

REGION 1 – NIAGARA FRONTIER

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Although weather this fall simulated premature winter, birders still enjoyed rainbow-adorned field and feeder (red Cardinals, Orange-crowned Warblers, yellow Evening Grosbeaks, green goldfinches, bluebirds, Purple Finches . . .) along with an occasional unforeseen species to spangle the spirits. A wet Sept. and Oct. averaged temperatures 2°C . (3.1°F .) below normal, but the dry Nov., which here was 3.9°C . (7°F .) colder than usual, in N. Carolina was 2.5°F . below the record low Nov. average set in 1901. (*Wellsville Reporter*, Dec. 1). Our infamous weather swept in with the jet stream which this year in an unusual pattern brings arctic air from Alaska south over the Great Lakes. Small lakes and ponds were frozen to stay Nov. 8, very early, and Lake Erie reached 3.3°C . (38°F .) Nov. 30, the day a freak storm dumped up to 4 ft. of snow on Buffalo and areas to the south.

Characteristics of the season include: (1) food generally abundant, *i.e.* mice, wild grape, fruits of Cucumber Tree, and the cone and mast (Red Oak) crops, but a spotty Box Elder fruit crop, (2) a delightful shore bird flight, (3) a "banner" season for larids, especially in Nov. (JT), (4) steady populations of Tufted Titmice, Carolina Wrens and Mockingbirds, but very low counts of Cardinals, (5) an excellent showing of E. Bluebirds and Cedar Waxwings, (6) widespread low numbers of many birds—400 fewer banded at Farmersville Sta. than last year during Aug., Sept. and Oct. (DC), (7) good reports of Screech, Great Horned and Barred Owls, but dearth of other owl news except for Snowy, (8) very few rails, Horned Larks, Red-breasted Nuthatches or Brown Creepers, (9) icterid counts all down except for Com. Grackles, and (10) only a trickle of Evening Grosbeaks and almost no other winter finches.

Rarities are: Little Blue Heron, Mute Swan, Goshawk, Bald Eagle, Peregrine Falcon, Merlin, Western Sandpiper, all three phalaropes, Lesser Black-backed Gull, Black-legged Kittiwake, Sabine's Gull, Common Raven, Dickcissel, House Finch, and "Oregon" Junco. *Addenda* from the summer are: Buff-breasted Sandpiper, Wilson's Phalarope, and White-eyed Vireo.

Abbreviations: ACBC—Allegany Co. Bird Census, Oct. 10; GMA or WMA—Game or Wildlife Management Area; NWR—National Wildlife Refuge; SP—State Park.

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LOONS—DUCKS: Although the max of a fine flight of Com. Loons was 20 on Kinzua Reservoir at Salamanca Nov. 4 (JV,RV), only one Red-throated Loon appeared in Yates Nov. 1 (HK,WK). The only report of the Red-necked Grebe was max 2 at Cuba L. Oct. 28, 29 (AnS), and a single Double-crested Cormorant was sighted at the Allegany Reservoir Oct. 1 (SE). The rare ad LITTLE BLUE HERON, identified at Iroquois NWR Oct. 30 (DF), was a month later than might be expected. A Great Egret appeared on the ACBC, and also at Iroquois NWR with max 8 between Sept. 15 and Oct. 6 (JM+), at Keeney Swamp with one on Sept. 29 and Oct. 1 (DB,LB,KP), and at Houghton, a late one on Nov. 10 (R. Smalley). Black-crowned Night Herons were few: 6 at Tift Farm Sept. 9 (RA+) and max 15 at Iroquois NWR Sept. 28 (Olsen). Continuing its visit from the summer, the MUTE SWAN at

Times Beach stayed on through Oct. 30 (mob). The small Whistling Swan flight, reported from 4 areas, peaked at 250 at Chautauqua L. Nov. 13 (RS+). Max of widely scattered flocks of Canada Geese was low, only 1754 at Iroquois NWR Oct. 29 (JM+); 3 (one a cripple) at Farmersville Banding Sta. Nov. 1-30 may winter here (DC). The Snow Goose was reported only from Iroquois NWR with max 6 on Oct. 3, 6 (RA,Bauer+).

The following are maximum waterfowl counts at Iroquois NWR, unless indicated otherwise: Mallard, 966 on Oct. 29 (JM+); Black Duck, 64 on Oct. 29 (JM+); Gadwall, 210 on Oct. 30 (DF); Pintail, 40 on Goat Is. Nov. 21 (Clark, Schaffner); Blue-winged Teal: 6, late, at Buckhorn Is. SP Nov. 28 (HK,WK); Am. Wigeon, 2000 on Oct. 5 (Olsen); N. Shoveler, 11 on Oct. 23 (JM); and Wood Duck, 32 in Hume Sept. 10 (KP,DB,LB). Other interesting waterfowl notes are: Redhead, max 100 at Iroquois NWR Oct. 20 (Olsen+) and 3 on the ACBC; Ring-necked Duck, max 200 on Bond's L Oct. 23 (HK,WK); Canvasback, 3000 at Niagara Falls Nov. 21 (Schaffner, Clark); Greater Scaup, max 1000 at 4-Mi. Creek SP Oct. 23 (HK,WK); Com. Goldeneye, max 30 at Buffalo Nov. 9 (DF); Oldsquaw, max 5 at Cuba L Oct. 29 (AnS); White-winged Scoter, 3 at Amity L Oct. 13 (VP,RP); Surf Scoter, 5 at Dewittville Oct. 30 (RS); Black Scoter, max 85 at Buffalo Oct. 19 (DF) and 34 on Cuba L Oct. 10-12 (AnS), unprecedented numbers for the latter location; Ruddy Duck, max 200 at Pt. Chautauqua Oct. 30 (RS); Hooded Merganser, max 40 at Chautauqua L. Nov. 13 (RS+); Com. Merganser, 16, early, on Genesee R, Caneadea, Nov. 11 (LW), and max 500 at Niagara F. Nov. 21 (Schaffner, Clark); Red-breasted Merganser, 15, early, on Allegany Reservoir Oct. 8 (SE), and max 300 at Buffalo Nov. 9 (DF).

HAWKS-ALCIDS: In Allegany Co. 2 **GOSHAWKS** appeared for the ACBC and one was seen Sept. 27 (VP). Sharp-shinned Hawks were reported as 5 on the ACBC and singles from 11 areas. Cooper's Hawks were identified as 4 on the ACBC, and singles in 12 areas, with the 8 from Allegany Co. and Cattaraugus Co. probably resident birds. Only one Red-shouldered Hawk appeared on the ACBC, a steady decline from 7 in 1973. A total of 7 Rough-legged Hawks was reported from 6 locations, the first at Wheatfield Oct. 21 (HK,WK). Single imm **BALD EAGLES** were identified at Allegany Reservoir Sept. 10 (SE) and at Iroquois NWR Oct. 2 (Olsen). Ospreys tallied 3 on the ACBC and individuals were sighted at 8 scattered sites. Exciting were two rarities: a **PEREGRINE FALCON** at Tonawanda WMA Sept. 27 (Reboviches, Carroll, Eddy) and Oct. 30 (DF); and a **MERLIN** at Porter Ave., Buffalo, Sept. 28 (DF).

Counts on the ACBC were low for Ruffed Grouse, 12 (40 in 1973), Ring-necked Pheasants, 11, and Turkeys, 18. Without the usual concentration of thousands of Am. Coots on Chautauqua L. this year, max was only 178 at Iroquois NWR Sept. 30 (JM).

Highlights of the shore bird flight include: Semipalmated Plover: one near Allegany Oct. 8 (SE), where it is uncommon; Killdeer: max 265(!) at Clarence Sept. 2 (DF); Am. Golden Plover: max 45 at Clarence Oct. 3 (AM,WM), and one near Allegany Oct. 8 (SE), unusual in the Southern Tier; Willet: one very late at Times Beach Oct. 2, 30, 24 (RA,DF+); Red Knot: one with still salmon-colored lower breast, and apparently "oddly banded with long band and white," near Allegany Oct. 8 (SE); Purple Sandpiper: 5 at Niagara F. Nov. 21 (Schaffner, Clark); Baird's Sandpiper: one at Prendergast Pt. Sept. 1-4 (RS) and 1, 2, 1 at Times Beach Sept. 15, 17, 19 (RA+); Dunlin: a superb flight with max 216 at Olcott Oct. 23 (RA+); **WESTERN SANDPIPER**: one at Bemus Pt. Sept. 5 (RS) and two at Tonawanda WMA Sept. 30 (WR,JM,Carroll); a late **RED PHALAROPE** at Pt. Gratiot Nov. 27 (Andries); a late **WILSON'S PHALAROPE** at Iroquois NWR Sept. 15 (JM); and 3 **NORTHERN PHALAROPE**s at the Peace Bridge Sept. 22 (HA).

A Parasitic Jaeger was spotted at Hamburg Nov. 14 (Foster). This was a **STUPENDOUS** larid season with: Glaucous Gull, arr at Cuba L Nov. 9 (AnS)—where it is unusual; Iceland Gull, one at Niagara Gorge Nov. 27 (Wilcove); Great Black-backed Gull, max 150 on Niagara R Nov. 14 (DF+); **LESSER BLACK-BACKED GULL**, one imm at Niagara Gorge

Nov. 27 (Wilcove, McMichael); Herring Gull, max 22,000 on Niagara R Nov. 14 (DF+); Ring-billed Gull, max 22,500 at Niagara Gorge Oct. 17 (HK,WK); Franklin's Gull, max 4 at Times Beach, Niagara R and Buffalo areas, irregularly Sept. 19-Nov. 26 (mob); Bonaparte's Gull, max 36,000 on Niagara R Nov. 14 (DF+), and 2200 at Barcelona Nov. 27 (RS); Little Gull, one at Bird Is. Sept. 5 (RA+), two at the Peace Bridge Sept. 9 (HA), max 7 at Times Beach Sept. 15, 19 (RA+), two at Buffalo Sept. 28 (DF), max 4 at Lewiston Nov. 3 (HK,WK), max 2 at Niagara F and Gorge Nov. 13-21 (mob), and one at Barcelona Nov. 27 (RS); one imm **BLACK-LEGGED KITTIWAKE** and an imm **SABINE'S GULL**—rare statewide—both at Niagara F Nov. 13 (McMichael, Frank, Horvett); Com. Tern, 400(!) at Lewiston Sept. 25 (HK,WK).

PIGEONS—WOODPECKERS: One lone Yellow-billed Cuckoo appeared this season at E. Amherst Oct. 11 (DF). Single Snowy Owls, in Niagara Co. Nov. 11 (Sommerville) and at Little Valley, Thanksgiving weekend (*Buffalo Courier*, Nov. 28, courtesy SE), constituted the only reports. Max and early dep of Com. Nighthawks was 75 at Jamestown Sept. 14 (RS). Red-headed Woodpeckers totaled 11 birds from 5 areas.

FLYCATCHERS—STARLINGS: The E. Kingbird left early, the last one at Model City Sept. 5 (AM,WM), but a late Great Crested Flycatcher was recorded at Tifft Farm Oct. 2 (RA+). 75 E. Phoebes on the ACBC was over 3 times the previous 3-yr. average. A late *Empidonax* flycatcher (species?) was noted at E. Amherst Oct. 16 (DF). Max, gathering to go south, were 400 Tree Swallows at Buffalo Sept. 28 (DF) and 150 Purple Martins at Lewiston Sept. 8 (Farrell). 15 Barn Swallows were found for the ACBC.

A **COMMON RAVEN** flew up 4-Mile valley s. of Allegany Nov. 14 (SE), about a mile n. of the N.Y.-Pa. line. Max Hermit Thrushes was 22 at Barcelona Oct. 3 (RS), and max of the Gray-cheeked Thrush was 3 also at Barcelona Oct. 3 (RS), with singles of the latter appearing in 7 areas. E. Bluebirds tallied 90 on the ACBC, highest in 4 yrs; max of personal reports was 27 (glorious!) at Collins Oct. 24 (AM,WM). Peak kinglet counts were 98 Golden-crowned on the ACBC and 150 Ruby-crowned at Bond's L Oct. 3 (AM,WM). From fair regional numbers, max Water Pipits was 95 at Tifft Farm Oct. 2 (RA+). Both shrikes were found: single Northern in 8 locations from Oct. 23 thru, and a Loggerhead on the ACBC from the Alfred area.

VIREOS—WARBLERS: Philadelphia Vireos noted were one at Cuba L Sept. 1 (AnS) and two at Williamsville Sept. 15 (DF). Choice warbler tidbits include: Blue-winged Warbler: one, late, banded at Alfred Sept. 29 (EB); Orange-crowned Warbler: early dep, one at E. Amherst Oct. 8 (DF); Nashville Warbler: 3, late, banded at Alfred Oct. 23 (EB); Blackpoll Warbler: one at Buckhorn Is. SP Oct. 2 (HK,WK); Pine Warbler: one on ACBC, 11 in W. Almond Sept. 4 (DB,LB) and one at Clarence Sept. 12, 18 (DF); a late Ovenbird, window-killed, at Alfred Oct. 26 (LC); Connecticut Warbler: one at E. Amherst Sept. 11 (DF) and one at Barcelona Sept. 25 (RS)—rare finds.

WEAVERS—SPARROWS: The 3143 Com. Grackles on the ACBC is 8 times the previous 3-yr. average. A late N. Oriole appeared at E. Amherst Oct. 4 (DF). Max Rusty Blackbirds were noted Oct. 3: 40 at Elma (DF) and 35 at Bond's L (HK,WK).

Cardinals tallied only 85 on the ACBC, 50% of the 1973-1975 average. A **DICKCISSEL** appeared regularly at a Cuba L feeder Nov. 18-30 (AnS). Very late arriving were Evening Grosbeaks, the first 4 appearing at Alfred Nov. 4 (EB). The **HOUSE FINCH** continues its expansion: at least 31 birds were totaled from 5 areas, one a new location at Wellsville where max 2 appeared Oct. 14-26 (EL). The only report of the Com. Redpoll was a female at an Alfred feeder Nov. 14 (HT) and Pine Siskins also were exceptionally scarce.

Noteworthy sparrows of the season include: A Savannah Sparrow at Amity L Nov. 29 (VP)—incredibly late; at least 8 Henslow's Sparrows at Clarence Sept. 18 (DF); 21 Vesper Sparrows on the ACBC, still a low figure; at least one Dark-eyed ("OREGON") Junco at E. Amherst Oct. 6-11, 24 (DF); a late Chipping Sparrow verified at an Alfred feeder Nov.

21, 22 (LC); single Fox Sparrows, on the ACBC, at Orchard Park Oct. 1, Nov. 1 (Saville), and at E. Amherst Oct. 17 (DF); and Lincoln's Sparrow: 2 on the ACBC, 4 in Hume Sept. 13 (KP), one banded at Alfred Sept. 28 (EB), and one, late, at Times Beach Oct. 24 (DF). A Lapland Longspur arr at Times Beach Oct. 24 (DF) and the first Snow Buntings were 25 at Cheektowaga the same day (R. Hull).

Addendum: Noteworthy sightings not included in the Region 1 Summer report are: a rare **BUFF-BREASTED SANDPIPER** at Clarence Aug. 15 (DF+); one more **WILSON'S PHALAROPE** at Iroquois NWR Aug. 8 (AM,WM); another **WHITE-EYED VIREO** at Newstead Aug. 20 (DF); the first Pine Warbler of fall migration at Alfred Aug. 29 (CK); and a Connecticut Warbler at Times Beach Aug. 29 (Foster).

Amity Lake, Belmont, New York 14813

REGION 2 – GENESEE

RICHARD O'HARA

Following a cool, wet summer, we have had a cold but rather dry fall. September was mild, but October was one of the coldest on record here, and November was remarkably consistent—steady cold and lots of birds but without very pronounced waves—especially of early waterfowl and most passerine species. An exception was a heavy incursion of gulls and some diving ducks in mid-November. Water levels on Lake Ontario dropped belatedly producing a few good records of late shore birds. So far, the flight of most cyclical winter visitants has been poor except for Northern Shrike and Pine Siskin which has been only fair. Some of the finches are almost entirely absent, and the Snowy Owl is still unreported to date.

Rarities: Eared Grebe, Harlequin Duck, King Rail, Hudsonian Godwit, Whimbrel, Red Phalarope, Purple Sandpiper, Buff-breasted Sandpiper, Pomarine Jaeger, Parasitic Jaeger, Franklin's Gull, Black-legged Kittiwake, Thayer's Gull, Yellow-throated Warbler, Kentucky Warbler, European Goldfinch.

Positive Trends: (1) excellent variety of species reported—except for some passerines. (2) seven reports of jaegers—both Pomarine and Parasitic—above average. (3) tremendous flight of gulls—ten species noted. (4) many Northern Shrikes. (5) good variety of warblers—some species in good numbers.

Negative Trends: (1) rather poor flight of dabbling ducks. (2) no Peregrines. (3) shore bird habitat poor—most numbers low. (4) no Snowy Owls—few Rough-legged Hawks. (5) few winter finches to date.

Abbreviations: BB—Braddocks Bay; DP—Durand Park; EL—East Lakeshore; GOS—Genesee Ornithological Society; HP—Hamlin Park; IBO—Irondequoit Bay Outlet; mob—many observers; MP—Mendon Ponds; NC—Northrup Creek; OB—Ontario Beach; PB—Point Breeze; RBA—Rochester Birding Association; SB—Sodus Bay; WP—Webster Park.

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LOONS—DUCKS: Red-throated Loon max. 6—Nov. 14 (low). Red-necked Grebe, only 4