

REGION 5 — ADIRONDACK

July, August and September were about 4 degrees cooler than the average of the previous three years. October temperatures were about average. August and September were very dry but October 7 brought the first snow to the central Adirondacks.

The crop of spruce, white cedar, hemlock and larch cones is good this year, balsam cone crop light, and pines poor.

LOONS — DUCKS: Unusual record of an American Scoter found dead on road near Lake Placid on October 18 (Chase). Buffle-head on Moody Pond at Saranac Lake, November 15, also an uncommon record. Canada Geese flight through Adirondacks is usually fairly light but came through in first half of October as usual. Wood Duck in good numbers in Saranac Lake area this fall. A single, apparently feral Mute Swan appeared on October 29 at Ray Brook (near Saranac Lake); was shot by a hunter.

HAWKS — OWLS: It is becoming clear that there are moderate numbers of Hawks which move south through Central Adirondacks in the fall. Chase reports 100-200 hawks passing De Bar Mountain between 9 and 11 a. m. on September 11. A single Golden Eagle is reported passing the crest of Whiteface Mountain on the same date. Meade spent the 13th of September on Whiteface Mountain. Conditions good for a flight but only 1 Osprey, 1 Broad-wing and 1 Red-shoulder were seen. These birds were following the west side of the north shoulder of the mountain at about 4000 feet and moving in a north-south line. The peak of flight may have been September 7 to 11. More work needs to be done on this subject in the area.

During the brood season the number of Ruffed Grouse broods seen were up in size and frequency over last year. There was a heavy road kill by cars in September. But the hunting season has so far shown only scattered and single birds. In general the Grouse are spotty in occurrence this fall. There was a failure of thorn apple crop which may be related to this drop in numbers. Woodcock very few this fall in Essex and Clinton Counties.

A new record for Lower Saranac Lake is two Bonaparte's Gulls on August 16 (Meade).

SWIFTS — SHRIKES: Arctic Three-toed Woodpeckers seem more than usually common this fall. Pipits on Whiteface Mountain at 4200 feet level on September 13th. No Shrikes seen as yet.

VIREOS — WARBLERS: First flight of Warblers the night of August 5 to 6 when temperature dropped. Another movement around August 20 to 21.

BLACKBIRDS — SPARROWS: Meadowlarks still at Saranac Lake, November 8. Heavy flights of Evening Grosbeaks near De Bar Mountain, as last year, since mid October but as yet they have not appeared in any numbers at the usual feeders in Saranac Lake. Several young seen there this past summer. Both Crossbills present all summer and fall in Saranac Lake-Lake Placid region. First Snow Buntings October 18 at Saranac Lake.

Gordon M. Meade, M. D.
Trudeau, N. Y.

REGION 7 — NEW YORK AND LOWER HUDSON VALLEY

Specialists who can relate bird activity to the weather should have a field day with the 1953 fall migration. The summer was dry and only moderately hot — until late August, when a record-breaking stretch of ten or eleven days with maximums about 90 degrees began. Water levels in fresh water streams and ponds were abnormally low. September and early October were remarkably free from violent weather; little rain, no wild winds, equable temperatures.

Why then — and this perhaps the ornithologist-meteorologists can tell us — should the southward migration have been so early? Or was it only chance that gave our region so many fall arrival dates ahead of or close to previous records? At any rate, it seemed to some observers that southward movements were keyed to the fairly mild pressure fronts rather than to temperature changes. As each shallow cold front approached in August and September, the night skies were filled with chirps of migrants.