

REGION 6 – ST. LAWRENCE

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Wet, cold and wet – enough said about September. October temperatures were 1 to 3° below normal, but precipitation was about normal with measurable rain falling on about one day in three. The only snow fell in Lewis Co. and southern St. Lawrence Co. the last day of the month. November was also cool, but not wet. Total snowfall ranged from 3-18 inches, with the maximum fall on 21 Nov.

According to notes from Lee Chamberlaine, the fall migration was marked by flights of N. Flicker in mid-September, both kinglets and Yellow-rumped Warbler during the last week of September, Tree Swallow in early October, White-throated Sparrow on 5 and 12 Oct, and followed by Dark-eyed Junco on 16, 17 and 25 Oct. Late departures were a Rose-breasted Grosbeak on 27 Oct and a N. Oriole on 4 Nov, while Snow Bunting was reported as early as 25 Oct. Lingering half-hardies included two male Red-winged Blackbirds 25-30 Nov in Stockholm, a disabled male Com. Grackle to 22 Nov in Henderson and a Song Sparrow at R. Brouse's feeder well into November.

With regard to species whose range is expanding north, Turkey Vulture and N. Cardinal no longer evoke reports except for one Cardinal in N. Russell, where they are unusual outside of villages in foothills. Tufted Titmouse at three Henderson feeders were only reports. Purple Finch was down in Henderson with four on 4 Oct and barely outnumbers House Finch 8:6 in Canton. In contrast, House Finch is the most abundant species at RB's feeder in Jefferson Co with a maximum of 42, surpassing 26 Mourning Dove, 31 Am. Goldfinch and 35 Evening Grosbeak. There were no reports for Red-bellied Woodpecker or any other species.

David Gagne, a new observer from the Wanakena Ranger School, reports Black-backed Woodpecker, N. Raven, Boreal Chickadee, Winter Wren, Hermit Thrush and both kinglets, all from mid-October – so the boreal species are there if anyone looks for them! He saw an early Com. Redpoll in Wanakena on 23 Oct.

High water in Lake Ontario and the heavy rainfall reduced shorebird habitat. Only Sanderlings occurred in fair numbers at EDB during September and October. In contrast, Lesser Yellowlegs was not reported at all, most extraordinary!!

The most exciting birding for the period – indeed, for the decade – was at Moses-Saunders Dam in Massena. Here several skilled Canadian birders spotted one rarity after another. Counting an unconfirmed Arctic Tern a total of 15 species of Larids was reported! On 5-6 Oct nine species of gull were sighted including a tentative state record for **MEW GULL** (pending NYSARC review) and Regional records for Common Black-headed, Lesser Black-backed, Sabine's and Franklin's Gull. A Peregrine Falcon and Red Phalarope were sighted the same weekend. Six weeks later a **NORTHERN GANNET** stayed for a week – another species not cited in Gordon's 1975 Regional check-list. Unusual but less rare was a Ruddy Duck. While such species as Thayer's Gull, Arctic Tern and Black-backed Woodpecker require NYSARC documentation, they are "old hat" to Ontario birders. It would seem that the St. Lawrence River has greater affinity with eastern Ontario than with the warmer Great Lakes region.

A total of 158 species including 33 waders and waterfowl, 47 raptors and shorebirds, 17 fowl, owls, and non-passerines and 61 passerines was reported.

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Abbreviations: EDB-Eldorado Beach Preserve; MSD-Moses-Saunders Dam; PR-Perch River WMA; ULL-Upper & Lower Lakes WMA; SLR-St. Lawrence River.

LOONS-DUCKS: Red-throated Loon: one above MSD on 12, 24 and 31 Oct (BDiL). Com. Loon: one to three per day only, scarce. Pied-billed Grebe: a few reports of two to four per day; last EDB 26 Oct. Horned Grebe: one to two per day late Oct-Nov on L Ont, scarce there; five MSD 24 Oct. Red-necked Grebe: 19 above MSD 24 Oct, 11 on 31 Oct (BDiL). N. GANNET: im MSD and Cornwall I, Ont, 22-29 Nov (TT, ET); second or third Regional record. Double-crested Cormorant: less numerous along L Ont and upper SLR than recent fall seasons, mostly two to four per day, max 12 EDB 17 Sep, 75 MSD 12 Oct; last Pt Pen 23 Nov. Am. Bittern: max and last four Southwick Beach SP 25 Sep (LBC), an unusually high count for fall. Great Blue Heron: one to four per day all sectors Sep-Oct; max an extraordinary 200 flying in group to roost at ULL in Sep (LW *fide* LBC), probably a Regional fall record max; scattered singles present in Nov. Great Egret: three near Helena (Fran?) 11 Oct (JVR), extraordinary number for that location and date. Green-backed Heron: last two Southwick Beach SP 25 Sep. Mute Swan: 11 PR 6 Oct (LBC) suggest this unwelcome population is expanding. Snow Goose: one PR 6 Oct and two EDB 1 Nov only reports. Brant: 110 EDB 30 Oct only report. Wood Duck: two-four per day scattered. Green-winged Teal: three to five per day EDB Sep-Oct; max 11 there 3 Sep. Am. Black Duck: max 200 Pt Pen 11 Nov (SH); generally 1-6 per day scattered otherwise; scarce as usual for recent years. Mallard: max 200 Pt Pen 11 Nov. N. Pintail: one EDB 8 Sep and two there 5 Oct, *only* reports, very scarce. Blue-winged Teal: scarce; three to ten per day EDB 1 Sep to departure 3 Oct; max only 18 there 3 Sep; what has happened to this species? Gadwall: unusually many at EDB with 2-20 per day Sep to 10 Nov, max 35 on 31 Oct. Am. Wigeon: max 300 PR 6 Oct; last 11 Pt Pen 11 Nov. Ring-necked Duck: unusual numbers EDB with 15-35 per day 5 Oct-Nov; max 500 PR 6 Oct (LBC). Greater Scaup: as usual, thousands present in the large bays of northeastern L Ont through late Nov. Oldsquaw two WH 13 Sep (MB) very early arr or possibly summering birds; next report 10 EDB 31 Oct. Black Scoter: seven to 12 per day EDB 18-25 Oct; 120 males above MSD 24 Oct, 40 on 31 Oct (BDiL). Surf Scoter: arr and max 22 EDB 31 Oct. Com. Goldeneye: arr ten EDB 1 Oct. Bufflehead: arr 7 EDB 30 Oct; 18 MSD 31 Oct. Com. Merganser: unusual numbers, two-15 per day EDB Sep-Oct; 45 MSD-Hawkins Pt 24 Sep, 5000 on 21 Nov, max 10,000 29 Nov. Red-breasted Merganser: arr 27 EDB 27 Sep; ten-30 per day there to mid-Nov. Ruddy Duck: one PR 6 Oct (LBC), rarely reported in this Region.

HAWKS-ALCIDS: Osprey: seven singles reported. Bald Eagle: im Henderson Harbor 1 Sep (SS), hacked at Alcove Res near Albany. N. Harrier: two to five per day through the period; good numbers all lowland sectors. N. Goshawk: im EDB 26 Sep and one Adams Ctr 19 Oct only reports. Sharp-shinned Hawk: max 29 in five hr flight EDB 27 Sep; scattered other reports of migrants primarily from the L Ont shore. Cooper's Hawk: three in five hr flight EDB 27 Sep plus three other singles, only reports. Broad-winged Hawk: three in five hr flight at EDB 27 Sep plus five other singles, only reports. Red-tailed Hawk: max 17 EDB flight of 27 Sep; otherwise one to four per day. Rough-legged Hawk: arr and max seven Cape Vincent to Pt Pen 19 Oct (SH); one to four per day thereafter. Am. Kestrel: max six each EDB 11 Sep and 27 Sep. Merlin: two EDB 27 Sep (GAS), only report. Peregrine Falcon: one MSD 4 Oct (BB, MG). Gray Partridge: five 2 mi N of

Watertown 23 Nov (RB); what is status of this seldom-reported species? Wild Turkey: ten S. Hammond 29 Sep (LBC) and one Massena 9 Oct (MB), new sites for our locally expanding population. Semipalmated Plover: two to seven per day EDB. Killdeer: max 34 Massena to Louisville 12 Sep (MB). Greater Yellowlegs: one Wescott Beach SP 20 Sep (LBC), *only report!* Spotted Sandpiper: singles only. Red Knot: im EDB 12 Sep, *only report.* Sanderling: three-20 per day Sep, max 60 on 13 Sep; two-eight per day Oct; last 2 Nov. Semipalmated Sandpiper: three to ten per day EDB. Least Sandpiper: one EDB 5-6 Sep, *only report.* Pectoral Sandpiper: one Ellisburg 16 Sep, *only report!!* Dunlin: arr EDB 17 Sep; max 26 EDB 21 Oct; last there 14 Nov; poor flight. Red Phalarope: one MSD 4 Oct (BB, MG). **FRANKLIN'S GULL:** im MSD 14 Sep-24 Oct (BB, MG, BDiL, *fide* JVR). Little Gull: three Southwick Beach SP 28 Sep (LBC); two to three in second winter plumage per day MSD 14 Sep to 16 Nov, max five on 24 Oct (BDiL, JVR). **COM. BLACK-HEADED GULL:** ad in Basic plumage MSD 24 Nov (DB, NYSARC). Bonaparte's Gull: 300 MSD 14 Sep, max 1200 MSD 12 Oct decreasing to 40 late Nov. **MEW GULL:** ad MSD 5 Oct (JJ, NYSARC). Ring-billed Gull: max 5000 21 Nov. Thayer's Gull: one Basic I plumage MSD 21 Nov (BDiL). Iceland Gull: two in Basic I plumage MSD 21 Nov, three im 26 Nov. Lesser Black-backed Gull; one in Basic I plumage MSD 10, 12 Oct (BDiL). Glaucous Gull: four MSD 21 Nov, max seven 25 Nov. Black-legged Kittiwake: ims MSD 5 Oct and 29 Nov. **SABINE'S GULL:** im MSD 14 and 24 Sep, ad there 5 Oct (BB, MG, BDiL, JVR). Caspian Tern: two to five per day EDB. **ARCTIC TERN:** im MSD 5 Oct (BDiL, BB). Com. Tern: 25 MSD 14 Sep, 18 on 24 Sep.

PIGEONS-WOODPECKERS: N. Saw-whet Owl: one heard Massena 4 Sep (MB), *only owl reported.* Com. Nighthawk: 26 Massena 4 Sep; also Sep sightings in Pierrepont. Chimney Swift: one Massena 1 Sep *only report.* Ruby-throated Hummingbird: five reported. Yellow-bellied Sapsucker: two im Henderson 28 Sep and two ad there 29 Sep. Black-backed Woodpecker: females Wanakena 12 and 18 Oct (DG); one Massena 10 Oct (BDiL), clearly moving through this atypical lowland farmland.

FLYCATCHERS-STARLINGS: Horned Lark: increasing in Jeff (LBC). Purple Martin: last Henderson 2 Sep. Red-breasted Nuthatch: one at feeder in Henderson 2 and 28 Sep; "small numbers through 4 Oct" (LBC); one at feeder Canton through Oct and Nov; notably absent from feeder in Stockholm (FR). Brown Creeper: one regularly at feeder Watertown (RB). Marsh Wren: last Stony Cr Marsh, Henderson, 17 Oct. E. Bluebird: common as usual in migration in central StL, max eight Pierrepont 28 Sep and five 18 Oct. Hermit Thrush: one Canton 18 Oct and last Wanakena 12 Oct. Am. Robin: last Louisville 18 Nov. Water Pipit: one EDB 13 Sep. Bohemian Waxwing: arr Canton 28 Oct (MEH); 100 Massena 20 Nov – promises to be a good year! N. Shrike: arr Louisville 2 Nov and Stockholm 8 Nov, portending a good year.

VIREOS-WARBLEDERS: Only four species reported. Yellow-rumped Warbler: max 70 Wanakena 12 Oct.

TANAGERS-WEAVERS: Am. Tree Sparrow: arr Watertown 3 Nov. Chipping Sparrow: last Louisville 25 Sep. Fox Sparrow: three Wanakena 18 Oct (DG); one Canton 15 Oct. White-crowned Sparrow: three Canton 8 Oct (MEH). Pine Grosbeak: arr Massena 29 Oct and Potsdam 3 Nov. Com. Redpoll: Louisville 14 Nov. Pine Siskin: arr 17 EDB 4 Oct and Louisville 14 Nov; max 60 Wanakena 10 Oct. Evening Grosbeak: many small flocks through period Jeff; flocks of six to 75 in Wanakena during Oct.

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