbill:** Newcomb feeder 22 Oct (AF); CH feeder 7-12 Nov (NO); 3 Plattsburgh yard 10 Nov (H&RB), feeding on birch buds; 6 Elizabethtown feeder 27-29 Nov (JP), 5 banded; other reports from BB, Rt 22 CLIN, L Placid in Nov.

**Com. Redpoll:** arr 8 Hadley Pd 28 Oct (DCR); widespread Nov; max 40 SLB 12 Nov (DCR).

**Pine Siskin:** max 50-70 L Placid feeder Sep (LM); numbers declined Oct-Nov.

**Evening Grosbeak:** max 20 Keene 3 Nov (J&PT); 18 Elizabethtown 16 Nov (JP), but Oct-Nov reports of “lots” & “large flock(s)” from Essex, FB, L Placid, Newcomb.

#### ADDENDUM

**Blue-winged Warbler:** CH 14-20 Aug 2001 (BK).

#### CORRIGENDUM

**Golden Eagle:** fem found near death Hope Falls HAMI, 23 Dec 2000 rehabilitated Northville, Bronx Zoo & Delaware Valley Raptor Ctr, PA, banded & released Hope Falls 29 Mar 2001, tracked by satellite transmitter to Canada 8 Apr, continued through Québec, then east to Labrador (MG).

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## REGION 8 – HUDSON-MOHAWK

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Fall 2001 was generally mild, sunny and quite dry. As reported from the Albany International Airport, September's mean temperature was 62.4°F, 1.1° above normal, with 66% possible sunshine. October continued warm, averaging 51.9°, 1.7° above normal, with 62% possible sunshine. November was also warm, averaging 44.8°, 5.1° above normal, with 45% possible sunshine. There was 1.71" of rain in September, 1.24" below normal; 1.26" of rain in October, 1.57" below normal; and 1.38" of precipitation in November, 1.85" below normal. The first frost occurred on 9 October. There had been no measurable snowfall or freeze by the end of the season. Water bodies remained open.

In contrast to last year's abundance, natural food crops were sparse. The berry crop was poor to nonexistent, particularly mountain ash, hawthorn and wild grape. It appeared to be a poor cone year. This seemed to result in increased numbers of birds at feeders. At my feeders in Saratoga, for instance, American Goldfinches numbered in the hundreds in October and November, consuming all food provided. Waterfowl numbers were generally low on area lakes and reservoirs. This may be partially attributed to increased security at the Basic and Alcove reservoirs in southern Albany County following the September 11 attacks, with no reports received from either site.

A personal highlight was the several thousand Snow Geese seen and heard flying over Black Mountain, east of Lake George, on 28 October while I was hiking. Hawkwatchers at Camp Pinnacle were frustrated by consistent south winds in September. Broad-winged Hawk numbers were at an all-time low. Fall shore birding was, as usual, limited by lack of habitat, with low numbers of species and individuals reported. With no strong frontal passages and winds remaining generally calm or southerly, the passerine migration went practically unnoticed. There were indications of winter finches moving into the area, with numerous reports of Pine Grosbeaks in November, as well as moderate numbers of Common Redpolls, Pine Siskins and Evening Grosbeaks. Few Purple Finches were noticed after early October and crossbill numbers were extremely low.

Making the news was a huge roost of American Crows, estimated at more than 14,000 individuals, in Troy near the Green Island Bridge over the Hudson River. According to an *Albany Times-Union* report, local residents were not amused by the inevitable effects of the birds' presence on automobiles and sidewalks. Non-lethal attempts were to be made by the U.S. Department of Agriculture's Wildlife Services to discourage the birds through the use of various methods, including pyrotechnics, predator eye balloons and possibly lasers. There were no predictions of the effects of the sounds of nighttime bombardment on human residents of the area.

Unusual birds seen included Great Cormorant, Black Vulture, Buff-breasted Sandpiper, Bohemian Waxwing and Orange-crowned Warbler. One hundred

eighty-nine species were reported during the period, including 25 species of waterfowl, 12 species of hawks, 12 species of shorebirds, 5 species of gulls, 5 species of owls, 23 species of warblers, 11 species of sparrows and 8 species of finches.

## CONTRIBUTORS

Ken Able, Sue Adair, Elliott Adams, Alan Devoe Bird Club monthly sighting reports (ADBC), Larry Alden, Kate Beale, Brad Bidwell (Bbi), Bob Boehm (Bbo), Robert Budliger, Paul Connor, Bill Cook, Dennis Dempsey, Walter Ellison, Jane Graves, Rich Guthrie, Hudson-Mohawk Bird Club's Birdline of Eastern New York (BEN), Bob Kirker, Ruth Lamb, William Lee, Andy Mason, Nancy Martin, Sally Murray, Tom Palmer, Barbara Putnam, Alison Van Keuren, Carol Whitby, Owen Whitby, Robert Yunick.

## ABBREVIATIONS

BCR – Basic Creek Res, ALBA; BMT – Bog Meadow Trail, Saratoga Springs, SARA; CBL – Coxsackie Boat Landing, GREE; CL – Collins L, SCHE; CPHW – Camp Pinnacle hawk watch, ALBA; FtE – Ft. Edward area, WASH; FtM – Ft. Miller, WASH; FR – Five Rivers Environmental Education Center, Delmar, ALBA; GI – Green I, ALBA; GL – Galway L, SARA; HR – Hudson R; JL – Jenny L, SARA; L7 – Vischer Ferry Power Station/Lock 7, SCHE; MR – Mohawk R; NB – New Baltimore, GREE; NL – Nassau L, RENS; NRP – Nott Rd Park, Guilderland, ALBA; NRRS – Niskayuna Railroad Station, SCHE; PISP – Peebles I SP, SARA; SI – Simmons I, Cohoes, ALBA; SkW – Skidmore woods, Saratoga Springs, SARA; SL – Saratoga L, SARA; SNHP – Saratoga National Historic Park, SARA; StFl – Stillwater Flats (including Saratoga Sod Farm), SARA; TR – Tomhannock Res, RENS; VF – Vischer Ferry Nature and Historic Preserve, SARA; WR – Watervliet Res, ALBA.

### LOONS – DUCKS

**Com. Loon:** max 14 SL 1 Nov; 12-14 TR 4 Nov.

**Pied-billed Grebe:** max 3 TR 4 Nov; last SL 18 Nov.

**Horned Grebe:** WR 11 Nov; 14 SL 18 Nov; only reports.

**Red-necked Grebe:** 15 SL 1 Nov, only report.

**Double-crested Cormorant:** max 92 New St Cohoes 20 Oct.

**Great Cormorant:** imm CBL (RG).

**Great Blue Heron:** max 17 MR between L7 & NRRS 6 Sep.

**Great Egret:** max 10 MR between L7 & NRRS 6 Sep.

**Snowy Egret:** Stuyvesant 28 Nov (*fide* BC).

**Green Heron:** last WR 6 Oct.

**Black-crowned Night-Heron:** imm Corning Preserve 9 Sep, only report.

**Black Vulture:** CPHW 9 Oct (BK).

**Turkey Vulture:** max 60 Guilderland 1 Sep; last Guilderland 2 Nov.

**Snow Goose:** arr Ballston Spa 15 Oct; max 3000+ Black Mt WARR 28 Oct.

**Canada Goose:** max c 4000 TR Muitzeskill 21 Oct (PC).

**Brant:** 350 over Thacher P ALBA 7 Oct; max 500 over Gallupville 18 Oct.  
**Mute Swan:** 2 NL 15, 26 Oct, only report n of COLU.  
**Wood Duck:** max 37 Ferry Dr SARA 30 Sep; 30 Wardsboro T Hague WARR 4 Oct; last 20 E Greenbush 7 Nov.  
**Gadwall:** max 11 Stanton Pd ALBA 12 Nov.  
**Am. Wigeon:** max 30-40 TR 4 Nov.  
**Am. Black Duck:** max 95 SL 18 Nov.  
**Mallard:** max 450 Schoharie 9 Nov.  
**Blue-winged Teal:** max 76 lower MR 1 Sep; 40-50 NRRS 17 Sep.  
**N. Shoveler:** max 9 Stanton Pd 12 Nov.  
**N. Pintail:** max 12 Stanton Pd 12 Nov.  
**Green-winged Teal:** arr 4 New St Cohoes 3 Sep; max 17 Blatnick P SCHE 8 Nov; last 5 GL 30 Nov.  
**Canvasback:** SL 18 Nov, only report.  
**Ring-necked Duck:** max 40-50 TR 4

Nov; very low numbers.  
**Greater Scaup:** max and last 6 SL 18 Nov.  
**Lesser Scaup:** 7 SL 18 Nov; 7 NL 19-27 Nov; only reports.  
**White-winged Scoter:** 12 SL 1 Nov, only report.  
**Black Scoter:** 55 NL 8 Nov (PC); 6 WR 11 Nov; only reports.  
**Bufflehead:** arr 3 NB 29 Oct; max 10 WR 11 Nov.  
**Com. Goldeneye:** max 200-300 TR 4 Nov; 60 HR Stillwater 17 Nov.  
**Hooded Merganser:** max 200+ TR 4 Nov.  
**Com. Merganser:** max c 200 NL 16, 19 Nov; 150 CL 21 Nov.  
**Red-breasted Merganser:** S. Rensselaer 20, 22 Nov, only report.  
**Ruddy Duck:** arr NL 2 Oct; max 300-400 TR 4 Nov

#### HAWKS – ALCIDS

##### Camp Pinnacle hawk migration totals

Species	Total	Peak Flight	Range of Dates
Turkey Vulture	311	54 on 12 Sep	5 Sep-29 Oct
Osprey	48	6 on 15 Sep	6 Sep-24 Oct
Bald Eagle	13	2 on 22 Sep	5 Sep-14 Nov
Northern Harrier	40	4 on 1 Oct	6 Sep-18 Nov
Sharp-shinned Hawk	282	35 on 30 Sep	3 Sep-13 Nov
Cooper's Hawk	54	5 on 8 Oct	5 Sep-16 Nov
Northern Goshawk	13		11 Sep-21 Nov
Red-shouldered Hawk	26	7 on 22 Oct	7 Sep-24 Nov
Broad-winged Hawk	210	77 on 15 Sep	3 Sep-19 Oct
Red-tailed Hawk	698	95 on 30 Sep	1 Sep-28 Dec
Rough-legged Hawk	4		20 Oct-27 Oct
Golden Eagle	9		30 Oct-12 Nov
American Kestrel	54	9 on 11 Sep	5 Sep-12 Nov
Merlin	9		11 Sep-12 Nov
Peregrine Falcon	3		28 Sep-2 Nov
Totals	1964	166 on 30 Sep	26 Aug-6 Dec

**Osprey:** 15 Sep, 0 Oct, 1 Nov reports.  
**Bald Eagle:** 1 ad 12 imm COLU Sep; imm Clarks Mills 9 Sep; imm HR Waterford 15 Sep; ad HR Papscanee

Creek outlet 10 Oct; imm Schodack Creek 21 Oct; ad SL 26 Oct; imm TR 4, 12 Nov; ad & imm Schodack Landing 18 Nov.  
**N. Harrier:** 24 reports of singles.

**Sharp-shinned Hawk:** 3 Gallupville 8 Oct; 37 reports of singles.  
**Cooper's Hawk:** 27 reports of singles.  
**N. Goshawk:** Gallupville 2, 25 Oct; JL 15 Oct; FtM 17 Nov.  
**Red-shouldered Hawk:** Austerlitz 5, 18 Sep; Rt 20 Schodack beaver pd 19 Oct; Claverack 29 Oct; only reports away from CPHW.  
**Red-tailed Hawk:** max 9 E. River Rd WASH 9 Nov.  
**Rough-legged Hawk:** arr Canaan 17 Oct; only 5 reports of singles.  
**Golden Eagle:** ad Slingerlands 30 Sep (NM); imm Gallupville 8 Oct (BBo, KB).  
**Am. Kestrel:** max 6 Waterford 14 Sep; 4 FtE 3 Oct; 12 reports of singles.  
**Merlin:** Albany 11 Oct, only report away from CPHW.  
**Peregrine Falcon:** Albany 9, 19, 26 Sep; imm Cohoes 23 Sep; Glens Falls 4 Oct; ad & imm New St Cohoes 7 Oct; Thacher P 7 Oct; Gallupville 8, 18 Oct; PISP 4 Nov; E. Greenbush 29 Nov.  
**Wild Turkey:** max 19 Guilderland 19 Nov; continues in moderate numbers throughout.  
**Am. Coot:** max 18 NL 8, 16 Nov; 58 SL 18 Nov.  
**Black-bellied Plover:** 2 New St Cohoes 23 Sep, 7 Oct; only reports.  
**Killdeer:** max 85 SUNY Albany 26 Sep.  
**Greater Yellowlegs:** only 6 reports of singles.  
**Lesser Yellowlegs:** 2 Ferry Dr 2 Sep; 3 New St Cohoes 3 Sep; only reports.  
**Spotted Sandpiper:** only 2 reports of singles.  
**Semipalmated Sandpiper:** 2 New St Cohoes 1 Sep; 4 Ferry Dr 30 Sep; only reports.  
**Least Sandpiper:** 6 New St Cohoes 1, 7 Sep; 2 MR Niskayuna 6 Sep; WR 6 Oct; only reports.  
**Pectoral Sandpiper:** 3 New St Cohoes 1 Sep; 6 WR 8 Oct.  
**Buff-breasted Sandpiper:** juv New St Cohoes 1 Sep (WE, NM), 1st report since

1994, 4th Reg record.  
**Ring-billed Gull:** max 830 lower MR 1 Sep; 1130 Cohoes/Waterford area 28 Oct.  
**Herring Gull:** max 325 Cohoes 20 Oct.  
**Iceland Gull:** 3 CBL 26 Nov.  
**Lesser Black-backed Gull:** 3 ad MR Cohoes Commons 20 Oct (WE).  
**Great Black-backed Gull:** max 125 MR Cohoes 20 Oct.

#### DOVES – WOODPECKERS

**Black-billed Cuckoo:** NRP 2 Sep; Amsterdam 22 Sep; only reports.  
**Yellow-billed Cuckoo:** 5 reports of singles.  
**E. Screech-Owl:** 13 reports of singles.  
**Great Horned Owl:** 4 Feller Rd T Taghkanic COLU 16 Oct; 15 reports of singles.  
**Barred Owl:** 5 reports of singles.  
**Short-eared Owl:** arr 2 FtE 15 Nov.  
**N. Saw-whet Owl:** BMT 20 Oct (JG/AV).  
**Com. Nighthawk:** 7 NRP 3 Sep; c. 50 Albany 4 Sep; 75 Westmere 4 Sep; 2 Guilderland 17 Sep; last one S. Rensselaer 26 Oct.  
**Ruby-throated Hummingbird:** max 12 Slingerlands 2 Sep; 7 Wardsboro T Hague 3 Sep.  
**Belted Kingfisher:** max 4-5 NL 13 Nov.  
**Red-bellied Woodpecker:** max 3 Tamarac Pd RENS 6 Oct; 32 reports of singles.  
**Yellow-bellied Sapsucker:** 10 reports of singles; last Guilderland 25 Oct.  
**Downy Woodpecker:** max 8 SNHP 4 Nov; 6 Guilderland 14 Nov.  
**Hairy Woodpecker:** max 4 Guilderland 8 Oct.  
**N. Flicker:** 7 Hudson Falls 3 Sep; max 10 PISP 28 Oct.  
**Pileated Woodpecker:** 38 reports of singles.

#### FLYCATCHERS – WAXWINGS

**Olive-sided Flycatcher:** Brookview 3 Sep.  
**E. Wood-Pewee:** max 4 FR 1 Sep; only 3

reports of singles.

**Willow Flycatcher:** Papscanee Creek 3 Sep.

**Great Crested Flycatcher:** SkW 11 Sep; Amsterdam 12 Sep; only reports.

**E. Kingbird:** 3 Brookview 3 Sep, only report.

**N. Shrike:** Brand Rd T Charleston MONT 3-10 Nov, only report.

**Yellow-throated Vireo:** only 2 reports of singles.

**Blue-headed Vireo:** 8 Sep & 9 Oct reports.

**Warbling Vireo:** max 3 Corning Preserve Albany 9 Sep; 3 reports of singles.

**Philadelphia Vireo:** no reports.

**Red-eyed Vireo:** max 8 Spencertown 3 Sep; 8 reports of singles.

**Blue Jay:** max 50+ Guilderland migrating overhead 28 Sep.

**Am Crow:** c. 14,000 coming to roost Troy Nov.

**Fish Crow:** 1-2 NL 19 Oct; 2 Cohoes 20 Oct; PISP 28 Oct; Papscanee Creek 18 Nov.

**Com. Raven:** reported throughout.

**Horned Lark:** max 60-80 Northumberland 15, 17 Nov.

**Tree Swallow:** max c. 50 NL 8 Oct.

**Black-capped Chickadee:** max 62 GL 30 Nov.

**White-breasted Nuthatch:** max 5 BMT 22 Oct; 5 Guilderland 14 Nov.

**Carolina Wren:** family group FR 1 Sep; 27 reports of singles.

**Winter Wren:** 9 reports of singles.

**Marsh Wren:** Ferry Dr 30 Sep.

**Golden-crowned Kinglet:** arr Gansevoort 1 Oct; reported in very low numbers.

**Ruby-crowned Kinglet:** arr Guilderland 28 Sep.

**Blue-gray Gnatcatcher:** StFl 2 Sep; SNHP 4 Sep; only reports.

**E. Bluebird:** max 18 New Salem 2 Sep; generally good numbers.

**Veery:** SNHP 2 Sep; Gansevoort 1 Oct; only reports.

**Swainson's Thrush:** Taghkanic 15 Sep,

only report.

**Hermit Thrush:** 11 reports of singles; last Ann Lee Pd 4 Nov.

**Wood Thrush:** Amsterdam 15 Sep; at breeding site Schodack thru 3 Oct; Canaan 18 Oct; only reports.

**Am. Robin:** max 90 Guilderland 28 Nov.

**Gray Catbird:** max 8 SNHP 3 Sep.

**N. Mockingbird:** 10 reports of singles.

**Brown Thrasher:** WR 6 Oct, only report.

**European Starling:** c. 8000 New Scotland 9 Nov.

**Am. Pipit:** arr 3 Amsterdam 1 Oct; max 42 Amsterdam 7 Nov.

**Bohemian Waxwing:** 8-10 Hague Town Beach 18 Nov (BBi).

**Cedar Waxwing:** max 50 Ferry Dr 30 Sep; 65 Guilderland 31 Oct.

#### WARBLERS

**Blue-winged Warbler:** FR 1 Sep; Amsterdam 15 Sep; only reports.

**Tennessee Warbler:** only 2 reports of singles.

**Orange-crowned Warbler:** Guilderland 19 Oct (WE, NM).

**Nashville Warbler:** only 6 reports of singles.

**N. Parula:** only 1 report of single.

**Yellow Warbler:** NB 3 Sep; Hudson Falls 3 Sep; Austerlitz 4 Sep; only reports.

**Chestnut-sided Warbler:** 8 reports of singles.

**Magnolia Warbler:** max 3 CPHW 6 Sep; 9 reports of singles.

**Cape May Warbler:** PISP 24 Sep, only report.

**Black-throated Blue Warbler:** max 4 CPHW 6 Sep; 3 Spencertown 3 Sep; 8 reports of singles.

**Yellow-rumped Warbler:** max 20 CPHW 6 Sep; 30+ NL 10, 15 Oct.

**Black-throated Green Warbler:** 25 reports of singles.

**Blackburnian Warbler:** 2 Spencertown 4 Sep; only 5 reports of singles.

**Pine Warbler:** only 1 report of single.

**Prairie Warbler:** Greenport 17 Sep, only

report.

**Palm Warbler:** max 4 NRP 24 Sep; 2 reports of singles.

**Bay-breasted Warbler:** 2 CPHW 6 Sep, only report.

**Blackpoll Warbler:** only 2 reports of singles.

**Black-and-white Warbler:** 5 reports of singles.

**Am. Redstart:** max 3 Spencertown 3 Sep; only 3 reports of singles.

**Ovenbird:** no reports.

**Com. Yellowthroat:** only 3 reports of singles.

**Wilson's Warbler:** 3 reports of singles.

**Canada Warbler:** Austerlitz 14 Sep, only report.

#### TANAGERS – WEAVERS

**Scarlet Tanager:** max 3 Spencertown 3 Sep; 6 reports of singles.

**E. Towhee:** max 4 SNHP 2 Sep; 6 Feller Rd T Taghkanic COLU 2 Oct.

**Am. Tree-Sparrow:** arr Albany 30 Oct; max 10 Coeymans 12 Nov.

**Chipping Sparrow:** max 70+ Smith Pd area Nassau 2 Oct; last 2 Wardsboro T Hague 7 Nov.

**Vesper Sparrow:** NRP 24 Sep; Easton 17 Nov; only reports.

**Savannah Sparrow:** last 6 Amsterdam 16 Oct.

**Fox Sparrow:** max 4 Wardsboro T Hague 28 Sep; 12 reports of singles.

**Song Sparrow:** max 23 Ferry Dr 30 Sep; 24 Amsterdam 16 Oct.

**Lincoln's Sparrow:** Powell 3 Oct; Guilderland 8 Oct; Amsterdam 16 Oct; only reports.

**Swamp Sparrow:** max 8 Ferry Dr 30 Sep; 6 WR 6 Oct; last Huyck Preserve 12 Nov.

**White-throated Sparrow:** arr 18 SNHP 30 Sep; max c. 350 Amsterdam 4 Oct; 81 banded Amsterdam 16 Oct.

**White-crowned Sparrow:** arr Austerlitz 7

Oct.

**Dark-eyed Junco:** arr 13 Guilderland 30 Sep; 34 banded Schenectady 15 Oct; excellent fall flight.

**Snow Bunting:** arr 4 Amsterdam 3 Nov; 20 North Creek WARR 11 Nov.

**N. Cardinal:** max 8 Guilderland 26 Nov.

**Rose-breasted Grosbeak:** 11 reports of singles.

**Red-winged Blackbird:** max c.1000 Cropseyville 24 Sep.

**E. Meadowlark:** max 6 Amsterdam 9 Oct.

**Rusty Blackbird:** arr Ferry Dr 30 Sep; last 10 BMT 27 Oct.

**Com. Grackle:** max c. 6000 Guilderland 16 Oct.

**Brown-headed Cowbird:** 200 Greenport 13 Sep.

**Baltimore Oriole:** Claverack 2 Sep, only report.

**Pine Grosbeak:** 30 Gore Mt WARR 11 Nov; Thacher P 17 Nov; 10 Jefferson 20 Nov; 5-8 Glens Falls 22 Nov; 10 Cherry Plain WMA 24 Nov; 3 E. Poestenkill 24 Nov; 3 Troy 24 Nov.

**Purple Finch:** max 26 Wardsboro T Hague 8 Oct; reported throughout Reg in low numbers.

**House Finch:** max 30-40 Schaghticoke 8 Nov.

**White-winged Crossbill:** reported in small numbers at feeders throughout Reg after 30 Oct.

**Com. Redpoll:** arr Schodack 11, 13 Oct; max 21 BMT 6 Nov.

**Pine Siskin:** max 12 Gallupville 14 Oct; 12 Glenville 18 Nov; moderate numbers throughout Reg.

**Evening Grosbeak:** max 23 Wardsboro T Hague 2 Nov; 15-20 Athol WARR thru; reported in moderate numbers throughout Reg.

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## REGION 9 – HUDSON-DELAWARE

**Michael Bochnik**

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September was slightly warmer than average with normal rainfall in the lower half of the Region. Liberty had just over 6" of rain for the month, mainly due to a 2" rainfall on the 25th. After that, there were drought conditions for the next two months. October was slightly cooler than normal and only about 1" of rain fell for the month; normally it is around 4" for most areas. November was just as dry, with 0.8–1.0" of rainfall. However, the month was much warmer than normal, with the average daily temperature for the month 2.5°F to 3.5° higher than normal. White Plains had 11 days at 60° or higher in November, and temperatures did not fall below freezing until the 12th.

The Region seemed to miss out on the many western strays that dominated the rare bird reports in the east this fall, except for one. The highlight of the season was an immature male **Rufous Hummingbird** that I found at Lenoir Nature Preserve in Yonkers, Westchester County, on 17 November. The bird remained into December and was studied, sketched and photographed by many people. Diagnostic photographs were obtained and a report will be submitted to NYSARC. This was a first for Westchester County but not for Region 9. New York State's first record for Rufous Hummingbird was from the Town of Chester, Orange County, 9 August 1993.

Most hawkwatches reported a slow fall season with the exception of Hook Mt., Rockland County. While the Chestnut Ridge Hawkwatch in Westchester County only managed 5351 Broad-winged Hawks for the year, Hook Mt. had over 10,000.

Della Wells found a basic-plumaged **American Avocet** at Piermont Pier the morning of 7 October. Many saw this first record for Rockland County. A report was submitted to NYSARC.

Snowy Owls made appearances in Kingston, Rhinebeck and Croton Point Park in November.

The Dutchess County Bluebird Trail monitors reported 901 Eastern Bluebirds and 403 Tree Swallows fledged from 361 boxes.

Two Connecticut Warblers were found, one in Doodletown 8 September on a Rockland Audubon Society field trip and one in Sterling Forest on 12 September.

Joe and Ellen O'Connell observed a spectacular blackbird migration at Lenoir Nature Preserve 11 November when more than 42,000 flew past, including 36,000 birds in one hour.

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## ABBREVIATIONS

CPP – Croton Pt P; CRHW – Chestnut Ridge Hawk Watch, Bedford; HM – Hook Mountain; LNP – Lenoir Nature Preserve; MC – Marshlands Conservancy; MPHWS – Mount Peter Hawk Watch; PP – Piermont Pier; SGNWR – Shawangunk Grasslands NWR (formerly Galeville Airport).

### LOONS – DUCKS

**Pied-billed Grebe:** 8 Swan L 17 Oct.  
**Great Egret:** 4 Bashakill 1 Sep; Bashakill 2 Oct; Wappingers L 27 Oct (BA, AM), late record.  
**Black Vulture:** 18 Verbank thru Sep; 2 LNP 28 Oct, unusual this far south; 21 MPHWS 3 Oct; 23 MPHWS 10 Nov; many other reports from the other counties.  
**Snow Goose:** arr Round Pd 2 Oct; 19 Round Pd 11 Oct; 15 Thompson Pd 26 Oct.  
**Brant:** Norrie Pt 3 Oct; 50 Pawling 22 Oct.  
**Wood Duck:** 40 Hillside L DUTC 12 Sep; 1906 Bashakill 27 Sep (RD); 1679 Bashakill 4 Oct (VF); 33 Amenia 11 Oct.  
**Green-winged Teal:** 200 Tallman Marsh 30 Sep.  
**Ring-necked Duck:** 50 Abels Pd, DUTC 10 Oct; 100 Abels Pd 24 Oct; 150 Abels Pd 28 Oct; 80 Thompson Pd 26 Oct; 34 L Walton DUTC 28 Oct; 10 Sylvan L 29-30 Oct.  
**Surf Scoter:** 120 Neversink Res 18 Nov (VF).  
**Black Scoter:** 35 Quaker L Pawling 28 Oct (CP).

### HAWKS – ALCIDS

**Osprey:** 12 HM 15 Sep; MPHWS 6 Nov.  
**Bald Eagle:** 17 HM 15 Sep; 13 HM 27

Oct; 4 LNP 27 Oct; 5 HM 28 Oct.  
**N. Harrier:** 6 HM 13 Oct.  
**Sharp-shinned Hawk:** 111 HM 12 Sep; 123 HM 13 Oct.  
**N. Goshawk:** arr HM 6 Oct (TF); good numbers at most hawkwatches.  
**Red-shouldered Hawk:** 65 HM 29 Oct.  
**Broad-winged Hawk:** 1236 HM 12 Sep; 9087 HM 15 Sep; 1299 MPHWS 15 Sep.  
**Rough-legged Hawk:** MPHWS 6 Nov.  
**Golden Eagle:** HM 8 Oct.  
**Am. Kestrel:** 34 HM 12 Sep; 24 HM 13 Oct.  
**Merlin:** 5 HM 12 Sep.  
**Peregrine Falcon:** 2 Mid-Hudson Bridge 9 Oct.  
**Sora:** PP 27 Oct.  
**Com. Moorhen:** Rockland L 8 Sep.  
**Am. Coot:** 81 Sylvan L 28 Oct.  
**Am. Golden Plover:** 26 Pine I 9 Sep (G&MD).  
**Killdeer:** 100 Pine I 9 Sep.  
**AMERICAN AVOCET:** PP 7-13 Oct (A&DW, CW, JCo, LT).  
**Greater Yellowlegs:** Round Pd DUTC 2 Oct; PP 27 Oct.

### DOVES – WOODPECKERS

**Snowy Owl:** Kingston Plaza 10-19 Nov (KM, HR); Rhinebeck 13 Nov; CPP early Nov.



**Long-eared Owl:** Red Hook 7 Sep.  
**Short-eared Owl:** arr SGNWR 13 Nov.  
**Com. Nighthawk:** ROCK 4 Oct (FB), late  
**RUFIOUS HUMMINGBIRD:** LNP 17  
Nov thru (MB, mob), *intro*.  
**Ruby-throated Hummingbird:** last 6  
Oct.  
**Red-headed Woodpecker:** HM 27 Sep;  
MPHW 10 Oct.

#### FLYCATCHERS – WAXWINGS

**Yellow-bellied Flycatcher:** Cape Pd 13  
Sep.  
**Philadelphia Vireo:** Buttercup Sanctuary  
10, 23 Sep.  
**Blue Jay:** 3931 LNP 8 Oct.  
**Red-breasted Nuthatch:** moved into Reg  
in good numbers by mid-Sep.  
**Am. Robin:** 2645 LNP 10 Nov.  
**Grey-cheeked Thrush:** Cape Pd 1 Oct  
(VF); 2 Reese Audubon Sanctuary 27 Oct  
(AM).  
**Am. Pipit:** 40 Sheffield Hill Rd DUTC 11  
Oct; MPHW 25 Oct.  
**Cedar Waxwing:** 200 SULL 17 Oct.

#### WARBLERS

**Connecticut Warbler:** Doodletown 8 Sep  
(RAS); Sterling Forest 12 Sep (TF, KW).

#### TANAGERS – WEAVERS

**Vesper Sparrow:** CPP 13 Oct; Vassar

Farm 20 Oct.  
**Nelson's Sharp-tailed Sparrow:** CPP 13  
Oct (GD); 2 MC 22 Oct (NYRBA).  
**White-crowned Sparrow:** Horseshoe L 9  
Oct; MPHW 10 Oct; 3 Cape Pd 11 Oct;  
Cape Pd 22 Oct.  
**White-throated Sparrow:** arr LNP 2 Sep.  
**Dark-eyed Junco:** arr (away from  
breeding areas) HM 13 Sep; albino  
MPHW 9 Nov.  
**Indigo Bunting:** Domin Farm DUTC 28  
Oct, late.  
**Rusty Blackbird:** MPHW 10 Oct; 2  
Roscoe 10 Oct; 15 Thompson Pd 26 Oct;  
MPHW 14 Nov.  
**blackbird spp.:** 32,000 LNP 5 Nov  
(E&JO); 42,000 LNP 11 Nov (E&JO).  
**Baltimore Oriole:** 4 LNP 29 Nov (ASi).  
**Purple Finch:** many reports in Oct and  
Nov.  
**White-winged Crossbill:** Montgomery 28  
Oct (AS); CRHW 28 Oct (JA); north-  
central SULL late Oct-10 Nov.  
**Pine Siskin:** arr Oct in good numbers.  
**Evening Grosbeak:** few Cape Pd 19 Oct  
(VF); 8 Rockefeller Preserve 22 Oct  
(NYRBA); many reports throughout after  
that.

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## REGION 10 – MARINE

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The season's weather can be described as warm September, warm October and hot November. Temperatures were 0.5° F higher, 1.0° higher and an unprecedented 5.1° higher than normal in each month, respectively. The actual mean temperature

for November was 52.7°, the warmest November ever recorded; there was no frost. After a wet September, it was extremely dry. Only 0.66" of rain fell in October and 1.36" in November. By season's end, the Region had a 10" shortfall for the year.

This fall's unusual weather pattern brought us an odd group of the more uncommon birds and also included three potential additions to the New York State Checklist, pending NYSARC review. The highlights were a rare pelagic, a heron subspecies from the south and a hummingbird, flycatcher and warbler from the west. There was also a good flight of northern species. After the mild, wet September and mild, very dry October, a major shift in weather patterns occurred on 26 October, bringing windy conditions and the first sustained cool (but not cold) spell to the Region. It brought with it a strong hawk flight along the beaches on the 27th and 28th, after a very slow start to the raptor migration, significant northern finch flights and some unusual birds.

On 1 December, Tom Burke went to Ft. Tryon Park in upper Manhattan to investigate the report of two hummingbirds, originally thought to be Ruby-throated, frequenting the park since mid-November. Late hummers should always be studied for a potential rare western species rather than our eastern Ruby-throated. After checking the birds, he made a tentative call that one might be a **Calliope Hummingbird**. Michael Bochnik identified both as Calliope the next morning. A group of birders in the afternoon, including John Fritz, Doug Futuyma, Kevin O'Leary and Gerard Phillips, sorted out the salient points and also identified both birds as Calliope Hummingbird. This was later confirmed by Paul Lehman after viewing photos on the web. The species will become an addition to the NYS Checklist, pending acceptance by NYSARC. Although identification was not made until December, when they were exhaustively studied and photographed by many, over several weeks, the birds were present during the fall season.

On 26 October, John and Gerda Fritz discovered a late season *Empidonax* flycatcher at the Jones Beach West End turnaround. The bird was extensively studied that day and the next by many observers. A preliminary identification of **Hammond's Flycatcher** was made the first day and concurred with the next. In the afternoon of the second day, a migrating Merlin was seen to take it. The species, listed as casual in the East, will become an addition to the NYS Checklist, pending acceptance by NYSARC. An article and photos appear in this issue of *The Kingbird*.

On 6 September, in Brooklyn's Prospect Park, Peter Dorosh and Edward Crowne observed what they concluded was an adult female or first year fall male **Virginia's Warbler**, a species not on the NYS Checklist. It would be a first state record if accepted by NYSARC. Both observers have submitted reports.

As if all this were not enough, in the early morning of 11 November, a **Cave Swallow** was seen flying at the Jones Beach West End turnaround. The bird was seen by Diana Teta, Kevin O'Leary, Steve D'Amato and Rich Berube. Later in the morning it was found over the West End Parking Lot 2 and was seen by others, including your Regional editors, before drifting back toward the turnaround, where it was seen by some of the original group and a few others, and then departing. This

bird was seen clearly when it flew directly over and around several of the observers in the parking lot at 11:00 a.m. Sy Schiff thought it belonged to the Caribbean nominate subspecies (ssp *fulva*), based on the deep chestnut-colored rump and rufous chest and flanks. See the excellent article on the subject, "Cave Swallow (*Petrochelidon fulva*) Second New York State Record," A. Guthrie and A. Wilson, *The Kingbird* 50:2.

The first major pelagic trip of the season occurred on 3-4 September from Barnegat Light, New Jersey, to Hudson Canyon. Dave Klauber listed the following in NY waters: 32 Cory's Shearwaters, 23 Greater Shearwaters, 1 **White-faced Storm-Petrel**, 9 Pomarine Jaegers, 1 subadult Long-tailed Jaeger and 2 Arctic Terns. Also seen on the trip were 15 Audubon's Shearwaters, not definitely thought to be in NY waters.

On 8 September, Carl Safina, about 70 miles south of Montauk, spotted a **tropicbird** species moving past his boat. Seen mostly with the naked eye and with binoculars only when going away, the long white tail was quite evident but plumage characters were not sufficiently noted to distinguish between White-tailed and Red-billed.

From 8-10 September, Tom Fiore, the sole birder aboard, was on a fishing boat well offshore but within officially defined NY boundaries. He reported many impressive pelagic numbers, including a single **White-faced Storm-Petrel**.

Orhan Birol reported on a 16 September pelagic trip into the Hudson Canyon, 70 miles south of Long Island. It produced 25 Greater Shearwaters, 1 Manx Shearwater, 45 Wilson's Storm-Petrels, 4 Red-necked Phalaropes, 1 Red Phalarope and 5 Pomarine Jaegers. On 23 September, on a charter fishing boat 60 miles south of Shinnecock, Birol was treated to close views of a **White-faced Storm-Petrel**. The only other pelagics noted were some Wilson's Storm-Petrels and a Black-legged Kittiwake.

A "**Great White Heron**" was found on Staten Island in mid to late September. This subspecies (ssp *occidentalis*) of the Great Blue Heron was formerly considered a separate species and may achieve such status again. On 8 October, John Fritz discovered one in the marsh at Gilgo on the Jones Beach barrier island, which proved to be different than the SI bird. It remained until the 28th. This is a bird of the Florida Keys, rarely venturing farther north. For birders to find two in New York is highly unusual. An article and photos appear in this issue of *The Kingbird*.

Jay Kuhlman, following up on a tip received from local fishermen, found an **American White Pelican** in Mastic. The bird, which was originally seen 19 October, spent most of the morning of the 20th in the Forge River, immediately south of Montauk Village. It was in Northville, northeast of Riverhead, on the 29th, later at Georgica Pond in East Hampton, and was last reported on 7 November. A Brown Pelican appeared in Bellport Bay 18 September. Another was seen flying over the beach at Shirley on 22 October.

On 28 October, two Greater White-Fronted Geese were at the Silver Lake Golf Course on Staten Island; one remained to 6 November. Two of the Greenland form of this species were found on 17 November by Bob Kurtz on the Grumman pond

in Calverton and were seen sporadically to the end of the period. An immature **Ross's Goose** was found there on 30 October and remained until 23 November. The goose flock it accompanied also contained the small "Richardson's" subspecies of Canada Goose.

P.A. Buckley and Tony Lauro found an adult **Barnacle Goose** on Short's Pond in Bridgehampton on 17 November. It was on Hook Pond in East Hampton on the 18th and sporadically thereafter. The bird was not banded and appeared wild. It should be noted that the question of origin is always a problem with this European species as it is often kept in captivity. One of this species was reported on the Connecticut RBA in late November, with the admonition, "origin uncertain."

On 28 October, **four** American Avocets appeared at Jamaica Bay Wildlife Refuge and remained until 4 November. On 8 October, Hugh McGuinness found a Red Phalarope at Sagaponack.

Paul Gillen sent us a report summarizing some post-nesting wandering of Royal Terns into our area. He noted that in recent years this species has increasingly favored the north end of Robins Island for roosting. This year, he first saw them there 12 August. They peaked at 57 on 18 September, although 40 birds were frequently seen until 1 October. There were 25 on 24 October and 17 on the 28th, when they were last seen at this spot. This is by far the largest non-hurricane-related number recorded in New York.

Cindy Wodinsky reported that a **White-winged Dove** came to her feeder in Cedarhurst, Nassau County, on 13 October and returned to the yard and feeder for 12 days before departing on the 24th. She graciously allowed dozens of birders access to her property.

On 22 November, Al Ott found an **Ash-throated Flycatcher** in Alley Pond Park, Queens County. On 16 September, a **Northern Wheatear** was found by Paul Maldonado and Michelle Wolf at Smith's Point Park, Suffolk County. It remained in the area until 1 October.

Late warblers, in addition to Yellow-rumped and Orange-crowned warblers and Yellow-breasted Chat, all of which winter in the Region, included: Blue-winged at Gilgo 9 October, Nashville in Prospect Park 22 November, Northern Parula at Jones Beach 4 November, Black-throated Blue at Sag Harbor through at least 9 November, Black-throated Green in Prospect Park 3 November, American Redstart in Prospect Park 28 October, Pine in Central Park 24 November, Prairie at Montauk Point 23 November, Ovenbird in Prospect Park 17 November, Blackpoll at Montauk Point 10 November, Hooded at Shinnecock 28 October and Central Park 30 October, Wilson's in Prospect Park to 23 November. Several of these persisted into December and CBC season.

On 20 September, Beverly Prentice reported a male **Yellow-headed Blackbird** at a feeder in Jamesport. It was seen for about 15 minutes. Another young male was seen on private property in Aquebogue on 24 October.

The shift in weather patterns starting 26 October brought an influx of migrating finches along the outer beaches. The birds were mainly fly-overs or temporary drop-ins. Few lingered for long. By late November, the movement was over. In

order of abundance, there were hundreds of American Goldfinches, a good number of Purple Finches, White-winged Crossbills in small flocks, Pine Siskins, some Red Crossbills and a few Common Redpolls.

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## ABBREVIATIONS

APP – Alley Pd P; CLP – Clove L P, SI; CP – Central P; CUT – Cutchogue; DP – Democrat Pt, FI; FI – Fire I; FP – Forest P; FTT – Fort Tilden, Queens; GKP – Great Kills P, SI; HLSP – Hempstead L SP; HP – Hook Pd, Southampton; JBCH – Jones Beach; JBWE – Jones Beach West End; JBWR – Jamaica Bay Wildlife Refuge; LI – Long I; MEB – Mecox Bay; MNSA – Marine Nature Study Area, Oceanside; MP – Montauk Point; PEL – pelagic trip to Hudson Canyon; PB – Pikes Beach, Westhampton; PBP – Pelham Bay P; PL – Pt Lookout side Jones Inlet; PP – Prospect P; RMSP – Robert Moses SP; SHIN – Shinnecock Inlet; SI – Staten I; SPP – Smith Pt Co P; VCP – Van Cortlandt P, Bronx.

### LOONS – DUCKS

**Red-necked Grebe:** PBP 7 Sep, rare so early in season.

**Eared Grebe:** 2 at end of last season JBWR, at least 1 remained thru.

**Cory's Shearwater:** 32 PEL 4 Sep.

**Greater Shearwater:** 23 PEL 4 Sep; 25 PEL 16 Sep.

**Sooty Shearwater:** DP 25 Sep.

**Manx Shearwater:** PEL 16 Sep (OB).

**Wilson's Storm-Petrel:** 45 PEL 16 Sep.

**WHITE-FACED STORM-PETREL:** PEL 4 Sep (DK), 8-10 Sep (TF); 16 Sep

(OB); 60 mi s of SHIN 23 Sep (OB).

**AMERICAN WHITE PELICAN:** 1 Mastic to Montauk 19 Oct-7 Nov.

**Brown Pelican:** Bellport Bay 18 Sep; SPP 22 Oct.

**TROPICBIRD SP.:** 70 mi s of Montauk 8 Sep (CS), encounter too brief to identify to species; *intro*.

**Least Bittern:** Southold 22 Sep (RE).

**"Great White" Great Blue Heron:** Wolfs Pd SI 2 Sep-4 Nov (CN); another Gilgo 8-28 Oct (JF); normally found in FL Keys, rare at this latitude.

**Tricolored Heron:** last MNSA 3 Nov.  
**Cattle Egret:** Riverhead 16-25 Oct.  
**Green Heron:** last 2 Oct.  
**Turkey Vulture:** PP 7 Sep; VCP 15 Sep; CP 28 Sep, 8 Oct, 15 on 12 Oct, 16 on 18 Oct, 2 on 22 Oct; PP 30 Oct, 3 on 28 Oct, 7 on 27 Oct; SI 28 Oct; 2 CP 28 Nov.  
**Greater White-fronted Goose:** Silver L Golf Course, SI 28 Oct-7 Nov; 2 Grumman Pd Calverton 17 Nov and vicinity thru.  
**ROSS'S GOOSE:** Grumman Pd Calverton 30 Oct-23 Nov (BA, et al.).  
**"Richardson's" Canada Goose (ssp *hutchinsii*):** with other Canadas and the Ross's Goose.  
**BARNACLE GOOSE:** Shorts Pd Bridgehampton, then various locations 17 Nov thru (PAB, AL); often kept in captivity, origin of birds typically uncertain.  
**Tundra Swan:** 2 HP 21 Nov thru.  
**Eurasian Wigeon:** Blydenburgh Co P Smithtown 14 Oct; JBWR 13 Oct-22 Nov; Marine P Brooklyn 4 Nov; Mattituck 23-24 Nov.  
**"Eurasian" Green-winged Teal:** VCP 27 Nov thru.  
**King Eider:** arr MP late Nov.  
**Com. Eider:** arr JBCH & MP early Nov.  
**Harlequin Duck:** arr PL & MP 4 Nov.

#### HAWKS – ALCIDS

**Osprey:** Massapequa Preserve 22 Nov.  
**Bald Eagle:** Big Reed Pd Montauk 2 Sep; PP 14 Sep; 2 VCP 15 Sep; FTT 29 Sep, 8 Oct; 3 MP 8 Oct; 2 CP 12, 22 Oct; JBWE 27, 28 Oct; PP 7 Nov; HP 11 Nov; Quogue Refuge 12 Nov; Hudson R Manhattan 20 Nov; total 4 FI hawk watch.  
**Broad-winged Hawk:** last 8 Oct.  
**Am. Kestrel:** still declining.  
**Wild Turkey:** Inwood Hill P Manhattan 23 Sep.  
**Am. Golden-Plover:** 30 CUT 2 Sep; max 40 near Rocky Pt 25 Sep; last JBWE Nov 14.  
**SANDHILL CRANE:** over GKP 9 Sep

(CH).  
**Semipalmated Plover:** last 18 Oct.  
**Piping Plover:** PB 11 Nov.  
**Am. Oystercatcher:** 100+ JBWE dwindling to 40 by season's end.  
**Am. Avocet:** 4 JBWR 28 Oct-4 Nov, high count.  
**Willet:** Shinnecock Bay 29 Nov (JC).  
**Spotted Sandpiper:** last 3 Nov.  
**Upland Sandpiper:** sod farms E. LI early Sep; fewer reports this year.  
**Whimbrel:** MEB 2 Sep; MP 23-24 Sep.  
**Hudsonian Godwit:** 7 JBWR 1 Sep, 6 on 9 Sep, 2 on 23 Sep, 1 on 3 Oct.  
**Marbled Godwit:** JBWR 1-3 Sep; Westhampton Dunes 23 Sep; JBWE 20 Oct; JBWR 3 Oct.  
**Least Sandpiper:** last 7 Oct.  
**Baird's Sandpiper:** Aquebogue Duck Farm 1, 3 Sep; 3 MEB 8 Sep; 2 JBWR 9 Sep; 2 MEB 14 Sep; MEB 21-22 Sep.  
**Pectoral Sandpiper:** last 29 Oct.  
**Purple Sandpiper:** arr 11 Nov.  
**Buff-breasted Sandpiper:** MEB 2, 8-11 Sep; 3 Rocky Pt 18-20 Sep; SPP 21-23 Sep, 2 on 25 Sep; 2 CUT 22-23 Sep.  
**Ruff:** CUT 23 Sep (SM, PL).  
**Wilson's Phalarope:** JBWR 8-9 Sep.  
**Red-necked Phalarope:** 4 PEL 16 Sep.  
**Red Phalarope:** PEL 16 Sep; Sagg Pd 8 Oct.  
**Pomarine Jaeger:** 9 PEL 4 Sep; 5 PEL 16 Sep; MP 29 Sep; MP 20, 28 Oct.  
**Parasitic Jaeger:** 4 MP 29 Sep, 6 Oct; 2 MP 28 Oct, 4 Nov, 11 Nov.  
**Long-tailed Jaeger:** PEL 4 Sep (DC).  
**Black-headed Gull:** MP 28 Oct.  
**Glaucous Gull:** SHIN 10 Oct; other sightings there.  
**Caspian Tern:** SHIN 8 Sep; 2 MEB 29 Sep; Sagaponack 6 Oct; Georgica Pd 1-11 Nov.  
**Royal Tern:** Robins I 12 Aug-28 Oct; 57 on 18 Sep, large numbers other times, the largest non-hurricane-related numbers on record; others early Sep to mid Nov.  
**Com. Tern:** last 27 Oct.  
**Arctic Tern:** 2 PEL 4 Sep (DK).

**Forster's Tern:** last 27 Nov.  
**Black Tern:** last 19 Sep.  
**Black Skimmer:** last late Oct.  
**Razorbill:** a few MP late Nov thru.

#### DOVES – WOODPECKERS

**WHITE-WINGED DOVE:** Cedarhurst feeder 13-24 Oct (CW).  
**Monk Parakeet:** flying by FTT 8 Oct.  
**Snowy Owl:** JBWE 12 Nov thru; Asharoken 25 Nov; SHIN 22 Nov.  
**Chimney Swift:** last 10 Oct.  
**Ruby-throated Hummingbird:** last 30 Sep.  
**CALLIOPE HUMMINGBIRD:** 2 Ft. Tyron P Manhattan 18 Nov thru (TB, MB, et al), identified in early Dec, 1st state record pending NYSARC acceptance.  
**Red-headed Woodpecker:** MP 2 Oct; 2 RMSF 7 Oct; PL 7 Oct; 2 CP late Oct thru.

#### FLYCATCHERS – WAXWINGS

**E. Wood-Pewee:** last 4 Nov.  
**Yellow-bellied Flycatcher:** banded Gilgo 4-11 Nov (RP); rare after mid Sep, extraordinarily late date. There are several other Nov banding records not in NY literature.  
**HAMMOND'S FLYCATCHER:** JBWE 26-27 Oct (JF, et al), 1st state record pending NYSARC acceptance.  
**E. Phoebe:** last 5 Nov.  
**Ash-throated Flycatcher:** APP 22 Nov (AO).  
**Great Crested Flycatcher:** last 7 Oct.  
**Western Kingbird:** Babylon 15 Oct; MP 21 Oct; RMSF 22 Oct; JBWE 31 Oct; Calverton 3 Nov; Gilgo 7 Nov.  
**Yellow-throated Vireo:** never particularly common in fall, a number seen in Sep; last CP 4 Oct (DA).  
**Red-eyed Vireo:** last 8 Oct.  
**CAVE SWALLOW:** JBWE 11 Nov (mob), identified as Caribbean subspecies (SS), NYSARC report submitted.  
**Barn Swallow:** last 19 Oct.  
**Blue-gray Gnatcatcher:** last 18 Nov.

**NORTHERN WHEATEAR:** SPP 16-22 Sep, 1 Oct (PM, MW).

#### WARBLERS

**Blue-winged Warbler:** Gilgo 9 Oct (RK), very late.  
**Golden-winged Warbler:** CP 15 Sep.  
**Tennessee Warbler:** CP 14 Oct.  
**Nashville Warbler:** PP thru, stayed into winter.  
**VIRGINIA'S WARBLER:** PP 6 Sep (PD, EC); reports to NYSARC. Not on NYS Checklist, it would be 1st state record if accepted by NYSARC.  
**N. Parula:** last 4 Nov.  
**Yellow Warbler:** last 8 Oct.  
**Chestnut-sided Warbler:** last 3 Oct.  
**Magnolia Warbler:** last 17 Oct.  
**Cape May Warbler:** last 13 Oct.  
**Black-throated Blue Warbler:** last 9 Nov.  
**"Audubon's" Yellow-rumped Warbler:** Gilgo 10 Nov (AL).  
**Blackburnian Warbler:** last 13 Oct.  
**Yellow-throated Warbler:** JBWE 20 Sep (JDC), very rare in fall.  
**Prairie Warbler:** MP 23 Nov (NL, MA), rare after Oct.  
**Bay-breasted Warbler:** last 2 Oct.  
**Blackpoll Warbler:** last 10 Nov.  
**Black-and-white Warbler:** last 7 Oct.  
**Am. Redstart:** last 28 Oct.  
**Prothonotary Warbler:** CLP 29 Sep (HF).  
**Worm-eating Warbler:** last early Sep.  
**Ovenbird:** PP 17 Nov.  
**N. Waterthrush:** last 28 Oct.  
**Kentucky Warbler:** CP 23 Sep.  
**Connecticut Warbler:** PP 7, 10 Sep; APP 12 Sep; CP, JBWE, Manorville, Riverside P 16 Sep; Inwood Hill P 23 Sep; CP 7 Oct; others; total at least 14, a very large number.  
**Hooded Warbler:** PP early Sep; Commack 13 Sep; Shinnecock 28 Oct; CP 30 Oct.  
**Wilson's Warbler:** 23 Nov thru.  
**Canada Warbler:** to 29 Sep.

**Yellow-breasted Chat:** widely scattered.

**TANAGERS – WEAVERS**

**Summer Tanager:** CP 23 Sep.

**Scarlet Tanager:** last 13 Oct.

**Am. Tree Sparrow:** arr 16 Oct, then early Nov; few reports, low numbers.

**Clay-colored Sparrow:** mid Sep to early Nov.

**Lark Sparrow:** Orient 22 Sep.

**Seaside Sparrow:** last 9 Nov.

**Lincoln's Sparrow:** last 20 Nov.

**"Pink-sided" Dark-eyed Junco (ssp *mearnsi*):** Gilgo 22 Oct (TB, RP, et al), chased into nets, banded, ph.

**Lapland Longspur:** 3 JBWE 28 Nov.

**Snow Bunting:** arr MP 28 Oct.

**Rose-breasted Grosbeak:** last 10 Oct.

**Blue Grosbeak:** RMSP 22 Sep; PL 7 Oct; Montauk Dude Ranch 20 Oct; Gilgo late

Oct; Montauk dump 8 Nov.

**Dickcissel:** Riverhead 7 Sep; JBCH 20 Sep; SPP 20-23 Sep; 2 Gilgo 20 Sep; RMSP 16 Oct; Riverdale 20 Oct; Connetquot SP and JBWE 3 Nov; JBCH 4-25 Nov; Eastport feeder 16-21 Nov.

**Bobolink:** last 31 Oct.

**YELLOW-HEADED BLACKBIRD:** Jamesport feeder 20 Sep (BP); Aquebogue 24 Oct.

**Red Crossbill:** 30 Oct - mid Nov; fewer than White-winged Crossbill.

**White-winged Crossbill:** 30 JBWE 28 Oct; small groups to 17 Nov.

**Com. Redpoll:** arr 4 Nov, small numbers.

**Pine Siskin:** arr 21 Oct.

**Evening Grosbeak:** CP 5 Nov; PP 19 Nov.

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## STANDARD ABBREVIATIONS

Regional rarities appear in BOLD; county names are shortened to their first four letters and appear in UPPER CASE letters; months are shortened to their first three letters. In species accounts: number of individuals omitted implies that one individual was reported; ! - details seen by Regional Editor; ad - adult; Alt - Alternate plumage; Am. - American; art - arrival or first of season; BBS - Breeding Bird Survey; BOTS - bird of the season; CBC - Christmas Bird Count; CO - confirmed nesting; Com. - Common; E. - Eastern; FL - fledgling; FY -adult feeding young; I - Island; imm - immature; intro - see introduction to report; juv - juvenile; L - Lake; max - maximum; mob - multiple observers; N.

Northern; NYSDEC - New York State Department of Environmental Conservation; NWR - National Wildlife Refuge; NYSARC - report to New York State Avian Records Committee; P -park; Pd- Pond; ph - photographed; Pt -Point; Res - Reservoir; Ri - River; SP - State Park; spm - specimen; subad -subadult; T - Town of; thru - throughout period; Twn - township; W. - Western; WMA - Wildlife Management Area; y - young.

## REPORTING REGIONS

Regional boundaries coincide with county lines, except at:

**Region 1-Region 2** in Orleans, Genesee and Wyoming Counties:

the boundary is NY Route 98 from Pt. Breeze to Batavia;  
NY Route 63 from Batavia to Pavilion, and NY Route 19  
from Pavilion to the Allegany County line.

**Region 2-Region 3** in Ontario County:

the boundary is Mud Creek to NY Route 64, NY Route 64  
from Bristol Center to S. Bristol Springs, and Route 21  
from S. Bristol Springs to the Yates County line.

**Region 3-Region 5** in Cayuga County:

the boundary is NY Route 31.

## REPORTING DEADLINES

**Winter Season:** December, January, February

Deadline is 7 March

**Spring Season:** March, April, May

Deadline is 7 June

**Summer Season:** June, July, August

Deadline is 7 September

**Fall Season:** September, October, November

Deadline is 7 December



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