

REGION 8—MOHAWK-HUDSON

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The summer drought conditions in the Mohawk-Hudson region continued well into October. However, October was the first month since January in which the precipitation was above normal. Temperatures for the entire period averaged above normal throughout most of the area. The hot and dry weather was certainly no inducement for many field trips. As a result the first one-third of the period covered by this report is based upon the observations of a few faithful correspondents.

A lone Dovekie, a species which had not previously been recorded in this region, took honors as rarity of the period (Ed-see field notes section, this issue).

Loons — Ducks: Both loons and all three grebes were reported during the period. Common Loons and Red-throated Loons were both late in arriving this year, Oct 22 and Nov 22 respectively. Red-necked Grebes were scarcer than usual, Horned Grebes slightly above average, and Pied-billed Grebes lingered until mid-November (Hallenbeck). Common Egrets peaked on Sep 19 when 39 were seen at Vischer's Ferry (Yunick). They were last noted Oct 11. Little Blue Herons were not observed after Sep 10. An American Bittern lingered at Guilderland Center until Nov 8 (Van Vorst). The variety of ducks and geese reported was above average but with no rarities. Snow Geese were observed primarily on Nov 8 when flocks totaling over 800 were seen at Tomhannock Reservoir by members of the Schenectady Bird Club (Ed-see field notes section, this issue). The first southbound Canada Geese were sighted on Sep 8, but no large flight occurred until the third week in October. Sixty Canada Geese were at Stockport on Nov 8 (Browns), and a spectacular migration of between 5000 and 10,000 was observed along the Hudson at Castleton on Nov 15 (Cook). Dabbling ducks occurred in normal numbers for the commoner species. No Gadwall, however, were reported, and only one shoveler was seen. Some late Wood Ducks were last seen on Nov 16. Diving duck numbers were slightly above the average. All three scoters and all three mergansers were reported.

Hawks — Owls: There were several September Turkey Vulture reports from the southern part of the region (Alan Devoe Bird Club). The commoner accipiters and buteos were reported in usual numbers. Nine Sharp-shins, 21 Broad-wings, and an Osprey flew over New Concord on Sep 11 (Radke). The only Rough-legged Hawk reported was seen on Nov 11 at Scotia (Hallenbeck). A Bald Eagle was noted on Sep 29, while the last Osprey was seen the last week in October. A Peregrine Falcon was observed Oct 25 at Crescent (Hallenbeck), and a Pigeon Hawk was noted on Aug 26 at Old Chatham (Reilly). Ruffed Grouse reports indicated that this species had a very good breeding season. No rails were reported during the period.

Shorebirds were reported frequently, no doubt as a result of low water in reservoirs and similar areas. Two Semipalmated Plovers were seen Sep 27 at Vischer's Ferry (Foote), and the rare Golden Plover was represented by a single individual at Tomhannock Reservoir on Oct 24 (Kaskan). A single Black-bellied Plover, locally an uncommon species at best, was reported from Tomhannock on Oct 11 (Angst, Sabin) and Nov 22 (Austin, Hipple). Two Pectoral Sandpipers were at Vischer's Ferry on Sep 20 (Foote), where they had been present for at least a month. A Least Sandpiper was also present at Vischer's Ferry on Aug 20. On Nov 8 eight Dunlin and two Sanderlings were still present at Tomhannock Reservoir (SBC). Both yellowlegs were widely reported, including Nov 8 at Tomhannock. The rare Northern Phalarope was seen at Lake Taghkanic on Oct 3 (Thurston).

No Great Black-backed or Bonaparte's Gulls had been reported up to the close of the period. Two uncommon (for this region) Common Terns were at Vischer's Ferry on Oct 11 (Foote). A first for this region was the Dovekie, previously alluded to, which was seen at Saratoga Lake on Nov 15 (SBC). Cuckoos were reported more frequently than usual. The common resident owls were all reported throughout the period. A Saw-whet Owl was picked up in Schenectady on Oct 30 and released outside the city (Bartlett). No Snowy Owls have been reported here this season.

Goatsuckers — Shrikes: The last Nighthawks were seen Sep 26 at Delmar (Madison) and Sep 28 at Canaan (Gokay), while Chimney Swifts were seen as late as Oct 24 in Troy (Yunick). Hummingbirds seemed quite numerous in the southern part of the region in September (ADBC). Migrant Yellow-bellied Sapsuckers were first reported on Sep 19. Phoebees were noted rather widely, an encouraging sign after low numbers in the spring of the year. A new Purple Martin colony loca-

tion at Linlithgo had adults still feeding young on Aug 22 (ADBC). Tufted Titmice appeared to be faring better than the Carolina Wrens. Four scattered locations in as many counties constitute all those reported to date. One of these is for southern Saratoga County where the birds have been reported as being present since early October. On Nov 15 one of a pair was banded at Slingerlands (Sabin). Red-breasted Nuthatches have been abundant this fall; estimates ranged as high as 50 or 60 birds in a very small area. Migrant Winter Wrens were slightly ahead of average fall arrival dates when several were seen in different places on Sep 12. The date of the last reported House Wren was Oct 7. Carolina Wrens have apparently been unsuccessful in returning to their haunts of several years ago, repulsed by the extreme cold of two successive winters. An exception to this is their continued presence at Nassau (ADBC). Long-billed Marsh Wrens were not reported after Oct 18 (Hallenbeck). A Mockingbird was seen in Livingston on Oct 19 (Munsons). Neither Catbirds nor Brown Thrashers appeared to be lingering anywhere in the region. Hermit Thrushes were scarce. Two Gray-cheeked Thrushes were at Red Rock on Sep 30 and again on Oct 3 (Smilows). Bluebirds were still scarce, although not to the degree of the previous spring. A few Robins were still present at the end of the period. Both kinglets were reported in about average numbers. A few Ruby-crowns were still present on Nov 30, which is a late date. Water Pipits were observed in good numbers for the short period of their passing through. The nomadic Cedar Waxwing continued to go unreported for long periods, an exception being in the Burnt Hills section of Saratoga County where it was fairly regular. Two Northern Shrikes were the only representatives of this family reported. These were seen at widely separated localities on the same date of Nov 19.

Vireos — Sparrows: A late Warbling Vireo was seen at Schenectady on Oct 8 (Eddy). The fall warbler migration was unspectacular, probably because of the extremely hot and dry weather. The following warblers were last reported on later than average departure dates: Worm-eating — Sep 25 (Hallenbeck); Golden-winged — Sep 24 (ADBC); Blue-winged — Sep 8 (ADBC); Blackburnian — Oct 11 (Kilcawley); Palm — Oct 25 (SBC); Northern Waterthrush — Oct 16 (French); Mourning — Sep 23 — banded (Radke), and Canada — Sep 25 (Hallenbeck). There were two unusually late reports of Tennessee Warblers. One was seen at Nassau on Nov 18 and again on Nov 22 (ADBC), at which time it was banded. The other report was of a bird seen at Schenectady on Nov 26 (Stone). One other unusual note concerns the Kentucky Warbler. This species apparently has an affinity for Columbia County in extending its range to the north, following the Hudson valley and appearing at Ghent and East Chatham on Sep 20 and Sep 30 respectively (Radke, Smilow). A good flight of Black-throated Blues was at Old Chatham on Sep 15 (Reilly). There were September Connecticut Warbler reports from Castleton (Cook), Ghent (Erlendbach), and Nassau (Turner). Wilson's Warblers were not infrequently reported during September (ADBC).

A late Baltimore Oriole was recorded at Loudonville on Nov 13 (French), in the same tree where one had been seen the previous November. Two very early Rusty Blackbirds were seen by several observers on Aug 20 at Vischer's Ferry. By October this species was widely reported, as one would expect. The last report of a Scarlet Tanager was of one seen in Albany on Oct 10 (Rzeszoto), a later than average departure date. A late Indigo Bunting was recorded Oct 4 at Loudonville (French). Evening Grosbeaks appeared on Sep 15, a portent of an invasion which to date appears to have penetrated all parts of the region. Purple Finches were scarce in the Schenectady area, but they were reported as quite common in Columbia County after Oct 20. Redpolls were quite widely reported after the middle of Nov, sufficiently so to indicate that this is a minor invasion year for this species. Pine Siskins were reported only during the last week of Nov from Columbia County (Cook, Erlendbach). An Albino Goldfinch was at Fonda on Nov 1 (K. Meritt et al).

A late Henslow's Sparrow was seen at Loudonville on Oct 25 (French). Juncos arrived at Schenectady on Sep 24, about ten days later than average. Reports showed them to be more abundant than last year, flocks of 50 to 75 being not uncommon. A late Field Sparrow was sighted at Schenectady on Nov 26 (Stone). White-crowned Sparrows first appeared in the region on Sep 26 (Turner). Their numbers appeared to be a little below normal. The last individual of this species was seen at Amsterdam on Nov 9 (Fitzgerald). White-throats, like Juncos, were about ten days late, arriving on Sep 15 (ADBC). The elusive Lincoln's Sparrow was seen on Oct 14

around a banding trap at Nassau (Turner). Snow Buntings were commonly reported during the first three weeks of November.

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REGION 9 — DELAWARE - HUDSON

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The weather during our late summer and fall period can be simply described as warm and wet. The tree foliage seemed to remain longer than usual, and its coloration was slow to develop. November skies held little snow. In general, however, it was a normal period, the kind of a season that leaves little impression on the mind to remember.

Returning to the field after a midsummer break, observers were ready for the fall migration which turned out to be, like the weather, quite a normal one with the usual ups and downs of certain species. In November we looked about for those birds that would probably winter, finding some, and we searched in vain for any spectacular flights of northern visitors. Some observers reported a good seed crop while others thought the crop poor, but these impressions were too restricted to make an accurate account for this region possible.

Loons — Ducks: Only one Red-necked Grebe report was received, a lone individual at Hook Mt., Nyack, on Nov 9 (Eugene Brown). An American Bittern was seen at Crugers Island, Dutchess County, on Nov 23, and the bird may attempt to winter (Rufus and Margaret Wood). This Bittern seems less common than in years past. Five adult and two immature Whistling Swans were observed at Hook Mt., Nyack, Rockland County, from Nov 2 thru Nov 9 (Katherine Dienemann, Eugene Brown et al). This is Rockland's third local record. The migration of Canada Geese through the Hudson Valley was apparently heavy as judged from the reports and comments. An early flock was reported by William Grierson on Sep 22 over Mt. Kisco in Westchester, and peak flights occurred from mid to late October. A late flock was seen on Nov 25 (F. Hough). A lone Brant in a flock of Coots was observed by Ruth Steffans at Congers Lake, Rockland County, on Oct 16. It is not often seen inland from the Hudson River. Most observers missed the Snow Geese, but Paul Jeheber got a nice flock of over 350 as they passed over the Cornwall sector of Orange County on Nov 16. For some other reason a single Snow Goose came into a flock of tame ducks swimming on a small stream near Pleasant Valley, Dutchess County, during a date in mid-No and was still present at the end of the period (Ralph T. Waterman Bird Club).

The largest flock of Green-winged Teal was reported at Swift Pond, Dover Plains, Dutchess County, on Oct 26 where 30 were seen by G. Decker. Oldsquaws were reported in Orange County (E. Treacy, P. Jeheber, J. Dye) and Ulster County (A. Feldman, G. Wood). Two White-winged Scoters were at Orange Lake in Orange County on Nov 21 (Mr. and Mrs. Hugh Pembleton, Ed Treacy). Ruddy Ducks reached a high of over 500 in a flock on the Hudson at Tappan Zee, Rockland Co., on Nov 25 (Mr. and Mrs. Robert Deed).

Hawks — Owls: The movement of Turkey Vultures through the upper counties was noticeably good. Henry and Ilse Dunbar saw about 60 in a flock near Stone Ridge, Ulster County, on Oct 8. These big birds started moving about Sep 15, and most had gone by Oct 20. Except for the Broad-wing most other hawk flights were considered unimpressive. On Sep 12 Ed Treacy counted over 275 Broad-wings passing over Cornwall, Orange Co., and at the same place on Sep 20 at least 375 more were observed by Treacy, A. Dignor, and N. Ward. Down in New City, Rockland County, Mr. and Mrs. Frank Steffans added another 150 Broad-wings on Sep 25. An early Rough-legged Hawk appeared at Pomona, Rockland County, on Oct 20 (Ed Gamble), and another was seen on Oct 31 near Blooming Grove, Orange Co. (E. A. Mearns Bird Club). Ed Treacy, Paul Jeheber, and Robert Bruce had an unexpected thrill in seeing an immature Golden Eagle passing low over the fire tower at Black Rock Forest near Cornwall, Orange Co., on Oct 17. On Oct 9 Mr. and Mrs. Robert Deed watched a Peregrine Falcon repeatedly attack a Marsh Hawk flying over the vicinity of Piermont Marsh in Rockland County.

A Virginia Rail was seen at Crugers Island on Nov 23 (Rufus and Margaret