

October. Southerners reported included a Summer Tanager and several Blue Grosbeaks on Long Island and a Black Vulture in Region 8, all in October. There were no fall observations of Cattle Egrets away from Long Island.

REGION 1—NIAGARA FRONTIER

RICHARD C. ROSCHE

Generally mild and pleasant conditions dominated the weather picture during the period. Average temperatures were slightly above normal and precipitation, except for the early part of the period, was below. The most noteworthy weather event, Hurricane Donna, had no appreciable effect on western New York. The first general snowfall occurred on October 24, with a fall of several inches being reported in some southern tier areas. November was very mild until the last two days of the month. It was then that the winter season began. Snow accumulations of over two feet were reported in areas to the north of Buffalo; lesser amounts occurred in the southern tier.

Passerine movements were generally good, particularly during September, when frequent cold fronts caused favorable conditions for landbirds to move into the area in "waves". However, as in the past few years, the numbers of many, perhaps most, species appeared to be lower than formerly. The most notable influx of small passerines occurred September 17-18. The latter day, with its fog and drizzle, was especially good in most areas but particularly so near or at the tops of the higher ridges in the northern Allegheny Plateau section. September 27-28 were also notable dates, reports of a definite influx of thrushes and first reports of typical early October migrants coming from many areas.

In examining the records below, another period, October 21-22, appears particularly outstanding. The most severe cold of the season up to that time and the first killing frost in many localities occurred. Coinciding with this, was the first noticeable influx of diving ducks and scoters, and the first reports of many winter resident species, i.e. Rough-legged Hawk, Pine Siskin, crossbills, Lapland Longspur and Snow Bunting.

Extreme drought conditions prevailed in many localities. Several observers noted more than the usual number of small landbirds coming to watering trays and lawn sprinklers. Concentrations of landbirds near small inland ponds and lakes appeared greater than usual. Water levels at many of these same ponds, lakes and reservoirs were extremely low, thus resulting in a greater number of shorebird reports than in most years from areas away from the Great Lakes. However, for the same reason many usual resting places for migrant waterfowl during October and November were rendered unsuitable, perhaps the reason for the apparent scarcity of surface feeding ducks and some divers.

Observations of greatest interest include: Eared Grebe, Common Eider, Golden Eagle, Willet, Red Phalarope, Sabine's Gull, Black-backed Three-toed Woodpecker, Western Kingbird, White-eyed Vireo and an extremely late Blue-winged Warbler.

Loons — Ducks: Common Loons were well distributed throughout the area during October and November, probably indicating a good flight. A maximum of 70 was counted on Lake Ontario between Shadigee and Fort Niagara Nov 27 (Axtells). Three Red-throated Loons Nov 20 near Shadigee was the only report (Axtells). A single Red-necked Grebe observed Oct 16 on the Niagara River at Buffalo was the only report (Schaffner). During mid October, Horned Grebes were seen on Lake Erie in unusually large numbers for so early in the autumn. In suitable inland locations they reached normal maximums during the first two weeks of November. The number of Eared Grebe reports was unprecedented. Normally one bird during a season is considered unusual. One was observed well Oct 21 on Lake Erie at Hamburg Town Park (Bourne); another occurred Nov 5 on the west branch of the Niagara River (Thompson et al), and one was studied carefully Nov 20 on Lake Ontario at Shadigee (Axtells). The only Double-crested Cormorants reported were two birds on Lake Ontario near Kuckville Oct 21 (Clark). Common Egrets continued to be scarce during late summer, the latest record being for Sep 5 near Mayville

(Rew). One Black-crowned Night Heron in Buffalo Oct 1 was the only report (Wendlings et al). A male Mute Swan, one of a group of about six which occurred during April at Paradise Lake near Chaffee, remained there until at least Nov 24. All available evidence indicates that this was a feral bird (Rosche et al). Observers at Chautauqua Lake counted 16 Whistling Swans Nov 19 (Bohall et al) and 34 Nov 20 (Rew et al). The only other report was of one immature at Paradise Lake Nov 24 (Rosche et al). The goose flight was disappointing to many observers, especially after those of a year ago. Early Canada Geese were reported Sep 19 near Hamburg (Bourne). Many observers reported flocks flying over Sep 30 - Oct 1. Reports during the remainder of October and November were spotty. Maximum count at Oak Orchard Refuge was 800-1000 Oct 12 (Heilborns). A flock of 20 Brant flying eastward over Lake Ontario at Point Breeze Oct 16 was the only report (Axtells). Blue or Snow Geese were not reported. Dabbling ducks, in general, appeared to be somewhat less abundant than in most years. This was especially true with Pintail, Blue-winged Teal and American Widgeon. However, Black and Wood Ducks were more numerous than usual, perhaps a reflection of a successful nesting season. At a small beaver pond near North Java, 181 Wood Duck were counted as they flew in to roost Sep 1. There were about 150 birds there Sep 25 (Rosche et al). Four were last observed Nov 5 on Grand Island, a rather early date for a mild November (Klabundes). A single Gadwall was observed Nov 3-5 at Grand Island (Klabundes et al). This was the only report. The Shoveler was not reported. Toward the end of the period there was a large concentration of dabblers, especially Pintail and American Widgeon, at Burntship Creek near the North Grand Island Bridge. The first Ring-necked Ducks appeared Oct 6 at Grand Island (Brownstein). Small numbers were present on certain inland ponds during October. Noteworthy was a group of 45 at Chautauqua Lake Nov 20 (Rew et al). Other diving ducks appeared in good numbers beginning Oct 21-22. Redheads and Canvasbacks seemed to be rather scarce, but comparisons with former years cannot be made until the hunting season is over and the birds move into more accessible observation areas from the Great Lakes. One King Eider was recorded Nov 27 on Lake Ontario near Lakeside Park (Axtells). Outstanding was an immature female Common Eider present in the gorge at Niagara Falls Sep 25-29 (Axtells et al). The bird was collected and is now in the Buffalo Museum of Science. The scoter flight beginning about Oct 21-22 was good, although not as extensive as those of a year ago. Ruddy Ducks were definitely more scarce than normally. For the first time in 15 years, none were recorded on the annual October Bird Count conducted by the Buffalo Ornithological Society. The only reports came from Attica Reservoir where one to nine were observed periodically Sep 29 - Nov 12 (Rosche et al) and from the mouth of the Niagara River where one was noted Nov 28 (Brownstein).

Hawks — Owls: The Turkey Vulture was last noted Nov 12 near Batavia (Buckland). One Goshawk was observed under excellent conditions Oct 8 at Chestnut Ridge Park (Bourne). A notable concentration of 14 Red-tailed Hawks was counted Nov 26 on Grand Island (Axtells). The Red-shouldered Hawk appeared to be less abundant than in most years. The only Broad-winged Hawk reported occurred Sep 20 near Cassadaga (Knott et al). Beginning about Oct 21-22 with the first notable movement of diving ducks, Rough-legged Hawks appeared in good numbers, especially on the Lake Ontario plain. On Nov 24, 17 were counted between Basom and Youngstown (Schaffner et al). Seven were observed Nov 26 on Grand Island (Axtells). Like last winter, a number were reported from the higher hill areas of the Allegheny Plateau. The Bald Eagle continues to be a difficult bird to find in this region. Only one, an immature, was observed near New Oregon Sep 26 (Bourne). An immature Golden Eagle was satisfactorily studied Sep 17 near Langford (Bourne). Many observers noted a marked increase in Marsh Hawks during the period. Most birds observed were either females or immatures. Perhaps, with a successful nesting season this year, this bird is staging a comeback from its low population ebb of the past two years. On the other hand, Ospreys appeared to be less abundant than usual, there being only four reports of single birds for the region. Single Pigeon Hawks were observed Sep 18 at Chautauqua Lake (Anderson et al), Oct. 1 at Buffalo (Wendlings et al) and Oct 1 at Attica Reservoir (Rosche et al). On the B.O.S. Count Oct 16, the highest number of Ruffed Grouse in 26 years was reported. A turkey near Farmersville Station Oct 13 represents a new station for this species previously

unknown to local field observers (McShane rep. Bourne). The three day open season in Allegany and Cattaraugus Counties this year accounted for a lower kill than in 1959 although the hunting pressure was about equal both years. Rail reports were few. Large numbers of immature Common Gallinules in many marshes during September and early October, indicated a very successful nesting season. This is another bird greatly benefited by wildlife marsh and farm pond construction. The American Coot was generally scarce, like last year, except for several notable concentrations at Chautauqua Lake. On Oct. 16, 157 were seen there (Jamestown Audubon Society), Oct 20, 2000 (Mitchell et al), and Nov 20, 1800 (Rew et al). Semipalmated Plovers were regularly noted at Chautauqua Lake as well as from several other inland areas. The last occurred Sep 27 at Hamburg Town Parke (Bourne). The Killdeer continued to be more scarce than usual. The lowest number since 1955 was counted Oct 16 (B.O.S. Count). They remained in suitable inland areas much later than usual, the last being reported Nov 27 at Wethersfield Springs (Rosche et al). For the second consecutive year there was little or no available habitat on Grand Island to attract numbers of Golden Plover. Other than the north shore of Lake Erie where they have been more numerous in the past two years than formerly, the only reports came from Bird Island, Buffalo where 15 were observed Sep 23 (Clark) and Squaw Island, Buffalo where one occurred Oct 8 (Filor). The earliest Black-bellied Plover occurred Aug 19 at Prendergast Point (Kibler et al). Six at Mayville Oct 22 constituted the maximum count and latest record for the region (Mitchell et al). Latest dates for resident shorebirds: American Woodcock, Oct 23; Common Snipe, Nov 27; Upland Plover, Sep 1; Spotted Sandpiper, Sep 27. Records of most interest and extreme dates for migrant shorebirds follow. Whimbrel: not reported. Solitary Sandpiper: latest Sep 26. Willet: one at Bird Island, Buffalo Aug 30 and Sep 3 (Clark). Greater Yellowlegs: latest Nov 15. Lesser Yellowlegs: latest Nov 2 near Langford (Bourne). Knot: single birds Aug 22 at Sheldonhall (Lenna et al), Sep 18 at Dunkirk (Knott) and Oct 4 at Hamburg Town Park (Bourne). Pectoral Sandpiper: latest Oct 29. White-rumped Sandpiper: one Oct 28 near Langford (Bourne). Baird's Sandpiper: one to three Aug 22-Sep 5 at Prendergast Point (Lenna et al), and two at Bird Island, Buffalo Aug 26 (Schaffner). Least Sandpiper: latest Oct 2. Dunlin: earliest Sep 19, latest Nov 26. Short-billed Dowitcher: two Aug 25 at Bemus Point (Lenna et al). Stilt Sandpiper: one Sep 17-18 at Bemus Point (Anderson) and one Oct 1 near East Eden (Bourne). Semipalmated Sandpiper: latest Sep. 15. Western Sandpiper: one Aug 22-24 at Prendergast Point (Lenna) and two Aug 26 at Bird Island, Buffalo (Schaffner). Sanderling: eight to ten Sep 10-18 at Chautauqua Lake (Pillsbury et al); latest Nov 10. One Red Phalarope was observed carefully at Athol Springs Nov 12 (Bourne). Gull populations on the Niagara River during November did not reach the extremes which occurred there a year ago. Actually counting gulls whenever possible Nov 20, about the peak of the flight, Dr. Harold Axtell reported the following for the entire Niagara River: Herring Gull, 6000; Ring-billed Gull, 120; Bonapart's Gull, 6500. On Oct 16 the Ring-billed Gull count was the lowest since 1954 and the Herring Gull count the lowest since 1942 (B.O.S. Count). The Glaucous Gull was first reported Nov 20 at Niagara Falls (Axtells). Iceland Gulls were not reported. The Franklin's Gull was first reported from the Niagara River at Buffalo Aug 26 (Schaffner). From one to three immatures were seen there through mid September. One was present in the gorge at Niagara Falls Sep 20 — Nov 13. Records of this species from the south shore of Lake Erie are few, hence one observed Oct 16 near Angola is noteworthy (Bourne). Most interesting was a Sabine's Gull observed excellently under satisfactory conditions Nov 14 in Buffalo's South Harbor (Bourne). A single Little Gull was observed on the Niagara River at Buffalo Sep 12-27 (Mitchell et al). None were reported during October. One to two were noted during November on the Lower Niagara River by several observers and one was noted Nov 3, 5 and 10 on Lake Erie near Hamburg (Bourne). Noteworthy were two Forster's Terns which were regularly seen at Delaware Park Lake, Buffalo Sep 3-7 (Schaffner et al). Two others were last reported Oct 26 from the Niagara River at Buffalo (Clark). One Common Tern was still present on the Niagara River Nov 20 (Mitchell et al). Maximum count of Black Terns on the Niagara River in the vicinity of the Peace Bridge was 3000 on Aug 20 (Schaffner et al). Mourning Doves appeared to be down in numbers. A nest containing two young Sep 20 in suburban Buffalo is an interest-

ing late nesting date (Christensen). One flock, estimated at 140 birds, was noted Oct 1 at Grand Island (Seeber et al). Two Barn Owls were still present at the Brocton nesting site Sep 16 (Brownstein et al). Five young were successfully reared and banded at a nest near Hamburg (Bourne et al). Single individuals were noted Nov 20 at Youngstown Cemetery (Mitchell et al) and Nov 26 at Wilson (Brownstein). The number of Snowy Owls reported gives some indication that this may be a peak year. First appearing during the last few days of October, there were several still present in the immediate vicinity of Buffalo at the end of the period. Four Short-eared Owls were observed Nov 27 at Grand Island (Axtells et al) and a single Saw-Whet Owl was found Nov 18 at Alden (Brownstein et al).

Goatsuckers — Shrikes: Whip-poor-will reports were few. Notable movements of Common Nighthawks occurred over suburban Buffalo Aug 27 when 67 were counted and Sep 24 when 94 passed over (Brownstein). On Sep 23, about 500 Chimney Swifts were noted in the air at the Jamestown Bird Roost (Beal). One was last reported Oct 6 at Buffalo (Clark). One Red-bellied Woodpecker was reported Sep 24 and Oct 16 near Batavia (Buckland). Red-headed Woodpeckers appeared to have fared rather well during the 1960 nesting season, there being an encouraging number of reports of migrant individuals during early September. Several observers stated that they had seen more of these birds this September than they had in the same month for the past four or five years. Outstanding was the finding of a Black-backed Three-toed Woodpecker Oct 9 on Grand Island (Mitchell et al). This is the earliest known fall date for the region. The Eastern Kingbird flight was excellent during late August and early September. A maximum count of 94 was reported Aug 21 in the Oak Orchard Refuge area (Brockner). A rather late individual was noted Sep 24 near Warsaw (Rosche et al). One Western Kingbird, the first record for this region, was studied carefully and all field marks noted Sep 9 near Chaffee (Rosche et al). Many observers commented again on the general scarcity of Eastern Phoebe. Fewer were reported on the Oct 16 Count than in any other year since 1949. A late Yellow-bellied Flycatcher was noted Sep 27 at Buffalo (Brownstein). Olive-sided Flycatchers seemed to be more scarce than in most years, there being only three reports for the migration. Horned Larks were less numerous than usual. Two Horned Larks (*E. a. alpestris*) observed Nov 6 near Bliss was the only report (Rosche et al). A roost in the city of Jamestown used primarily by Purple Martins since 1956 attracted much attention from field observers, near and far, this year. The following are estimates of martin populations at the roost: Aug 29 — 100,000; Aug 30 — 50,000; Sep 2 — 75,000; Sep 9 — 30,000; Sep 14 — 15,000; Sep 18 — 5,000; Sep 23 — 200; Sep 30 — 1 (Beal). The Tufted Titmouse did not appear to expand its range in the region during the period from the reports on hand. Red-breasted Nuthatches were widely scattered throughout the region in moderate numbers, the first migrant appearing Sep 5 at Niagara Falls (Heilborn). A single Carolina Wren Nov 26 and Nov 28 at Wilson represents the only locality from which this species has not been regularly reported in the past. One Short-billed Marsh Wren was observed Oct 16 near Angola (Bourne). The first Mockingbird reported since June was discovered Nov 3 in a residential area in suburban Buffalo. It was observed periodically through the end of the period (Dietrich). Another was noted Nov 19 at Wethersfield Springs (Rosche). In general, the thrush migration was excellent. Unusually late dates were reported for three species. A single Wood Thrush was observed Oct 16 in the Batavia area (B. O. S. Count). Two Swainson's Thrushes were reported Oct 20 from Grand Island (Freitag) and another was reported Oct 29 (Brockner). A late Veery was studied carefully Sep 26 at Lewiston (Klabunde). Peak numbers of Swainson's and Graycheeked Thrushes occurred Sep 17-18 and Sep 27-30. Many observers continued to express concern over the Eastern Bluebird, while others had the impression that migrant flocks during September and October were larger and more frequent than in the past two years. Many flocks contained a high percentage of juveniles. Ruby-crowned Kinglets and Water Pipits appeared to be down in numbers compared with most years. On the other hand, Cedar Waxwings, were more numerous, there being many flocks present through the end of the period. Northern Shrikes were generally scarce after the first one was noted Oct 30 at Oak Orchard (North). There were only four reports for November. A Loggerhead Shrike was noted Aug 21 near Albion (Brockner).

Vireos — Warblers: Most interesting was an excellent observation of a White-eyed Vireo Sep 18 at Youngstown (Klabundes). Several Yellow-throated Vireos occurred during September, the last being for Sep 23 at Hamburg (Bourne). The Solitary Vireo continued to be very scarce. Several of the more active field observers in the region had difficulty in finding even one this year. Philadelphia Vireos seemed to be more common than usual during September, especially in inland areas where they were considered rather rare in past years. A late Warbling Vireo was observed Sep 23 near Attica Center (Rosche). A total of 30 species of warblers were reported during the period. With few exceptions, arrival dates were later and departure dates were earlier than the average dates for the region. Except for good numbers of birds on 'flight days' previously mentioned, the following are the only records of possible interest. A Blue-winged Warbler, rare any time after late August, was picked up dead from a snowbank in Hamburg Nov. 30. The specimen, in excellent condition, is now in the Buffalo Museum of Science (Lillie rep. Bacon and Axtell). Noteworthy was the movement of Parula Warblers between Sep 12 and 23, the most noticeable influx in the past few years. Late Yellow Warblers were reported Sep 18 from Chestnut Ridge Park (Freitag) and Frewsburg (Anderson et al). A Cerulean Warbler was studied under good conditions Sep 13 at Chestnut Ridge Park (Bourne). There are a few September dates for this species. The same observer studied a Pine Warbler Sep 22 in the same locality. A Louisiana Waterthrush occurred Aug 25 at Mayville (Lenna). Single Connecticut Warblers were observed Sep 17 at Buffalo (Mitchell et al) and Sep 23 at Hamburg (Bourne).

Blackbirds — Sparrows: Except for the Red-winged Blackbird, most Icterids appeared to continue their upward trend as noted in past reports. There was a good flight of Bobolinks, maximum number occurring about Aug 20-25. At the Jamestown roost Oct 1, 100 Rusty Blackbirds were counted as well as about 7000 Red-winged Blackbirds and 600 Brown-headed Cowbirds. Good numbers of meadowlarks, Red-winged Blackbirds and Brown-headed Cowbirds were reported through the end of the period — the mild November undoubtedly the reason. The late October — November flight of winter finches was outstanding. Pine Siskins took the limelight, good numbers being observed throughout the region. Maximum counts occurred Oct 21 when 650 were observed on the Lake Ontario Plain between Wilson and Youngstown and Nov 26 when about 350 were estimated to be in this same area (Brownstein et al). Red Crossbills came next in frequency and abundance. While most were noted on the Lake Ontario Plain, a number of reports came from scattered inland localities. Maximum count occurred Nov 26 when 36 were observed between Wilson and Youngstown (Brownstein et al). White-winged Crossbills were less numerous. Three were reported Oct 21 at Point Breeze, Orleans County (Brownstein et al), four Oct 27 on the Lake Ontario Plain (Wendlings et al) and nine on Nov 7 at Chestnut Ridge Park (Bourne). Common Redpolls were scarce with four near New Oregon Nov 2 (Bourne) and nine near Orangeville Nov 27 (Rosche et al) being the only reports. Purple Finches were somewhat more common and widespread also. Fifteen on Grand Island Oct 13 (Clark) and seven in the same area Nov 26 (Axtells) were the most noteworthy reports. There were no Pine or Evening Grosbeaks reported through the end of the period. The number of late Grasshopper Sparrows was noteworthy. One was observed well Sep 18 near Bennington Center (Rosche et al) and one to two were studied Sep 24, 26 and 29 at Elma (Coggeshall). The Sharp-tailed Sparrow was not reported this year. A late Chipping Sparrow was observed Nov 11 at Buffalo (Nathan et al). White-crowned Sparrows appeared to be more common than usual during mid October. One observed Nov 5 at Orangeville was the latest record (Rosche et al). Fox Sparrow was less common than usual. An early Lincoln's Sparrow was observed Sep 11 at Lewiston (Klabundes). In northwestern Wyoming County, unprecedented numbers of this species were observed Sep 18 - Oct 1 (Rosche). On the Lake Ontario Plain between Point Breeze and Kuckville, 54 Lapland Longspurs were counted Oct 21 (Brownstein et al). Two birds in this same area Nov 13 were the only others reported (Axtells). The flight of Snow Buntings was less impressive that that of last year, but nevertheless somewhat better than average. Ten were first observed Oct 21 at Point Breeze, Orleans County (Brownstein). Flocks of up to 350 individuals were reported from widely scattered localities through November.

48 Dartmouth Avenue, Buffalo 15