

REGION 10 – MARINE

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The season started with slightly below normal temperatures and a wave of migrants on 1 September. Good numbers and a good variety of landbirds, especially warblers and flycatchers, were reported from throughout the Region. Another cool front on 6 September produced another wave of migrants. No other really big waves of passerines were reported, though cool fronts with NW winds on the 17th, 21st, 26th and 27th brought the season's best hawk flights to outer beach hawk watchers at Breezy Point and Fire Island. Overall, the month was cool and relatively dry with an average temperature of 65.9°F, 2.4° below normal, and a total rainfall of 2.51 inches, 1.15 inches below normal. October started out cool. The low for the month, 41°, was on the 6th, helping to give a daily mean of 51°, 10° below normal. Things then warmed up considerably for the rest of the month with temperatures at or above normal from the 8th on. Most of the first part of October was dry with the exception of the 1st and the 2nd when three-quarters of an inch of rain fell. Between then and the 21st there was less than a tenth of an inch of additional rain spread over three days. The weather was a bit damper after that, with some rain every day from the 22nd to the 29th. The month ended with an average temperature of 61.8°, 4.1° above normal, and a total rainfall of 3.63 inches, only .22 inches above normal. After the extremes of the two previous months November fluctuated around, but fairly close to, the norms for the month, at least until the end of the month when things started to warm up again. The month's average temperature of 47.3° was .1° below normal and the total rainfall of 4.07 inches was .31 inches above normal. (All weather data from New York City.)

Arthur Morris continued the Jamaica Bay shorebird census that was conducted by Tom Davis over the last few falls. He found that this year, in contrast to previous years, Black-bellied Plover and Greater Yellowlegs peaked in numbers in October rather than in September. Several species, Semipalmated Plover, Lesser Yellowlegs, Ruddy Turnstone, Red Knot, Stilt Sandpiper and Short-billed Dowitcher, had an above average season. However, several other species, Semipalmated Sandpiper and Long-billed Dowitcher, had a below average season and Sanderling and Western Sandpiper were far below average.

Reports from two coastal hawk watches were received. Arthur and Hannah Richard reported on seventh year of the Breezy Point Raptor Banding Station at Fort Tilden. The station was operated for 31 days from 16 September to 18 October, four days longer than last year. They banded a total of 245 hawks, just about exactly their average over the previous six years, but 30% higher than last year's relatively low total of 188. As usual, American Kestrel had the highest total with 186 banded. Other hawks banded included 42 Sharp-shinneds, two Northern Harriers, one Peregrine, two Cooper's and 12 Merlins. Their Peregrine was the first banded there since 1979. Their total of 1139 hawks seen was below average for them but above last year's all time low of 871. The total included 15 Peregrines, the most seen in the last four years. Drew Panko reported on the

third year of his Fire Island hawk watch. This year the watch was kept on 29 days from 15 September to 16 October, six days less than last year. Even with the shortened coverage the total of 1811 hawks seen was somewhat larger than last year's 1664. The biggest increases were: Northern Harrier - 151 birds, up from 78; Osprey - 108, up from 52; and Peregrine Falcon - 53, up from 39.

Finally, I must end on a sad note. While writing this report I learned of the sudden death on 8 January of Walter Sedwitz. Walter was an active birder in Region 10 for over fifty years and a regular contributor to these seasonal reports. I will miss his regular, detailed reports on the season in northern Manhattan and the Bronx. We will all miss his cheerful presence in the field.

Rarities: Gyrfalcon, California Gull, Arctic Tern, Ash-throated Flycatcher, Scissor-tailed Flycatcher, Black-throated Gray Warbler.

Abbreviations: LI-Long Island; SI-Staten Island; SP-State Park; WEJB-West End, Jones Beach; HLSP-Hempstead Lake State Park; RMSP-Robert Moses State Park; JBWR-Jamaica Bay Wildlife Refuge; mob-many observers; NYRBA-New York Rare Bird Alert.

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LOONS-DUCKS: The falling temperatures of 3 Nov. may have contributed to the "excellent" flight of Red-throated Loons along Jones Beach 4 Nov. (AW); the same day, two were at JBWR where they are rare (JD); six were at WEJB 6 Nov. (FF). Individual Red-necked Grebes were at Great Kills, SI 18 Nov. (NYRBA) and Montauk 20 Nov. (AT, TT). A recently dead N. Fulmar was found at Mexoc Bay 19 Nov. (PG). A Greater Shearwater at Montauk Pt. 12 Nov. was very late, but not a record (JJR). Also late were three Sooty Shearwaters off Tobay 4 Oct. (NYRBA). A good flight of N. Gannets was reported off the south shore in early Nov. with 100's seen off Jones Beach 7 Nov. (LS). The peak of Tundra Swans was 14 at Hook Pd. 12 Nov. (JJR). The earliest Snow Geese reported were 57 at Muttontown Preserve 26 Sept. (AL); several flocks, some of over 100 birds each, passed over RMSP 3 Oct. (FF). An albino Brant was at Bay Park 4 Oct. (SBD). At least seven Eurasian Wigeons were found during the season: one-two at JBWR from 23 Sept. thru the end of the period (mob); and individuals at Lawrence 15 Oct. (M. & A. Penzer), Kaler's Pd., East Moriches 10 Nov. (JJR), Hook Pd. 10-25 Nov. (NYRBA), Massapequa Preserve from 24 Nov. on (mob) and Hewlett 25 Nov. (NYRBA); this wide an occurrence explains why the species hasn't been highlighted in this region's reports in some years. A male Tufted Duck returned again to the Central Pk. reservoir 23 Nov. (DK). Eiders were fairly scarce at Montauk this season: two Com. Eiders were there 21 Oct. (NYRBA) and a pair of Kings were there 27 Nov. (LS). Harlequin Ducks appeared in the Region in late Nov. with four at Pt. Lookout 22 Nov. and six at Montauk 24 Nov. (NYRBA). The first Hooded Mergansers arrived at HLSP 25 Oct. (SBD).

HAWKS-ALCIDS: Cool fronts with NW winds may have been responsible for single Turkey Vultures over Seatuck 22 Sept. (C. Smith, T. Litwin) and Gardiner Co. Pk., West Bay Shore (L. & L. Feldman). An adult Bald Eagle was at Connetquot 18-27 Nov. (G. Bergen). After a gray phase **GYRFALCON** was discovered at Zach's Bay, Jones Beach, 25 Nov. the bird picked the floodlit watertower at the foot of the Wantagh Causeway as its roost and was subsequently added to many people's life and state lists on nocturnal visits

(mob). The peak count of Black-bellied Plovers at JBWR was 1079 on 27 Oct. (AM). Lesser Golden-Plovers were fairly widely reported till early-Oct. in generally small numbers with the exception of 100 at a sod farm in Calverton 26 Sept. (RA). As reported in the Summer report, Am. Oystercatchers showed increased numbers this year with 50-60 continuing at JBWR thru Sept. (mob). Three Am. Avocets at JBWR 4-14 Oct. is an apparent record maximum for the state (mob). An Upland Sandpiper at JBWR 1 Sept. was a rare find for the location (NYRBA). Small numbers of Hudsonian Godwits were at JBWR till 12 Nov., peaking at eight on 16 Sept. (AM, mob); another bird at Zach's Bay 15 Sept.-15 Nov. (AW). Lone Marbled Godwits were reported at JBWR 15-30 Sept. (mob). Red Knots peaked at JBWR in late Oct. with 301 there 27 Oct. (AM). In contrast White-rumped Sandpipers peaked in early Oct. with 37 at JBWR 8 Oct. (AM). Individual Baird's Sandpipers were seen at Jones Beach and JBWR in early Sept. (mob) and two were found at JBWR 27 Sept. (J. G. Williams, *vide* AM). The earliest Purple Sandpipers reported were ten at Montauk Inlet 12 Nov. (JJR). A count of 4379 Dunlins at JBWR 27 Oct. was the most ever seen there (AM). As with golden-plovers, Buff-breasted Sandpipers were fairly widely reported in small numbers till early Oct., though their peak numbers were much lower: ten at a sod farm in Wading River 22 Sept. (J. Lamoureux). Wilson's Phalaropes were at JBWR in ones and twos till 13 Oct. (mob), but the only Red-necked Phalarope reported was one there 16 Sept. (mob). Both Pomarine and Parasitic Jaegers were found at Montauk into Nov. with one Pomarine 10 Nov. (NYRBA), eight Parasitics 10 Nov. (NYRBA) and one Parasitic 27 Nov. (LS). A Com. Black-headed Gull was at the Montauk Harbor jetty 24 Nov. (NYRBA). Approximately 1100 Ring-billed Gulls were noted flying SW over the Jerome Res., Bronx 6 Nov. (WS). An adult **CALIFORNIA GULL**, a second regional and third state record, was reported at Oyster Pd., Montauk 10 Nov. (PAB). The "Kumlien's" Gull returned in late Nov. to the vicinity of the Boardwalk Restaurant, Jones Beach, for the eighth consecutive year (mob). One to two Lesser Black-backed Gulls were reported at Montauk 14 Oct.-10 Nov. (mob); other individuals were at Riis Pk. 7-21 Oct. (mob), Fire I 9 Nov. (PAB) and Pt. Lookout 28 Nov. (WS). A Glaucous Gull was at Montauk Pt. 12 Nov. (JJR). A Caspian Tern was at the Sore Thumb, Jones Beach, 2 Sept. (R. Laskowski) and one to two were at Zach's Bay 23-26 Sept. (mob). A late report from the summer season was of 104 Royal Terns, 18 Aug. a very high count (NYRBA); 42 were at Mecox 14 Oct. (NYRBA) and two lingerers were at East Moriches 10 Nov. (JJR). Two **ARCTIC TERNS** were reported at Sagaponack Pd. 21 Sept. (PAB). Small numbers of Forster's Terns were at WEJB in early Nov., peaking at 25 on 6 Nov. (mob). The only Black Terns reported were two at JBWR 2 Sept. (JJR), surely there were others?

PIGEONS-WOODPECKERS: In another late note from the summer season, seven pairs of Com. Barn-Owls raised 27 young at JBWR; another pair nested at Yankee Stadium (NYRBA)—there was no word about how good this latter pair was at catching foul balls. Two Snowy Owls were at JFK Airport 25 Nov. but the species was scarce elsewhere (NYRBA). Migrant groups of Com. Nighthawks were reported in mid-Sept. with 24 seen at Roslyn Hts. 12 Sept. (H. Roth). A Ruby-throated Hummingbird at Montauk 20 Nov. was a near record late date (AT, TT). Red-headed Woodpeckers were fairly widely reported during the season with the high being three at Muttontown Preserve 12 Sept. (LLAS). The cold front of 6 Oct. brought at least 12 Yellow-bellied Sapsuckers to Jones Beach, "the most I have ever seen in one day," according to one active observer (SBD). The cool weather of a few days earlier brought a flight of 525 N. Flickers to the hawkwatchers at Fire I. (FF).

FLYCATCHERS-STARLINGS: One of the finds of the season was an **ASH-THROATED FLYCATCHER** photographed at WEJB 21 Nov. (RV); the series of excellent photos was examined by Dr. W. E. Lanyon of the Amer. Mus. Nat. Hist. who confirmed the identification; this is the third confirmed record for the state. Over ten W. Kingbirds were reported this fall including one at Short Beach 1 Sept. (EL), three at WEJB for much of Nov. (mob)

and three at Ditch Plains, Montauk 11 Nov. (NYRBA). A **SCISSOR-TAILED FLYCATCHER** was found at West Meadow Beach, East Setauket 18 Sept. (J. & T. Fasullo). About a dozen Cliff Swallows at WEJB 1 Sept. was a good find for the location (EL). At either end of the migration, a House Wren at Connetquot River SP 27 Nov. was late (*fide* FF) and a Winter Wren at Jones Beach 13 Sept. was early (AW). Six E. Bluebirds were at Manorville, where they nest, 5 Oct. (RA); three were at JBWR 4 Nov. (JD). A flock of 35 Water Pipits at Cunningham Pk. was a good local count (A. Wagner, S. Yeaton), as was 140 Cedar Waxwings at Seton Pk., Bronx 18 Nov. (WS).

VIREOS-WARBLEDERS: A Solitary Vireo at RMSP 8 Nov. was a little late but far from a record (FF). The only Philadelphia Vireo reported was one at JBWR 16 Sept. (AM); surely others were seen! Golden-winged Warblers are always rare on LI but especially in the fall, so two individuals, Gardiner Co. Pk. 1 Sept. and Belmont 2 Sept. were good finds, especially for one pair of observers (L. & L. Feldman). A Tennessee Warbler on Jones Beach 28 Oct. was a bit on the late side (AW, SS). A bander at the Harbor Hill Sanct. banding station reported the most Tennessee and Black-throated Blue Warblers in any Sept. in memory (J. Pion). Individual Orange-crowned Warblers were found at Fire I 6 Oct. (LLAS), JBWR 11 Oct. (AM) and Pelham Bay Pk. 17 Nov. (NYRBA). Adding to the less than ten state records of **BLACK-THROATED GRAY WARBLERS** was one found at Greenwood Cemetery, Brooklyn 27-29 Sept. (R. Rosenbloom, *et al.*); the strange sound you hear is the gnashing of your regional editor's teeth who managed to miss this bird only half-a-mile from his home! Single Connecticut Warblers were reported at Prospect Pk. (JR) and Garview Pt. Preserve (D. Thompson) on 20 Sept. and Muttontown Preserve 26 Sept. (AL). Yellow-breasted Chats were at RMSP 6-7 Oct. (mob) and Seatuck 10 Oct. (FF); a dead chat was found at Glenwood Landing 12 Oct. (J. Doran).

TANAGERS-WEAVERS: A late-lingering Rose-breasted Grosbeak was found at Jones Beach 8 Nov. (AW, SS). Four Blue Grosbeaks were reported during Oct.: Southard's Pd., Babylon 4 Oct. (D. Kaufman), Zach's Bay 6 Oct. (NYRBA), Jones Beach 20 Oct. (NYRBA), and HLSP 30 Oct. (SBD). The Lark Sparrow quota seemed to be one a month this season: WEJB 28 Sept. (AW), Prospect Pk. 4 Oct. (JR) and the Bronx Zoo 3 Nov. (DK). Ten "Ipswich" Sparrows at WEJB 24 Nov. was a very good number for this uncommon race of the Savannah Sparrow (LS). White-crowned Sparrows were reported in small numbers in early to mid-Oct. with the highest count 13 found at RMSP 12 Oct. (FF). Oddly, the warm weather at the end of Oct. coincided with a wave of Dark-eyed Juncos thru the area with large flocks found all along the Jones Beach strip 29 Oct. (FF) and many at HLSP 30 Oct. (SBD). Mid-Nov. saw the arrival of small numbers of Lapland Longspurs in the region: two at Jones Beach 11 Nov. (AW, SS), two at Smith Pt. Beach Pk. 17 Nov. (JJR), and three at Great Kills, SI (AM) and six at Bay Pk., East Rockaway (NYRBA), the latter two records both on 25 Nov. The largest group of Snow Buntings reported was 150 at Smith Pt. Beach Pk. 10 Nov. (JJR). A late-lingering Orchard Oriole was at RMSP 7 Oct. (A. J. Lauro). The wave on 1 Sept. included large numbers of N. Orioles with approximately 500 noted in one hour at WEJB (EL).

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