

storm on August 23, and it is possible that this weather brought him ashore. This is, I believe, the earliest fall date for this gull.

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Ed. Note: This is apparently the 12th record of this species for Long Island. See *Kingbird* for January 1968 and January 1969 where the 10th and 11th records are reported.

HIGHLIGHTS OF THE FALL SEASON

FRITZ SCHEIDER

Autumn! Season of mists and mellow fruitfulness – and rarities! A veritable smorgasbord of rarities appeared across the state and a major banquet of same occurred on Long Island (v.i.). Fortunately not only rarities but a whole barn of other migrational data was harvested this season by an ever enlarging corps of birders.

Nearly all sectors agreed that fall was warm and wet with little really cold or snowy weather until late November. Consequently many warm weather waterbirds (herons, shorebirds, terns) and many insectivores, particularly certain flycatchers, thrushes, vireos, and warblers, established late and even record late departure dates. The consensus seemed universal that this was to be a winter without winter finches or Red-breasted Nuthatches, and no other northern landbird incursions, except possibly Northern Shrike, appeared evident. Upstate a universal complaint of high water preceded the apologia for such poor shorebird tallies, but downstate areas did very well, especially in Golden Plover.

Red-throated Loons were reported widely upstate (2, 3, 5, 6, 7) but the Great Lakes' Brant and scoter flights (2, 5, 6) were uniformly poor. Both regions 2 and 5 mentioned very poor numbers of dabbling ducks and of some diving ducks, probably secondary to the early intensive hunting pressure, but spectacular numbers were tallied at Montezuma National Wildlife Refuge – the tally of 8000 Blue-winged Teal there may be a state record. Both Scaup species and Common Goldeneye numbers seemed lower when and where noted but this may be the negative side of the very mild weather of the period.

The picture on raptores is mixed; many more Accipters were noted (3, 5, 9) and some impressive Broad-winged Hawk tallies were achieved in Regions 9 and 10. Both Red-shouldered and Marsh Hawks were noted as being almost universally decreased and the total numbers given for Rough-legged Hawks were low (3, 4, 5, 6) although reports were widespread. A few more Peregrine Falcons were noted (3, 5, 6, 9, 10) but the Pigeon Hawk seemed as scarce as or scarcer than ever. Ring-necked Pheasants were definitely decreased in Regions 3, 5, and 9 and so uniformly so that one might question if an epizootic rather than hunting pressure or habitat changes was responsible.

Shorebird tallies were kept low by the lack of habitat upstate but both Purple Sandpiper (2, 5, 6) and Buff-breasted Sandpiper (2, 3, 5, 10) were observed in unusual numbers; also inland numbers of all three species of phalaropes seemed above average. The only Ruff for the period was a July bird from Long Island. Parasitic and Pomarine Jaegers were recorded on Lake Ontario (2, 5, 6) and a Parasitic Jaeger from Lake Champlain (7) might be a drifter from the suspected Hudson Bay - Great Lakes - Atlantic Ocean route.

Whip-poor-wills, rarely mentioned in the fall, established record departures upstate (3, 5) and more migrant Common Nighthawks were noted. Equally impressive were the high September counts of migrant Flickers (2, 5, 6) and Yellow-bellied Sapsucker. Increased numbers of Yellow-bellied Flycatchers (3, 5) were matched by some amazing totals on Philadelphia Vireo (3, 5, 9, 10); however, numbers of swallows, especially Tree (3, 5) and possibly Bank (3), upstate appeared reduced; it would be interesting to know if the tremendous Tree Swallow congregations on Long Island have shown any recent reduction. Both Tufted Titmouse (4, 5, 6) and Mockingbird (4, 5, 9) increases received documentation in this report but the Carolina Wren upstate is mentioned as singles only here and there (2, 3, 4). Pleasantly greater numbers of migrant Bluebirds were mentioned in Regions 3 and 5 - when was the last time you saw 50 Bluebirds in New York State? Heavy flights of both Golden-crowned and Ruby-crowned Kinglets were observed (5, 7, 9) but few November holdovers of the latter were mentioned, this despite the warm weather. And if the winter finches did not come south, by heaven, the Cedar Waxwings did - September and October tallies in Regions 3, 5, and 9 were frankly impressive.

Heavy warbler migrations were reported September 15-19, 24-26 (upstate), 27-28 (downstate with a kill at the Empire State Building), and October 6, 14-16 (upstate) and 17-18 (downstate). Numbers in central New York (3, 4, 5) seemed rather low or, at least, very spotty but heavy flights (numbers not given) were reported in both Regions 7 and 9; the many late dates (q.v.), even in the Adirondack Mountains, attest to the protracted warm weather this fall.

A few Evening Grosbeaks appear to be the only evidence of the existence of winter finches and, except for the range expansions of the House Finch and, to a lesser degree, of the Cardinal, that portion of the Fringillid list is a washout. Numbers of emberizine sparrows seemed up somewhat and a splendid pot-pourri of rare (LeConte's, Sharp-tailed, Clay-colored Sparrows) and semi-rare (Lincoln's Sparrow, Oregon Junco) species was reported.

Rarae aves for the period include Eared Grebe (9, 10), Little Blue Heron (5), Cattle Egret (3, 9), Snowy Egret (3), Blue Goose (7), Common Eider (2, 6), Purple Gallinule (2), Marbled Godwit (3), Hudsonian Godwit (6), Parasitic Jaeger (6), Franklin's Gull (5), House Finch

(3, 4, 5), Sharp-tailed Sparrow (3), and Clay-colored Sparrow (3). I recommend a careful reading of all the Region 10 report which has enough rarities in it to make one drool and wish for tides and salt water someplace – any place – upstate.

It is regretted that summaries were unavailable from Regions 1 and 8.
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REGION 2 — GENESEE

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We enjoyed a long and mild fall season this year until a few days before Thanksgiving when a cold front accompanied by several inches of snow changed the scene to winter almost overnight. Rainfall was consistently above normal and well-distributed through the period. For the second successive year, we seemed headed for above normal precipitation, probably by several inches. This follows a cycle of many dry years through most of the past decade.

The fall migration was not spectacular in the last part of August and early September with the exception of a few noteworthy records mentioned below. Perhaps this was chiefly because we again had to look hard to find suitable shorebird habitat and also because steady, mild weather before mid-September appeared somewhat to delay the migration of many passerine species.

Nevertheless, after mid-September, birding improved steadily and the total impression of most observers was that we had the best fall warbler migration in years. Many of these species were still present well into early October and, following a good spring flight, it was indeed encouraging.

October and November were two of the best months, as always in this climate, and many interesting records are cited below. The duck flight did not appear especially heavy, although in much of this region duck hunting prevents concentrated build-up, especially of shallow water species. Flights of divers were at least normal and in some species may have improved over recent poor years.

So far northern finches and other erratic winter visitants have been scarce. In the case of several no reports have been received to date. Usually a heavy flight can be seen building up in late October and November so the outlook for the winter season appears dim in this respect.

Most unusual records include: King Eider, Peregrine Falcon, Purple Gallinule, all three Phalaropes, Buff-breasted Sandpiper, Purple Sandpiper, Pomarine Jaeger, Parasitic Jaeger, Black-legged Kittiwake, Orange-crowned Warbler, Pine Warbler.

Observers cited in text: JC—Jerry Czech; GD—Gertude Davis; JF—John Foster; AEK—Allen E. Kemnitzer; BK—Bea Kemnitzer; WL—Warren Lloyd; WCL—Walter C. Listman; J and TM—Joseph and Thelma McNett; mob—many observers; RO'H—Richard O'Hara; SO—Steven Oresman; GP—Glenn Perrigo; GOS—Genesee Ornithological Society; MAS—Mary Ann Sunderlin; TT—Thomas Tetlow.

Locations: BB—Braddocks Bay; DP—Durand Park; HBP—Hamlin Beach Park; MB—Manitou Beach; MP—Mendon Ponds; OB—Ontario Beach; SB—Sodus Bay; WP—Webster Park.

LOONS—DUCKS: Red-throated Loons reached a peak on November 21 when 34 were noted at WP (AEK). The best count of Whistling Swan was 17 on November 24 (WCL); there were some still present at the end of November. 2 Least Bitterns were noted at BB on August 19 (RO'H) and another was seen in the same place on September 19.

The fall flight of Brant was somewhat late this year with the best count being