

## REGION 6 – ST. LAWRENCE

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The weather this fall was unusually mild. September temperatures were 1-3 degrees above normal, with the maximum of 84 at Gouverneur on 20 Sep. The first local frosts came 12-14 Sep, but in many areas there was no freeze until 20 Oct. A tenth or more inches of rain fell on about seven dates in September throughout the Region, with totals 2-4 inches above normal largely the result of Hurricane *Gloria* on 28 Sep. October temperatures and precipitation were near normal. There were six to ten dates with measurable rain, but the absence of snowfall was unusual. According to the Regional Climate Center at Cornell, November was "drab." Temperatures averaged about 2 degrees below normal and ranged from 11 degrees to a record-breaking high of 68 on 20 Nov. There were eight to ten dates in November with precipitation. Snow first fell in the second week and again during most of the last week of November. Total accumulations ranged from 4 inches at Canton to 8 inches in Lewis Co.

Hawks generally were scarce. Despite the prevalence of northeast winds that concentrate migrating hawks along Lake Ontario, the only Broad-winged Hawk report was three at ElDorado Beach on 10 Sep. Rough-legged Hawk was very scarce, with only a few ones and twos reported after 19 Oct. Two Golden Eagles seen migrating into New York State near Massena on 2 Nov by several experienced Canadian birders (RB, MG, RG, BP) were extraordinary. A hunter found an Osprey shot near High Falls, Town of Fine, on 19 Oct. It spent the night perched in his lean-to, and he brought it out in his canoe. The next day it was picked up by the DEC and taken to Delmar, where it died. How many other raptors, water birds and waders are needlessly and illegally shot?

There were unprecedented numbers of Little Gull. A total of ten were at ElDorado Beach between 1 Sep and 30 Oct (GAS). Because most reports were of one or two per day, several individuals must have been involved. In addition, five Little Gulls were at Moses-Saunders Dam on 27 Oct and three were there on 2 Nov (RB, *fide* JVR). Numbers of Bonaparte's Gull also were high. Five to 20 per day were at ElDorado Beach to mid-Oct, with a peak of 58 on 23 Sep. Joe VanRiet counted 300 at Moses-Saunders Dam on 19 Oct and a record Regional high of 1000 on 27 Oct.

The passerine migration peaked in mid-October. No Horned Larks and just five species of vireo or warbler were reported. Lee Chamberlaine reported Brown Creeper and Golden-crowned Kinglet moving through Henderson together on 6 Oct. Ruby-crowned Kinglet also were moving in October, with a maximum of 11 at Henderson on 14 Oct.

Food crops were good. O'Shea reports large flocks of American Robins feeding on fallen cherries on 10 Nov, while Evening Grosbeaks gleaned the fruits which remained on the trees. It promises to be a banner year for Bohemian Waxwing. The first was at ElDorado Beach on 19 Nov in flock of 125 Cedar Waxwings. One to five per day were seen thereafter with a maximum of 15 on 22 Nov. There

were two reports of probable N. Shrike from the Potsdam area. After a three-year dearth, winter finches also were numerous. Purple Finch numbers generally were low. Com. Redpoll arrived at Eldorado Beach on 28 Oct, and 20 to 60 per day were seen thereafter. Pine Siskin was first reported in Henderson on 6 Oct, with a maximum of 15 on 12 Oct. Pine Grosbeak was widely reported after its arrival at Eldorado Beach on 2 Nov. The first Evening Grosbeaks arrived at Eldorado Beach on 4 Sep.

A total of 147 species was reported for the period, including 33 waterfowl, 17 raptors, 32 shorebirds and larids, and 65 pre-passerines and passerines. This compares with 150 species last year and 99 in 1984. We report two great rarities: **YELLOW RAIL** and **COM. BLACK-HEADED GULL**. Two sightings of Mute Swan in St. Lawrence Co are unusual, but four swans observed in flight over the Grasse River on 23 Nov could have been Tundra Swan. A female Scarlet Tanager lingered in Potsdam from 11 to 16 Nov (JNA). Tufted Titmouse arrived at Massena, and Kelly recorded the first House Finch for Brasher Falls in Nov. Breeding of House Finch at Canton finally was confirmed by fledged young (M&EH), although the species likely has bred there for a year or so previously. Finally, the Cerwonkas were unable to dissuade their Potsdam neighbors from cutting trees in their yard which they insisted were infested by "worms"—the true culprit was a family of Yellow-bellied Sapsucker.

Contributors: Joanne and Norbert Ackerman, Marilyn Badger, R. Bracken, Sheila and Bob Cerwonka, Lee Chamberlaine, Betty Coots, Ken Crowell, M. Gawn, R. Gorman, John Green, Mildred and Everett Howard, Paul Kelly, Peter O'Shea, Joe VanRiet, B. Penney, Gerald Smith, Trudy VanderBilt, Brian Watson, James Winterbottom.

ABBREVIATIONS: EDB—Eldorado Beach Preserve, LOnt—Lake Ontario, MSD—Moses-Saunders Dam, RMSP—Robert Moses SP, SLR—St. Lawrence R, SLU—St. Lawrence University, WI—Wellesley I., WDPd—Wiley-Dondero Ponds, WH—Wilson Hill WMA.

LOONS-DUCKS: Com. Loon: one or two/day after late Sep, scarce. Pied-billed Grebe: max nine WH 10 Oct (JVR). Horned Grebe: arr four RMPD 17 Oct; two-four/day thereafter. Double-crested Cormorant: two to four/day SLR and LOnt Sep-Oct is fewer than usual, last EDB 26 Oct early departure. Am. Bittern: last Canton 17 Oct (JG). Great Blue Heron: max 17 Upper and Lower Lakes WMA 9 Sep, present all sectors including Adirondacks (PO) to early Nov. Great Egret: one flying north over Point Peninsula 23 Nov (L. Gunn *vide* LC) extremely late and unusual for season. Mute Swan: two ad, one j Joe Indian Pd, Colton, 17 Nov and one about 10 Nov (TV). Brant: arr late Oct, max 450 Perch River 26 Oct; one or two cripples daily LOnt to late Nov. Canada Goose: arr Henderson 21 Sep; to 1000/day through mid-Nov in all sectors. Wood Duck: only two records totaling four individuals, very scarce. Green-winged Teal: max 40 EDB 1 Oct, last there 17 Oct; none reported elsewhere. Am. Black Duck: max 80 WDPd Massena 19 Oct and 50 Pillar Pt 25 Nov; at least small numbers reported from all sectors. Mallard: max 75 EDB 9 Sep; otherwise to 40/day in lowland sectors, fewer than in most recent years. N. Pintail: max 26 WH 26 Oct. Blue-winged Teal: max 54 EDB 9 Sep, last there 15 Oct; few reported elsewhere. N. Shoveler: two EDB 3 Sep, where infrequent; max 130 WDPd 19 Oct (JVR) and 50 Perch River 17 Nov; last four WDPd 10 Nov. Gadwall: max 200 WH 19 Oct, scarce otherwise. Am. Wigeon: max 350 WH 19 Oct; scarce away from e SLR. Canvasback: one to two/day only, no reports from traditional Nov concentration areas in the w SLR. Redhead: excellent numbers e SLR during late Oct with max 1500 WDPd 23 Oct-3 Nov (JVR). Ring-necked Duck: max 200 WDPd 3 Nov. Oldsquaw:

max 60 EDB 30 Oct, to 30/day LOnt in Nov. Black Scoter: 10-20/day EDB 28 Oct to 15 Nov, max 35 on 13 Nov. Surf Scoter: arr one EDB 30 Oct; two MSD 17 Oct are infrequent migrants on e SLR. White-winged Scoter: three MSD 17 Oct only report, very scarce! Com. Goldeneye: arr five WDPd 19 Oct; max 425 EDB 13 Nov. Bufflehead: arr six MSD 17 Oct; max 30 EDB 13 Nov, but few counts above 10, all LOnt and SLR, scarce. Hooded Merganser: arr WH 19 Oct; max 50 each WH 23 Oct and Black R Bay 17 Nov (KC). Com. Merganser: arr MSD 16 Oct; max 4000 there 10 Nov; numbers on LOnt down. Red-breasted Merganser: max 60 EDB 8 Nov, but few counts above ten, scarce.

**HAWKS-ALCIDS:** Turkey Vulture: max 23 Smithville 4 Sep (LBC); last 16 Louisville area 20 Nov (MB), very late for so many. Osprey: last Henderson 10 Oct; numbers seem up slightly. Bald Eagle: imm MSD 27 Oct (JVR) only report. N. Harrier: one to three/day, widespread, through late Nov. Sharp-shinned Hawk: max six EDB 10 Sep, none reported after 4 Oct. Cooper's Hawk: five reported, last 28 Oct, scarce. N. Goshawk: one chasing a Blue Jay in Henderson 20 Nov only report. Red-shouldered Hawk: none reported as usual in fall. Red-tailed Hawk: max eight n Watertown 6 Nov (LCB). Am. Kestrel: max 14 EDB 10 Sep. Merlin: six singles 7 Sep to 10 Oct include two reports at Henderson and Louisville away from LOnt where rare. Gray Partridge: covey of eight near Massena all season (JVR) only report. Ruffed Grouse: scarce, most reports one/day. Wild Turkey: five near Pierrepont (KC) only report. **YELLOW RAIL:** one found dead in a driveway in Lisbon on 30 Sep by R. McNeil, a non-birder (spm SLU) is only the second or third Regional record—the others are a 1936 sight record in Gordon and an unpublished mist-netting ca. 1970 (F. Sibley). Am. Coot: max 40 to 50/day WH 20 Oct to 3 Nov. Black-bellied Plover: max 10 EDB 23 Sep, last there 28 Oct early departure, but one of five at WH 25 Oct still present on 3 Nov, only reports away from EDB. Lesser Golden-Plover: 12 EDB 23 Sep only report, unusually high count for this locality. Killdeer: max 50 EDB 23 Sep, last 23 Oct early departure. Greater Yellowlegs: scattered ones and two EDB to 25 Oct. Lesser Yellowlegs: max 34 EDB 7 Sep, last there 24 Sep. Solitary Sandpiper: one EDB 8-10 Sep only report. Spotted Sandpiper: last two EDB 23 Sep. Ruddy Turnstone: four to 16/day EDB 1-4 Sep, one there 23-25 Sep. Sanderling: max 179 EDB 8 Sep, 100-125 there first third Oct, three to 30/day to 4 Nov, excellent flight. Semipalmated Sandpiper: max 220 EDB 2 Sep, last 9 Oct. W. Sandpiper: total of seven EDB between 19 Sep and 6 Oct. Least Sandpiper: max 64 EDB 2 Sep and 67 on 5 Sep, last 9 Oct. White-rumped Sandpiper: total of eight EDB between 22 Sep and 8 Oct. Baird's Sandpiper: one EDB 5 Sep only report. Pectoral Sandpiper: one to four/day to 8 Oct, scarce. Dunlin: arr EDB 12 Sep, max 65 on 15 Oct and 66 25 Oct, last 4 Nov, early departure. Com. Snipe: six Helena 19 Oct only report. Am. Woodcock: one Canton 17 Oct only report. Red Phalarope: one EDB 7 Oct only report. **COM. BLACK-HEADED GULL:** one in winter plumage MSD 27 Oct-10 Nov (JVR,RB,MG,RG,&BP; NYSARC). Ring-billed Gull: max 7000 MSD 27 Oct. Herring Gul: max 1000 RMPD 27 Oct. Iceland Gull: three MSD 4 Nov only report. Great Black-backed Gull: max 1000 Robert Moses Power Dam 27 Oct (JVR) is very high count. Black-legged Kittiwake: two ad RMPD 6 Nov (Dilabio *fide* JVR). Caspian Tern: max ten EDB 1 Sep, last there 22 Sep. Com. Tern: one to five/day EDB to 10 Sep, then 29 on 22 Sep, 43 on 23 Sep, last five on 29 Sep.

**PIGEONS-WOODPECKERS:** Great Horned Owl: six reports 10 Oct to 25 Nov. Barred Owl: Wanakena 12 Nov (PO's). No other owls. Com. Nighthawk: one Henderson 3 Sep only report. Ruby-throated Hummingbird: last two Canton 27 Sep. Belted Kingfisher: one WH 19 Oct, late. Yellow-bellied Sapsucker: last Pierrepont 4 Oct. N. Flicker: last Massena 26 Oct.

**FLYCATCHERS-STARLINGS:** E. Phoebe: singing 29 Sep, last Pierrepont 20 Oct. E. Wood-Pewee: last one WH 21 Sep. Tree Swallow: 20 near Massena 10 Sep unusually late. Barn Swallow: six near Massena 10 Sep late. Gray Jay: one Chandler Pd, Colton 5

Oct. Am. Crow: numbers seem up; max 300 at roost near Sacket's Harbor 17 Oct; two flocks of 60-100 near Canton on both 20 Oct and 19 Nov. Tufted Titmouse: two at feeders were the first near Massena (Chase & Ashley, *vide* JVR). House Wren: last Canton 4 Oct. Swainson's Thrush: one RMSP 20 Oct, unusual locale. Hermit Thrush: one Henderson feeding on Nannyberry 14 and 17 Oct. E. Bluebird: good numbers in Pierrepont 1 Sep to 6 Oct, max 5, last 3 Nov. Water Pipit: arr two EDB 18 Sep. Eur. Starling: flocks of 100+ south of Canton 19 and 27 Oct. Is this species increasing?

VIREOS-WARBLED: Yellow-rumped Warbler: many mid-Oct; max and last 20 WI 20 Oct. Chestnut-sided Warbler: one 4 Sep. Black-throated Green Warbler: one 29 Sep. Blackburnian Warbler: one 11 Oct. Pine Warbler: one singing Canton 19 Sep.

TANAGERS-WEAVERS: Rose-breasted Grosbeak: last Canton 11 Oct, late. Am. Tree Sparrow: arr Dekalb 6 Nov. Chipping Sparrow: last two Canton 4 Oct. Field Sparrow: one Massena 15-19 Oct. Vesper Sparrow: one WH 26 Sep; two RMSP 20 Oct (JVR). Savannah Sparrow: last RMSP 27 Oct, late! Fox Sparrow: one Massena 26 Sep; one EDB 3 Oct; three RMSP 20 Oct. White-throated Sparrow: only small flocks Henderson 28 Sep; last Massena 20 Oct. White-crowned Sparrow: two RMSP 20 Oct, three Canton 23 Oct. Dark-eyed Junco: max 17 Canton 19 Nov. Snow Bunting: arr EDB with 10-25/day to mid-Nov, fewer thereafter. Rusty Blackbird: four Helena 15 Oct (JVR); 60 feeding on Gray Dogwood fruit WI 20 Oct, unusual. Purple Finch: two imm, one ad ♂ Pierrepont 29 Sep; "very few" Henderson (LBC), one 29 Nov. House Finch: "increasing through period, attracting raptors" at feeder in Henderson (LBC). House Sparrow: most in two years in spite of increasing House Finch.

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## REGION 7 – ADIRONDACK-CHAMPLAIN

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Weather was exceedingly dry much of the season, producing few grounded migrants, yet exceptionally wet when rain did fall. Newcomb, for example, had 4 inches of rain overnight on 5-6 Sep. The dam at Mountain View, Franklin Co., was released early this year on 24 Sep, and Champlain beaches were exposed by lower lake levels, providing a total of 16 shorebird species. The weak passage of Hurricane *Gloria* the afternoon of 27 Sep was wet and windy, but produced no significant fallout, except perhaps for the Rock Doves wearing bands with the CU prefix of the Canadian Racing Pigeon Union that turned up at Crown Point and Ticonderoga in following days. Coot Hill hawk watch was visited only on 11 Oct, a clear, sunny day of W-NW winds that provided 11 birds of six species, plus 50 Canada Geese and four Common Ravens. By 9 Nov there was snow on the mountains, and on 16 Nov temperatures fell to 10°F at Newcomb, with up to 3½ inches of snow at Paradox the same day, pushing birds into