

REGION 1 — NIAGARA FRONTIER

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The latter half of August continued mild but slightly cooler than the preceding two weeks. Sunshine was abundant and precipitation normal. The only disturbance of note was a severe thundersquall, high winds, and some hail over the region on August 31. Migration of passerines was almost nil during this period but shorebirds continued rather numerous as lake levels remained low and algae covered many parts of the shore. September was generally cloudy with changeable weather, temperatures near normal, and precipitation 1.58 inches above the mean. Light frost occurred in rural sections on the twelfth and twenty-ninth and a pronounced cold front passed on the last day of the month. Warblers were much in evidence, at least seven "waves" being noted, although other species of birds appeared to be less common than usual. In most respects weatherwise it was a pleasant October with clear and cloudy days in average abundance and temperatures and precipitation departing little from the means. No severe weather phenomena occurred during the month and sunshine was 7% above the long term average. There were some late records for land bird migrants and the waterfowl appeared in the usual numbers with the exception of Oct 26 to 28 when there was considerable movement, especially of geese, over the region. It was a mild and sunny November with temperatures averaging 5 degrees above normal until the last week when a cold wave passed with considerable snowfall closing roads and bringing midwinter temperature. Again a spectacular sight was the tremendous number of gulls along the Niagara River chiefly from Niagara Falls to its mouth at Lake Ontario.

Loons — Ducks: In late October and early November Common Loons were in evidence on Lake Ontario in noteworthy numbers. Most were flying eastward but some also were moving in a westerly direction. On Oct 28 a total of 64 were ob-

served near Lakeside (Andrle, Hochmuth), 103 in one hour on Oct 29 at Shadigee (Andrle), and 175 also in about one hour on Nov 8 along a stretch of the lake shore (Axtells). Two Red-throated Loons and also 140 Horned Grebes were noted by the Axtells during the flight on Nov 8. A Red-necked Grebe remained in the Niagara Gorge below the falls into November, another was seen at Bay View Nov 15 (Bourne), and two were seen on Lake Ontario Nov 23 (Axtells). One to three Pied-billed Grebes remained in the gorge at Niagara Falls through the end of the period. The only Common Egret reported was on Aug 21 at Randolph Pond (Elderkin). Whistling Swans appeared a little more frequently than normal with flocks being reported from Lakes Ontario, Erie and Chautauqua. On Sept 15 at Gainsville the first Canada Geese were recorded (15) (Grosby fide Smith), and numerous flocks, some numbering in the hundreds, were reported over Buffalo and localities as far south as Olean on Oct 26. Of interest was an immature Blue Goose reported at Burnt Ship Creek on Grand Island Nov 22 (Mitchell, Clark). From 2000 to 3000 Brant were reported flying eastward at Shadigee on Lake Ontario between dawn and 9:00 AM (Rue fide Andrle). On Oct 28 between Lakeside and Olcott on Lake Ontario, 320 Brant were observed, some flying westward as well as to the east (Andrle, Hochmuth). In connection with this flight it is worth mentioning that the wind changed from SSW on Oct 25 to NE, N and NW in which directions it remained for five days, the temperature dropping several degrees although the wind remained at averages from 9.7 to 12.8 mph. throughout. In general no unusual numbers or occurrences of ducks were reported during the period. 700 Black Ducks were observed in two localities on Lake Ontario Nov 23 (Axtells). Ring-necked Duck, a species that is seldom seen here in the fall migration, was observed on Nov 12 (two) at Burnt Ship Creek (Mitchell), seven on Chautauqua Lake Nov 16 (Anderson), and two at Niagara Falls Nov 22 (Axtells). No Eiders or Harlequin Ducks had appeared up to the end of November. 3000 Red-breasted Mergansers were observed mostly flying westward on Lake Ontario Nov 1 (Axtells).

Hawks — Owls: The only Goshawk of the period was a bird observed five miles east of Olcott on Nov 8 (Axtells). The first Osprey of the season was reported from the Allegheny River on Aug 31 (Eaton). Marsh Hawks and Red-tailed Hawks seemed to be in somewhat above normal numbers in the region, especially in October. A few Rough-legged Hawks appeared from the middle of October on but nowhere near the numbers that have been recorded in some previous years. Turkeys and Ruffed Grouse as well as several small species were reported feeding on beechnuts in Cattaraugus County (Eaton). Two Common Gallinules on Oct 31 at East Eden Pond were the last recorded for the year (Bourne). Golden Plover were only reported from Grand Island (one) Nov 11 (Freitag) during the period although more appeared in Ontario. Shorebirds were common up to the middle of September on the Ontario shore of Lake Erie but as usual few were noted within the region. A Baird's Sandpiper was observed by Andrle on Sept 30 near Lakeside on Lake Ontario. This species has been unusually numerous on the Canadian shore of Lake Erie. The last White-rumped Sandpiper appeared near Lakeside on Oct 29 (Andrle). A pair of Red Phalaropes were found at Bay View on Lake Erie Nov 24 (Bourne). They were well seen by many observers and one was noted for the last time on Nov 27. The only northern gull reported to the end of the period was a Glaucous Gull Nov 29 at Squaw Island (Andrle, Thill). The gull concentration on the Niagara River can only be described as sensational. By November 6 a rough estimate placed the gull numbers on Lake Ontario and up the Niagara River to Lewiston as 15,000 Herring Gulls, 10,000 Ring-billed gulls and 5000 Bonaparte's Gulls, (Axtells). Another estimate on Nov 9 from 1.5 miles above Niagara Falls to the Rainbow Bridge, a short distance downriver from the American Falls, totaled: Herring Gulls 5000, Ring-billed Gulls 17,000, Bonaparte's Gulls 5000 (Axtells). There were also 2000 of the last species at the Peace Bridge at Buffalo on the same date. The Axtells made accurate gull counts on the entire Niagara River on Nov 11 and 27. Each count gave 70,000 gulls, about two-thirds of which were at Niagara Falls and most of the rest downstream from there. On both counts Ring-billed Gulls made up about half and Herring Gulls about one-third of the total while a maximum of 12,000 Bonaparte's Gulls were present. One to two Franklin's Gulls were noted by several observers at Niagara Falls in October and November. Little Gulls were seen among the Bonaparte's Gulls at various places along the Niagara River during November. The largest number determined definitely was on Nov 8 when four were noted at

Lewiston (Axtells), one at Niagara Falls, and one at Buffalo (Filor). One of the exciting discoveries of the year was a Sabine's Gull in the gorge at Niagara Falls on Sept 30 and Oct 1, first found by Seeber and seen later by several observers. A Forster's Tern was in the gorge at Niagara Falls on Oct 1 (Andrle, Coggeshall). The last Common Tern of the year also appeared in the gorge on Nov 11 (Axtells) and two Caspian Terns on Sept 19 at Chautauqua Lake (Rue fide Andrle) were the last reported of this species in the region. On Nov 10 and Nov 25 two Barn Owls were brought to the Museum, the first from a warehouse in Buffalo, the second possibly also from the city. A Barred Owl was reported from Hamburg Oct 27 (Bourne). No Snowy Owls had appeared to the end of the period. An injured Saw-Whet Owl was at Hamburg Nov. 4 - 30 (Bacon).

Goatsuckers — Shrikes: Two Nighthawks on Sept 25 at Hamburg (Bourne) were the last migrants recorded. The only Olive-sided Flycatcher to be reported was on Aug 29 in Chautauqua gorge (Anderson, Knott). The great roost of Purple Martins at Jamestown held 25,000 birds on Sept 1, 3000 on Sept 16, and 200 on Sept 17 (Beal). A Tufted Titmouse observed at Wilson Nov 2 (Brockners), was the only one reported during the period. Carolina Wrens were not reported frequently. One wonders whether they have regained their numbers after their apparent mortality or at least disappearance during the severe weather last winter. A Mockingbird was reported at Niagara Falls from Nov 9 to 22 (Heilborn). Reports of three Wood Thrushes Oct 12 along the south shore of Lake Erie near Angola and Dunkirk (Rue, Stanley) were interesting as they are rarely seen so late. Water Pipits were fairly numerous in October as were Cedar Waxwings in some localities. The first Northern Shrike appeared Oct 22 near Attica Ctr. (Andrle).

Vireos — Warblers: As was mentioned previously there were several pronounced warbler movements during September especially on the seventh, sixteenth and twentieth when flocks of 100 or more were noted. Chestnut-sided and Wilson's Warblers were present at least in some localities in more than usual numbers during the first part of September while Blackpoll Warblers frequently made up at least half to three-quarters of the flocks (Axtell). A Warbling Vireo Sept 21 at Jamestown (Beal) was a somewhat late record for this species in the region. An exceptional record was a Black-and-White Warbler (which was carefully observed feeding in a large spruce) at Wilson Nov 30 (Lehrers). A Nashville Warbler Oct 14-17 at Athol Springs (Csont) was the last migrant noted of this species. Parula Warblers were decidedly rare throughout the region during the migration. A Pine Warbler and a Connecticut Warbler, both rarities in the region, were observed in Chestnut Ridge Park Sept 24 (Bourne). Late records were an Ovenbird Oct 12 near Olean (Eaton), a Common Yellowthroat near Java Center Nov 8 (Mitchell), and an American Redstart on Oct 26 near Youngstown (Coggeshall et al). Interesting was the report of a Yellow-breasted Chat Sept 6 at Gainesville (Mrs. E. V. Smith). This species is very seldom noted in the region after the nesting season.

Blackbirds — Sparrows: Eaton noted a flock of 300 Grackles feeding in the good beechnut crop near Olean Oct 21. A Rose-breasted Grosbeak at Wilson on Oct 12 (Klabundes) was a late occurrence for this species. Evening Grosbeaks first appeared at Olean Nov 9 (Eaton) and were feeding on beechnuts along with Blue Jays, Black-capped Chickadees, and Red-breasted Nuthatches. Pine Siskins were reported from several localities but no Common Redpolls or other winter finches had appeared by the end of the period. Goldfinches seem to be more common than usual. Young in large numbers were reported leaving their nests on Aug 25 and 26 throughout the region (Axtell). Eaton reports Goldfinches wintering in good numbers in the Olean area and feeding on a good crop of yellow birch seeds. Flocks totaling 600 on Nov 1 and 450 on Nov 8 were observed along the south shore of Lake Ontario (Axtells). A Grasshopper Sparrow obtained at Elma on Oct 1 (Coggeshall) is a very interesting late record for a species which it little noted in the fall. White-crowned Sparrows appeared to be less numerous than in other years in the region. Three White-throated Sparrows stayed through November at Hamburg (Bacon). Ten Fox Sparrows were noted near Olean Nov 9 (Eaton). On Nov 1 and 8 Lapland Longspurs, 25 on each date, were observed several miles east of Point Breeze near Lake Ontario (Axtells). Snow Buntings were first noted Oct 29 with a flock of 25 on the lake shore near Lakeside (Andrle) and a total of 850 were observed Nov 8 in about 12 places along the Ontario Plain to the eastward, (Axtells).

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