

REGIONAL REPORTS

HIGHLIGHTS OF THE FALL MIGRATION

August 15 to November 30, 1956

1956 did have some fine days. A delightful Indian Summer broke into this atrocious year, but the season under consideration could not entirely escape the rigors of 1956. Much of the fall migration was ruined by short and early, but intensely cold spells which swept through a great many migrants. Frost and snow hit Region 1 on September 20. The Indian Summer in western New York then proved a void for land birds. Fortunately the eastern part of the state was not so hard hit and the mild weather along the Hudson provided some notable late records, notably a December 5 Kentucky Warbler in Region 9. Late-hatching insects helped to hold over some birds who braved the early cold.

Failure of the hurricanes of recent years to develop cut down the number of long-distance wanderers, but did not preclude some notable appearances: Scissor-tailed Flycatcher (in Region 8) from the South and Rough-legged Hawks (in 3, 4, 5, 6) and Arctic Three-toed Woodpeckers (in 1, 2, 4, 7) from the North. GRR

SUMMARY OF TREE AND SHRUB CROP

Region	1*	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
Red Pine-----	—	—	—	F	P	P	F	G	F	—
White Pine-----	P	F	—	G	P	F	G	G	P	FP
Pitch Pine-----	—	—	—	F	P	—	G	P	P	FP
Larch-----	—	G	—	—	F	G	F	G	F	—
White Spruce-----	—	—	—	G	F	P	—	—	F	—
Black Spruce-----	—	—	—	G	—	P	—	—	F	—
Red Spruce-----	—	—	—	G	—	—	—	—	F	—
Balsam Fir-----	—	—	—	F	F	F	—	—	F	—
Hemlock-----	G	G	G	F	G	G	G	P	G	—
Arbor-vitae-----	F	—	G	G	F	P	G	F	F	F
Red Cedar-----	F	G	—	F	—	F	F	—	F	F
Bayberry-----	—	G	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	FG
Ironwood (Ostrya)-----	G	G	G	G	—	F	F	—	—	—
Blue Beech (Carpinus)-----	G	G	—	G	—	P	—	—	F	—
Yellow Birch-----	P	P	—	G	F	G	G	G	G	—
White Birch-----	—	—	—	G	F	G	G	G	F	—
American Beech-----	GF	P	G	G	G	G	G	G	G	—
White Oak-----	P	P	—	P	P	G	F	G	F	G
Red Oak-----	P	G	—	P	P	G	G	G	G	F
Cucumber Tree-----	F	F	—	—	F	—	—	—	—	—
Mountain Ash-----	G	G	G	G	G	G	G	G	G	—
Thornapple-----	GF	G	G	F	G	P	G	G	G	—
Wild Black Cherry-----	P	G	F	F	F	G	F	G	F	G
Box Elder-----	F	G	G	G	G	G	G	G	G	—
Sugar Maple-----	GF	F	G	G	G	G	G	G	G	—
Grey Dodwood-----	G	G	G	G	G	—	—	—	F	F
Red-osier Dogwood-----	G	G	—	G	G	—	—	F	—	—
White Ash-----	G	G	—	F	F	F	F	G	G	—
Black-berried Elder-----	GF	G	G	F	F	G	G	G	G	—
General Crop Estimate -----	GF	G	—	GF	—	G	Imp.	G	F	F

*Reports from Harold H. Axtell (N and NE of Buffalo) and S. W. Eaton (Cattaraugus Co.) combined.

This summary is perhaps more meaningful to persons living in forested areas such as the Southern Tier, Adirondacks and Catskills. It does not pretend to be an exact survey but may help in future analyses of fall and winter bird populations.

This year, for instance, Turkeys fed mainly on beechnuts from October through December. While watching these noble birds scratching the ground for beechnuts, one could also predict and soon see large Blue Jay and Chickadee flocks come by feeding on the nuts still on the trees. Downy and Hairy Woodpeckers have been eating these too but the most interesting forager in the beech forests of southern Cattaraugus County has been the Tufted Titmouse — as many as six birds on a two mile hike.

In all regions where beech is plentiful the crop has been reported as good. This is also true of sugar maple and mountain ash. Yellow birch seeds are generally low in western New York, but in the east this crop and the white birch appears to be generally good.

Except for regions 4, 5 and 8 the hemlock seed crop is good. The spruce-fir-larch crop in the Adirondacks and Catskills appears to be generally from fair to good. From Long Island Mr. Elliott reports good black alder seed production at Montauk and at Jones Beach the firethorn was loaded. The pepperidge (*Nyssa*) crop was good and popular with thrushes in September. —S. W. Eaton.

REGION 1 — NIAGARA FRONTIER

CLARK S. BEARDSLEE

The three-and-one-half month period under review exhibited a pattern of weather which had a very definite effect upon the birds of Region 1. The first six weeks were cold and wet, with frost and snow being recorded on September 20. A very large proportion of our migrants hurried through with hardly a pause, with the result that fewer swallows, vireos, warblers, and thrushes were reported in October than in the average year. October, on the other hand, must have broken all records for beautiful weather, being continuously mild and sunny. It would have been an ideal month for late records if it had followed a better September. The feature of the period was the start of an unprecedented invasion of Arctic Woodpeckers.

Loons — Ducks: First record of RED-THROATED LOON was of three at Wilson Oct 27 (Mitchell et al.). The Axtells supplied a splendid record, — an EARED GREBE in the gorge at Niagara Falls on Sep 20; the bird was seen there by others until the 27th. Mrs. McMurtry reported an AMERICAN EGRET near Wellsville during the period from Aug 25 to Sep 13; Mitchell found another on Grand Island Sep 5. First authentic records of CANADA GOOSE were a flock of 11 Oct 6 (Buffalo, Brockner et al.) and a flock of ten Oct 13 (E. Eden, Mitchell et al.). First GADWALL was reported Oct 21 (Perry Center, Rosche). GREATER SCAUPS were first seen off Wilson (20 on Oct 27 by Schaffner et al.). A better than average BUFFLEHEAD population has been a constant on the river throughout late fall, and all three SCOTERS have been on view in better numbers than usual.

Hawks — Owls: TURKEY VULTURES have not been reported since the B. O. S. fall count on Oct 14, when 22 were seen. Eaton noted a GOSHAWK near Vandalia Nov 15, while our first ROUGH-LEG record was provided by Brockner, who observed two at Medina Oct 22. McMurtry saw an OSPREY at Wellsville Aug 18 and Bourne another south of Buffalo Oct 14. The only PIGEON HAWK recorded during the period was one near Batavia on Oct 14 (Pixley et al.). TURKEY records were fewer