

REGION 8 — HUDSON-MOHAWK

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It was a pleasant and normal autumn in eastern New York. September was slightly warmer and slightly drier than average, with many sunny, warm days; the only extended period of rain occurred in mid month. October continued warmer than normal, but slightly wetter. At least light rain occurred on 19 of the first 22 days of the month, with heavier amounts mid month, culminating with over 2 inches on 20 Oct. Temperatures in November averaged exactly normal, rainfall slightly less than normal, and snowfall below normal.

For observers on the ground, it was apparently a generally lackluster migration (yet another one!). No one reported major "waves" of passerine migrants nor large groundings. Hawk migration must have either dribbled through or happened when observers were not on station. The drawdown of Basic Creek Res and coverage of a sod farm produced many interesting shorebird sightings for this inland Region. They illustrated once again that during migration seasons it is profitable to check local water bird habitat whenever inclement weather occurs (especially rain). Species that would otherwise pass over the area unnoticed often come to ground under these circumstances. For the same reasons that they usually don't land in the first place, however, they tend to leave as soon as the weather improves. Among the rare water birds **not** associated with Hurricane *Hugo* (see below) were the first Regional record of **Buff-breasted Sandpiper**, second record of **Great Cormorant**, third record of **Parasitic Jaeger**, plus **Barrow's**

Goldeneye, Long-billed Dowitcher, Red-necked and Red Phalarope and Laughing Gull.

There were indications at the end of the summer that irruptive boreal species might make a good showing. With respect to Red-breasted Nuthatch, White-winged Crossbill, and Pine Siskin that proved to be true. In contrast to last year, Evening Grosbeak was present in small numbers, but only at a fraction of their typical abundance in recent years.

Hurricane *Hugo* was the major bird event of the season. Although the storm went inland in the Carolinas, passed northward overland, and came no nearer to our area than its passage through western New York and into southern Ontario during the night of 22-23 Sep, it brought a number of birds to our Region. The few observers out looking were amply rewarded. If we needed another lesson of the sort provided by Hurricane *David* in 1979, this was it. In Albany, the storm produced sustained southerly winds of only 30 mph during the night, with the highest gust 47 mph. Less than 1/4 inch of rain fell. Despite its weakness and the facts that it was overland for hundreds of miles before reaching New York and that its center passed far to the west of us, it probably carried many birds over a vast area east of its center (always the best sector of such storms for birds). By late afternoon on the 23rd, the rains had ended and with the passage of a cold front, skies cleared rapidly and the winds shifted abruptly to the northwest. Nearly all of the interesting birds were seen while it was still raining on the 23rd, and by the next morning essentially all were gone. The obviously storm-related records were: **Great Shearwater**: one Alcove (KPA, NYSARC), second(!) Regional record; **Wilson's Phalarope**: one Basic (BC, KPA); **Red-necked Phalarope**: four Alcove (KPA); **Laughing Gull**: imm Basic (BC, KPA), one Catskill (RPG), fourth Regional occurrence; **Common Tern**: two Alcove, others Catskill; **Least Tern**: three Catskill (RPG), second Regional occurrence. Unfortunately, this was probably only the tip of the iceberg.

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Abbreviations: Alcove - Alcove Res, ALBA; Basic - Basic Creek Res, ALBA; FiveR - Five Rivers Environmental Education Center, Delmar, ALBA; SaraL - Saratoga L; TomR - Tomhannock Res, RENS.

LOONS-DUCKS: Com. Loon: first migrants Alcove 9 Oct (BC); max 20 SaraL 28 Oct (SBT). Pied-billed Grebe: three reports. **Great Shearwater**: intro. **Great Cormorant**: imm New Baltimore 29 Oct (WC, RPG), second Regional record. **Double-crested Cormorant**: max and last 50 Stuyvesant 29 Oct (WC). Am.

Bittern: one Whitehall 16 Sep (JS), Ghent 20 Oct (HG), rarely reported in fall. Great Egret: at least 21 reported through 24 Sep. Snowy Egret: one Cohoes 7 Sep (KPA), only report. **Little Blue Heron**: two Castleton 1 Sep (PFC), only report. Mute Swan: continues to increase; two Clarke's Mills, WASH were far north (JS). Snow Goose: widely reported in large nos.; max 5000 Chatham 22 Oct (KD, EG). Brant: 40 Basic 21 Oct (BC). Green-winged Teal: max 80 Basic 12 Sep (PFC). Blue-winged Teal: max 60 Basic 12 Sep (PFC). N. Shoveler: 12 TomR 28 Oct (BC). Am. Wigeon: two Cohoes 7 Sep (KPA), early. Redhead: *ten* Alcove 21, 22 Oct (BC). Ring-necked Duck: one Basic 7 Sep (KPA), early; max 200 Basic 1 Nov (PFC). Oldsquaw: max eight SaraL 12 Nov (SBT). Black Scoter: max 40 Alcove 21 Oct (BC). Surf Scoter: max 50 Alcove 21 Oct (BC). White-winged Scoter: max 100 Alcove 21 Oct (BC). Com. Goldeneye: max 100+ SaraL 12 Nov (SBT). **Barrow's Goldeneye**: ad male TomR 5, 18 Nov (FM, et al.). Hooded Merganser: max 15 TomR 28 Oct (BC). Ruddy Duck: max 90 Alcove 29 Oct (BC).

HAWK-ALCIDS: Turkey Vulture: COLU 24 Nov (ADBC), late. Osprey: E Greenbush 22 Nov, late. Bald Eagle: ten reports, three ad, three imm, four unknown. N. Harrier: group of eight near Hudson 18 Nov (RLH), large number. Cooper's Hawk: ten reports. N. Goshawk: five reports. Broad-winged Hawk: poor flight; max 125 Pinnacle 18 Sep (PFC); very late reports, one each at Hague 5 Nov (ER), Claverack 10 Nov (WC), ad Berne 18 Nov (KPA). Rough-legged Hawk: five reports, first 29 Oct. Golden Eagle: ad near Raymertown RENS 12 Nov (PFC!). Merlin: five reports, earliest 7 Sep. Peregrine Falcon: ad Basic 25 Sep to 9 Oct. Ring-necked Pheasant: four reports COLU (WC, ADBC). Wild Turkey: hen with two 1/3 grown poults near Schenectady 10 Sep (PDeB), late. Sora: one Roger's I COLU (WC), seldom reported in fall. Com. Moorhen: three Carter L WASH (JS), seldom reported in fall. Black-bellied Plover: one to eight (max) Basic 4 Sep to 10 Oct (KPA), rare locally. Lesser Golden-Plover: numerous reports Basic; 26 max, last Schodack RENS (PFC). Greater Yellowlegs: max 50 Basic 10 Oct (KPA). Lesser Yellowlegs: max 30 Basic 23 Sep (KPA). Solitary Sandpiper: last 24 Sep. Ruddy Turnstone: one Basic 24 Sep (AOL), rare locally. Sanderling: one, three Basic 19, 23 Sep (KPA), rare locally. White-rumped Sandpiper: last TomR 28 Oct (BC). Pectoral Sandpiper: max 60 Basic 10 Oct (KPA), last there 22 Oct (BC). Stilt Sandpiper: one to 10 (max) Basic 4-24 Sep (KPA). **Buff-breasted Sandpiper**: one j sod farm Bemis Heights SARA 1-4 Sep (SBT, BP, et al.); one Basic 24 Sep (BC), perhaps a result of *Hugo*; first Regional records. Short-billed Dowitcher: one Basic 1-12 Sep (KPA). **Long-billed Dowitcher**: one j Basic 19, 23 Sep (KPA), fourth identified in Region. Am. Woodcock: one FiveR 4 Nov (AM), late. Wilson's Phalarope: one Collins L. 17 Sep (ES); *intro*. **Red-necked Phalarope**: one Alcove 24 Oct (KPA); *intro*. **Red Phalarope**: one Alcove 24 Oct (KPA), fourth Regional record. **Parasitic Jaeger**: one j Thirteenth L WARR 14 Sep (KPA), third Regional record. **Laughing Gull**: two imm Alcove 21 Oct (BC), fifth Regional record; *intro*. Lesser Black-backed Gull: two ad, one Basic II plumage, Collins L, Colonie Landfill 2 Nov (CG, SBT). Com. Tern: seven Castleton 21 Oct (PFC), large no; *intro*. **Least Tern**: *intro*.

PIGEONS-WOODPECKERS: Black-billed Cuckoo: one calling strongly FiveR 16 Oct (AM), late. Long-eared Owl: one picked up injured Schenectady 2 Nov. Short-eared Owl: one Stuyvesant 24 Oct (MS); one Palatine 25 Nov (SP); both early. N. Saw-whet Owl: one each netted New Baltimore 23 Oct (RPG), Berne 5 Nov (KPA). Red-headed Woodpecker: Fonda 25 Nov (SP), only report. Red-

bellied Woodpecker: good numbers COLU.

FLYCATCHERS-STARLINGS: Olive-sided Flycatcher: last FiveR 19 Sep (AM). Purple Martin: late Kinderhook 6 Sep (AOL). Blue Jay: scarce for third consecutive year Jenny L (RPY). Com. Raven: 13 individuals reported from regular sites; continues to increase. Black-capped Chickadee: not an irruption year at Jenny L (RPY) or elsewhere. Red-breasted Nuthatch: RPY banded 25 at Jenny L Jul-Nov, with fewer after Aug; appeared outside breeding areas end Aug, present in good nos. all period. Carolina Wren: holding in good nos. in Hudson R valley s of Albany. Winter Wren: very late nest in nestbox Jenny L fledged 3 Sep (RPY). Gray-cheeked Thrush: no reports. Swainson's Thrush: nine banded New Baltimore during period (RPG); nocturnal calls heard Schodack Center 16 Sep, 18 Oct (PFC). Hermit Thrush: one each Berne, Jenny L 18 Nov, 23 Nov (KPA, RPY), late. N. Mockingbird: 15 in flock Stuyvesant 10 Oct (RLH). Am. Pipit: first Cohoes 7 Sep. N. Shrike: two reports Nov.

VIREOS-WARBLED: Philadelphia Vireo: six reports, last New Lebanon 15 Oct (Grant). Pine Warbler: one Burnt Hills 8 Nov (NO), late. Cerulean Warbler: one L Taghkanic COLU 3 Sep (WC), rarely reported in fall. Worm-eating Warbler: one banded New Baltimore early Sep (RPG), rarely reported in fall.

TANAGERS-WEAVERS: Am. Tree Sparrow: arr Basic 29 Oct (BC). Chipping Sparrow: singles Hague 18 Nov (ER), Jefferson 25 Nov (AM), COLU through 30 Nov (ADBC). White-crowned Sparrow: hundreds northeast SCHO 14-16 Oct HF(BB, KB). Lapland Longspur: arr four Basic 30 Sep. Snow Bunting: arr, dead on road Basic 23 Oct (BB, KB). Red-winged Blackbird: female Hague 30 Nov (ER). Rusty Blackbird: max 40 SaraL 12 Nov (SBT). Purple Finch: average nos. Jenny L. (RPY); large numbers moving Albany area early Oct to mid Nov (SBT). House Finch: numbers down in Schenectady; 140 banded to end of period versus 1296 in peak year 1985 (RPY). Red Crossbill: no reports. White-winged Crossbill: moderate numbers after early Sep; max 51 Camp Pinnacle 9 Oct (SBT). Com. Redpoll: three reports of five birds 24 Oct, 11, 23 Nov (SBT). Pine Siskin: arr 20 Petersburg RENS 1 Oct (AR); moderate numbers through end period. Evening Grosbeak: scarce after mid Aug Jenny L (RPY); first outside breeding areas Alcove 21 Oct (BC); max 50 E Greenbush 25 Nov (MK).

ADDENDUM: Cooper's Hawk: one banded Cuba, N.Y., Sep 1984 as a hatching year bird (M.C. Forness), was recovered Harlemville COLU in mid May 1988 (fide RPG).

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