

REGION 1 - NIAGARA FRONTIER

STEPHEN W. EATON

The weather remained normal through September with temperatures averaging about 62°. Away from the lakes temperatures were 3-4° below normal. The month was a bit drier than normal, rain down about an inch and a half at Buffalo International, Jamestown and Amity Lake, and sunnier than normal, with 62% of possible sunshine. A bleak windy day on the 5 Sep brought a Parasitic Jaeger into Barcelona Harbor on Lake Erie for Bob Sundell to savor. Hurricane *Gilbert* contributed only a little, light rain but forest fires in Yellowstone National Park sent enough smoke eastward to produce haze on 10 and 11 Sep. Frost occurred on the Allegany plateau on 6, 19 and 29 Sep. "October was cold, wet and dreary," to quote the *Buffalo News*, "normally one of the prettiest months of the year in Western New York." Vivian Pitzrick wrote that "October's bright blue weather, wasn't." Temperatures averaged 4.5° below normal at Buffalo and 2.6° below normal at Amity Lake, but frost didn't reach Buffalo until 30 Oct. Precipitation at Buffalo was three inches above normal but below normal at Amity Lake. Water tables across the uplands of the plateau remained low and wells were failing. Sunshine was about 14% less than normal. November was cloudy but remarkably snow-free with mild temperatures, averaging about 3° above normal at Buffalo and Amity Lake. Although precipitation was rather light there were 22 days with at least a trace, mostly rain, at Buffalo and 17 days at Amity Lake. Lake Erie's surface temperature dropped from 50° at the end of October to 45° at the end of November, close to normal for that date. Buffalo received less than an inch of snow during the month, the least amount of snow in 42 years for November when normally it gets 12 inches.

The fruit crop in the Allegany Hills was unusually good, perhaps because of the unusually sunny summer and sufficient moisture. Any beech not hit by beech blight produced a fair to good crop of nuts. These did not start dropping until mid to late November, when Wild Turkeys soon found them. Large flocks tore up the forest floor in their quest. Earlier bird parties made up of several species were seen feeding on the nuts still in burrs on the branches. These parties usually consisted of one or two Tufted Titmice, a Downy and a Hairy Woodpecker, two White-breasted Nuthatches, a Red-breasted Nuthatch and about ten Black-capped Chickadees. Associated with these but feeding elsewhere on the trees were a few Golden-crowned Kinglets and a Brown Creeper. In parties of their own, large flocks up to 30 Blue Jays also could be seen and heard in the same woods as they flew from one area with a plentiful beechnut supply to the next. When they got to a tree loaded with beechnuts they would stop for a while, get a good nut, then hold it between their legs and hammer out the edible portion. This also was the method used by the chickadee, but the woodpeckers and nuthatches needed to find a place to lodge the nuts in bark before they pounded out the nut. Turkeys and Ruffed Grouse bolted the nuts down whole. Turkeys got them only from the ground but grouse often foraged high in the trees. Twenty five droppings of Wild Turkey, strained in the sink, had only beechnut parts and the crops of three window-killed and two road-killed grouse all had eaten at least some beechnuts. Usually when the Evening Grosbeak is in the Region they

also feed on the nuts while still on the trees, neglecting feeders until beechnuts are scarce; grosbeaks were absent this season. Red Oak produced a fair crop of acorns, the first since the Allegany Hills were hit by Gypsy Moth in 1985. Turkey, White-tailed Deer and Blue Jays feed on these if beechnuts were not readily at hand. The Cucumber Tree *Magnolia acuminata* produced abundant fruit and several birds were observed eating the orange seeds located in cucumber-like fruits. Hairy Woodpecker, Downy Woodpecker and White-breasted Nuthatch were seen to fly to fruit still on the branches, pick out a seed and then retire to a trunk to hammer out and then eat the the soft inner seed. Hawthorn, Dogwood *Cornus* sp., Viburnum, and Elderberry *Sambucus canadensis* all produced good fruit crops in the Allegany Hills. Hemlock produced another excellent crop of seed which chickadees, nuthatches, juncos and goldfinch ate. Hemlock seed fell from October, after the first heavy frost, through the period.

Dunkirk Harbor and the shores of Lakes Erie, Ontario and Chautauqua continue to attract many interesting waterbirds, shorebirds, gulls, and, fortunately, interested birders. Waterbird maxima, except for Red-throated Loon, were almost all lower than reported in 1987. The sandpipers also seemed to be less evident this fall, at least away from the Great Lakes and Chautauqua Lake. The severe summer drought may have helped hurry them along to the Atlantic Coast beaches. Joe Thill wrote that "...it's been a great fall for gulls of the Niagara River with thirteen species seen on a couple of trips in late November." As the human population increases, so do the gulls, which gladdens the hearts of some but not all observers.

Bob Sundell wrote about a Ruby-throated Hummingbird which has visited a feeder in Jamestown through November. It was given a sugar solution in the morning laced with protein cereal, a protein powder, a little evaporated milk and a little vitamin-mineral powder. In the late afternoon feeding, it was given the straight sugar-water solution. The bird, a female, is still free-flying at the end of the period. It roosts in a nearby twelve foot spruce hedge. Although I admire the attentiveness of the hummingbird and the person supplying the food, this action probably is not in the best interest of the bird.

Warbler migration was only mediocre compared to the 1950's and 1960's. Art Clark, monitoring the kill at TV towers south of Buffalo, found less than 500 birds, a normal number. The winter finches had not arrived by the end of the period and it will be interesting to see where these birds were after examining the National Audubon Society's Christmas Counts next summer.

Rare or unusual species seen on the Niagara Frontier this fall were **Glossy Ibis, Sandhill Crane, Red Phalarope and Parasitic Jaeger.**

Contributors: Allegany County Bird Club, Robert Andrie, Tim Baird, Bellerby, William Bogachi, Robert Brock, Elizabeth Brooks, Lois Buck, Buffalo Ornithological Society, William Burch, Lou and Doris Burton, Cattaraugus County Bird Club, Keith Confer, Bruce Chilton, Arthur Clark, William D'Anna, Steve Eaton, Don Endres, Michael Galas, Joseph Gilbert, Ted Grisez, Joe Gula Sr., Joe Gula Jr., Thomas Harper, Paul Hess, Jamestown Audubon Society, Walter and Harriet Klaubunde, Terry and Judy Mosher, Odie Olsen. Roger Tory Peterson Institute Bird Club, Raymond and Vivian Pitzrick, Betsy Potter, Fran Rew, Gerald Rising, Donald Robertson, Olga Rosche, Stephen Socha, Audrey Spencer, David Suggs, Robert Sundell, Joe Thill, Don Tiller, William Watson, Regina and Jim VanScoy.

Abbreviations: ASP - Allegany State Park; BIPB - Bird Island Pier, Buffalo; BOS - Buffalo Ornithological Society; BNS - Burgeson Nature Sanctuary; CCNS - Canadaway Creek Nature Sanctuary; ChauL- Chautauqua Lake; DH - Dunkirk Harbor; INWR - Iroquois National Wildlife Refuge; LBSP - Lakeside Beach State Park; LESP - Lake Erie State Park; NiagF - Niagara Falls; BOSOC - Buffalo Ornithological Society October Count, 19 Oct; OOWMA - Oak Orchard Wildlife Management Area; PTwn - Pomfret township, Chautauqua Co.; TFNP - Tift Farm Nature Preserve; TWMA - Tonawanda Wildlife Management Area.

LOONS-DUCKS: Red-throated Loon: arr LESP 4 Nov; max 11 ChauL 26-28 Oct. Com. Loon: arr Porter Twn NIAG 24 Sep; 13 ASP 23 Oct; max 20 ChauL 26-28 Oct. Pied-billed Grebe: max 51 BOSOC CHAU 16 Oct. Horned Grebe: arr ChauL 28 Sep and DH 5 Oct. Red-necked Grebe: one L Erie, Evans Twn Erie, only report. Double-crested Cormorant: max 13 Allegheny Res 9 Oct. Am. Bittern: one TWMA 17 Sep, only report. Great Egret: max six INWR 18 Sep, last 23 Oct. Green-backed Heron: one DH 26 Nov, late. Black-crowned Night-Heron: arr Red House CATT 4 Sep, two TFNP 29 Oct. **Glossy Ibis**: one DH 2 Oct (JG,Sr,JG,Jr!). Tundra Swan: arr three NiagF 29 Oct. **Greater White-fronted Goose**: one INWR after 31 Oct. Snow Goose: arr six INWR 1 Oct (00); singles BNS 18 Oct, PTwn 30 Oct, INWR 19 Nov. Brant: arr 30 mouth Canadaway Creek 28 Oct (JG); one INWR 5 Nov; six DH 6 Nov. Wood Duck: one DH 27 Nov, late. Green-winged Teal: max 100 INWR 30 Nov. Am. Black Duck: max 740 INWR 30 Nov. Mallard: max 5400 INWR 30 Nov. N. Pintail: max 20 INWR 30 Nov. N. Shoveler: arr two Dunkirk 7 Sep. Gadwall: arr BIPB 23 Sep; max 20 INWR 30 Nov. Canvasback: max 2000 NiagF 27 Nov. Redhead: max 60 Gayville 7 Nov. Ring-necked Duck: arr DH 11 Sep; max 50 INWR 30 Nov. Greater Scaup: arr BIPB 11 Oct; max 6500 Lewiston Res 12-31 Oct. Lesser Scaup: arr LaSalle P, Buffalo, 18 Sep; max 7800 Lewiston Res 1-31 Oct. King Eider: one NiagF 11-27 Nov. Oldsquaw: arr BIPB 11 Oct. Black Scoter: arr five BIPB 11 Oct; max 30 on 31 Oct. White-winged Scoter: max 400 L Ontario, Wilson to Youngstown NIAG. Hooded Merganser: max 123 INWR 6 Nov. Com. Merganser: max 11 Amity Twn Alle 17 Nov, now seen throughout the year in the upper Genesee and Allegheny River valleys. Ruddy Duck: max seven Lewiston Res 21 Oct.

HAWK-ALCIDS: Turkey Vulture: one Lockport 11 Nov, late. Bald Eagle: two ad, two imm INWR 5 Sep, one OOWMA 15 Sep, imm mouth Niagara R 22 Sep (white tag right wing), imm Porter Twn NIAG 17 Oct, ad Lewiston 30 Oct; two ad INWR through period (DT), imm 12 Oct, two imm 24 Oct. N. Harrier: five reports 2-24 Sep, six reports in Oct (BOS); one Sheldon Twn Wyom 13 Nov; one INWR 19 Nov, on increase? Sharp-shinned Hawk: five reports Sep, one Oct, five Nov (BOS). Cooper's Hawk: two reports Sep, four reports Oct, three reports Nov (BOS). N. Goshawk: imm NiagF 22 Nov. Broad-winged Hawk: last was only report. Rough-legged Hawk: arr Charlotte Twn, CHAU 21 Oct; max five 30 Oct. Merlin: one Westfield 24 Sep, one Eden Twn Erie 11 Oct. Ruffed Grouse: good productivity in CHAU (JT), poor productivity Allegany Hills (SE). Wild Turkey: excellent productivity southern tier counties; two broods near headquarters INWR 12 Sep. Am. Coot: max 350 Gayville 7 Nov. **Sandhill Crane**: one Carrollton near Limestone CATT 13-22 Sep (RV, mob,!); two near Millport Niag 30 Oct (SS). Black-bellied Plover: none! Lesser Golden-Plover: arr 13 Eden 5 Sep; max 95 Batavia and Oakfield 5 Sep. Greater Yellowlegs: max 123 OOWMA 4 Sep. Lesser Yellowlegs: departure is late. Willet: one Goat I 7-30 Sep, last 2 Oct. Purple Sandpiper: arr NiagF 1 Nov, max seven on 26 Nov. Wilson's Phalarope: three INWR 5 Sep, late. Red-necked Phalarope: one BIPB 25 Sep, irregular. Red Phalarope: one DH 17 Oct. **Parasitic Jaeger**: *intro*. Laughing Gull: one TFNP 8 Nov (WB!). Franklin's Gull: arr Peace Bridge area 20 Sep; one DH 6-7 Nov. Little Gull: arr NiagF 15 Sep; 13 reports Oct, max 12 Niagara R 12 Nov and 13 other reports from along Niagara R and DH (BOS). Bonaparte's Gull: max 11850 mouth Niagara R 25 Oct. Iceland Gull: arr Adam Beck Hydro, Niagara R, 20 Nov. **Lesser Black-backed Gull**: arr NiagF 23 Nov. Glaucous Gull: arr Fort Niagara SP 20 Nov. Black-legged Kit-

tiwake: arr Fort Erie 6 Nov. Sabine's Gull: one LaSalle P, Buffalo, 20 Sep; two Niagara River, 5 Nov. Forster's Tern: two reports DH in Sep; 5 reports Niagara R in Oct.

PIGEONS-WOODPECKERS: Yellow-billed Cuckoo: one Goat I 10 Sep, last of the two cuckoos (BOS). Long-eared Owl: one Porter Twn NIAG 20 Nov, only report. Com. Night-hawk: max 300 DH 2 Sep; last BIPB 21 Sep. Chimney Swift: max 480 Buffalo 20 Sep. Ruby-throated Hummingbird: *intro*. Red-bellied Woodpecker: six reports on lake plain through period (BOS). Red-headed Woodpecker: singles TFNP 10 Sep, Pt Gratiot 24 Sep, only reports. Yellow-bellied Sapsucker: one Lewiston 19, 23 Oct., wintering? Com. Flicker: nine BOSOC ALLE 16 Oct, two BOSOC CATT 16 Oct, seven BOSOC CHAU 16 Oct, probably some wintering on good crops of grapes (*Vitis riparia*) and other fruits.

FLYCATCHERS-STARLINGS: *Myiarchus* sp.: one INWR 11 Oct (DE). N. Rough-winged Swallow: six NiagF 6 Nov, one 12 Nov, late. Bank Swallow: one BIPB 18 Sep, late. Com. Raven: continues to appear in CATT and ALLE at regular intervals. Tufted Titmouse: singles Willing Twn, ALLE 5 Sep, Amity L 27 Sep, NiagF 30 Sep; five reports Oct, three reports Nov (BOS); continues increase from 1976-77 low. Carolina Wren: six reports Sep, four reports Oct (BOS). Marsh Wren: five Machias 24 Sep, first CATT record since 1968; one TFNP 1 Oct. Golden-crowned Kinglet: arr Amity L 23 Sep. Ruby-crowned Kinglet: arr three Pt Gratiot 15 Sep. Gray-cheeked Thrush: two arr Tonawanda Twn 11 Sep. N. Mockingbird: one Lewiston Res 19 Sep; one Alfred 3-30 Nov; five other reports lake plain (BOS). Water Pipit: max 83 Charlotte Twn CHAU 21 Oct; one Wilson Twn NIAG 25 Nov, late. N. Shrike: singles LBSP 30 Oct, Grand I 30 Oct, INWR 19 Nov.

VIREOS-WARBLED, Orange-crowned Warbler: arr TFNP 25 Sep; one Alfred Twn ALLE 12 Oct. Yellow-rumped Warbler: arr four Goat I 8 Sep. Pine Warbler: arr INWR 4 Sep; one TFNP 25 Sep. Prairie Warbler: one Amity L PDBA 15 Sep, late. Palm Warbler: arr two LBSP 11 Sep. Bay-breasted Warbler: arr Williamsville Glen 1 Sep. Blackpoll Warbler: arr Goat I 10 Sep. Kentucky Warbler: one Ft Niagara SP 5 Sep (!). Connecticut Warbler: one banded Alfred Twn ALLE 19 Sep (EB, ph); one PTwn 9 Oct. Mourning Warbler: one PTwn 23 Sep, late. Hooded Warbler: one PTwn 23 Sep. Yellow-breasted Chat: one Tonawanda Twn 3 Sep, late.

TANAGERS-WEAVERS: Indigo Bunting: two CNS 24 Sep, late. Rufous-sided Towhee: one at feeder PTwn 22 Nov. Vesper Sparrow: one Amity L 12 Sep. Fox Sparrow: arr PTwn 30 Sep. White-throated Sparrow: arr four Goat I 15 Sep. White-crowned Sparrow: arr TFNP 30 Sep. Lapland Longspur: one Wilson 25 Nov. Snow Bunting: arr 23 Lewiston Res 21 Oct; max 300 Buffalo 12 Nov. Rusty Blackbird: arr five TFNP 18 Sep. N. Oriole: one NiagF 13 Sep, late. Pine Siskin: three Porter Twn NIAG 20 Nov, only report

Ten Mile Road, Allegany, N.Y. 14706

REGION 2 - GENESEE

KEVIN C. GRIFFITH

The early season began on the cold side but ended on somewhat of a warming trend. September was cooler than usual with an average temperature of 60.1°, slightly more than 2° below normal. The temperature varied from the high of 81° at mid month to lows in the 30's. Precipitation was about an inch below normal at 1.69 inches. October was abnormally cold. Its average of 48.5° was nearly 6° below normal. A high of 82° on 1 Oct was one of the few warm days during the month. Mid month saw a reading of 76°, but the rest of the month