



*Figure 1. Gray Kingbird (1987-35-D), near Savannah, New York, 1 Nov 1987.
Photograph by Brian W. Keelan.*

Report of the New York State Avian Records Committee 1987

This report marks the return to annual reporting by the NYSARC. Aside from getting this report out on time there are several positive items to mention. During 1987, after several mail ballots, a portion of the committee met and was able to resolve all past NYSARC reports so that there currently are no unresolved records. This past year was also one of stability with no changes in the committee during 1988. Finally, we are most pleased to report that progress is being made on a checklist of the birds of New York State. We hope to have the final product available within the year.

As has been the case in prior years, we were not able to document all sightings of rare birds in the state. About 40 states now have state records committees and a few, such as California, receive as many as ten times the number of reports we do. We were very happy to receive six reports on the Gray Kingbird which appeared upstate, but for a number of other unusual sightings we received no reports at all. If you see a species that's on the list of reportable species below please write it up and send your report to the NYSARC at the address given below. Although they are not required, you can get additional copies of the NYSARC reporting form from the Laboratory of Ornithology, Cornell University, or from any NYSARC committee member.

The list of species which should be reported to the NYSARC has not been printed in several years. The NYSARC will review reports of:

1. Any species new to New York State.
2. Any addition to the list of species proven to nest in New York State.
3. Any of the following species found anywhere within New York State:

Pacific Loon, Yellow-billed Loon, Western Grebe, Yellow-nosed Albatross, Black-capped Petrel, Mottled Petrel, Herald Petrel, Audubon's Shearwater, White-faced Storm-Petrel, Leach's Storm-Petrel, White-tailed Tropicbird, Red-billed Tropicbird, Brown Booby, American White Pelican, Brown Pelican, Magnificent Frigatebird, White Ibis, White-faced Ibis, Wood Stork, Fulvous Whistling-Duck, Ross' Goose, "Black" Brant, Barnacle Goose, Cinnamon Teal, Smew, Black Vulture, American Swallow-tailed Kite, Black-shouldered Kite, Mississippi Kite, Swainson's Hawk, Gyrfalcon, Yellow Rail, Corn Crane, King Rail, Azure Gallinule, Sandhill Crane, Northern Lapwing, Wilson's Plover, Wood Sandpiper, Eskimo Curlew, Whimbrel (white-rumped races only), Eurasian Curlew, Long-billed Curlew, Bar-tailed Godwit, Rufous-necked Stint, Little Stint, Sharp-tailed Sandpiper, Long-tailed Jaeger, Great Skua, South Polar Skua, Mew Gull, California Gull, Thayer's Gull, Ross' Gull, Ivory Gull, Sandwich Tern, Arctic Tern, Bridled Tern, Sooty Tern, Common Murre, Atlantic

Puffin, White-winged Dove, Northern Hawk-Owl, Burrowing Owl, Great Gray Owl, Boreal Owl, Say's Phoebe, Vermilion Flycatcher, Ash-throated Flycatcher, Gray Kingbird, Scissor-tailed Flycatcher, Fork-tailed Flycatcher, Black-billed Magpie, Brown-headed Nuthatch, Rock Wren, Bewick's Wren, Northern Wheatear, Mountain Bluebird, Townsend's Solitaire, Fieldfare, Redwing, Sage Thrasher, Bell's Vireo, "Audubon's" Yellow-rumped Warbler, Black-throated Gray Warbler, Townsend's Warbler, Swainson's Warbler, Painted Redstart, Western Tanager, Black-headed Grosbeak, Painted Bunting, Green-tailed Towhee, "Spotted" Rufous-sided Towhee, Bachman's Sparrow, Lark Bunting, Baird's Sparrow, LeConte's Sparrow, Golden-crowned Sparrow, Harris' Sparrow, Smith's Longspur, Chestnut-collared Longspur, Brewer's Blackbird, "Bullock's" Northern Oriole, Hoary Redpoll

as well as the following species from *upstate* New York only:

any species of shearwater or storm-petrel, Northern Gannet, Great Cormorant, Tricolored Heron, Yellow-crowned Night-Heron, Tufted Duck, Common Eider, Black Rail, Purple Gallinule, Piping Plover, American Oystercatcher, Black-necked Stilt, American Avocet, Marbled Godwit, Curlew Sandpiper, Gull-billed Tern, Royal Tern, Roseate Tern, Black Skimmer, any species of alcid, Chuck-will's-Widow, Western Kingbird, Yellow-throated Warbler, Summer Tanager, Blue Grosbeak, Lark Sparrow, Savannah "Ipswich" Sparrow, Sharp-tailed Sparrow, Boat-tailed Grackle

the following species *away from* the Adirondacks:

Spruce Grouse, Three-toed Woodpecker, Black-backed Woodpecker, Gray Jay

and the following species for *spring* reports only:

Western Sandpiper (upstate New York only), Baird's Sandpiper, Sabine's Gull

4. Any reports of birds seen at least four weeks before early arrivals or four weeks after late departures, as summarized in John Bull's *Birds of New York State* (1974) or the *Supplement to Birds of New York State* (1976).

5. Reports of rarities should be mailed to:

Richard G. Evans
NYSARC
Cornell Laboratory of Ornithology
159 Sapsucker Woods Road
Ithaca, NY 14850.

This summary covers 58 reports representing 45 separate NYSARC records from 1987. Also included are one report from 1984, eight (four records) from 1985, and two from 1986 which were previously unresolved or were submitted in 1987. Of these 69 reports, 50 (72%) were accepted.

1987 Accepted Reports

- Pacific Loon (*Gavia pacifica*). 1987-18-A adult in Alternate plumage at Dewey Avenue, Town of Greece, Monroe Co., 5 May (KG). The split of Pacific Loon from Arctic Loon has resulted in some confusion among birders. Although the description of this individual did not rule out Arctic Loon, Pacific Loon is the only species known to occur in the eastern U.S. and no North American specimens of Arctic Loon are known east of Alaska and the Pacific Coast of Canada. There is one prior New York State record based on a specimen and three prior sightings of birds in Alternate plumage appear in Bull (1974).
- Northern Gannet (*Sula bassanus*). 1987-17-A adult at Hook Mountain on 26 April (PF). Unusual for both inland locality and the spring date. There are about 40 prior Upstate records.
- Great Cormorant (*Phalacrocorax carbo*). 1987-28-A immature near Greensport, Columbia Co., 24 September (WC). Increasingly observations of this species Upstate involve immatures and birds outside the "normal" winter season.
- Yellow-crowned Night-Heron (*Nycticorax violaceus*). 1987-22-A adult well studied on Tift Farm Nature Preserve, Buffalo, Erie Co., 6 June (RA). The Upstate birds appear in a very narrow time frame between late May and mid-June and, at least in western and central New York, usually as adults. There are about a dozen prior Upstate records.
- Fulvous Whistling-Duck (*Dendrocygna bicolor*). 1987-36-A four near Manitou Rd. and Ontario Parkway, Monroe Co., 8 November (JK).
- Black Vulture (*Coragyps atratus*). 1987-42-A two at Mt. Peter Hawk Lookout near Greenwood Lake, Orange Co., 26 April (BW). There are about thirty prior records, about half from Upstate.
- American Swallow-tailed Kite (*Elanoides forficatus*). 1987-20-A adult at Braddock Bay Hawk Lookout, Town of Greece, Monroe Co., 30 May (FN, JD, MD, RM). The date suggests a post-breeding wanderer, rather than a spring overshoot. This is the fifteenth record for New York State.
- Mississippi Kite (*Ictinia mississippiensis*). 1987-19-A subadult at Braddock Bay Hawk Lookout, Town of Greece, Monroe Co., 22 May (FN, JD, RM). Now being reported biennially in the state, this represents only the fifth accepted record, all of which occurred in the past nine years.
- Swainson's Hawk (*Buteo swainsoni*). 1987-15-A subadult at Derby Hill, Oswego Co., 12 April (FS). Now appearing almost annually in spring along the south shore of Lake Ontario. This is the fourteenth record for the state.
- Gyr Falcon (*Falco rusticolus*). 1987-38-A, B gray morph on Salt Road, Webster, Monroe Co., 22 November (DS, MT). There are about 40 prior records.



Figure 2. Sandhill Crane (1987-33-A), Stacy's Basin, Oneida Co., New York, 13 Oct 1987. Photograph by Dorothy W. Crumb.

- ✓ Sandhill Crane (*Grus canadensis*). 1987-12-A two flying east at Braddock Bay Hawk Lookout, Monroe Co., 14 April (CC). 1987-13-A one at Derby Hill, Oswego Co., 15 April (DC). 1987-14-A two, Derby Hill, 16 April (FS). 1987-33-A,B one at Stacey Basin, Town of Verona, Oneida Co., 13-15 October (DC, FS; Fig. 2). The pattern of record along the Lake Ontario shore in spring and almost anywhere in agricultural land in fall still holds true. There are now more than two dozen reports for the state.
- ✓ Marbled Godwit (*Limosa fedoa*). 1987-27-A,B one at Delta Lake, Town of Western, Oneida Co., 7-8 September (DC, FS). There are about twenty-five prior Upstate records.
- ✓ Little Stint (*Calidris minuta*). 1987-26-A,B juvenile at Jamaica Bay National Wildlife Refuge, 2 September (CD, SH) with Least, Semipalmated and Western Sandpipers for direct comparison. Only the second

report for the state. Careful searching may determine this species to be a very rare but regular migrant through the western Long Island littoral.

- ✓ Thayer's Gull (*Larus thayeri*). 1987-3-A adult on the Oswego River at Fulton, Oswego Co., 25 January (FS). Rare but regular at this site.
- ✓ Sabine's Gull (*Xema sabini*). 1987-31-A two immatures near Peace Bridge, Erie Co., 7 October (RA). The first time in memory more than one individual has been reported at once in New York State. The NYSARC normally will not review fall reports of this species.
- ✓ Black Skimmer (*Rynchops niger*). 1987-25-A a juvenile at Croton Point, Westchester Co., 30 August (BW, SL). In proximity to salt water but still unusual away from either Long Island Sound or the Atlantic Ocean.
- ✓ Boreal Owl (*Aegolius funereus*). 1987-8-A,B one at Curtin Road, Town of Parma, Monroe Co., 6-7 March (B & EK, RS), photographs on file. Another find for Rochester owls! This is the twenty-third record for the state.
- ✓ Say's Phoebe (*Sayornis saya*). 1987-43-A one at Five Rivers Environmental Education Center, Delmar, Albany Co., 7-9 February (AM). This is the tenth record for the state. An account with a photograph appears in *The Kingbird* 37:73; 1987.
- ✓ Vermilion Flycatcher (*Pyrocephalus rubinus*). 1987-45-A a male at west end of Jones Beach, Nassau County, 24-25 September (JBu, AD). An account of this addition to the cumulative state list appears in *The Kingbird* 38:2-4; 1988.
- ✓ Gray Kingbird (*Tyrannus dominicensis*). 1987-35-A,B,C,D,E one at Route 89 and Armitage Road, Town of Tyre, Seneca Co., 31 October-4 November (DC, FS, RE, BK, RS; Fig. 1). Perhaps the strangest waif yet to central New York and at a very peculiar season. This is the sixth record for the state and the first Upstate.
- ✓ Yellow Warbler (*Dendroica petechia*). 1987-37-A slightly injured adult male 13 November at Three Rivers WMA, Onondaga Co. (FS). Looked for on subsequent occasions but never relocated.
- ✓ Yellow-throated Warbler (*Dendroica dominica*). 1987-24-A singing male at Science Lake, Town of Red House, Allegany State Park, Cattaraugus Co., 19 June (RA). This species nested at this site in 1984 but apparently not in 1985 or 1986. There are about forty prior Upstate records.
- ✓ Black-headed Grosbeak (*Pheucticus melanocephalus*). 1987-39-A first fall male at Saranac Lake, Town of North Elba, Essex Co., 20-22 November (RH), photograph on file.
- ✓ Sharp-tailed Sparrow (*Ammodramus caudacutus*). 1987-29-A,B multiple birds seen 3 and 10 October 1987 at various Lake Ontario marshes,

Town of Greece, Monroe Co. (RS, BK), photographs on file.
 Golden-crowned Sparrow (*Zonotrichia atricapilla*). 1987-34-A,B,C one at Zach's Bay, Jones Beach, Nassau Co., 17-18 October (JBU, EE, TB), well documented with good photographs (*Kingbird* 38:8-9; 1988). Only the second report for the state, the last being one present from 31 January to 24 April, 1954, also at Jones Beach.
 Brewer's Blackbird (*Euphagus cyanocephalus*). 1987-32-A a single female at East spit of Braddock Bay, Monroe Co., 11 October (BK).
 Hoary Redpoll (*Carduelis hornemanni*). 1987-6-A one at feeder in Phoenix, Town of Schroepel, Oswego Co., 15-16 February (FS).

1987 Reports Not Accepted

Least Grebe (*Tachybaptus dominicus*). 1987-40-A Montezuma National Wildlife Refuge, Seneca Co., 14 September - 2 November.
 Eurasian Kestrel (*Falco tinnunculus*). 1987-16-A,B one at Coot Hill, Port Henry, Essex Co., 26 April.
 Gyrfalcon (*Falco rusticolus*). 1987-1-A,B one near Mashomack Preserve, Pine Plains, Dutchess Co., 12-17 January. Also 1987-2-A one at Niagara Blvd. between Queenston and Niagara-on-the-Lake, Ontario which was watched as it flew east into Niagara Co., 14 February.
 Sandhill Crane (*Grus canadensis*). 1987-10-A one at County Line and Chase Roads, Monroe Co., 15 March. 1987-11-A two at Lakeside Cemetery, Town of Hamburg, 11 April. The latter report clearly refers to some species of crane, but the details are not complete enough to be absolutely certain that these were Sandhill Cranes and not another species of crane. Sandhill Crane is by far the most likely species to occur in New York.
 Thayer's Gull (*Larus thayeri*). 1987-9-A one at Irondequoit Bay outlet (each side), Monroe Co., 15 March.
 Northern Hawk-Owl (*Surnia ulula*). 1987-4-A one near Rochester along Lake Ontario Parkway, 25 January. 1987-5-A one at Pittsford, Monroe Co., 10 February.
 Rufous Hummingbird (*Selasphorus rufus*). 1987-21-A one at Elmira, Chemung Co., 26 May.
 Gray Kingbird (*Tyrannus dominicensis*). 1987-35-F Route 89 north of Montezuma National Wildlife Refuge near the Wayne Co. line, 2 November. Probably the same individual reported in 1987-35-A,B,C,D,E but description inadequate to ascertain that the species in question was a Gray Kingbird.
 Mountain Bluebird (*Sialia currucoides*). 1987-23-A one on 12 June at Honeye Falls, Monroe Co.
 Brewer's Blackbird (*Euphagus cyanocephalus*). 1987-41-A date and location not specified.

Hoary Redpoll (*Carduelis hornemanni*). 1987-7-A one 10-12 March at feeder in Potsdam, St. Lawrence Co.

1986 Accepted Report

Great Cormorant (*Phalacrocorax carbo*). 1985-38-E one at Summerville Pier, Rochester, Monroe Co., 1 February 1986 (D & DT). Please note that the report is in 1986 but was labelled with a 1985 code number.

Azure Gallinule (*Porphyryla flavirostris*). 1986-39-A one found dead at Fort Salonga, Suffolk Co., 14 December (BS, WK). An excellent summary of the penchant of Rallidae to wander accompanied the detailed measurements and description. Details of this first record not only for New York but for all of North America (pending decision by A.O.U. Check-list committee) appear in *Am. Birds* 42:25-27; 1987.

1986 Report Not Accepted

Hoary Redpoll (*Carduelis hornemanni*). 1986-40-A a single bird near Irondequoit Bay, Monroe Co., 24 December.

1985 Accepted Reports

Great Cormorant (*Phalacrocorax carbo*). 1985-44-A one on Hudson River near New York, Rockland Co., 24 December (PD).

Marbled Godwit (*Limosa fedoa*). 1985-46-A one, from 31 August to 3 September at Geoffroy's Pond, Town of Claverack, Columbia Co. (WC). An account of this bird, with photograph, appears in *The Kingbird*.

1985 Reports Not Accepted

Frigatebird sp. (*Fregata* sp.). 1985-31-A one on 27 September in wake of Hurricane Gloria near South Beach Boardwalk, Staten Island, Richmond Co. Accepted as *Fregata* sp. With the occurrence of three species of *Fregata* now documented in North America (see the 6th edition of A.O.U. Check-List of North American Birds, 1983) one may not assume that hurricane blown birds necessarily are Magnificent Frigatebirds.

Great Cormorant (*Phalacrocorax carbo*). 1985-38-A,B,C,D a single bird on Lake Ontario off East Spit of Braddock Bay, Monroe Co., on 24 November. There were multiple observers but observation conditions and distances were poor.

1984 Accepted Report

Greater Shearwater (*Puffinus gravis*). 1984-51-A one, 1 July in Long Island Sound between Niantic, Connecticut and Montauk, Suffolk Co. (MB). Although barely into Long Island Sound, this record was reviewed and is reported here because of the scarcity of reports of pelagic birds within the Sound.

The Azure Gallinule in 1986 and the Vermilion Flycatcher in 1987 were both additions to the New York State list, which now stands at 435.

Respectfully submitted,
Robert F. Andrle
Robert O. Paxton
Fritz G. Scheider (Chairman)
Steven C. Sibley
Barbara Spencer

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