

REGION 8 — LONG ISLAND

Moderate fall weather prevailed into December with practically no snow, and that which fell disappeared rapidly. Many birds lingered with the good berry crop. At Jones Beach, numbers of Hermit Thrushes, several Catbirds and numerous Robins stayed into early winter. Here could be recognized, on several occasions in late October, the subdued song of the northern or Black-backed Robin (*Turdus m. nigriceus*) identifiable by its wilder, ringing notes to one familiar with this subspecies in the north. A Western Tanager associated with the Robins and Hermit Thrushes there for several weeks and to the end of the period.

The fall of 1952 was unique in the scarcity of all goose records, particularly of those of Snow and Blue Goose, and its abundance of reports of both Dickcissel and Lark Sparrow.

Loons — Ducks:

There was no great flight of Loons, Grebes, Gannets, Cormorants or Brant reported. The Snowy Egret and Little Blue Heron had left by mid-October. American Egret also disappeared about that time, although, usually in recent years, it has been reported into early November. The White Pelican, appearing at Mill Neck in mid-June, was still present during December. A Leach's Petrel was found dead at Rockaway, September 7 (**Brooklyn Bird Club**). Although a few flocks of Canada Geese were reported and a Snow Goose was seen at Gilgo in late September, there were few or no fall records later of the rarer Geese; however, usual heavy concentrations of Canada Geese and Brant arrived in the winter. Among ducks, the Baldpate was very numerous, and goodly numbers of Canvas-backs were present on Western Long Island. The Gadwell, Shoveller, Ring-necked Duck and Hooded Merganser were fairly common. The Ruddy Duck was scarcer than usual and there was no report of European Teal.

Hawks — Owls:

Hawk counts on September 23 coordinated with the Fish and Wildlife Service's widespread census. Three lists — Far Rockaway (J. Bull), Moriches (R. Wilcox), and Orient (R. Latham) — contained principally falcons with very few Buteos, as to be expected. The total consisted of three Red-tail Hawks, one Broad-wing Hawk, nine Marsh Hawks, 13 Ospreys, 38 Pigeon Hawks, eight Sparrow Hawks and one Duck Hawk. A month later (October 25) a good flight of Sharp-shinned Hawks came through. Unusual was a Gyrfalcon (light phase) at Short Beach, November 1 (P. Murphy). About a week later a dark Gyrfalcon was reported on western Long Island. There were no reports this fall of Yellow Rail; very few of Black Rails, but several of Florida Gallinule. The general early sandpiper flight was light as to unusual species; two Golden Plover were present at Idlewild on November 23. Willets were comparatively uncommon; there were few or no Wilson's Phalarops, a few Northern and no Red Phalaropes coming to the attention of this writer. There was no very noticeable flight of Hudsonian Curlew, Upland Plover, Stilt Sandpiper or Baird's Sandpiper and comparatively few Godwits, although there was one late Marbled Godwit at Montauk, November 6 (G. Raynor) and another present in December at Moriches. There was a good late flight of shorebirds, with 200 Black-bellied Plovers and 800 Red-backed Sandpipers at Idlewood, October 26 (J. Mayer). Fair numbers of these lingered into winter. The first Purple Sandpiper was seen at Montauk on November 6 (G. Raynor). Bonaparte's Gulls showed up at Fire Island, August 23. Few Gull rarities were reported into early winter. There was a good flight of Black Terns in September; few Forster's and Caspian Terns were reported, but one late Caspian Tern was seen at Jones Beach, November 23 (J. Bull). There was no large flocking of Black Skimmers peculiar to the last five years, and there appears to be some decrease of breeding numbers of this bird on Long Island in the last few years, probably due to increasing Herring Gull nestings and a recent custom of grass planting on the newly pumped sand, causing it to vegetate rapidly. The Mourning Dove was abundant into winter. After late fall storms a few Dovekies were found inland, some alive. One or two Murres were recorded at Montauk, and next to Dovekies, the Razor-billed Auk was the most frequent Alcids reported. There were no Snowy Owl records, few Barred or Great Horned Owl reports and only two of Saw-whet Owl.

Swifts — Shrikes:

Few reports of Cliff Swallows came in, but a record Purple Martin concentration was observed, with 2,000 at Lake Ronkonkoma, August 30, in the early morning. This exceeds all Long Island records for abundance of this species (H. Darrow). One or two Red-headed Woodpeckers, the same of Arkansas Kingbirds, and two or three Mockingbirds, constituted the fall reports for these species. Red-breasted Nuthatches were not as common as last year; Short-billed Marsh Wren was last seen November 1 (Idlewild), and five or six Blue-gray Gnatcatchers were recorded from early September to October 4. The Migrant Shrike was less common than last year, and the Northern Shrike was reported only once in late fall.

Vireos — Warblers:

The Blue-headed Vireo passed through in regular numbers; the Warbling Vireo migrated early almost unnoticed, and there were only one or two records of Philadelphia Vireos that came in this fall.

The Warbler migration was poor, except on western Long Island. Individual Magnolia, Bay-breasted and Hooded Warblers appeared, August 4, at Massapequa, but later concentrations did not materialize, and migration was straggly to the middle of September, except for the Bay-breasted Warbler which was more common than usual. There were few Tennessee and Cape May Warblers. A good flight of Parula Warblers came through September 23. The Myrtle Warbler appeared early, with six at Heckscher Park, August 26 (Wm. Reid, Jr.). On extreme western Long Island, at Riis Park and at Idlewild, warbler migration was somewhat better than eastward, and stragglers of a half-dozen species remained or passed through in early November. Very few Orange-crowned Warblers were recorded. Several Yellow-breasted Chats were found in early winter from Massapequa westward. An immature Western Tanager, first found November 23 at Jones Beach (W. Sedwitz), was seen regularly into December.

Close to a dozen reports came in of both Dickcissel and Lark Sparrow, mostly coastal and from Gilgo westward. A tremendous flight of Siskins and Goldfinches passed through during October, and a good flight of Red Crossbills, with a flock of at least 80 at Jones Beach, appeared in late fall. On October 26, while observing large number of Juncos, an Oregon Junco was reported at Jones Beach (Bull). White-crowned Sparrows were very numerous. Lapland Longspurs came through regularly in late October, and a flock of 40 were reported at Idlewood in early November (J. Mayer, G. Rose). Snow Buntings were reported first on November 10, with flocks recorded of up to 60 since.

John J. Elliott
3994 Park Ave.
Seaford, Long Island, New York

REGION 9 — FINGER LAKES

Fall migration records up to October 1, 1952, were reported in the last issue of The Kingbird. However, two important breeding records were omitted from this report. There are of Golden-winged Warbler in the Pine Plains region near Geneva feeding young on 6/28 (Miss Holtby), and young birds held in hand 7/6 (Dr. and Mrs. Munford); also, Upland Plover at 3 locations in Seneca County during summer with young at one location (Walker), and adult with 3 young on 7/6 (Munfords). Diurnal movement of birds was quite spotty and sporadic and in general was quite extended. For example, large numbers of plovers, Ruddy Turnstones, and several species of sandpipers were still present along the lower St. Lawrence River Valley and the Atlantic coast in Canada during late August. Some of these species were observed at Montezuma Wildlife Refuge in good numbers in the same period of August 24-30.

Some of the more interesting late fall observations include Barn and Tree Swallows 10/26, Wood Thrush and Black-poll Warbler 10/14, Cowbirds 11/29, Pipits 10/16 and 18, flocks of Robins 10/18, White-crowned Sparrow 10/24, White-throated Sparrow 12/8, Vesper Sparrow 11/2, flocks of Prairie horned Larks 11/10, and Killdeer 12/28; however, following the first snow at Geneva on October 20,