

REGION 4 — SUSQUEHANNA

MARY DOBINSKY

Fall 1990 was both warmer and wetter than usual. Recurring periods of Indian Summer (there were three in November alone) continued until 28 Nov. Temperatures that day soared to the low 70s setting Regional record highs for the month. Although temperatures the last two months of the period were higher than normal, September readings were 2° below the norm of 57.9°. Coldest mid month, some areas were hit by their first frost on 18 Sep. Others were spared until mid October. Precipitation all three months was above average but October was the worst. Rainfall varied from a near record 7.19 inches in Binghamton (3 inches on 23 Oct alone) to 4.59 inches in Oneonta where the month's average was still 2 inches above normal. Although November precipitation of 3.20 inches was only slightly over average, it brought the 11-month total to 40.75 inches, several inches above normal. The first measurable snowfall occurred on 29 Oct and the next on 12 Nov but both melted quickly. No really strong weather fronts hit the area. At the end of the fall period, the ground was still mostly bare. Water levels, which had been good for ducks, were still high and lakes and streams remained about 95% open.

The count of 3231 migrating raptors topped Region 4's birding achievements this fall. The site of the hawkwatch was the Delaware-Otsego Audubon Society Sanctuary atop Franklin Mt., south of Oneonta. The organization of this monitoring program last fall went unreported due to absence of a Region 4 report. At the end of last season, observers claimed that the Franklin Mt. location was one of the best Red-tailed Hawk and Golden Eagle migration sites in the East. Hawkwatch 1990 justified their faith. They tripled the number of manned hours at the site and counted four times the number of raptors spotted in 1989. The program got under way this fall 8 Sep, 16 days ahead of last year's opening date. The advanced start let participants catch peak dates for Osprey and Broad-winged Hawk migration, which was missed last year. Red-tailed Hawk dominated the skies from 17 Oct until mid Nov, reaching a maximum of 914 birds on 26 Oct and a season's total of 2249 birds. This was almost two-thirds of all hawks seen. Golden Eagle increased from last year's 12 to a total of 41, with a maximum of 18 on 8 Nov. This year's addition of N. Goshawk, Merlin and Peregrine rounded out the species list to include all raptors normally seen in the East with the exception of Bald Eagle. Albeit they missed the mountain, Bald Eagle were reported at Whitney Point and Cannonsville Reservoirs. Andy Mason, who has coordinated the hawk watch both years, gave special credit for its success to Ron Milliken, Apalachin. "He put in 90% of the hours," said Andy.

"Western" Palm Warbler was the most unusual species reported this fall, but many other uncommon birds were present. Among water birds, Am. Bittern, Snowy Egret and Brant made surprise appearances. Thirteen species of ducks matched top totals of other years. Shorebirds were mostly singles but did include a Regionally uncommon Sanderling. Short-eared and N. Saw-whet Owl boosted excellent counts for our three more common owl species. The Short-eared Owl, spotted at the Waterman Center in November by Doug Weeks and Sheila Murphy, was assumed to be the same bird seen several times last winter. That, in turn, was the first of the species since 1985. A mixed flight of about 300 swallows was spotted at N. Norwich Marsh on 9 Sep by Don Windsor, Chad Covey and Jay Lehman. Most thrushes and vireos remained later than usual, tempted perhaps by the abundance of berries. Warblers, on the contrary, were generally scarce and departed early. One exception was a record late Black-throated Blue Warbler at Cutler and Jeanette

Baldwin's Owego feeder on 25 Nov. Low sparrow counts were especially noticeable for Savannah, Swamp and White-crowned Sparrows. And it doesn't look like a good year for winter finches if the scattering of Pine Siskin is any indication.

The number of bird species listed this fall added up to a whopping 180. It might even be a record! For the 11 years prior to 1990, the previous high was 170 birds in 1987 and 1988. And still we missed Red-necked Grebe, Am. Coot, Water Pipit, Olive-sided Flycatcher and Blackpoll Warbler.

Observers: Cutler & Jeanette Baldwin, Ronald & Jean Barnes, Don & Judy Bell, Reynolds Bennett, Les Bemont, Bruce Bozdos, Mildred Clark, Chad Covey, Marilyn Davis, Sadie Dorber, Margaret Ferranti, Polly & Earl Getlein, M. Gregory, Gail Kirch, Sandy Kistner, Margaret Layton, Jay Lehman, S. Levin, Harriet Marsi, Rick Marsi, Ron Milliken, Marie Petuh, Steven Rice, Joe Sedlacek, Tom & Norene Tasber, B. Titus, Doug Weeks, Kathryn Wilson, Donald Windsor, Irene Wright.

Abbreviations: FrMt - Franklin Mt.; NVy - Newark Valley; OnRes - Oneonta Reservoir; OPM - Oneonta, Portlandville, Milford; NNM - North Norwich Marsh; WPR - Whitney Point Reservoir.

LOONS-DUCKS: Com. Loon: only one WPR 26 Nov (MP, MF). Pied-billed Grebe: arr OnRes 12 Sep; last of five reports 27 Oct. Horned Grebe: only report OnRes 26 Oct. Double-crested Cormorant: max four WPR 20 Oct; three other Oct reports. Am Bittern: singles NNM 15 Sep and Oneonta 17 Sep, often missed. Great Blue Heron: 30 Sep, 8 still Nov, last two 29 Nov. Great Egret: one Owego 3 Sep (JS); max two 17 Sep Chenango Forks (MDv); one TIOG Nov (DW, SM) late, excellent count. Snowy Egret: one Binghamton 2 Sep (SR), one TIOG Sep (RB). Green-backed Heron: 11 Sep reports; one TIOG Oct (D&JB), late. Snow Goose: max 50 Norwich 15 Oct (DW); five TIOG reports Oct & Nov. Brant: three reports, TIOG 14 Oct (C&JB); BROO 24 Oct (ML) and 2 Nov (HM&BB), often missed. Canada Goose: max 350 BROO 1 Oct, high counts through Oct. Swan (Chinese) Goose: near New Berlin CHEN 24 Nov (DW), probably an escape. Wood Duck: max 40 OTSE 19 Sep, good counts through Oct, last BROO 11 Nov. Green-winged Teal: arr NNM 9 Sep, max five OnRes 9 Oct; one TIOG Oct. Am. Black Duck: max 28 BROO 9 Oct, two Nov reports BROO and DELA. Mallard: abundant all season; max 60 BROO 9 Sep. N. Pintail: one NNM 20 Oct, only report. Blue-winged Teal: one NNM 9 Sep, only report. Am. Wigeon: arr TIOG 15 Oct (C&JB); six WPR 20 Oct (T&NT). Ring-necked Duck: arr six WPR 2 Oct; last of three other reports one 7 Nov. Lesser Scaup: eight Dean's Pd 22 Oct and 2 Nov; last WPR 7 Nov. Oldsquaw: one WPR 20 Oct (T&NT) only report. Black Scoter: max eight WPR 20 Oct; one Chen L 24 Nov. White-winged Scoter: one WPR 20 Oct (T&NT), only report. Com. Goldeneye: two Chen L 12 and 19 Nov, only ones. Bufflehead: max four BROO 31 Oct; last of five other reports 9 Nov. Hooded

Merganser: arr BROO 22 Oct; max 26 Dean's Pd 17 Nov (MDv). Com. Merganser: max 24 WPR 25 Nov. Ruddy Duck: six Owego 23 Oct (MP, BT, MG), only report.

HAWKS-ALCIDS: FrMt hawkwatch totals:

Species	1989	1990
Osprey	4	61
N. Harrier	10	34
Sharp-shinned Hawk	25	289
Cooper's Hawk	8	17
N. Goshawk		5
Red-shouldered Hawk	9	17
Broad-winged Hawk	2	335
Red-tailed Hawk	658	2249
Rough-legged Hawk	1	9
Golden Eagle	12	41
Am. Kestrel	5	36
Merlin		2
Peregrine Falcon		3
Unidentified	71	101
Totals	815	3231

Ring-necked Pheasant: five singles TIOG Oct/Nov, one OTSE, BROO, good count. Ruffed Grouse: common BROO, CHEN (JS) Oct/Nov. Wild Turkey: max 20 BROO 17 Oct (FHNC staff); common (JS). Virginia Rail: one Triangle 4 Oct (T&NT), late. Semipalmated Plover: two BROO reports 10 Sep, only reports. Killdeer: max 29 BROO 23 Sep and 6 Oct; last two 2 Nov. Greater Yellowlegs: two OnRes 8-30 Oct; one BROO 23 Oct, only reports. Lesser Yellowlegs: one BROO 10 Sep (HM, BB); one 15 Sep (SL). Solitary Sandpiper: only reports CHEN, last 14 Oct, scarce. Spotted Sandpiper: one CHEN 10 and 16 Sep, only reports. Sanderling: only one TIOG Sep (RB). Semipalmated Sandpiper: one Vestal 9 Sep (SR), only report. Least Sandpiper: only one CHEN 9 Sep. Pectoral Sandpiper: one OnRes 10-12 Oct; one Endicott 15 Oct, scarce. Com. Snipe: one CHEN 15 Sep; one Owego 22 Sep, only reports. Am Woodcock: two TIOG early Nov (JS), only report. Ring-billed Gull: max up to 250 WPR 20 Oct. Herring Gull: max 25 BROO 30 Oct.

PIGEONS-WOODPECKERS: Mourning Dove: max 65 Delhi 25 Nov (MC). E. Screech-Owl: seven reports BROO, TIOG to 2 Nov. Great Horned Owl: max four heard BROO 20 Nov (JS). Barred Owl: ten TIOG and four BROO reports Sep through Nov, high count. Short-eared Owl: *intro*. N. Saw-whet Owl: one banded Vestal 22 and 28 Oct, first since 1984. Com. Nighthawk: last six BROO 22 Sep (BB). Whip-poor-will: only one banded Vestal 14 Oct. Chimney Swift: max 16 Otsiningo Pk 10 Sep; last BROO 22 Sep. Ruby-throated Hummingbird: several late Sep reports, last Oneonta 8 Oct, latest since 1982. Red-headed Woodpecker: only one S Vestal 21 Oct (SD). Red-bellied Woodpecker: one TIOG Sep (R&JB), one banded NVy Oct (JB), one Apalachin Nov (P&EG). Yellow-bellied Sapsucker: last of 14 reports one TIOG 22 Oct. Pileated Woodpecker: excellent counts all season.

FLYCATCHERS-STARLINGS: E. Wood-Pewee: max six BROO 9 Sep. Yellow-bellied Flycatcher: only one banded Vestal 9 Sep. Least Flycatcher: last two Vestal, one (SR), one banded (HM). Great Crested Flycatcher: only one Oneonta 3 Sep. E. Kingbird: only three reports. Horned Lark: single report BROO 9 Nov (HM, BB), often missed. Tree Swallow: 150 NNM 9 Sep, only report. Bank Swallow: 50 NNM 9 Sep, only report. Cliff Swallow: 25 NNM 9 Sep, only report. Barn Swallow: max 75 NNM 9 Sep. Tufted Titmouse: excellent counts continue especially BROO, TIOG. Carolina Wren: high counts Oct/Nov. Winter Wren: max four BROO 1 Oct; one banded NVy 7 Oct; last two BROO 19 Nov, high count and late. Marsh Wren: one CHEN 9 Sep, only report. Golden-crowned Kinglet: arr Triangle 24 Sep, excellent counts. Ruby-crowned Kinglet: max 42 BROO 3 Sep; last BROO 11 Nov. E. Bluebird: max 30 OPM 7 Oct; last CHEN 4 Nov. Veery: 11 scattered reports through Sep; last banded Vestal 16 Oct. Gray-cheeked Thrush: singles banded Vestal 13 & 27 Sep, 8 Oct. Swainson's Thrush: six banded Vestal 15 Sep-16 Oct; one BROO 28 Sep, high. Hermit Thrush: max and last five banded Vestal 21 Oct. Brown Thrasher: four reports. Cedar Waxwing: max 200 OPM 11 Sep. N. Shrike: one Trout Creek DELA 28 Nov (SK), often missed.

VIREOS-WARBLED: Yellow-throated Vireo: last of six reports one OPM 13 Sep, late. Philadelphia Vireo: one banded Vestal 16 Sep, only report. Tennessee Warbler: four reports. Nashville Warbler: six reports. Yellow Warbler: two BROO 23 Sep last of eight reports. Chestnut-sided Warbler: max three OPM 13 Sep. Magnolia Warbler: last two BROO, OTSE 8 Oct. Black-throated Blue Warbler: *intro*. Cape May Warbler: arr BROO 3 Sep; one OPM 6 Sep; singles banded NVy 15 and 23 Sep, only reports. Yellow-rumped Warbler: max 14 OPM 8 Oct; last BROO 27 Oct. Black-throated Green Warbler: max 20 OPM 13 Sep. Blackburnian Warbler: arr BROO 1 Sep, max and last three OPM 4 Sep. Pine Warbler: one NVy Sep, one Triangle 24 Sep, often missed. Prairie Warbler: single FHNC 29 Sep, only report. Palm Warbler: one Eastern race Triangle 16 Sep; one Western race banded Vestal 22 Sep (HM, GK). Bay-breasted Warbler: two OPM 13 and 20 Sep, only reports. Black-and-white Warbler: ten reports. Am. Redstart: six reports. Ovenbird: five banded Vestal four Sep dates. Com. Yellowthroat: 25 reports. Hooded Warbler: last one CHEN 5 Sep. Wilson's Warbler: arr FHNC 7 Sep; one banded NVy 6 Oct last of eight reports. Canada Warbler: singles BROO, CHEN, OTSE all 5 Sep, only reports.

TANAGERS-WEAVERS: Scarlet Tanager: max four OPM 10 Sep, three TIOG reports, last two banded Vestal 16 and 22 Sep, scarce. N. Cardinal: several reports to 3/day through, excellent count. Rose-breasted Grosbeak: one CHEN 6 Oct last of three Oct reports. Indigo Bunting: one TIOG report, max and last 18 OPM 11 Sep. Rufous-sided Towhee: three BROO 3 Nov, late. Am. Tree Sparrow: arr Triangle 14 Oct. Chipping Sparrow: max 20 Oneonta 13 Sep, three banded Vestal 21 Oct, last 24 Oct. Field Sparrow: last two Oneonta 24 Oct. Vesper Sparrow: only two BROO 19 and 22 Oct. Savannah Sparrow: singles BROO 2 Sep, OEM 19 Sep, CHEN 6 Oct, only reports. Fox Sparrow: three singles BROO, TIOG

Oct, last Oneonta 14 Nov. Lincoln's Sparrow: one banded Vestal 5 and 12 Oct, only reports. Swamp Sparrow: four OPM 20 Oct, last banded Vestal 21 Oct. White-throated Sparrow: 42 banded Vestal 6-31 Oct, 14 on 21 Oct. White-crowned Sparrow: scattered reports 1-22 Oct, early departure and scarce. Dark-eyed Junco: max 70 at three sites OPM 22 Oct. Snow Bunting: arr 25 WPR 2 Nov (MP, mob). Bobolink: three OPM 4 Sep; last CHEN 9 Sep, only reports. E. Meadowlark: max six Lisle 4 Nov, scattered reports through 11 Nov. Rusty Blackbird: only one Triangle 14 Oct. Com. Grackle: diminishing reports through Nov. Brown-headed Cowbird: last two Delhi 27 Nov. N. Oriole: one Sep report TiOG, early departure. House Finch: abundant up to 60/day feeders. Purple Finch: up to 15 Oct/Nov reports, good count. Pine Siskin: arr TiOG Sep, other reports of 1-3 birds after 20 Oct. Evening Grosbeak: arr five sites TiOG 25 Oct, max 100 Triangle 23-24 Nov.

7 Spencer Drive, Oneonta, New York 13820