

VIREOS-WARBLEDERS: Yellow-throated Vireo: Chenango Forks Aug. 18-31; Owego Sept. 21. Solitary Vireo: Vestal Oct. 9. Red-eyed Vireo: banded Vestal Oct. 21. Philadelphia Vireo: 5 reports, 4 banded Vestal to Oct. 3 (EH). Warbling Vireo: Owego Sept. 6: 3 Otsego Co. Sept. 6; Otsego Co. Sept. 20. Blue-winged Warbler: 1 Chenango Forks Sept. 6 (A, MD) only report. Tennessee Warbler: Sept. 2 to Oct. 5. Nashville Warbler: Choconut Center Oct. 4. Parula Warbler: 1 Vestal Oct. 10 (GC) only report. Yellow Warbler: Owego Sept. 6. Magnolia Warbler: Choconut Center Sept. 28. Cape May Warbler: Vestal & Endwell Sept. 27. Black-throated Blue Warbler: Owego Oct. 16. Yellow-rumped Warbler: 10 Otsego Co. Oct. 25; Owego Nov. 2. Black-throated Green Warbler: Owego Oct. 16. Blackburnian Warbler: Owego Oct. 16. **YELLOW-THROATED WARBLER:** 1 SUCO campus Oneonta Oct. 16-21 (MB, FE, JN). Chestnut-sided Warbler: banded Vestal Oct. 5. Bay-breasted Warbler: 8 Otsego Co. Aug. 30. Blackpoll Warbler: Owego Oct. 16. Palm Warbler: banded Vestal Oct. 13, only report. Ovenbird: Vestal Oct. 12. Northern Waterthrush: Vestal Sept. 27. Connecticut Warbler: 1 Candor Sept. 7; 1 Vestal Sept. 17. Common Yellowthroat: Sept. 28; Wilson's Warbler: Owego Sept. 21. Canada Warbler: Owego Sept. 21. Am. Redstart: Choconut Center Sept. 28.

WEAVERS-SPARROWS: Bobolink: 100 Otsego Co. Aug. 30, last report. E. Meadowlark: 8 Milford Nov. 1, last report. Northern Oriole, Owego Sept. 11. Rusty Blackbird: 2 Endwell Oct. 10 (FL) only report. Scarlet Tanager: Owego Nov. 2. Rose-breasted Grosbeak: Owego Oct. 4. Evening Grosbeak: 2 Oneonta Res. Aug. 21; 20 Vestal Oct. 8; many later. Purple Finch: 22 Otsego Co. Sept. 13. House Finch: thruout period. Pine Grosbeak: 8 Hartwick Nov. 8; 2 Milford Nov. 23. Pine Siskin: Owego Sept. 23; Candor Nov. 2; 3 other reports. Red Crossbill: 12 Greenwood Park Nov. 16 (MS). White-winged Crossbill: Owego Oct. 17 (RB). Rufous-sided Towhee: Owego Oct. 20. Savannah Sparrow: 1 Otsego Co. Aug. 16 only report. Vesper Sparrow: 5 Delhi Oct. 25. Dark-eyed Junco: 5 Otsego Co. Sept. 13; many Oct., few Nov. Tree Sparrow: 16 Norwich Oct. 10. Chipping Sparrow: Delhi Oct. 29. Field Sparrow: Otsego Co. Oct. 25. White-crowned Sparrow: Choconut Center Oct. 4; Chenango Forks Oct. 4; several thru Oct. 25 when 50 were at Milford. White-throated Sparrow: 1 Otsego Co. Sept. 13, many Oct., few Nov. Fox Sparrow: 2 banded Vestal Oct. 23; Oneonta Nov. 19; 2 other reports. Lincoln's Sparrow: 1 banded Vestal Sept. 18 & 20 (EH); 1 Choconut Center Oct. 18 (MS). Swamp Sparrow: 1 Otsego Co. Aug. 16; 5 Otsego Co. Oct. 25; 5 other reports. Snow Bunting: Owego Nov. 5 (C, JB); 1-2 Greenwood Pk. Nov. 16 (MS).

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REGION 5 – ONEIDA LAKE BASIN

FRITZ SCHEIDER

September entered wet and cloudy, persisted so, and turned surprisingly cold by mid-month. Insect life plummeted and correspondingly the insectivores (flycatchers, swallows) bugged out early. Many migrants (thrushes, icterids, tanagers) normally feeding on a mixed insect and fruit diet seemed to concentrate almost exclusively on the heavy berry crops hereabout. October weather mellowed and dried out the soggy landscape a bit. Strong southwest winds, the absence of cold fronts with northerly winds, and the abundant weed seed crop produced ideal conditions to hold migrant sparrows. Conversely the waterfowl and gull movements, particularly on Lake Ontario, were virtually nil and the duck hunters cursed the numerous days of "bluebird" weather. What do we call those lovely warm

autumnal days now that we don't have bluebirds anymore? November remained persistently mild and somewhat dry with no serious freeze-up before the close of the period.

Cone crops and the acorn crop were both utter failures and species dependent (cross-bills, Blue Jay) on such will be, I predict, thinly recorded this winter. The heavy rains of Hurricane Eloise in mid-September ruined the local shorebirding and even when some habitat reappeared in October, the shorebird flight continued poor in both numbers and variety.

Positives for the season include 1) increasing numbers of Double-crested Cormorant; 2) some improvement, albeit small, in local tallies of Redhead, Canvasback, Ruddy Duck, and American Coot; 3) good Lake Ontario flights of Oldsquaw and Red-breasted Merganser; 4) a rediscovered hawk migration lookout (1000+ birds) near Oneida; 5) a fair flight of jaegers on Lake Ontario; 6) an irruption of Black-capped Chickadees with accompanying Boreal Chickadees; 7) expansion in Red-bellied Woodpecker, Tufted Titmouse, Carolina Wren, and Mockingbird; 8) a strong flight of both kinglets; 9) heavy movements of Hermit and Swainson's Thrushes, Scarlet Tanager, and Rose-breasted Grosbeak; 10) good to excellent tallies of early September warblers—Cape May, Magnolia, Blackburnian, Bay-breasted, and Wilson's Warblers; 11) winter finch irruptions, notable more for variety than numbers, though some species had high counts briefly; and 12) a very heavy sparrow migration in October with an especially strong Lincoln's Sparrow flight.

Negatives, surprisingly, constitute a shorter litany (am I getting optimistic in my old age?)—1) no white herons and a paucity of American Bittern; 2) a very poor dabbling flight, especially of Pintail, American Wigeon, and Wood Duck; 3) a poor flight of both scaup, all three scoters, and both Hooded and Common Mergansers; 4) a miserable shorebird migration, not even improved by the usually numerous later Dunlin; 5) very poor gull numbers, even for the common species; 6) early departures of most flycatchers and all swallows; 7) poor tallies of the later September warblers—Parula, Black-throated Blue, Black-throated Green, and Blackpoll Warblers; 8) a paucity of Horned Lark, Eastern Meadowlark, and "grass" sparrows, most notably Vesper Sparrow.

Seasonal rarities include European Wigeon, Harlequin Duck, Peregrine Falcon, Purple Sandpiper, Parasitic and Pomarine Jaegers, Little Gull, Black-legged Kittiwake, Forster's Tern, Boreal Chickadee, Bohemian Waxwing, Yellow-breasted Chat, and Sharp-tailed Sparrow.

Abbreviations: DH—Derby Hill near Texas; FH & FHBSP—Fair Haven and Fair Haven Beach State Park; LOL—Lake Ontario littoral; NPT—Northern Pompey Township; SP—Sandy Pond; SSSP—Selkirk Shores State Park near Port Ontario; Syr—Syracuse.

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Please have Winter Season reports (1 December-31 March) in by April 7.

LOONS—DUCKS: Red-throated Loon: 18 individuals Oct. 23-Nov. 23, the majority from L. Ontario, a bit up from the usual number. Horned Grebe: max. 149 Nov. 2 LOL.

Double-crested Cormorant: one-nine per day LOL thru period; definitely increasing on eastern L. Ontario. Black-crowned Night Heron: max. six Oneida L. Sept. 21. American Bittern: increasingly scarce—total four individuals for the period with the last noted Oct. 26.

Mute Swan: single adult persisting thru period at SSSP. Canada Goose: big flight early—3400 Oct. 2 DH and 1050 Oct. 8 at Oswego. Brant: max. 1600 (low) Oct. 30 DH; no other big groups noted.

Gadwall: max. 53 (low) FHBSP and Beaver L. Nov. 9. Pintail: scarce—max. only 190 Oct. 2 DH; most tallies in one-20 per day range. EUROPEAN WIGEON: ad male Oct. 30

DH (FGS), second fall record for the region. American Wigeon: peak 600 Nov. 7 Beaver L. (JWP); used to be recorded in the thousands—where have all the wigeon gone? Wood Duck: fall max. only 72 DH Oct. 7; five years ago it was noted by the hundreds.

Redhead: increasing somewhat—max. 350 FH Nov. 29; also 70 Beaver L. Nov. 9 where recent fall tallies have been only 10-20 per day. Canvasback: some slight improvement in local numbers—max. 850 FH Nov. 29; numbers otherwise below 100 per day.

Oldsquaw: max. 1525 Oct. 30 passing DH in a fierce NW gale. **HARLEQUIN DUCK**: one Nov. 15 (MSR) only report this fall. The scoter flight was rather thin this fall—max. White-winged 350 Nov. 13, Surf 130 Oct. 3, and Black 360 Oct. 30, all from L. Ontario.

Ruddy Duck: max. 73 at Beaver L. Oct. 25 (GH), best tally in a decade. Hooded Merganser: very scarce—max. only 28 Nov. 28 FH; similarly scarce is Common Merganser with the max. a dismal five Nov. 15 DH; in contrast Red-breasted Merganser were abundant along LOL with 7500 Nov. 23 east of Oswego Harbor.

HAWKS—ALCIDS: The Oneida Hawk Lookout tallies Aug. 31 thru Oct. 30 (B & S Peebles) include Turkey Vulture 16, Goshawk 2, Sharp-shinned Hawk 197, Cooper's Hawk 32, Red-tailed Hawk 196, Red-shouldered Hawk 18, Broad-winged Hawk 607, Rough-legged Hawk 18, Marsh Hawk 31, Osprey 6, American Kestrel 119, unidentified 44, grand total 1286. Rare raptors for the fall are an ad Bald Eagle Woodman's Pond Sept. 10 (G & MC) and a second ad at Quaker Hill near Rome (fide EVD), **PEREGRINE FALCON** singles Sept. 21 and Oct. 3 SP (FGS), and ad male Merlin Sept. 7 Tully (JWP).

Ring-necked Pheasant: increasingly scarce—max. only 8 Sept. 4 Vernon. American Coot: max. 400 Nov. 29 FH and 600 Nov. 7 Beaver L, tallies much increased over past five years.

Shorebirding in the period was basically a washout—Hurricane Eloise swamped all local mud flats and shorebirds were more likely in muddy harvested cornfields than at lake margins. Killdeer: max. 120 Sept. 4 Mexico. American Golden Plover: max. 35 Sept. 18 Durhamville and again 35 Oct. 3 Canastota (both DWA); departure date Nov. 9 one (late) Sage Creek flats. Black-bellied Plover: scarce—max. only 14 FH Oct. 26; present to Nov. 20 one Sage Creek flats.

Common Snipe: max. 70 Oct. SSSP—Chedmardo; present thru period. Upland Sandpiper: 5 Sept. 17 Bridgeport, late for so many. Spotted Sandpiper: 1 Nov. 2 FH is a record departure date (MSR). Greater Yellowlegs: a rotten flight—max. only 8 Oct. 7 DH—Chedmardo; present to Nov. 9. Lesser Yellowlegs: like Greater Yellowlegs, a very poor flight—max. only 27 Sept. 1 Onondaga L.; departure date Oct. 30 DH. **PURPLE SANDPIPER**: 2 Nov. 2 and 1 Nov. 23, both FH; unreported elsewhere despite intensive searching. Pectoral Sandpiper: max. 33 (low) Oct. 12 SSSP—Chedmardo; last are singles Nov. 9 at Sage Creek flats and near Beaver L. White-rumped Sandpiper: only three individuals for entire period (16 observers). Baird's Sandpiper: max. 10, a high tally for upstate, Sept. 3 Onondaga L. (PAD). Least Sandpiper: max. 18 (low) Sept. 1 SP-SSSP with departure date Oct. 25 (late), 1 SSSP. Dunlin: max. only 40 (miserably low) Oct. 25 SP-SSSP; present to Dec. 4 1 FH. Semipalmated Sandpiper: fall max. 95 Sept. 1 SP-Onondaga L.; departure date Oct. 17 (very early) 2 SSSP, especially when compared to Least Sandpiper. **HUDSONIAN GODWIT**: 14, all immatures, Oct. 3-5 (DWA), a splendid flock for the traditional "Godwit Weekend."

RED PHALAROPE: 1 Sept. 1-11 Onondaga L. and singles Sept. 14 and again Nov. 20 at SP; Nov. is normally the best month to see a Red Phalarope in the region. In contrast, **NORTHERN PHALAROPE** was extremely scarce—just 2 Sept. 4 Onondaga L. for all fall.

PARASITIC JAEGER: 4 Oct. 21, 21 Oct. 16, 1 Oct. 25 all at DH—a good flight. **POMARINE JAEGER**: dark phase imm seen for 25 min. Nov. 22 DH (DWC, FGS), a record late date for the species locally. In general a very poor fall for gulls—max. for the common species were 70 Great Black-backed, 500 Herring, and 2000 Ring-billed Gulls Nov. 23 at

Oswego; all Bonaparte's Gull counts less than 60 per day—terrible. The only rare species were Little Gull single adults Oct. 16 and Nov. 22 DH and an imm **BLACK-LEGGED KITTIWAKE** Nov. 12 also DH; the latter is now a rare but regular Nov. visitant on L. Ontario. **FORSTER'S TERN**: max. 4 Sept. 11 SP and 3 Sept. 19 FH, the latter notable for such a number away from SP Inlet. Common Tern: singles at FH and Oswego Nov. 2 (MSR) are very late.

PIGEONS—WOODPECKERS: Snowy Owl: single at Syr Airport Nov. 25 with 2 or 3 birds reported by end of period—definitely not a flight year.

Common Nighthawk: 1 Oct. 3 at SP (FGS) is a quite late migrant. Red-bellied Woodpecker: expanding on Ontario lakeplain with 6 individuals Oct. 9 Lysander Twpsh, Onondaga Co. and an ad male at Oak Orchard on the Oneida River Nov. 1.

FLYCATCHERS—STARLINGS: Eastern Phoebe: scarce thru fall—max. only 6 Oct. 3 SP-SSSP; present to Oct. 26 2 DH-Oswego. Yellow-bellied Flycatcher: 14 individuals Sept. 11-Sept. 26—a poor fall showing. Horned Lark: very thin fall migration—max. only 40 Oct. 23 DH-SSSP; scarce here now both as breeder and as migrant. Departure dates for swallows were Tree Swallow Oct. 26, 35; Bank Swallow Sept. 28 1; Rough-winged Swallow Oct. 4 1; Barn Swallow Oct. 7 1; Cliff Swallow Sept. 2 1; Purple Martin Sept. 23 1—not one lingering species in the whole bloody bunch. Common Crow: 1000 Oct. 25 SP-SSSP only high count for the fall—where are they?

An irruption of Black-capped Chickadee (100-300 per day in late Oct.) was accompanied by at least 6 **BOREAL CHICKADEES** in November; inexplicably there was a simultaneous Tufted Titmouse incursion (16 individuals Oct. 5-Nov. 30). Red-breasted Nuthatch: a moderate Sept. flight (max. 20 Sept. 14 SP-SSSP) but very scarce after Oct. 5.

Winter Wren: max. 56, a state record, Sept. 28 SP-Hickory Grove. Carolina Wren: now up to 35 different sites for the region, a record number. Mockingbird: newly sighted at Syracuse (3), Wampsville, Jamesville, DH, Lysander, and Clay Swamp—expanding but more slowly than either Tufted Titmouse or Carolina Wren. Gray Catbird: fall max. 34 Sept. 19 FH—Hannibal; last noted Oct. 13 (early) 5 Hannibal-Clay Swamp. Brown Thrasher: singles Nov. 5 DH and Nov. 15 Pompey are somewhat late.

American Robin: max. 560 Sept. 19 FH-Hannibal feeding on *Cornus* sp. berries. Hermit Thrush: a superb fall for this species—counts of 10-20 per day in mid-Oct. with max. 24 Oct. 7 SP-Chedmardo. Swainson's Thrush: max. 70 (best fall count in years) Sept. 19 FH-Hannibal. Veery: 1 seen and heard Oct. 26 Lakeview (FGS) and 1 seen Nov. 5 N. Syracuse (K. Slotnick) are both record departure dates for the state. Eastern Bluebird: 29 individuals (16 observers) for period—a poor fall flight.

Strong flights of both Golden-crowned and Ruby-crowned Kinglets this fall with max. 250 Golden-crowned Kinglets Pompey and 130 Ruby-crowned Kinglets Hannibal-Sterling, both tallies on Oct. 13. Water Pipit: heavy flight with 600 Oct. 10 Lysander, 200 Sept. 26 Pompey, and 200 Oct. 23 DH; present to Nov. 14 3, Eaton. **BOHEMIAN WAXWING**: 5 on Nov. 13 DH (FGS) were prelude to the best modern regional flight to date. Northern Shrike: total of 21 individuals Oct. 23 thru period—a strong incursion.

VIREOS—WARBLERS: Solitary Vireo: last noted were 5 individuals Oct. 26 at LOL, NPT, and Syr. Philadelphia Vireo: a very heavy flight with max. 16 Sept. 1 SP-LOL, a state record for live birds; last noted Oct. 28 (late) 1 NPT.

Black-and-white Warbler: light flight with max. only 9 Sept. 1 LOL. Tennessee Warbler: max. 32 (low) Sept. 1 SP-LOL. Orange-crowned Warbler: 26 individuals, a pronounced flight with latest Oct. 22 1 Pratt's Falls. Parula Warbler: poor flight with max. 5 Sept. 11 SP; last noted Oct. 20 (late) 1 NPT. Magnolia Warbler: strong fall flight with max. 60 Sept. 1 SP-LOL; 1 on Oct. 13 NPT is late. Cape May Warbler: very heavy flight and much pro-

tracted—max. 34 Sept. 1 SP-LOL; arr. Aug. 10 with departure date Oct. 21 1 S. Onondaga area. Black-throated Blue Warbler: in complete contrast to Cape May Warbler, a miserable fall flight with max. only 6 Sept. 18 SP; last noted Oct. 15 (early) 1 Syracuse. Yellow-rumped (Myrtle) Warbler: heavy fall migration—max. 229 Sept. 21 SP-SSSP; many counts of 100 per day and widely so; noted thru period. Black-throated Green Warbler: like Black-throated Blue Warbler, a terrible fall movement—max. only 35 Sept. 21 SP-SSSP with last Oct. 26 1 near Oswego. Blackburnian Warbler: max. 25 (high) Sept. 1 SP-LOL; last noted Oct. 6 (late) 1 Lysander. Bay-breasted Warbler: everywhere this fall—max. 53 Sept. 1 SP-LOL with departure date Oct. 6 1 Lysander. Palm Warbler: total of 6 individuals of the "Yellow Palm" race Oct. 8 to 26—usually only 1 to 2 per fall here. Mourning Warbler: poor flight—only 10 individuals noted Sept. 1-Oct. 13. **YELLOW-BREASTED CHAT**: only fall report 1 Sept. 7 NPT; this warbler is one of the most difficult species to see in the fall. Wilson's Warbler: max. 24 (fair) Sept. 11 SP-SSSP; last noted Oct. 13 1 NPT.

WEAVERS-SPARROWS: Eastern Meadowlark: where are they this fall??—counts ridiculously low—1-20 per day with max. a mere 40 Oct. 23 DH. Northern Oriole: early departure with last Sept. 10 1 Bridgeport area. Rusty Blackbird: first noted Sept. 11 1 SSSP; heavy numbers in late Oct. with max. 290 Oct. 26 DH-FH.

Scarlet Tanager: fall max. 29 (high) Sept. 19 FH-Hannibal; departure date Oct. 1 1 NPT is very early. Rose-breasted Grosbeak: max. 41 (high) Sept. 19 FH-Hannibal—like Scarlet Tanager, Swainson's Thrush, and American Robin this species was concentrated in richly laden berry-bearing *Cornus* thickets; last noted Oct. 13 1 NPT, somewhat late and in strong contrast to the very early departures of Northern Oriole and Scarlet Tanager.

Some species of winter finches (Evening Grosbeak, Pine Siskin) arrived early and, in some cases, in impressive numbers; however, the later arriving species (Pine Grosbeak, Common Redpoll) appeared to be lingering here rather than passing on thru as the earlier species did. Evening Grosbeak: arr Sept. 4 (very early) 2 NPT; max. 700 Oct. 25 DH; Nov. numbers down, primarily reported from feeders with the abundant local Box Elder crop seemingly ignored. Pine Grosbeak: arr Oct. 25 14 DH in a fringillid flight passing DH; small numbers in Nov. but larger flocks in early Dec.

Common Redpoll: arr late—Nov. 2 10 DH; few in numbers thru Nov. but tallies up strongly in last week of Nov. and into early Dec. Pine Siskin: arr Sept. 22 (early) 1 NPT; large flocks in last two weeks of Oct. (120-210 per day) but few persisting thru Nov. American Goldfinch: hundreds noted widely with counts of 300-850 per day in late Oct. Red Crossbill: arr Sept. 18 (early) 2 Hickory Grove LOL; flock counts in late Oct. 20-25 per day but only small flocks in first half of Nov.—no cones available to hold them here. White-winged Crossbill: miniscule flight—3 birds only—bah!

Savannah Sparrow: max. 55 Oct. 3 Mexico; scarce otherwise with most counts 4-5 per day. Grasshopper Sparrow: 3 Oct. 13 Hannibal, late for so many. **SHARP-TAILED SPARROW**: 1 Clay Swamp Oct. 26-28 (J & N Sedgwick) is only the fourth fall regional record—it's a tough bird to see locally. Vesper Sparrow: max. only 7 Oct. 9 Lysander; most observers saw none.

Very heavy flights of Dark-eyed Junco—max. 424 Oct. 13, White-crowned Sparrow—max. 330 Oct. 13, and White-throated Sparrow 700 Oct. 13, all Sterling-Hannibal-Clay Swamp; numerous lesser counts (hundreds each day) of these three species thru Oct. with many present thru first two weeks of Nov., especially White-throated Sparrow.

Lincoln's Sparrow: 92 individuals recorded this fall; arr Sept. 1 1 SP (FGS, GH), with max. 10 Sept. 28 NPT in a heavy flight of migrants grounded there by rain and fog. Lapland Longspur: Sept. 11 2 at SP inlet (FGS) is a regional and a state record fall arrival date.

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