

REGION 7 – ADIRONDACK-CHAMPLAIN

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Despite early snows and some cold nights, fall was often pleasant across the Region. Ray Brook dropped to 42°F by 2 Sep, yet Lake Champlain's waters were still 65°F on 4 Sep, warming the basin and allowing boat trips to the Four Brothers Islands until late in the month. The High Peaks were snow covered as early as 12 Sep when Whiteface Mt. recorded 8" and the streets of Saranac Lake had 1"-3". WPTZ Plattsburgh reported the storm as the earliest first major snowfall since 1899. Newcomb and Ray Brook fell below freezing to 31°F on 16 Sep, these two chilly Essex Co. hamlets dropping further, to 22°F, on 10 Oct. Another snowstorm hit parts of the Region 6 Nov, leaving 5" at Paradox. Then gale force winds buffeted forests on 10 Nov, knocking down trees. Newcomb took honors as the coldest spot in the country (except for mountaintops) on 14 Nov, when local thermometers dropped below zero for the first time, registering a nippy -2°F. Finally, a major storm tracked across the Region 20-21 Nov, dumping a foot or more on Elizabethtown. Nevertheless, this really wasn't a bad fall. Really.

Migration appeared generally light, but produced excellent variety, with individual numbers fairly high for a few species. This is reflected in the banding totals near Elizabethtown, where just 104 birds, but of 29 different species, were banded between 14 Sep and 25 Nov. The most numerous were 15 Yellow-rumped Warblers, 14 Evening Grosbeaks, 12 Black-capped Chickadees, and 10 Ruby-crowned Kinglets, followed by seven Blue Jays and six Eastern Bluebirds. Most unexpected was a Tufted Titmouse 5 Oct, the first banded in the Region; three titmice visited the same rural feeding station 22 Nov, suggesting a movement.

Feeders across the Region provided other interesting birds. A Rock Dove wearing a Canadian Racing Pigeon Union band from a loft in Jerseyfield, Ontario, stopped at the Borland feeder in Speculator 10-20 Sep. A pair of *American Crows* regularly visited the Delehanty suet feeder in Tupper Lake. Boreal Chickadee returned to the Chapman feeder in Newcomb for the *sixth* consecutive year, surely a state record. A **CAROLINA WREN** appeared at the Hagar feeder in Saranac Lake on 22 Oct, for the second Franklin Co record and first since 1954; the wren remained through the end of the period, sometimes roving up to the Benson feeder on nearby Moody Pond. A Northern Shrike arrived at a Tupper Lake feeder 9 Nov, while a male Northern Cardinal in Newcomb during Nov was out of its usual range. Common Redpoll appeared at the Delehanty feeding station in Tupper Lake 19 Nov, followed by a few at Newcomb feeders the following week.

Meanwhile, out in the wilds there were some good finds, too. Waterbirds were well represented: two species of loon, three grebes, three geese, six puddle ducks, eleven divers (including all three scoters), and three mergansers, plus moorhen and coot. Raptors were well represented (13 diurnal, 5 owls), although Coot Hill hawk watch was visited only 6 Sep, a day that provided only nine birds of four species. Unhappily, a Merlin found shot at Essex 5 Oct died three days later in spite of veterinarians' efforts; one sometimes wonders when the

shooting and trapping of nongame birds will end. (Only weeks earlier a Great Blue Heron also died of a gunshot wound, so the problem is not limited to "chicken hawks.") One also wonders where the Peregrine Falcon *northbound* at high speed over Moriah on the late afternoon of 23 Nov was headed. A Sandhill Crane independently reported by several local residents in Saranac Lake during October was not verified.

As Mark Gretch noted, "This was not a good fall for shorebird observations." Lake Champlain was high (over 96 ft. in early September), but fortunately one of the smaller ponds at Lake Alice GMA was low from early September to early October. Only a dozen shorebirds were found over the entire Region, but included two **WHIMBREL**. The five larids included two reports of **LITTLE GULL** and an Iceland Gull. The six woodpeckers included a female Three-toed Woodpecker at Ferd's Bog 2 Nov, this one showing a clearly marked back, but not much white through the eye. Passerines were representative, but there were many misses: for example, only a dozen warblers could be found in all four counties. Some species appeared in good numbers, though, as shown in the maxima for Horned Lark, Barn Swallow, American Robin, Water Pipit, Snow Bunting, Common Grackle, and Evening Grosbeak. No less worthy of note were the record *five* "not so" Solitary Vireos Jeff Carlton had at Moriah 22 Sep, or the *six* Yellow-throated Vireos reported by Jan Trzeciak from Owls Head 28 Sep. Seven winter finches had been reported by the end of the season, but in no extraordinary numbers. Curiously, there were no reports of House Finch. A record seasonal total of 165 species were reported, compared with 130 in both 1983 and 1984 and the previous high of 150 species in 1985.

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LOONS-DUCKS: Red-throated Loon: Indian L, Fran, 24-27 Oct; Crown Pt 25 Oct-28 Nov (WE). Com. Loon: max 10 Four Brothers I 19 Sep. Pied-billed Grebe: max 10 L Alice 22 Sep. Horned Grebe: max 10 North West Bay 23 Nov. Red-necked Grebe: arr Heart Bay 2 Nov. Double-crested Cormorant: three y still in nest Four Brothers I "A" 19 Sep (RB, JP), late. Great Blue Heron: 666 nests tagged in 426 trees Valcour I heronry 1986. Snow Goose: four Champlain reports. Brant: arr 14 Franklin Falls Pd 3 Oct (RH). Gadwall: arr f Westport 8 Nov. Am. Wigeon: arr two f L Alice 30 Oct. Canvasback: 106 Crown Pt 28-29 Nov. Redhead: arr f Crown Pt 28 Nov. Ring-necked Duck: max 500 L Alice 29 Sep. Lesser Scaup: arr two f Indian L, Fran, 25 Oct (JT). Oldsquaw: arr m Basic plumage Mt View L 23 Oct. Black Scoter: arr Indian L, Fran, 23 Oct (JT). Surf Scoter: arr f Heart Bay 2 Nov. White-winged Scoter: arr Indian L 23 Oct, max three there 27-28 Oct and Bulwagga Bay 25 Oct. Com. Goldeneye: max 800 Monty Bay 28 Nov. Bufflehead: max 20 North West Bay 23 Nov. Hooded Merganser: max 25 L. Alice 30 Oct. Com. Merganser: max 130 Indian L, Fran, 7 Nov, high inland. Red-breasted Merganser: arr three Indian L 10 Oct.

HAWKS-ALCIDS: Turkey Vulture: two im site attached Coot Hill 6 Sep perhaps offspring of spring pair. Osprey: late report of one taking Wood Duck Penfield Pd Aug. Bald Eagle: migrant Elizabethtown 15 Sep; im Crown Pt State Hist Site 19 Oct; im chased by

two Am. Crows Saranac L 4 Nov. Rough-legged Hawk: arr Westport and Wallonsburg 25 Oct. Peregrine Falcon: f Palisades, L Champlain, 5-25 Oct (WE). Gray Partridge: two Champlain 8 Sep. Ring-necked Pheasant: 1148 released Clin/Esse by DEC, none reported. Ruffed Grouse: three late j Tupper L 15 Oct. Com. Moorhen: three Monty Bay Swamp, Clin, 9 Sep (MG). Am. Coot: Webb Royce Swamp, Esse, 5 Oct (RB, KB). Semipalmated Plover: L Alice 15-29 Sep. Greater Yellowlegs: L Alice 8 Sep-22 Oct, max 11 there 22 Sep; five resting on stumps Mt View L 26 Oct. Lesser Yellowlegs: arr Miner L 28 Oct (TM). **WHIMBREL**: two n end of runway at L Clear's Adirondack Airport 6 Sep (JF, GC, RH); first Fran rec, third from Adirondack Park, fourth for Region and only report in over a decade. Ruddy Turnstone: Port Henry 5 Sep (GC, TM), second latest Esse. Sanderling: two Four Bros, one mouth Boquet R 19 Sep (RB, JP). Semipalmated Sandpiper: L Alice 9-29 Sep, max four there 22 Sep. Least Sandpiper: one L Alice 29 Sep only report. Dunlin: arr L Alice 29 Sep. Com. Snipe: max 20 L Alice 22 Sep. Am. Woodcock: Indian L, Hami, 13 Nov, 3" snow on ground. **LITTLE GULL**: three ad Crown Pt 25 Oct, one ad there 7 Nov (WE, RL, NM, CR, ph). Bonaparte's Gull: max 200 Westport 2 Sep. **ICELAND GULL**: Basic II plumage Cumberland Head ferry landing 15 Oct (RH), first Clin rec. Great Black-backed Gull: max 13 Boquet R 19 Sep.

PIGEONS-WOODPECKERS: Snowy Owl: arr Chazy Landing 19 Nov (MG). Long-eared Owl: soft, puppylike barking call Paradox 28-29 Oct (MB) probably this species.

FLYCATCHERS-STARLINGS: Traill's Flycatcher: rec late banded Elizabethtown 18 Sep (JP). Horned Lark: max 200 N Farm Rd, Clin, 23 Nov. Barn Swallow: max 100 Monty Bay Marsh 9 Sep. Boreal Chickadee and Tufted Titmouse: *intro*. **CAROLINA WREN**: *intro*. Marsh Wren: two Monty Bay Marsh to 9 Sep. Golden-crowned Kinglet: abundant, still in song Paradox 21 Oct. Blue-gray Gnatcatcher: transient Elizabethtown 17 Sep (RB) unusual inland. E. Bluebird: last flew over Cherry Ridge, Hami, 13 Nov (RM). Hermit Thrush: j in song Paradox 1-4 Oct. Am. Robin: max 75 L Alice 7 Oct eating autumn olive and wild grapes; Rt 28N Newcomb 13 Nov (WC), late inland. Water Pipit: max 75 plowed cornfield Chazy Landing 8 Oct. N. Shrike: *intro*.

VIREOS-WARBLEDERS: Solitary Vireo: singing Paradox 24 Sep; *intro*. Yellow-throated Vireo: *intro*. Red-eyed Vireo: singing Paradox 2 Sep. Black-throated Green Warbler: full song Paradox 6 Sep, whisper song Elizabethtown 15 Sep. Black-and-white Warbler: singing Paradox 10 Sep. Ovenbird: flight songs and feeding y Paradox 10 Sep (MB). Wilson's Warbler: arr Tupper L 9 Sep.

TANAGERS-WEAVERS: N. Cardinal: *intro*. Am. Tree Sparrow: arr Tupper L 30 Oct. Field Sparrow: Tupper L feeder 7 Nov. Vesper Sparrow: Tupper L feeder 3 Nov. Fox Sparrow: Tupper L 18 Oct-13 Nov, Elizabethtown 20 Oct, only reports. Lincoln's Sparrow: six Moriah by 18 Sep (GC). White-throated Sparrow: singing Chilson 28 Sep. White-crowned Sparrow: arr Moriah 17 Sep (GC), early. Snow Bunting: arr Paul Smiths 2nd wk Oct, max 500-600 N Farm Rd, Clin, 23 Nov. Red-winged Blackbird: Tupper L to 30 Nov, late, Rusty Blackbird: Tupper L feeder 14-27 Nov, only report. Com. Grackle: max 200 Tupper L 22 Sep. Pine Grosbeak: heard Hogansburg and Paradox Nov. Purple Finch: singing Paradox 19 Oct. Red Crossbill: singing Paradox 2 Sep-18 Nov, max 20 there 31 Oct; ten Owl Pate Mt 21 Oct (MB); three gravel rd Newcomb 25 Nov (WC); road killed j Owls Head 30 Nov. Com. Redpoll: arr 20 Owls Head and 10 Teboville, Fran, 14 Nov (JT); *intro*. Pine Siskin: max 55 Tupper L 22 Oct. Am. Goldfinch: feeding y Tupper L feeder in Sep. Evening Grosbeak: max 150 Indian L, Hami, 7-15 Nov. House Sparrow: carrying grass Whallonsburg 25 Nov (EJ) following major snowfall!

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