

REGION 1 — NIAGARA FRONTIER

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September on the Niagara Frontier was near average in temperature (61.7°) and rainfall (3.6 inches), only 0.2 inches above normal at Buffalo. At Amity Lake rain totaled 5 inches. The first frost in the valleys of the plateau occurred on 18 Sep, killing our zucchini squash. According to Gerry Rising (*Prothonotary* 56(10):117) nine fronts "marched through" the Region, mostly from the southwest, which must have reduced the number of groundings of night migrants. Northerly winds with fog are best for these bird fallouts. The first week of October was warm but with strong winds from the southwest. A tropical storm Raquel from the Pacific influenced the weather with a massive low swirling over us and as it passed drawing strong winds from the plains. These may have been responsible for some unusual sightings to the west and east of our Region, including a bird at Tifft Nature Preserve which may have been a White-faced Ibis. Temperatures for the month averaged 52.5° at Buffalo, about one degree above normal. Precipitation at Buffalo was 4.6 inches, 1.7 inches above normal. Soils were well saturated across the Region. The first killing frost occurred at Buffalo on 20 Oct and at Amity Lake on 27 Oct. November was generally warm and sunny. At Buffalo temperatures averaged 3.1° above normal and precipitation was low. Snow in Buffalo totaled only 12.8 inches, much below normal. At Amity Lake and our farm pond, skim ice developed on 15 Nov but later melted in sunny weather.

The waterfowl flight along the Lake Erie shore was "dismal", to quote Terry Mosher, and he didn't see one bay duck (*Aythya*). Counts on the Niagara River and Chautauqua Lake were also low, reflecting the relatively open season through the end of the period.

The fruit crop on the Allegheny Plateau was generally poor, except for the oaks in drier sites. Black Oak, Chestnut Oak, and Red Oak, generally found in more upland situations, produced excellent crops, which Wild Turkey flocks located. They made these hillsides appear like well used barnyards. Deer also found this abundant, but often isolated and seldom available, food source. There were very few wild Black Cherries on the upland forest trees of the unglaciated Allegany Hills, but some trees in the buffered soils of the lowlands produced good crops. Vivian Pitzrick said her cherry trees produced good crops, lasting

to 20 Oct. White Ash was unproductive as was Eastern Hemlock. Predictably, we observed few cardueline finches, with the exception of Evening Grosbeak, which fed on Box Elder and visited feeders in villages in modest numbers in November.

The warbler migration through the Region was light, according to three bird banders, Don Clark, Betsy Brooks and Dave Junkin. Arthur Clark, who monitors Buffalo's TV towers, agreed. In 2,857 net hours from 1 Aug to 15 Nov, Betsy Brooks banded 22 species of warblers but more than five individuals of only eight species: 11 Nashville, 41 Magnolia, 15 Yellow-rumped, 6 Black-throated Green, 8 Palm, 6 Bay-breasted, 7 American Redstart, and 35 Common Yellowthroat. Arthur Clark said the tower kill of about 250 individuals was well below average. Bob Sundell said the warbler migration in central and southern Chautauqua County was poor. The concensus was that, as in 1989, there were few combinations of strong fronts followed by good grounding conditions.

After the late summer sandpiper migration and the later warbler migration are essentially over, gull-fever strikes, particularly in the Buffalo area. Birders concentrate along the Niagara River to observe and monitor them. The usual full compliment of twelve species was reported for the period.

The most interesting and unusual species of the period were **Northern Gannet**, **White Ibis** and several *Plegadis Ibis*, including one which some thought might be a White-faced Ibis. In nonbreeding plumage, that species is identifiable only in hand (Rising, *Prothonotary* 56(11);132). Dunkirk Harbor may have been visited by another maritime species on 8 Nov. Terry Mosher reported that two duck hunters (also banders), Mike and David Rosing, saw what they took to be a Dovekie there 8 Nov, one day after a "blow," but it could not be verified.

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Abbreviations: BH - Barcelona Harbor, Lake Erie; BIPB- Bird Island Pier, Buffalo; BOS - Buffalo Ornithological Society; ChauL - Chautauqua Lake; DH- Dunkirk Harbor; FNSP - Fort Niagara State Park; GHSP Golden Hill State Park;

INWR - Iroquois National Wildlife Refuge; NF - Niagara Falls; NR - Niagara River; TNP - Tifft Nature Preserve; TWMA - Tonawanda Wildlife Management Area.

LOONS-DUCKS: Com. Loon: arr Wilson Twn 9 Oct; 15 over Athol Springs 6 Nov. Horned Grebe: arr Alfred Twn 2 Oct. Red-necked Grebe: arr NF 16 Nov. **Eared Grebe**: one FNSP 18-23 Nov (RA, RB, mob). **N. Gannet**: imm mouth NR 21 Nov (R&MP). Double-crested Cormorant: max 149 NF 20 Sep. Am. Bittern: one Bird Swamp CATT 29 Sep (TB); one Stockton Twn 23 Oct (JV, *fide* TM). Least Bittern: two TNP 2 Sep, late. Great Egret: max 26 TWMA 29 Sep; last five INWR 8 Oct. Black-crowned Night-Heron: max 11 Buffalo 23 Sep. **White Ibis**: one N Collins Twn ERIE 6-7 Nov (LH, mob). **Glossy Ibis**: one-two TNP 10-19 Oct (JW, mob), plus one 12-19 Oct (GR, TC, mob) thought possibly to be White-faced Ibis, *intro*. Tundra Swan: arr E Aurora 31 Oct, max 97 Mayville ChauL 30 Nov. Snow Goose: max ten Shelby Twn ORLE 8 Oct; six other sightings Sep-Oct, Nov. BOS. Brant: arr nine L Ontario ORLE 21 Oct; one Yates Twn 3 Nov. N. Pintail: max 101 INWR 3 Nov. N. Shoveler: max 35 INWR 3 Nov. Gadwall: max 62 INWR 3 Nov. **Eurasian Wigeon**: one-two TNP 24 Oct (DR). Am. Wigeon: max 98 TNP 23 Sep. Canvasback: max 1500 NF 3 Nov (BC, AS); 41 Celeron ChauL (RS). Redhead: arr TNP 11 Oct; max Celeron ChauL 31 Oct. Ring-necked Duck: max 149 Celeron ChauL 28 Nov. Greater Scaup: arr Shadagee NIAG 9 Oct. Oldsquaw: arr five GHSP 21 Oct. White-winged Scoter: arr 50 Shadagee NIAG 9 Oct. Ruddy Duck: max 57 Celeron ChauL 31 Oct.

HAWKS-ALCIDS: Turkey Vulture: one Pembroke Twn 30 Oct, late migrant. Bald Eagle: three INWR and nearby 15 Sep, two imm 16 Sep; two imm Allegany SP 2 Oct; one imm GHSP 21 Oct; two INWR 23 Nov. N. Goshawk: one Lakeside SP 4 Nov. Red-shouldered Hawk: one Yates Twn 17 Nov, late. Rough-legged Hawk: arr three Yates Twn 3 Nov. Merlin: ad male DH 25 Sep. (DK *fide* TM); one GHSP 12 Oct; one Stockton Twn 3 Nov. Wild Turkey: large flocks Allegany Hills, feeding on acorns. Com. Moorhen: one TNP 6 Oct. Am. Coot: max 200 INWR 28 Sep. Lesser Golden-Plover: arr Prendergast Pt ChauL 7 Sep; one Yates Twn 3 Nov, late. Upland Sandpiper: two Clarence Twn 12 Sep, late. Purple Sandpiper: arr NF 23 Nov. Buff-breasted Sandpiper: arr Clarence Twn 16 Sep. Short-billed Dowitcher: one Buffalo 7 Oct, late. Red-necked Phalarope: max five TNP 25 Sep. Red Phalarope: arr BH 23 Sep (RS); one Tonawanda Water Treatment 6 Oct (TB). Parasitic Jaeger: one on L Erie 4 mi nw DH 12 Sep, imm dark morph (R&CB); one Athol Springs 6 Nov (RA). Franklin's Gull: arr BH 16 Sep; max four NR 1 Nov. Little Gull: max seven NR 1 Nov. Bonaparte's Gull: max 25,000 mouth NR 23 Nov. Iceland Gull: arr NR 3 Nov; max five 25 Nov. Lesser Black-backed Gull: arr NF 28 Oct, regular last decade. Glaucous Gull: arr Adam Beck Hydro NR 11 Nov. Greater Black-backed Gull: max 259 NF 29 Nov. Black-legged Kittiwake: max 6 Athol Springs ERIE 25 Nov. Sabine's Gull: imm 28 Oct, one NF 4 Nov, late. Com. Tern: max 460 NF 21 Sep. Forster's Tern: arr three ChauL 7 Sep. Black Tern: three BIPB 25 Sep, only report BOS.

PIGEONS-WOODPECKERS: Short-eared Owl: arr Porter Twn NIAG 22 Nov. N. Saw-whet Owl: one banded Alfred Twn 1 Oct (EB). Com. Nighthawk: max 160 Hamburg 6 Sep. Whip-poor-will: one Charlotte Twn CHAU 3 Sep; one banded Alfred Twn 19-21 Oct, late. Chimney Swift: max 590 BIPB 14 Sep.

FLYCATCHERS-STARLINGS: Horned Lark: 75 Somerset Twn 27 Oct. only report period. Purple Martin: max 6,000-10,000 NR 23 Sep; 100 BIPB 25 Sep. N. Rough-winged Swallow: 200 Goat I NR 23 Sep. Bank Swallow: four BH 16 Sep, late. Cliff Swallow: six BH 16 Sep, late. Com. Raven: one Ellington 28 Sep. (AC *fide* RS). Winter Wren: arr Porter Twn NIAG 22 Sep. Marsh Wren: three Bird Swamp CATT 29 Sep (TB); one BIPB 10 Oct. E. Bluebird: max five Amity L ALLE Oct, two-three to 10 Nov; three E Aurora 25 Nov. Am Pipit: arr Clarence Twn 22 Sep; max 125 Pomfret Twn CHAU 3 Nov. Cedar Waxwing: max 285 GHSP 21 Nov. N. Shrike: arr Yates Twn 27 Oct, ten reports BOS 9-28 Nov.

VIREOS-WARBLED: Philadelphia Vireo: arr FNSP also TNP 2 Sep; one Bird Swamp CATT 29 Sep, late. Pine Warbler: arr INWR 16 Sep; one Pt Gratiot CHAU 22 Sep (TM, DK *fide* TM). Prairie Warbler: one Amity L ALLE 12 Sep, late. Palm Warbler: eight banded Alfred Twn 1, 3, 13 Oct (EB). Hooded Warbler: one Pomfret Twn CHAU 28 Sep, late.

TANAGERS-WEAVERS: Am. Tree Sparrow: widespread arr 14 Oct. Snow Bunting: arr Lake Ontario Plain 21 Oct; max 2000± Yates Twn 3 Nov. Rusty Blackbird: max 60 E Aurora 4 Nov. Com. Grackle: 2000 Alabama Twn 4 Nov. Purple Finch: one-three males ERIE 1-15 Nov; one Amity L ALLE 5, 6, 18 Nov. Red Crossbill: arr 14 GHSP 10 Nov. White-winged Crossbill: arr one Amity L ALLE 23 Nov. Pine Siskin: one at feeder Eden Twn ERIE through period; max 15 GHSP 27 Oct. Evening Grosbeak: arr CATT, ALLE 14 Oct; max 56 Amity L ALLE 1-30 Nov; eight other reports BOS 14-30 Nov.

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