

REGION 1 — NIAGARA FRONTIER

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The latter half of August was warm and excessively dry while September's temperature and rainfall, being near normal, did not do much to alleviate the dryness in the area. Water levels remained low into October as this month's temperatures were near the mean and precipitation was considerably below the average. Aside from a paucity of rainfall, no unusual weather conditions occurred up to November but this month, although having a normal average temperature, showed a marked change as severe storms on the 8th and 9th and the 21st and 22nd brought high winds and locally heavy snow (three feet) to the area. Tufted Titmice and Carolina Wrens continued to be reported more frequently in widespread areas. Pronounced movements of Red-breasted Nuthatches, Purple Finches and Pine Siskins have been noted during the period. Northern Shrikes appeared earlier than expected and in late October and November good flights of northern finches were observed, perhaps indicating a major incursion for the winter. The diving ducks began to come in October and by mid-November were observed in good numbers. The Niagara River in late November was the scene of an unprecedented congregation of gulls, a conservative estimate being over 25,000 individuals between Niagara Falls and the river mouth.

Loons — Ducks: Although Common Loons and especially Horned Grebes were plentiful after late September, no Red-necked Grebes were noted throughout the period. Two Eared Grebes Nov 24 and one on Nov 28, (Axtells, et al) on the Niagara River for the second year indicate more care should be taken in watching for this species. American Egrets were not reported for the area in late summer. The first flock of Canada Geese was noted at Wellsville on Sept 23 (McMurtry) and 700 were seen at Oak Orchard Swamp and on Lake Ontario on Nov 3 (Mitchell, et al). On Oct 13 good numbers of pond ducks were at Oak Orchard Swamp — American Widgeon 1250, Mallard 736, Blue-winged Teal 156 (Ulrichs, Lovelace). 700 Canvasbacks on Nov 17 on the Niagara River (Mitchell) marked the first influx of this species. Two adult male Harlequin Ducks Nov 30 were at Niagara Falls (Axtells, Andries). This rare species is quite partial to the swift water of the rapids. Ruddy Ducks seemed to be fewer in number than usual while Scoters appeared in normal abundance except for the Surf Scoter of which only a few were noted.

Hawks — Owls: Rough-legged Hawks were observed in fair numbers after the first noted at Batavia Oct 13 (Pixley, et al). There were few reports of Ospreys or Eagles during the period. Turkeys appear to be increasing and extending their range to the east and west in the southern part of the region. Mrs. McMurtry reports flocks of five at Shongo and 20 at York's Corners on Oct 7 and on Oct 8 Elderkin saw seven between Frewsburg and Onoville. On Nov 3 Eaton at Olean reports Turkeys beginning to feed on wild black cherries, their principal food during November. Golden Plovers were not seen in normal abundance in the area this fall; two on Grand Island Sept 7 (Norths) are the only ones reported in an excellent locality for them. Shorebirds were not very much in evidence in the region, partly due perhaps to little coverage and because flooded areas were at a minimum. A late Ringed Plover occurred at East Eden Nov 5 (Bourne). 43 Snipe were noted at various scattered points on the census of Oct 13. Mrs. Pixley reported 25 Lesser Yellowlegs in the Batavia vicinity Oct 13, a good number for an inland station. Mitchell observed a Franklin's Gull at Bird Island in Niagara River Nov 23 and another was noted on the 28th and 30th at Niagara Falls (Axtells, Andries). A Little Gull Nov 9 at Niagara Gorge (Axtells) marked the first record of a species which usually first occurs in September. Also interesting was a Laughing Gull, accidental in our area, at Lewiston on the Niagara River Nov 28 (Klabundes). The expected Snowy Owl invasion did not materialize, only three being noted in November. A Barred Owl at Chestnut Ridge Park Nov 12 (Bourne) is noteworthy as few are reported near Buffalo. Of interest is a Saw-whet Owl at Fredonia Oct 18 (Stanley).

Goatsuckers — Shrikes: A late Nighthawk was noted at Buffalo Oct 14 (Andrle). 200 Horned Larks were observed by Axtells on Oct 13 moving westward along the south shore of Lake Ontario near Point Breeze, an excellent migration route for a number of water and land birds. At Jamestown on Sept 1, Beal reported a great roost of 15,000 Purple Martins and several other species, which was reduced to 1000 Martins on Sept 15. Blue Jays seem to be more numerous than usual in the region this fall. A Catbird on Nov 17 at Ellery Center (Mealy, Robinson, Randell) is a late occurrence. Several Mockingbirds were still present at Westfield on Oct 4 (Mrs. Bentley), after a successful breeding cycle there.

Vireos — Warblers: A Solitary Vireo on Nov 5 at Lewiston (Klabundes) is considerably later than normal. Warblers began to arrive as usual in late August but apparently their migration through September was fairly regular with no unusual waves reported. They remained fairly late into October, six species being recorded on the 13th and several later in the month. Mrs. Smith reported a Brewster's Warbler at Gainesville on Oct 10 and 11, an important record of a hybrid which nests in our region but has been little noted in migration.

Blackbirds — Sparrows: 1000 Rusty Blackbirds at Jamestown on Sept 27 (Beal) is an exceptional number for that date. Evening Grosbeaks first were noted near Vandalia on Oct 1 (Eaton) and numerous scattered flocks were reported throughout the period after that date. Redpolls, Pine Grosbeaks, White-winged Crossbills and Snow Buntings appeared in late October and early November and were seen in many localities. Outstanding was the report of a Harris' Sparrow at a feeder in Jamestown through November (Brolins, Mealy, Parker, Beal). Three exceptionally late White-crowned Sparrows were observed, one at Hamburg Nov 23 and 24 (Avery) and two at Buffalo Nov 27-30 (Fisk). A fine record was the immature Dickcissel at Mrs. Avery's feeder at Hamburg on Nov 23 and 24. Eight Lapland Longspurs near Point Breeze on the south shore of Lake Ontario (Axtells) was the only report of this species during the period.

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REGION 2 — GENESEE

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The first month of this period continued the very dry weather which had persisted since about the tenth of July. Mid-September brought general moderate rains which lessened but did not break the drought. October was dry, so dry in fact that there was talk of again closing the woods. November brought more than the normal amount of snow, but even so there is a deficiency of well over five inches in precipitation since early July. This has resulted in low water levels which made for good shore birding but reduced the areas available for the dabbling ducks. Temperatures were close to average throughout the period except for a hot spell about the middle of September and a very cool spell the last part of the same month.

The greatest difference birdwise from last year has been in the relative number of winter finches present. Last year there were exactly *none*, while this year all six species have been reported. There was a very heavy migration of Red-breasted Nuthatches and the fall migration of warblers was much better than a year ago.

Loons — Ducks: The loon flight this fall seemed about normal with the maximum count of Common Loons being 50 on Oct 20 along the west lakeshore (Haller, Listman). A Holboell's Grebe was seen Oct 5 at Webster Park (Kemnitzer) and a high count of 14 was made there Nov 30. The high count of Horned Grebes was 150 birds along the west lakeshore Oct 5 (Kemnitzer). The number of Double-crested Cormorants seemed somewhat less than usual. Three of these birds were seen migrating over Durand-Eastman Park Oct 26 and one bird was seen the same day at Manitou (Listman). A rather late Green Heron was seen at Braddock Bay Oct 5. There were **no** reports of any of the southern herons including the American Egret