

REGION 5 – ONEIDA LAKE BASIN

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Observers in the Oneida Lake Basin Region were underwhelmed by the intensity and diversity of the fall 1984 migration. Field trips repeatedly returned with short lists and few individual birds spotted. Much of this paucity of avian life may be attributed to the rather uniform, mild weather that prevailed through the entire season. Mean temperatures and monthly precipitation totals were similar for all three months, and rain, heat and cold were rather evenly distributed as well. As a result September was a little cooler than normal while November was somewhat warmer. The first killing frost came late, and the few cold periods were of brief duration and followed by longer spells of abnormally warm weather, especially in the latter half of the period. There was little snow, almost all in mid-November, and the seasonal total was about a third normal through November.

Few strong frontal systems grounded migratory birds or drove waterbirds on Lake Ontario close to shore. Flights of diving ducks, phalaropes, jaegers and kittiwakes were much smaller than last year. Pied-billed Grebe and Red-throated Loon made good showings, and dabbling ducks were seen in good though unexceptional numbers. Geese were not very numerous, and maxima for diving ducks were quite low. The few odd gulls noted were mostly stragglers from the late summer. Red-throated Loon and Canvasback set record early arrivals, while Snowy and Cattle Egret set record late dates.

Shorebirds were diverse in species but poor in numbers. No especially outstanding sites were found during most of the period, and most regular shorebird sites were inundated to varying degrees for much of the season. Departure dates for Ruddy Turnstone, Red Knot and Short-billed Dowitcher were rather early, but a frontal passage on 12 Nov. produced late Lesser Golden-Plovers, White-rumped and Western Sandpipers and a record late Baird's Sandpiper. Numbers of our regular gull and tern species were similarly mediocre.

Migrant landbirds appeared to pass overhead without stopping. Calls of nocturnal migrants were conspicuous in late September and occasional birds could be heard through early November. Few good dates for grounded migrants were reported, and several observers thought this migration was one of the worst they had ever experienced. As for waterbirds, landbird maxima were unimpressive. Both kinglets showed signs of continued increase in numbers. Otherwise, negatives abounded. Both Tufted Titmouse and Northern Mockingbird were much less conspicuous than in the past four or five seasons. Swallows, thrushes, vireos, warblers, icterids and sparrows generally were found in low numbers only. Only Black-throated Blue and Bay-breasted Warblers produced good counts; Yellow-rumped Warbler was notably scarce. Despite these low maxima, arrival and departure dates were just about average; the most noteworthy of the few stragglers noted was a record late Cliff Swallow.

Raptors and irruptive species were scarce. Almost no Rough-legged Hawks, owls, and Northern Shrikes were reported, and even our regular species were generally low in numbers. Irruptive landbirds were numerous in the Adirondacks

of northern Herkimer county throughout the season, but only Pine Siskin made a modest showing elsewhere. Only four (count them!) Evening Grosbeaks were reported away from the Adirondacks all season, and crossbills were confined there.

The season was not without its collection of rarities. The best of these included Greater White-fronted Goose, Long-billed Dowitcher, Common Black-headed and Sabine's Gull, and Western Kingbird. Other species noted only a few times each year that were reported this season include Red-necked Grebe, Black-crowned Night-Heron, Tundra Swan, King Eider, Bald Eagle, Merlin, Peregrine Falcon, Hudsonian Godwit, Western, Purple and Buff-breasted Sandpipers, Red Phalarope, Pomarine Jaeger, Little Gull, Forster's Tern, Northern Saw-whet Owl, and Connecticut Warbler. Surprising misses for the fall were Red-shouldered Hawk, Sora, Red-necked Phalarope, cuckoos, Great Crested Flycatcher, Northern Rough-winged Swallow, Blue-winged, Golden-winged and Pine Warblers, and Indigo Bunting. Even with these absences, a total of 236 species were reported, which is about average.

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Abbreviations: arr-arrival; DH-Derby Hill, Oswego Co.; FH-Fairhaven, Little Sodus Bay and vicinity, Cayuga Co.; last-last of season; LOL-Lake Ontario littoral, Oswego Co.; NYSARC-report submitted to New York State Avian Records Committee; Onon-Onondaga; SP-Sandy Pond, Oswego Co.; SVB-Sylvan and Verona Beach, Oneida Co.; Syr-Syracuse; TRIGMA-Three Rivers Game Management Area, Onon. Co.

LOONS-DUCKS: Red-throated Loon: arr SVB 13 Sept. (JH) record early, record max 16 DH 6 Nov. Com. Loon: arr SP 6 Sept., max 20 DH 6 Nov. Pied-billed Grebe: max 14 late Oct.-early Nov. best since 1979. Horned Grebe: arr FH 27 Sept., max 27 there 27 Oct. Red-necked Grebe: one Onon Lake 30 Sept., two DH 20 Oct. Am. Bittern: last Peter Scott Swamp 11 Sept., then one SP 16 Nov. Great Blue Heron: most gone after 18 Nov. Snowy Egret: imm photographed SVB 5-20 Sept. record late. Cattle Egret: imm. FH 1 Nov. (FGS) record late. Green-backed Heron: last Woodman's Pond 21 Oct. Black-crowned Night-Heron: one or two SVB 22-27 Sept. only reports. Tundra Swan: two SP 12 Nov., imm FH 15-26 Nov. **GREATER WHITE-FRONTED GOOSE**: imm FH 8-24 Nov. (FGS, RK) ninth (second fall) Regional record. Snow Goose: arr and max 17 DH 28 Oct., last (three) LOL 22 Nov. included only blue morph. Brant: arr DH 20 Oct., max 751 there 3 Nov., last FH 8 Nov.; 100 Sangerfield 28 Oct. (GH) is good count away from LOL. Canada Goose: counts above 100 after 16 Sept., but none above 700. Wood Duck: max 157 Peter Scott Swamp 30 Sept., last LOL 15 Nov. Green-winged Teal: arr. FH 9 Sept., max 46 there 1 Nov., last LOL 15 Nov. Am. Black Duck: max 124 FH 4 Nov. N. Pintail: max 47 DH 4 Oct. Blue-winged Teal: max 34 FH 15 Sept., last LOL 28 Oct., then one FH 22 Nov. N. Shoveler: arr FH 22 Sept., max 28 FH 27 Oct. Gadwall: max 68 FH 1 Nov. Am. Wigeon: max 233 FH 1 Nov. Canvasback: arr DH 4 Oct., record early, max 36 DH 17 Nov., low. Redhead: arr SP 30 Sept., max 23 FH 5-8 Oct., low. Ring-necked Duck: arr FH 9 Sept., max 102 LOL 22 Nov. Greater Scaup: max 270 DH 17 Nov. Lesser Scaup: arr FH 4 Oct., max 220 LOL 15 Nov. King Eider: imm male FH 26 Nov. Oldsquaw: arr FH 20 Oct. Black Scoter: arr 5 Oct. Beaver Lake, max 27 DH 20 Oct. Surf Scoter: arr SP 27 Sept., max 30 DH 20 Oct. White-winged Scoter: max 114 DH 20 Oct. Com. Goldeneye: arr FH 8 Oct., max 685 LOL 22 Nov. Bufflehead: arr 27 Oct., max 44 FH 15 Nov. Hooded Merganser: arr SP 18 Oct., max 31 DH 1 Nov. Com. Merganser: arr SP 15 Sept. Red-breasted Merganser: arr FH 27 Sept., max 6,100 LOL 22 Nov. Ruddy Duck: arr Beaver Lake 5 Oct., max 32 FH 25 Oct.

HAWKS-ALCIDS: Turkey Vulture: last DH 28 Oct., then one Selkirk 26 Nov. (Jim Farquar *vide* SH) record late. Osprey: last TRIGMA 28 Oct. Bald Eagle: single imms SP 13-15 Sept. and SVB 16-22 Sept. N. Goshawk: about four reports. Broad-winged Hawk: last Crayfoot Hill 16 Sept. Rough-legged Hawk: arr DH 11 Nov., only about five reported. Merlin: singles SP 16 and 30 Sept. Peregrine Falcon: imms SP 8 and 16 Sept. Ruffed Grouse: max four, scarce. Wild Turkey: Chittenango 22 Sept. (JL) rather far north. Virginia Rail: last Clay Marsh 9 Oct. Com. Moorhen: last FH 13 Oct. Am. Coot: arr SP 14 Sept., max 90 LOL 1-4 Nov. Black-bellied Plover: max eight SP 16 Sept., last there 18 Nov. Lesser Golden-Plover: last SP 18 Oct., then ten SP 10 Nov., (MSR, JH). Semipalmated Plover: max 20 Onon Lake 9 Sept., last SVB 21 Oct. Greater Yellowlegs: max 13 DH 20 Oct., last Selkirk 12 Nov. Lesser Yellowlegs: last LOL 8 Nov. Solitary Sandpiper: last s. Onon Co. 11 Oct. Spotted Sandpiper: last LOL 9 Oct., then one SP 28 Oct. Ruddy Turnstone: last FH 6 Oct., early. Red Knot: last SP 16 Sept., early. Sanderling: max 53 SP, low, last there 17 Nov. Semipalmated Sandpiper: last Onon Lake 11 Oct. Western Sandpiper: five reports, last SP 12 Nov. Least Sandpiper: last Onon Lake 30 Sept. White-rumped Sandpiper: last SP 12 Nov. Baird's Sandpiper: last Onon Lake 20 Sept., then one SP 12 Nov. (MSR, RK, DWC, JH) record late. Pectoral Sandpiper: last SP 3 Nov. Purple Sandpiper: eight SP 12 Nov., singles there 27 Oct. and 18 Nov. Dunlin: regular after 16 Sept., max 59 SP 12 Nov. Stilt Sandpiper: last Delta Lake 6 Sept., then one DH 20 Oct. Buff-breasted Sandpiper: this year's bird SP 2 Sept. (MSR). Short-billed Dowitcher: last SVB 5 Sept. **LONG-BILLED DOWITCHER:** singles calling SP 27 Sept. (FGS, JH, DWC) and 18 Oct. (FGS, JH), only two other reports in last decade. Com. Snipe: max 31 SP 18 Oct., last DH 8 Nov. Am. Woodcock: last DH 15 Nov. Wilson's Phalarope: imm SVB 12-14 Sept. Red Phalarope: one Oswego 18 Nov. Pomarine Jaeger: adult DH 18 Oct. Parasitic Jaeger: five SP 16 Sept., two DH 18 Oct. Little Gull: last SP 3 Sept. **COMMON BLACK-HEADED GULL:** adult SP 29 Sept. (JH), tenth Regional record. Ring-billed Gull: max only 3,000 Onon Lake 28 Oct. Iceland Gull: arr SP 22 Nov. Black-legged Kittiwake: six 2 Nov., three 5 Nov. and five 12 Nov., all DH. **SABINE'S GULL:** one DH 2 Nov. (Gerald A. Smith, DWC), sixth Regional record. Glaucous Gull: arr DH 17 Nov. Caspian Tern: last SVB 15 Sept., max 26 SP 3 Sept., last there 27 Sept. Com. Tern: last SP 4 Oct. Forster's Tern: last SP 15 Sept. Black Tern: last SP 3 Sept.

PIGEONS-WOODPECKERS: Snowy Owl: three reported after 10 Nov. Short-eared Owl: one moribund Minoa 18 Nov. N. Saw-whet Owl: calling bird banded Peterboro 12-15 Oct. Com. Nighthawk: last E. Syr 27 Sept. Chimney Swift: last SVB 16 Sept. Ruby-throated Hummingbird: last SP 20 Sept. Red-headed Woodpecker: only two reported. Yellow-bellied Sapsucker: migrants 15 Sept. to 6 Oct., max 5 low.

FLYCATCHERS-STARLINGS: Olive-sided Flycatcher: last Syr 12 Sept. E. Wood-Pewee: last SVB 30 Sept. Yellow-bellied Flycatcher: last FH 15 Sept., early. Willow Flycatcher: last SP 14 Sept. Least Flycatcher: last SP 30 Sept. E. Phoebe: last FH 20 Oct. **WESTERN KINGBIRD:** one FH 23 Sept. (MSR, NYSARC) third Regional record. E. Kingbird: last two sites 14 Sept. Horned Lark: arr SP 30 Sept., max 46 DH 8 Nov. Purple Martin: max and last 25 SP 27 Sept. Tree Swallow: last DH 20 Oct. Bank Swallow: last SP 16 Sept. Cliff Swallow: last SP 18 Oct. (FGS, JH), record late. Barn Swallow: last TRIGMA 14 Oct., late. Blue Jay: max 45 FH 13 Oct., low. Am. Crow: max 600 DH 11 Nov. Tufted Titmouse: last FH 13 Oct., scarce. Red-breasted Nuthatch: one/two per day all season. Brown Creeper: arr SP 6 Sept., max 7 FH 13 Oct. Carolina Wren: only report Syr 16 Oct. (MSR). House Wren: last SP 9 Oct. Winter Wren: arr FH 15 Sept., max 12 SP 30 Sept., last Beaver Lake 3 Nov. Marsh Wren: last Clay Marsh 11 Oct. Golden-crowned Kinglet: arr Syr 15 Sept., max 87 FH 8 Oct. Ruby-crowned Kinglet: arr SP 16 Sept., max 104 FH 8 Oct., last Pompey 4 Nov. Blue-gray Gnatcatcher: last Noyes Sanctuary 8 Sept. E. Bluebird: last TRIGMA 27 Oct. Veery: last E. Syr 4 Oct. (JL) late. Gray-cheeked Thrush: about seven reported 26-30 Sept. Swainson's Thrush: last SP 30 Sept. Hermit Thrush: arr FH 22 Sept., max 13 FH 13 Oct. Last E. Syr 5 Nov. Wood Thrush: last E. Syr. 5 Oct. Am. Robin: max 200 FH 1 Nov.

Gray Catbird: last E. Syr 17 Oct., then one Syr 6 Nov. Brown Thrasher: last SP 9 Oct. Water Pipit: arr SP 8 Sept., max 180 Lysander 11 Oct., last DH 8 Nov. N. Shrike: three reported after 15 Nov.

VIREOS-WARBLED: Solitary Vireo: arr SH 27 Sept., last SP 18 Oct. Yellow-throated Vireo: last FH 22 Sept. Warbling Vireo: last FH 22 Sept. Philadelphia Vireo: max seven FH 9 Sept., last SP 1 Oct. Red-eyed Vireo: last SP 9 Oct. Tennessee Warbler: last SP 18 Oct. Orange-crowned Warbler: about ten reported 12 Sept. to 13 Oct. Nashville Warbler: last SP 9 Oct. N. Parula: last FH 8 Oct. Yellow Warbler: last SP 30 Sept. Chestnut-sided Warbler: last FH 8 Oct. Magnolia Warbler: max 33 FH 15 Sept., last FH 18 Oct. Cape May Warbler: last FH 8 Oct. Black-throated Blue Warbler: last SP 9 Oct. Yellow-rumped Warbler: max 85 FH 8 Oct., last Syr 22 Nov. Black-throated Green Warbler: last FH 8 Oct. Blackburnian Warbler: last Chittenango 8 Oct. Palm Warbler: arr two sites 14 Sept., last three SP 8 Oct. included a "Yellow" Palm Warbler. Bay-breasted Warbler: max 44 FH 9 Sept., last SP 30 Sept. Blackpoll Warbler: to ten per day 6 Sept. to 13 Oct. Black-and-white Warbler: last FH 27 Sept. Am. Redstart: last Syr 29 Sept. Ovenbird: last FH 8 Oct. N. Waterthrush: last SP 4 Oct. Mourning Warbler: last FH 9 Sept. Com. Yellowthroat: last SP 9 Oct. Hooded Warbler: max 10 FH 15 Sept., last SP 30 Sept. Wilson's Warbler: last SP 30 Sept. Canada Warbler: last FH 15 Sept.

TANAGERS-WEAVERS: Scarlet Tanager: last SP 23 Sept. Rose-breasted Grosbeak: last SP 9 Oct. Rufous-sided Towhee: only migrants reported 30 Sept. to 20 Oct. Am. Tree Sparrow: arr Onon Lake 25 Oct. Chipping Sparrow: last Clay Marsh 19 Oct. Field Sparrow: last Sangerfield 28 Oct. Vesper Sparrow: max and last 14 Lysander 11 Oct. Savannah Sparrow: last DH 28 Oct. Fox Sparrow: three reports 1 to 18 Oct. Song Sparrow: max 245 Lysander 11 Oct., last DH 17 Nov., early departure. Lincoln's Sparrow: to 14/day 23 Sept. to 19 Oct. Swamp Sparrow: last FH 11 Nov. White-throated Sparrow: arr SP 14 Sept. Max 350 LOL early Oct., scarce after 8 Nov. White-crowned Sparrow: arr E. Syr 23 Sept., max only 16, last Sangerfield 28 Oct. Dark-eyed Junco: arr SP 30 Sept., max 113 FH 13 Oct., low. Lapland Longspur: five singles after 30 Sept. Snow Bunting: arr DH 20 Oct. Bobolink: last FH 22 Sept., only report. Red-winged Blackbird: max 30,000 DH 20 Oct., last counts > 100 10 Nov. E. Meadowlark: very few reported, but last FH 28 Nov. Rusty Blackbird: to 200/day 23 Sept. to 28 Oct. Com. Grackle: max 25,000 DH 20 Oct., last counts > 100 1 Nov. Brown-headed Cowbird: last counts > 100 1 Nov. N. Oriole: last SP 2 Sept. Purple Finch: only scattered ones and twos noted. Red Crossbill: only reports n. Herkimer Co., where regular thru season. White-winged Crossbill: ditto, about five seen for every Red Crossbill. Pine Siskin: max 125 Town of Webb 23 Nov.; scattered small flocks elsewhere 14 Oct. to 15 Nov. Evening Grosbeak: one Chittenango 13 Nov. (JL) and three Whitesboro in Nov. (MS) only reports outside Adirondacks, extraordinarily scarce!

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REGION 6 – ST. LAWRENCE

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Mild is the adjective for this period. Summer residents lingered and winter visitors were slow to arrive. With few cold fronts to move things along, it was