

REGION 8 -- HUDSON-MOHAWK

BILL COOK

With temperatures remaining reasonably mild and good wild food reserves noted, there is no wonder that there have been fewer reports of boreal species this fall than last. Exceptions include a Snowy Owl, Snow Bunting and early Lapland Longspurs. The warm weather accompanied by little or no rain would seem to make excellent fall birding but the number of observers reporting fell this season. These two conditions have resulted in a meager tally of 150 species compared to 191 for last year's fall report. Among the missing are several raptors, waterfowl, shorebirds, swallows and, alas, no September goatsuckers. Perhaps the institution of a Sentimental September Census Day to bid farewell to our retreating avifauna would provide a better data base for this, the only season without a major birding event.

Wild Turkeys seem to be uprising in native American fashion as sportsmen in the Hillsdale area exclaim that they are displacing ever scarcer Ring-necked Pheasants and . . . intimidating deer?

From the southern shores of chilly Lake George comes the rarity of the season. Thanks to Mike Peterson we have Kathryn O'Keefe's report of a female Harlequin Duck which was carefully observed on 18 October near her camp at Assembly Point. This bird will be featured in Mike's list of "Birds of the Adirondack Park."

The banding records reported here are all from Greene Co. and a few interesting discoveries are worth noting. A male hatch year Black-throated Blue Warbler had acquired full adult plumage by October while a Veery with juvenal plumage had completely ossified its skull by 26 September. Birds normally molt their juvenal feathers before the completion of skull ossification and fall Black-throated Blue Warblers with bright spring plumage would normally be considered older than hatch year. Two Cedar Waxwings banded had orange tail bands like the Japanese race.

A hatch year Yellow-rumped Warbler observed begging during migration on 27 October in New Baltimore leads one to suspect that birds other than terns may migrate in family groups. With only five sandpipers reported, a White-rumped in a downtown location is significant. It was found in the drained duck pond of Schenectady's Central Park.

Good Birding and may your favorite heifer befriend a migrating Cattle Egret.

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LOONS-DUCKS: A Red-throated Loon was seen at Tomhannock in mid-Sept. Pied-billed Grebes were seen on 26 Sept in New Baltimore and 11 Oct at Featherstonhaugh L Montgomery Co. 13 Double-crested Cormorants were seen on 12 Sept at Embough Bay and one on 10 Oct in New Baltimore was soaring very high. 21 reports of Great Blue Heron thru. Four Green-backed Herons reported in Sept. Great Egret: two on the Mohawk R 3 Sept and four on 20 Sept; another at Stockport Flats 18 Oct. A Least Bittern and an Am. Bittern were also found at Stockport on 18 Oct (LB). Canada Goose: max 600 Central Br Oct. Brant: Embough Bay 20 Sept thru. 25 Snow Geese flew over the Embough on 15 Nov (JP).

Large flights of Mallards were observed over the Embough but Am. Black Duck numbers were down. About 200 No. Pintails and 25 Green-winged Teals were on the Embough 5 Nov. Four Blue-winged Teals were at Stockport 18 Oct. An artificially created wetland in Catskill supported a breeding population of Wood Ducks found to be in excess of 200 this fall. Ring-necked Duck: one Featherstonhaugh L 11 Oct. Good flights of Canvasbacks numbering 25-30 birds noted at the Embough from 20 Oct. 15 Buffleheads were there on 5 Nov and three were in Central Br that month. **HARLEQUIN DUCK:** female Lake George 18 Oct (*fide* MP). Scoters appear in small numbers during spring and fall migration. This fall an imm White-winged Scoter was seen on the Mohawk R 30 Nov (TP). Com. Merganser: five Embough 5 Nov.

HAWKS—ALCIDS: Four reports of Turkey Vulture thru; max 20 Kiskatom. A Sharpshinned Hawk raided a blackbird flock in Cocksackie 10 Oct. Another was at Palmer's Ravine 11 Oct where a Cooper's Hawk visited 6 Nov. High mouse populations reportedly have kept local Red-tailed Hawk numbers soaring. A late Broad-winged Hawk was reported from Cocksackie 30 Nov with no sign of Rough-legged Hawks at that time. Two Bald Eagle reports: Delmar 9 Sept and Saratoga L mid-Oct. No. Harrier: one Stockport 18 Oct; Palmer's Ravine 4-23 Oct. Nine Ospreys reported: latest in Central Br Oct. Numbers of Am. Kestrels decreasing at Palmer's Ravine thru. Ruffed Grouse: 25 Schoharie Co. in Oct; 11 in Nov. Two male Ring-necked Pheasants escaped hunters by feeding beside Rt. 23 in Hudson 18 Oct; two more Central Br Oct. Wild Turkeys reported from Central Br, Embough Rd. and Hillsdale thru. Virginia Rail: one Stockport 18 Oct. Killdeer reported into Oct; max 80 Cocksackie 10 Oct. Lesser Golden-Plovers did descend this fall with six or more sighted in Cocksackie 11 Oct and another in Watervliet (RG). Two Am. Woodcocks from Central Br in Oct and a Com. Snipe from Stockport 18 Oct were reported. Two Spotted Sandpipers and a Solitary Sandpiper were observed in Schoharie Co in Sept. Another Solitary joined a White-rumped Sandpiper in Schenectady's Central Park on 2 Sept (BM). Greater Yellowlegs: one at the Embough 12 Sept and another at Stockport 18 Oct. Semipalmated Sandpiper: three Mohawk R 3 Oct. An Iceland Gull and a Lesser Black-backed Gull are again reported from the Colonie Landfill 13 Oct (WS). Herring and Ring-billed were the only other gulls reported.

PIGEONS—WOODPECKERS: Rock and Mourning Doves reported from Central Br and Palmer's Ravine thru. A Black-billed Cuckoo was banded in Sept. An E. Screech-Owl in a Braumantville sycamore may be returning to the winter home it occupied Dec.-Feb last year. Six reports of Great Horned Owl thru. Snowy Owl: Delmar 15 Nov. Barred Owl: Jenny L 3 Oct. A Ruby-throated Hummingbird zipped past the Embough 12 Sept. At least nine reports of Belted Kingfisher, which like the No. Flicker, declined in numbers thru. Pileated Woodpecker: one Central Br Oct, three in Nov; four Palmer's Ravine thru. An adult Red-headed Woodpecker was last seen in Palmer's Ravine 10 Sept but one was found in Albany 8 Nov. A Yellow-bellied Sapsucker was banded in Nov. Two Hairy Woodpeckers were banded in Oct-Nov while six Downy Woodpeckers were banded in the same period.

FLYCATCHERS—STARLINGS: E. Kingbird: last seen Palmer's Ravine 10 Sept. Flycatchers banded in Sept were one E. Phoebe, three Yellow-bellied, two Traill's, six Least and two E. Wood-Pewees. Late feeding of pewee young was observed in New Baltimore in Sept. Horned Lark: 25 Cocksackie 10 Oct. The only swallows for the period were Tree Swallow: Palmer's Ravine 5 Sept; one Embough 12 Sept. At least 17 reports of Blue Jays include one banded in Oct. Two Com. Ravens were observed near Hunter in the Catskills on 7 Nov (PF). Am. Crow: Central Br, Palmer's Ravine and Claverack thru. 14 Black-capped Chickadees and six Tufted Titmice banded thru. Six White-breasted Nuthatches were banded Sept-Oct and they outnumbered Red-breasted Nuthatches in Central Br at least five to two in Nov. Brown Creeper: eight reports. Wren banding included eight House Wrens Sept-Oct, the first Winter Wren in seven years at New Baltimore Oct and five adult Marsh Wrens in Embough Bay 13 Sept. Another Winter Wren was observed at Palmer's Ravine 9 Oct. No. Mockingbird: Central Br Oct; Claverack 30 Nov. 72 Gray Catbirds banded in Sept, ten more in Oct. Brown Thrasher: one Embough 12 Sept. Thrush banding included five Am. Robins thru, 11 Wood in Sept, 17 Hermit thru, 51 Swainson's in Sept, four more in Oct and seven

Veerys in Sept. Both Golden-crowned and Ruby-crowned Kinglets were observed at Palmer's Ravine 11 Oct; the banding ratio was two to four. Water Pipit: at least 100 Cocksackie 10 Oct; one Palmer's Ravine 5-9 Oct; Schoharie Res 24 Oct. Cedar Waxwing numbers decreasing thru period at Palmer's Ravine and Central Br; 13 banded in Sept, three in Oct. European Starlings observed in winter flocks of several hundred by 13 Nov Selkirk. Yellow-throated Vireo: one Palmer's Ravine 6 Sept. Vireo banding records for Sept-Oct include four Solitary, 49 Red-eyed, 14 Philadelphia and one Warbling. Warbler banding included one Black-and-white Sept, six Tennessee Sept, six Nashville Sept-Oct, ten Magnolia Sept, two Black-throated Blue Oct, 20 Yellow-rumped Oct, 15 Black-throated Green Sept-Oct, four Chestnut-sided Sept, one Blackpoll Sept (down significantly), two Palm Sept-Oct, four Ovenbirds Sept, two Mourning Sept, 16 Com. Yellowthroats thru, five Wilson's Sept, six Canada Sept and six Am. Redstarts Sept. In addition, a Yellow Warbler was observed at the Embough 12 Sept and a Prairie Warbler was found dead on the road in Westerlo in early Sept to bring the warbler count to 18 (23 in 1981, 18 in 1980).

TANAGERS—HOUSE SPARROWS: House Sparrow: Central Br, Palmer's Ravine and Claverack thru. Bobolink: Palmer's Ravine 6 Sept. More than ten reports of E. Meadowlark thru 10 Oct. Red-winged Blackbird: three banded in Sept. A No. Oriole has been visiting a Sand Lake feeder since 28 Nov. Rusty Blackbird: six Catskill 1 Nov (LB). Com. Grackle reported thru 18 Sept Resist Sanctuary. Brown-headed Cowbird: Palmer's Ravine Sept. Scarlet Tanager: 14 banded in Sept; feeding young at Jenny L. 6 Sept. No. Cardinal: four banded Oct-Nov. Rose-breasted Grosbeaks left in Sept when 30 were banded and four Evening Grosbeaks were in Braumanville by 28 Oct. Purple Finches arrived at Featherstonhaugh L on 11 Oct. House Finch: Palmer's Ravine feeder thru. Pine Siskin: one Amsterdam 5 Oct. Am. Goldfinch: 24 banded; local breeders still feeding young at New Baltimore 9 Oct. Rufous-sided Towhee: one banded Oct. More than 20 Savannah Sparrows found at Cocksackie 10 Oct. 23 Dark-eyed Juncos banded beginning 5 Oct. The earliest Am. Tree Sparrow banded was 27 Oct followed by four in Nov. Four Field Sparrows banded thru. An adult and an imm White-crowned Sparrow were found in a Cocksackie field edge 10 Oct; one Palmer's Ravine 2 Oct. Other sparrows banded include 211 White-throated with 30 max on 5 Oct; seven Fox in Oct, two in Nov; two Lincoln's in Sept; one Swamp in Sept, five in Oct and 20 Song thru. Three Lapland Longspurs were found among the pipits in Cocksackie 10 Oct. The first Snow Bunting report of the season is 12 Nov from the Niskayuna landfill.

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REGION 9 — DELAWARE-HUDSON

EDWARD D. TREACY

The New York Weather Bureau reported September as the coolest in seventeen years, making the warm days to come in October and November unexpected. Killing frosts did not come to the lowlands until late October, and katydids and crickets continued to call far into November. At this writing in late December, the Hudson River and lakes of the region are still unfrozen. Precipitation was well below normal for the period, bringing a return to the drought conditions of the past several years. Reservoirs again returned to dangerously low levels for the communities they serve, but were excellent for shorebirds, especially in northern Westchester. No appreciable amount of snow fell and fruit and seed production was good. Perhaps similar conditions of food and weather prevailed farther north, for winter finches and other northern migrants were well