

REGION 10 – MARINE

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The fall season was pleasingly characterized by good to heavy numbers of common migrants and several outstanding rarities. The average temperatures were: Sept. 66.6° F (19.2° C), Oct. 52.9° F (11.6° C), Nov. 41.6° F (5.3° C). The average rainfall in inches was 3.15 (8.0 cm) for Sept., 5.31 (13.5 cm) for October and 0.32 (.81 cm) for November. November, although quite dry, was abnormally cold with a freeze occurring for the first time around the 15th.

Observers were in unanimous agreement about the incredible numbers of Hermit Thrushes migrating into the area in late October and into November. Repeated mention was made of this species' proclivities toward self-destruction against glass windows. One notable example of this slaughter was observed at the Jones Beach Restaurant on Oct. 24, where up to 12 birds were found dead due to impact with the large window walls of the facility. Herring Gulls would sit up on the roof of the restaurant and swoop down to devour the dead or stunned migrants. Interestingly, despite this superabundance of Hermits, Swainson's Thrushes and Veeries were present in normal numbers and Gray-cheeked Thrushes and Wood Thrushes were scarce.

Ruby-crowned Kinglets and Yellow-rumped Warblers were also present in abundance and enormous flocks of fringillids mixed in with Yellow-rumped Warblers and Hermits were observed feeding on the grass on the sides of the Ocean Parkway from Captree to West End on the Jones Beach strip from mid to late October. These birds would rise in a curtain from the ground to the adjacent shrubbery when a car approached, only to return to feeding upon passage of the vehicle. If one were to assume that there was one bird present to each linear foot along *each* side of the ten-mile strip from West End to Captree, this could be extended to a possible count of over 100,000 birds at the peak of migration on October 24. Whatever the correct ratio actually is, of course, is open to conjecture, but there sure were a heap of birds around. Road kills of these migrants were extremely high. This editor is compiling a list of birds killed on the barrier beach highway over a one year period which will be itemized when complete.

Mention should also be made of the very large numbers of Cape May Warblers present in September.

Visions of avian sugar plums lingering until Christmas Count time were dispelled with the onset of unusually cold November winds which cleared out this mass of birds.

Encouraging numbers of Ospreys were noted with over 60 birds reported. Twenty-seven Peregrine Falcons were counted along with the ominous report that one falcon was wearing falconer's jesses. Clever bird!

The Hawk Migration Association of North America observation station at Great South Beach, Fire Island, reported 520 raptors for the fall season, down from 1097 in 1975, although the 1975 total included a one-day high of 563 birds and no such single one day high occurred in 1976. Observation hours were about the same as 1975 and 36 Sharp-shinned Hawks, 7 Cooper's Hawks, 23 Marsh Hawks, 15 Ospreys, 2 Peregrine Falcons, 29 Merlins and 408 Am. Kestrels were noted in 16 count days between Sept. 11 and Oct. 27. Anyone interested in participating in the Fall, 1977, count should contact Mr. William L. Graves, 26 Livingston Road, Bellport, N.Y. 11713, (516) 286-0497.

Winter finches were so scarce during the period as to be nonexistent.

Rarities were: Spotted Redshank, Franklin's Gull, Sabine's Gull, Skua, Gray Kingbird,

Wheatear, Townsend's Warbler and Brewer's Blackbird; their geographical origins neatly box the compass.

Observers: JA—Jim Ash; PAB—Paul A. Buckley; TWB—Thomas W. Burke; JC—Joe Costa; THD—Thomas H. Davis; AJL—Anthony J. Lauro; DP—Dennis Puleston; GSR—Gilbert S. Raynor; RWS—Robert W. Smart; BS—Barbara Spencer. Abbreviations: JBSP—Jones Beach State Park; JBWR—Jamaica Bay Wildlife Refuge.

LOONS—DUCKS: A weakened Northern Fulmar was found wandering in the driveway of DP on Oct. 12; see report elsewhere in this issue. AJL had a bargain basement priced pelagic trip on October 31 from Democrat Point, Fire Island, when at the end of a heavy rain storm with prevailing southerly winds a minimum of 410 Gannets, 1 Manx Shearwater, 4 Greater Shearwaters, 6 Cory's Shearwaters, 4 unidentified Shearwaters, 14 Parasitic Jaegers, 1 Pomarine Jaeger, 300 Laughing Gulls and 1 Black-legged Kittiwake flew by in a westerly direction. THD and RWS found a third latest date Louisiana Heron on Nov. 28, Montauk. Single drake European Wigeons were noted at Montauk, Easthampton, Mecox and JBWR.

HAWKS—ALCIDS: A few Goshawks were found in late Nov. and 2 Cooper's Hawks in late Sept. on the Jones Beach strip. An adult Golden Eagle was found along the Meadowbrook Parkway on Nov. 9 where it lingered until the 11th and was seen Nov. 11 PM at Lawrence Marsh (C. Ward, JA, JC). DP noted an imm. Bald Eagle along the Carmans River on Oct. 29. The Sagaponack potato fields counts of Am. Golden Plover were 200 Sept. 5 (JA *et al.*), 150 Sept. 11-12 (mob), 75 Sept. 19 (G. Tudor). Whimbrels were in good numbers with 30 counted on Sept. 11 at Sagaponack (JA) and 5 at Fire Island on Sept. 15 (AJL, *et al.*). A winter-plumaged **SPOTTED REDSHANK** was described in great detail by Helene Tetrault when found on Oct. 4 at JBWR. Five Baird's Sandpipers were present Sept. 11-12 at Mecox Bay (mob). A faded adult Curlew Sandpiper played hide-and-go-seek from Aug. 20 to Sept. 3 at JBWR (N. Wagerik, JA, THD *et al.*). Buff-breasted Sandpipers were found scattered along the south shore of Long Island: 1 on Sept. 4, Wantagh (J. Yrizarry); 1 Sept. 11 Easthampton (AJL); 3-6 Sept. 5 to Sept. 19 Sagaponack (mob); 2 Sept. 14-15 JBSP (L. Schore, W. Baumann *et al.*). Western Sandpipers were scarce this fall with the exception of a flock of 200 seen on North Line Island (J. Yrizarry). Marbled Godwits were also scarce with only 2 at North Line I. and 2 at JBWR reported. Steve Dempsey found a black Ruff in the sewage beds at Pilgrim State Hospital on Sept. 3. and another was present at JBWR Oct. 11-17 (mob). Single Wilson's Phalaropes were present at JBWR to Oct. 17 (mob). JBSP Sept. 20 (mob) and 4 were seen at Pilgrim State Hospital on Sept. 4 (THD, TWB). Four Northern Phalaropes were seen by many Sept. 3-6 at JBWR; 1 at JBSP Sept. 6 (C. Ward); 1 also JBSP Sept. 16 (A. Wollin). An adult Lesser Black-backed Gull lingered through the end of the period at Hempstead Harbor after being found by Barbara Spencer. Up to three adult Black-headed Gulls were present throughout the fall season at JBSP. Following Hurricane Belle from 5000 to 10,000 Laughing Gulls were present in the area, but the cold November weather drove their numbers down virtually to zero by the end of the fall season. **FRANKLIN'S GULLS** were found by P. Buckley and W. Sedwitz at Floyd Bennett Field on Sept. 19 and by AJL at JBSP on Oct. 31. Both were winter adults and the first bird was photographed. This was the best season in years for observing Black-legged Kittiwakes from shore; at least ten birds were reported from vantage points on western Long Island. Forster's Terns lingered until November 7 at West End JBSP where up to seven were counted. Only 1 Caspian Tern was noted: Sept. 11, Moriches by GSR who also reported the year's high of 18 Royal Terns at Moriches on Sept. 19.

PIGEONS—WOODPECKERS: A late Ruby-throated Hummingbird whose "long" bill caused it to become a target for collectors in search of exotica hopefully survived its stay from Oct. 30 to Nov. 7 at Riis Park. Nine Red-headed Woodpeckers were reported from the region this fall.

FLYCATCHERS-STARLINGS: A field trip to Tobay Sanctuary on Sept. 11 led by John Bull led to the discovery of a Gray Kingbird by S. Quinn; it stayed until the 12th. Five Western Kingbirds were seen: Sept. 19 JBWR (P. Buckley, W. Sedwitz); Oct. 1 Watermill (C. McKeever); Oct. 17 JBWR (A&F Bisk); Oct. 17 Riis Park (J. Yrizarry); Nov. 7 Nyack (W. Wilkens). JC found a Boreal Chickadee at Montauk Point on Nov. 14 which is all the more interesting in that this year no notable chickadee flights were reported. At least 200 birders saw a Wheatear that lingered in a traffic cloverleaf from Sept. 23 to Sept. 28 at Captree State Park (AJL). BS reported a flight of up to 200 Water Pipits on October 24 at Mecox and GSR reported 75 on Oct. 31 at Eastport. Loggerhead Shrikes appeared scarce this fall since only 3 were reported: Aug. 29 RMSP (AJL); Sept. 4 Tobay (AJL); Sept. 19 Riis Park (JA,JC).

VIREOS-WARBLEDERS: Golden-winged Warblers, which are early migrants to the tropics, were found much later this year than normally expected: 1 Aug. 31 Central Park (*vide* S. Elliott), 1 Sept. 6 JBWR (D. Brandt), and a bird was banded on Sept. 21 at Brookhaven by DP who noted that the bird was "a most unusual occurrence in this part of Long Island." Roger Pasquier found the rare "Lawrence's" Warbler on Sept. 9 in Central Park and certainly the warbler of the year was found near the horse pasture at Montauk when JA located a male TOWNSEND'S WARBLER on October 2. A Yellow-throated Warbler was seen on Sept. 13 by W. Baumann at JBWR and an unusual barrier beach warbler was found at JBSP when A. Wollin noted a Hooded Warbler.

WEAVERS-SPARROWS: The horse farm pasture at Montauk was also the site of the discovery of a female BREWER'S BLACKBIRD on Oct. 23 by K. Kaufman, E. Cook and a male was seen on Nov. 21 by A. Keith at the same site. J. Gee & J. Wall gave detailed description of a Western Tanager at Riis Park on Oct. 30. Blue Grosbeaks are now regularly found each fall at the Montauk Town Dump where at least three birds were seen by many Sept. 12 to Oct. 23; DP banded one in Brookhaven on Sept. 15 and A. Dignan had one at Tobay Sept. 25. Ten Lark Sparrows were reported from the south shore of Long Island during the period. Riis Park again turned up Henslow's Sparrows when JA, TWB, *et al.* found one on Oct. 23 and H. Tetrault, J. Bull *et al.* turned up another on Oct. 30. THD, D. Salisbury *et al.* had a Clay-colored Sparrow on Sept. 26 at Montauk, and Al Wollin and Sy Schiff found another at JBSP on Oct. 28. The only Evening Grosbeaks reported were on Oct. 28 at JBSP (A. Wollin) and the only Lapland Longspurs were 2 seen on Nov. 17 at Calverton (GSR).

PELAGIC TRIP REPORTS

Sept. 11. Cox's Ledge (THD *et al.*): 24 Greater, 10 Cory's, 19 Wilson's Storm-petrels, 1 Parasitic Jaeger, 1 imm. SABINE'S GULL.

Sept. 19. South of Block I. (R. Radis): 4 Greater, 18 Cory's, 2 unid. shearwaters, 1 Red Phalarope, 4 unid. phalaropes.

Sept. 25. Cox's Ledge (THD, D. Salisbury, P. Benham, *et al.*): 1 Greater, 13 Cory's, 4 unid. shearwaters, 4 unid. phalaropes, 2 Pomarine Jaegers, 1 imm. SABINE'S GULL.

Oct. 23. Cox's Ledge (B. Dietrich, S. Emmons): 1 Northern Fulmar, 125 Greater, 18 Cory's Shearwaters, 9 Gannets, 1 SKUA, 1 Pomarine Jaeger, 2 unid. jaegers, 10 Black-legged Kittiwakes.

Nov. 27. 20 miles south of Montauk Point (THD, BS, RWS, *et al.*): 150 Gannets, 1 SKUA, 250 Black-legged Kittiwakes, 2 Razorbills, 2 Dovekies, 1 COMMON PUFFIN.

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Barbara Spencer finds herself unable to continue as co-editor for Region 10. We wish to thank her for her work over the past two years, and hope that she will continue to give these notes as much input as possible.