

REGION 3 — FINGER LAKES

DICK CLEMENTS

Our hot dry summer continued into September with above normal temperatures making us wonder if the cool days of autumn would ever arrive. For the second consecutive year precipitation for September and October was below normal. Because of the dry summer, many streams were waterless for months. The dry weather was blamed for the less vivid fall leaf colors and a decrease in the wild berry crop. November was warm and wet as above normal precipitation finally started streams running again. Snowfall was minimal. Chemung County had the first significant snowfall—four inches of wet snow—on 5 November.

Without the heavy rains or storms, migrating birds had near perfect flying conditions. Wilifred Howard reported only five birds killed at Elmira Hawley Hill tower during September. This was the smallest tower kill since 1963. Common Nighthawks ordinarily migrate in huge flocks, sometimes 1,000 or more, through Chemung County in late August and early September. This year our warm weather no doubt delayed their migration to late September and early October and they were spread out with a maximum of only 50 observed at one time.

Lower water levels resulted in some excellent habitat for shorebirds, especially at Montezuma National Wildlife Refuge. Twenty-nine species of shorebirds were identified with twenty-two species observed in one day. Move over, Jamaica Bay! Some impressive numbers of individual species were noted.

In addition to the shorebird report other seasonal positives were: 1) a good Common Loon migration, 2) encouraging accipiter reports, 3) Tundra Swans more evident than in previous years, 4) good numbers of thrushes, 5) only one negative report on Red-tailed Hawk and American Kestrel numbers.

Seasonal negatives: 1) American Bittern getting scarcer, 2) sparrow numbers except for Fox were down, 3) no crossbills or Pine Grosbeaks, 4) small numbers of Pine Siskins, 5) Rough-legged Hawks were evident in several locations but way down in numbers compared to last year, 6) farmers in Phelps destroying valuable habitat.

Rarities: Western Grebe, Hudsonian Godwit, Ruff, Western Kingbird.

Abbreviations: Co—County; L—Lake; max—maximum; MNWR—Montezuma National Wildlife Refuge; Schy—Schuyler; Sem—Laboratory of Ornithology Monday night seminars at Ithaca; Sen—Seneca.

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LOONS-DUCKS: Red-throated Loon: one Keuka L 9 Nov. (ML). Com. Loon: regularly reported at Sem; additional report from Watkins Glen, Elmira, Geneva, and Seneca Falls; max 30 south of Aurora early Nov. Red-necked Grebe: two Hammondsport, no date. **WESTERN GREBE**: two north of Long Point State Park 9 Nov. (Bradley Mitchell), only the second record for our region. Double-crested Cormorant: regular MNWR 9 Sept. thru 11 Nov. Am. Bittern: only one report, Tompkins Co. 9 Sept. Great Blue Heron: good

numbers thru MNWR and Queen Catherine Marsh. Great Egret: one last reported MNWR 10 Oct. Black-crowned Night-Heron: three imm MNWR 6 Nov. Tundra Swan: four Sen L 27 Oct; one Hammondsport 25 Nov.; max 14 MNWR 21 Nov. Brant: one Myers Point 5 Nov. Snow Goose: max 57 MNWR 8 Nov. Canada Goose: 56,000 max MNWR 14 Oct.; big flight days Watkins Glen 21 Oct.; Elmira 29 Oct.

Maximum duck numbers at MNWR as reported by Refuge personnel:

Wood Duck	1,000 13 Oct.	Canvasback	300 25 Nov.
Green-winged Teal	5,000 13 Oct.	Redhead	1,000 28 Oct.
Am. Black Duck	13,000 13 Oct.	Ring-necked Duck	1,000 25 Oct.
Mallard	142,000 21 Oct.	Bufflehead	75 13 Oct.
Northern Pintail	10,000 21 Oct.	Hooded Merganser	150 14 Nov.
Blue-winged Teal	2,000 26 Sept.	Com. Merganser	200 30 Nov.
Gadwall	5,100 13 Oct.	Ruddy Duck	32 2 Nov.

Redhead: large numbers Keuka L 14 Nov. Oldsquaw: one Elmira 27 Nov; two MNWR 28 Nov. Black Scoter: 75 MNWR 19 Oct; six Elmira 5 Nov. White-winged Scoter: one Stewart Park 14 Nov. Com. Merganser: 10 Clute Park 5 Oct.

HAWKS-ALCIDS: Osprey: reported at Sept. and Oct. Sem. as well as single reports from Montour Falls and Elmira in Oct. Bald Eagle: one Tompkins Co. 1 Oct. (K. Confer). No. Harrier: reported at all Sem. and regular in Schy Co. Sharp-shinned Hawk: five Sem. and scattered reports from Watkins Glen and Seneca Falls. Cooper's Hawk: listed at all Sem; one Southport thru Oct. decreasing the House Finch population by one-a-day; another in Elmira pursuing an Am. Kestrel. No. Goshawk: one Watkins Glen State Park 13 Nov. Red-shouldered Hawk: reported at only two Sem. Red-tailed Hawk: common throughout region with only Seneca Falls area reporting a decrease in numbers. Rough-legged Hawk: first sighted MNWR 18 Oct. with additional sightings in Ithaca, Schy, Yates, and Chemung Cos. but few individuals. Am. Kestrel: 15 MNWR area 31 Oct. Merlin: female Stewart Park 16 and 17 Sept. (D. Nutter); one MNWR 14 Sept. Peregrine Falcon: one MNWR Tschache Pool 2 Nov. (VAD). Ring-necked Pheasant: hard to find anywhere. Ruffed Grouse: healthy populations in all reporting areas. Wild Turkey: doing well and increasing in most areas. Com. Moorhen: few individuals; only report MNWR 17 Oct. Am. Coot: 45 Sen. L. 30 Nov. Shorebirds: all listed species were seen at MNWR with additional sightings from other areas included. Black-bellied Plover: max 250. Lesser Golden-Plover: ten Bennettsburg 3 Sept. (Gates). Semipalmated Plover: numerous thru. Greater Yellowlegs: one Elmira 8 Nov. Lesser Yellowlegs: last reported 7 Nov. Solitary Sandpiper: four Sem. last report 6 Oct. Spotted Sandpiper: last report 3 Oct. Whimbrel: one report 20 Sept. (B. McCaffery). **HUDSONIAN GODWIT:** 28 Sept. (Benning). Ruddy Turnstone: three Sem. Red Knot: three 15 Sept. Sanderling: Myers Point 16 Oct. Semipalmated Sandpiper: numerous thru 24 Oct. Western Sandpiper: one report 16 Oct. (Sabo, Breslav). Least Sandpiper: ten Jennings Pond 6 Oct. White-rumped Sandpiper: Myers Point 19 Oct. thru 23 Oct. Baird's Sandpiper: Stewart Park 3 Sept. Pectoral Sandpiper: reported on seven Sem, last report 7 Nov. Dunlin: four Sem. Stilt Sandpiper: listed on five Sem, last report 10 Oct. Buff-breasted Sandpiper; one Myers Point 15-18 Sept. (Popp *et al.*); two other Sept. reports. **RUFF:** one MNWR 15 Sept. (Dewey). Short-billed Dowitcher: max 200. Long-billed Dowitcher: reported on four Sem. Com. Snipe: max 250. Am. Woodcock: six Jennings Pond 6 Oct.; hunters report good numbers in Schy Co. Wilson's Phalarope: two Sept. reports. Red-necked Phalarope: last reported 21 Sept. Bonaparte's Gull: observed only at Myers Point. Caspian Tern: MNWR thru Sept. No other tern reports.

PIGEONS-WOODPECKERS: Com. Barn-Owl: no reports. E. Screech-Owl: listed on three Sem; one returning imitated call in Pine City thru. Great Horned Owl: many reports Tompkins Co. as well as Geneva. Snowy Owl; one Horseheads 17 and 18 Nov.; this bird might have escaped detection by bird club members if they had not been alerted by a photograph in local newspaper; first Elmira area report since 1975. Barred Owl: reported

on two Sem in Oct. No. Saw-whet Owl: one found dead Cornell Campus 2 Oct. Com. Nighthawk: good numbers Elmira 18 Sept. with small groups thru 1 Oct. Chimney Swift: flock migrating along eastern shore Sen L. 25 Sept.; 100 Elmira seen entering chimney of abandoned school with varying numbers thru 26 Sept. Ruby-throated Hummingbird: last report Yates Co. 5 Oct. Belted Kingfisher: doing well in all areas. Red-headed Woodpecker: one Sem report 12 Sept; two Elmira reports including one adult in corn field early Oct. Red-bellied Woodpecker: listed on Sem thru; four Queen Catherine Marsh 25 Oct. and increasing elsewhere in Schy Co. Yellow-bellied Sapsucker: reported only in the Ithaca area. No. Flicker: reported at Sem thru 21 Nov.

FLYCATCHERS-STARLINGS: Yellow-bellied Flycatcher: one Sapsucker Woods 26 Sept. E. Phoebe: singing Elmira 9 Oct. **WESTERN KINGBIRD:** one MNWR 25 Sept. (R. Eckhardt). Purple Martin: reported only at Sem 12 Sept. Tree Swallow: large flock Sen L State Park 26 Sept; one Tompkins Co. 12 Nov., late. Barn Swallow: decreased numbers in Yates Co. Fish Crow: present Ithaca thru 21 Nov. Red-breasted Nuthatch: reported at a number of feeders throughout the region. Brown Creeper: difficult to find in Schy Co; regularly observed in Ithaca area. Carolina Wren: only report outside of Ithaca comes from Schy Co where it was sighted in three areas. House Wren: Schy Co. 15 Oct., late. Winter Wren: reported on three Sem; one report Yates Co. Nov. Marsh Wren: MNWR 18 Sept. Golden-crowned Kinglet: regularly found in several locations in Schy and Chemung Cos. Ruby-crowned Kinglet: one tower kill Elmira 25 Oct. E. Bluebird: encouraging reports from all areas except Chemung Co. where the numbers are down from previous year; one report from Arnot Forest. Veery: last report 26 Sept. Gray-cheeked Thrush: six banded Penn Yan Sept. (ML). Swainson's Thrush: excellent migration; 22 banded Penn Yan Sept.; one found dead downtown Ithaca (DM); one Monkey Run Tompkins Co. 6 Nov., late. Hermit Thrush: reported from five areas in region. Wood Thrush: last reported on Sem 3 Oct. Am. Robin: no mammoth flocks; largest noted 200 MNWR 31 Oct. No. Mockingbird: one Elmira successfully driving away a horde of starlings in the vicinity of "his" barberry bush. Water Pipit: flock of 150 Elmira area 13 Oct. with lesser number late Oct. (WH). No. Shrike: one vicinity of Sapsucker Woods attacking birds at feeder 9 Nov.; one Phelps 19 Nov. Loggerhead Shrike: no reports.

VIREOS-WARBLERS: Warbling Vireo: one singing Elmira 18 Sept. Philadelphia Vireo: eight banded Penn Yan Sept. Warblers: most observers report a normal fall migration. Most of the regular species were accounted for. The more uncommon species of warblers are commented on: Orange-crowned: one Stewart Park 18 Sept. (D. Nutter). Connecticut: four sightings Ithaca area; one banded Penn Yan; this was more than the usual number of reports. Mourning: Sem 26 Oct. Yellow-breasted Chat: one Tompkins Co. 1 Oct. Warblers not reported: Golden-winged; Prairie; Cerulean; Worm-eating; No. Waterthrush; Louisiana Waterthrush; Hooded.

TANAGERS-WEAVERS: Rose-breasted Grosbeak: abundant Queen Catherine Marsh Sept. Am. Tree Sparrow: earliest MNWR 25 Oct.; small numbers throughout region. Vesper Sparrow: one Penn Yan 17 Nov. Savannah Sparrow: Sem 26 Sept. Fox Sparrow: five Pine City 30 Oct.; reported on four Sem; last report Watkins Glen 30 Nov. White-throated Sparrow: reported on Sem thru but in small numbers. White-crowned Sparrow: Sem 3 Oct. thru; others at Phelps. Dark-eyed Junco: 24 at a feeder in Ithaca. Snow Bunting: first reported Long Point State Park 23 Oct.; medium flock at Phelps 7 Nov. E. Meadowlark: last reported Sem. 21 Nov. Rusty Blackbird: reported at Ithaca, MNWR, Watkins Glen and Phelps. Purple Finch: commn Queen Catherine Marsh Oct. and Nov. Pine Siskin: small numbers observed in four areas with a max of four at Watkins Glen. Am. Goldfinch: 46 at Ithaca feeder. Evening Grosbeak: first reported Ithaca 24 Oct.

Corrigendum Vol. XXXIII No. 4: Canada Goose: the Richardsons race bird was near Dresden, not Dundee.

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