

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.

LOONS — DUCKS: The White Herons did not advance up the Hudson in any great numbers this year. Most of those seen were American Egrets. The only Little Blue Herons reported were an August date in West Nyack (Dr. Matthew J. Brennan) and a lone bird at Grassy Point, Sept. 9 (Mr. and Mrs. Frank Steffens). A female Pintail arrived on Sept. 26 at the home pond of Mr. and Mrs. Stanley O. Grierson in Katonah.

HAWKS — OWLS: The Hawk migration in Rockland and Orange Counties was considered thin, but Bedford Audubon Society regarded it as good. BAS now has posting rights on 30 acres in the Town of Harrison, north of White Plains — a former hawk-shooting site now established as Hawk Hill Sanctuary. On Sept. 12, a field group saw 21 Ospreys over Hawk Hill, along with a few Sharp-shinned and Marsh Hawks; on Sept. 26, another group counted nine Sharpies, six Ospreys, two Cooper's Hawks, a Marsh Hawk, and a Bald Eagle. Ospreys and Sharp-shinned Hawks also ran strongly around Anthony's Nose and Bear Mountain.

A pair of Coots apparently bred at Congers Lake, a first nesting record for Rockland County (Steffens and others). Dr. Marjorie R. Hopper and others also identified an immature Florida Gallinule on the same lake in September.

Between Aug. 31 and Sept. 4, an unusual number of shorebirds landed on the mud flats that were appearing in Cross River Reservoir, Westchester County, because of the drought. The Griersons found among them: both Yellowlegs, Semipalmated Plover, Least Sandpiper, Semipalmated Sandpiper, Pectoral Sandpiper, and Killdeer. Some of these birds remained well into October.

SWIFTS — SHRIKES: Yellow-bellied Sapsuckers reached Rockland County on Sept. 25 (Hopper) and Westchester County on Sept. 29 (Mrs. John Lentz). The first Red-breasted Nuthatch was reported from Nyack on Sept. 22 (Eugene R. Brown). Red-breasted Nuthatches were observed all summer at Mamaroneck (Steinhardt). On Aug. 24, a Carolina Wren, uncommon on the east side of the Hudson, was seen and heard at Lake Waccabuc, South Salem, by Ruth and Stanley Grierson. A Ruby-crowned Kinglet on Sept. 24 was close to Rockland County's early date (Hopper).

Mrs. Lentz had Blue-headed (Solitary) Vireos at Chappaqua, Westchester County, on Oct. 2 and 8. Dr. Hopper's observation of a Cape May Warbler on Sept. 22 is Rockland County's first fall date.

A truly remarkable series of observations within the Island of Manhattan was made by Geoffrey Carleton of the Linnaean Society of New York. These records attest to the early movement of warblers:

At Inwood Hill Park, July 24 — a female Cerulean Warbler (this species has nested in latter years atop the Palisades south of Alpine, N. J., across the Hudson from Inwood Hill Park), Prairie Warbler, Blue-winged Warbler, Black and White Warbler, Least Flycatcher. Carleton does not believe any of these species breed in the park.

At Inwood Hill, July 24 and 25 — three Nashville Warblers. This is either a record early date, or close to it.

In Central Park, Aug. 12 — Myrtle Warbler (either an early record or close to it), Bay-breasted Warbler (also very early).

In Greenwich Village, Aug. 12 — Tennessee Warbler (very early).

In Greenwich Village, Aug. 16 — Magnolia Warbler (near a record).

On the night of Sept. 21, a large flock of migrants, mostly warblers, blundered into the 1,250-ft. Empire State Building in New York City. In the morning, 277 dead birds of 19 species were picked up on the building's setbacks and in the street. Six were found still living: four Yellowthroats, a Bay-breasted Warbler, and a Rose-breasted Grosbeak. Of the dead, 104 were Bay-breasted Warblers, attesting to the abundance of this species this year. Among the rarer birds were two or three Philadelphia Vireos.

The Empire State Building was also the scene of a similar accident on the night of Sept. 11, 1948, when more than 300 birds were killed. At that time, the migrants appeared to be riding a cold air mass that suddenly thinned down into a shallow wedge, forcing the birds nearer to earth. This autumn's accident is without an explanation, for the southbound mass was 8,000 ft. deep.

BLACKBIRDS — SPARROWS: A Lincoln's Sparrow was spotted by the Griersons in the marsh at their home near Katonah on Sept. 23. This bird is not often reported in the fall. The earliest reports of White-throated Sparrows are Sept. 20 in Rockland County (Hopper) and Sept. 30 in Westchester (Grierson). Early Juncos

are reported from Nyack Sept. 23 (Hopper) and Lake Kitchawan, Town of Lewisboro, Oct. 7 (Mr. and Mrs. Arthur C. Weeks).

Robert F. Deed
50 Clinton Ave.,
Nyack, N. Y.

REGION 8 — LONG ISLAND

The large Common Terns and Black Skimmers reportedly were successful in weathering early summer downpours, but these apparently affected the Least Tern on western Long Island. On eastern Long Island the spread of the Herring Gull has caused a great diminution in the nesting populations of Terns and Skimmers by usurping their nesting grounds. An increase in Wood Ducks was reported at Mill Neck and 40 Gadwall pairs summered at Jones Beach Sanctuary Pond. Strays of summering Brant, Green-winged and Blue-winged Teal were seen at Idlewild, and an Old-squaw was noted in July at Port Jefferson. As for fall migration many species of land birds lingered into late October with the long dry spell; American and Snowy Egrets had about disappeared by the middle of the month.

LOONS — DUCKS: There were very few breeding records of Pied-billed Grebe. The American Egret nested for the first time in the Long Island area this summer (Fishers Island); two pairs of Snowy Egrets bred on Jamaica Bay island and the Yellow-crowned Night Herons in several locations.

An increase of migrating Loons was noted by November 1; no Horned Grebes to date; the White Pelican, present at Mill Neck from June, 1952, was still there on September 27. A European Cormorant was seen at Shinnecock, September 26 (R. Wilcox) and a Louisiana Heron at Jones Beach, August 30 to September 3. No large flocks of Canada Geese or Brant reported; but an adult Blue Goose with two immatures and two immature Snow Geese at Bridgehampton, mid-October, suggested a hybrid family group (C. McKeever). Pintails, Baldpates and Shovelers arrived about on time; the Ring-necked Duck was noted westward to Babylon.

HAWKS — OWLS: Reports came of the Red-tailed Hawk on eastern Long Island and a scattering of nesting Red-shouldered and Broad-winged Hawks on the western half. Records of nesting Clapper Rails came from the Sound as well as the South Shore. There is apparently a decrease of Piping Plovers at Moriches, according to Roy Wilcox, who consistently bands in this area. The Herring Gull colonies on Gardiner's and Cartwright Islands and in Shinnecock Bay are increasing in size. Terns and Skimmers are diminishing in the same area and the sandy islands around Moriches Bay, once containing prosperous colonies, are becoming overgrown.

Regarding migration, there was a poor Buteo flight, and very few flight days for Accipiters and Falcons. A half-dozen or more Soras were noted around September 4, and at least four Black Rails were flushed out of the grassy marsh near Moriches Inlet on that date. Two Florida Gallinules were present at Lawrence into late October and two Wilson's Plovers at Jones Beach, September 3 (J. Bull). A maximum of 23 Golden Plovers were seen in a flock at Orient, September 13 (R. Adelson). Goodly numbers of Hudsonian Curlew and both Godwits were recorded, also two Northern Phalaropes at Moriches Inlet, August 22. Among Gulls there is little to report, except two Bonaparte's at Moriches, September 4 (Wilcox). An early September Tern flight included fair numbers of Forster's and Black Terns and a few Roseate Terns. Around the hurricane season several Royal Terns put in an appearance at Shinnecock (about August 30) and two were still present on September 29.

The Mourning Dove has become more abundant in recent years; late nesting, Baldwin, September 28 one young in nest. Practically no Owl records; no nesting reports of Long-eared; one of Great-horned at Manorville ended in failure (G. Raynor); no Saw-whet Owl records to date this fall.

SWIFTS — SHRIKES: There was one record of Nighthawk possibly nesting: Manorville, July 1. A good fall flight of this species over Long Island was noted on September 27. There were several fall records of Red-headed Woodpecker but no nesting report. Arkansas Kingbird was present on Oak Island, August 29 (Dr. and Mrs. H. Kimball); no report since. A late Olive-sided Flycatcher was seen at Idlewild, October 16 (J. Mayer, G. Rose). The Least Flycatcher was found again