

Hawk-Owl near Braddocks Bay: I first observed this Hawk-Owl (*Surnia ulula* caparoch) about noon on Oct. 25, 1962, sitting in a medium sized tree, at the intersection of Hogan Pt. and Hinchey roads, near Braddocks Bay.

When I spotted the bird, I stopped the car a few hundred feet away and took a look with 8 x 40 binoculars. I then drove up until I was almost beneath the tree and took a good, long look.

Besides the characteristic shape and size, I was most impressed by the heavy transverse barring across the underparts and the "side-burns". He seemed to be rather settled in that particular tree and quite tame. The feathers being blown about by the wind looked quite soft and fluffy.

When about 3 P.M., I stopped by again, he was in an adjacent tree about 400 feet away across an open field. At this time he seemed to be alert and looking for game. A smaller bird was in the same tree but was keeping out of his way. Soon the Hawk-Owl flew right back to the original tree. I never observed it to sit in the very top of a tree or jerk its tail.

The bird was under observation from noon until dark by about a dozen people and the identification was confirmed by these observers: Mr. and Mrs. Ralph Dakin, Gary Leubner, Mr. and Mrs. Neil Moon, Al Starling, Mr. and Mrs. Leo Tanghe, Joseph W. Taylor and others.

The bird was observed to hover over and catch at least two mice. One of these, it left in an old bird's nest. Neil Moon reported that the bird caught a mouse and flew up the road a few feet off the ground directly toward him. As it neared him, it rose just high enough to avoid striking him in the head and continued on to a perch. Other instances of its fearlessness were reported. Some pictures were taken but I do not know the results.

Despite later visits, the bird was not seen after that day. A woman from the nearest farm said that the bird had been around for several days. The pheasant season was on at the time.

Recently, I observed the Hawk-Owl near Lockport and believe it to be a different bird than ours near Braddocks Bay. The Lockport bird seemed smaller in size.

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HIGHLIGHTS OF THE FALL SEASON AUGUST 16 — NOVEMBER 30 DAVID B. PEAKALL

In general the fall migration of warblers and other passerines was reported as good with some notable peaks. In several areas September 27-29th was an especially good period, but otherwise the dates of peaks did not seem to correspond in the various parts of the state. Particularly noteworthy were the heavy TV tower kills near Buffalo.

The occurrence of a flock of 150 Red-throated Loons on Saratoga Lake is a very unusual occurrence. The distribution of this species upstate is strange, it sometimes occurs in large numbers on the southern shores of Lake Ontario (ie 3000 April 20, 1960 nr Rochester); it has never been recorded in large numbers on the eastern shore of Lake Ontario nor, until now, away from the lake.

The migration of Canada Geese was generally reported as good. The regional reports do not contain enough data to give an overall summary of the duck migration, but a number of interesting points emerge. The Red-head can be currently considered as a rare bird, in some regions it was unreported and the maximum count was nine on Chautauqua Lake. A Cinnamon Teal was observed in region 1, the first record for this area and the 3rd or 4th for the state. There is an old specimen from Yates county, one reported

shot but not saved in 1949 in Jefferson county and a well substantiated sight record from Long Island in 1957. The most unusual waterfowl occurrence was the appearance upstate of large numbers of Common Scoters on October 13th. Several flocks, totalling 500 individuals, were seen in region 8. The largest group was on Saratoga Lake. This is an enormous number for this species away from the sea, there is no recent count for Lake Ontario (where it is regular) as large as this and away from the Great Lakes and Long Island it is normally a scarce bird. On the same date, twenty were observed on Kiamesha Lake and 52 at Rochester (highest count for four years). Winds from the east of up to 80 miles per hour during the previous few days presumably accounts for these unusual records.

Another report of a Black Vulture from the Hudson Valley is a further indication of the northward spread of this species (Greider and Wagner, *Wilson Bulletin*, 1960, 72:291). Two Golden Eagles were reported from region 1.

The general impression of the shorebird migration was that variety was good but the numbers on the whole rather poor. On the sight record of a Greenshank it does not behove me to comment. There were more reports than usual of the Purple Sandpiper from Lake Ontario. The status of this species as a regular November migrant in small numbers along the shores of Lake Ontario can now be considered to be established. A Red Phalarope was found in region 4 where it is very scarce and the species was also recorded from regions 1 & 6. There was a good flight of Bonaparte's Gull on the Niagara River and better than normal numbers at Rochester. As in the great flight of 1959 a number of Little Gulls were recorded in the flocks. If this is a true correlation it is a surprising one since the breeding grounds of the Bonaparte's Gull is the sub-arctic regions of north-western Canada and the Little Gull breeds in the temperate regions of Europe and Asia. The rare Sabine's Gull was reported from regions 1 & 2.

The Hawk-Owl was reported near Rochester and from Madison county. There have been several reports from nearby regions of Ontario suggesting a minor interruption of this northern species. The Black-backed Three-toed Woodpecker was widely reported, from Niagara to Dutchess counties. There were two upstate records of the Western Kingbird. This species is rarely recorded away from Long Island, I know of only five other upstate records. However, since the species is regular, although in small numbers, in fall on the New England coast and on Long Island there is presumably a small overland passage each year.

A specimen of a Raven was obtained from a crow shot in Madison county and another was reported to have been shot. One was seen in Orange county. There is, it appears, a small passage of this species, which usually passes unreported. The migration reports of Bluebirds were encouraging. The field note section gives an account of 200 seen in a small area near Lake Erie, a sight that probably has not been seen in the state for many years. Most regional reports noted an improvement, a number reporting the best counts for several years and nowhere was a decrease noted.

One's first impression of a report of a flock of a 100 million Redwings along the Hudson Valley is 'surely not'. I calculated the number of birds

for myself using the dimensions of the flock given by Mr. Foley and the figures for flock density and flock speed given by Symonds (Bird Study, 1961, 8:192) for the Starling. The figure obtained was somewhat larger than Mr. Foley's but was of the same order of magnitude.

To end on a negative note it looks like being a poor winter for watching winter finches; only the Pine Siskin was widely reported and that only in moderate numbers.

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REGION 1 — NIAGARA FRONTIER

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In contrast to the generally mild and pleasant weather conditions of the past few fall seasons, autumn 1962 was somewhat disappointing. The large number of balmy, sunny days so typical of recent fall seasons, were below average this year. Temperatures averaged slightly below normal; precipitation continued to be below normal. Many areas on the Lake Plains did not have any frost during the month of September.

Weather extremes included one of the earliest major local snowstorms on October 26-27. Most areas of Western New York had measurable snowfall with the heaviest accumulations reported up to 15 inches in Southern Tier areas. Two inches on October 26 were the greatest amount recorded in Buffalo for October since 1925. On the brighter side of the picture — November ended with a series of seven exceptionally mild 50-60 degree days caused by a static high pressure system over Eastern United States.

September, too, had its weather extreme — this extreme being of most interest to local ornithologists. The first soaking rain since mid June and the heaviest in three years (total 2.50 inches) fell on September 27-28-29. Northeasterly winds, and dense fog in some areas, accompanied this storm. During this storm the largest television tower kill of nocturnal migrant passerines on local record occurred. A total of 655 individuals of 37 species were picked up dead from the base of a tower located in the Town of Colden, Southern Erie County. Migrants were falling out of the sky so often, that the person in charge entered in the official station log, "It is raining birds"! The ridge upon which the tower is located is 1720 feet above sea level (or about 1100 feet above the level of the near-by Lake Erie Plain); the tower proper is 1159 feet in height.

Additional specimens were picked up at this tower on October 7, 10, and 13 following foggy nights. The total kill on all five dates reached 779 birds of 47 species. The ten most common kill birds in decreasing order were: Swainson's Thrush, Ovenbird, Red-eyed Vireo, Gray-cheeked Thrush, Rose-breasted Grosbeak, Blackpoll Warbler, Catbird, Bay-breasted Warbler, Scarlet Tanager, and Black-throated Blue Warbler. Other comments concerning the tower kills can be found in the notes below.

Highlights of the season include: a report of a Cinnamon Teal; Golden Eagle, Black-legged Kittiwake, Sabine's Gull, and Black-backed Three-toed Woodpecker.

Abbreviations used below are as follows: BOS COUNT — Buffalo Ornithological Society October Bird Count; Chaut. Lk. — Chautauqua Lake; ISP — Island State Park; OOGMA — Oak Orchard Game Management Area.

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