

REGION 4 — SUSQUEHANNA

MARY DOBINSKY

Fall 1991 continued the year's pattern of warmer and drier weather than normal. September was a little cooler than normal with several days of below average temperatures. October's average daily temperature, however, was about 2° warmer than the usual 49.1°. November, also slightly milder than average, had four days with record breaking high readings, including 60° on 30 Nov. September rainfall was 0.71 inches below the average 3.32 inches and October had only slightly more than half its normal precipitation, according to National Weather Service records at Link Field in Broome County. November, however, had more than an inch above normal rainfall. Summer's drought problems persisted into November. Reservoirs and shallow ponds continued dry and caked. Rivers were low early in the period, but water flow improved mid October.

Birds adapted to these conditions in different ways. Many, it turned out, had already left. Migration generally was early with low numbers for most species. This was despite several observations of abundant berries and fruits, particularly Autumn Olive, Gray Dogwood, grapes, Mountain Ash, apples and hawthorns. Herons stayed later into fall than usual. Migrating ducks, in about average numbers, arrived later than customary but didn't linger. By rare coincidence, 8 Nov was a peak day for duck species throughout Region 4. On that cold, windy morning, eight species either arrived or had maximum numbers reported. Shorebirds were scarce. Flights over the Franklin Mt. hawkwatch site near Oneonta were good, according to Andy Mason, coordinator. The total number of raptors counted was 2782, down from last year's 3231. However, that could be attributed to the sharp drop in Red-tailed Hawks seen, from 2250 in 1990 to 1500 this year. Sharp-shinned Hawks doubled their numbers this year to 513 and Bald Eagles (13 of them) passed the mountain for the first time in the three years of the hawkwatch operation. Golden Eagle numbers were impressive, too. In the Vestal banding report, Gail Kirch penned a big "0" after Veery and Wood Thrush to emphasize their plight. Only one Veery and four Wood Thrush were reported in all of Region 4. "This is the shortest Sep banding report ever for this station," Gail wrote, "both for species and number of birds per 100 net hours." Some late fall warbler movement and the sparrow migration, albeit sparse, improved the October numbers.

The one rarity, by reason of its timing, was a very late Pine Warbler 28

Nov at Candor (TiOC). Bob and Rita Pantle observed the Thanksgiving Day visitor as he flew back and forth between their feeder and a nearby stand of large spruce trees. "I believe it was an immature," Bob said as he described the bird. "The yellow on its breast was not as extensive as on the four or five I have banded over the years."

Another rare event, by reason of numbers, was the flight of an unprecedented 75 Brant on 22 Oct. As reported by Harriet Marsi, "Rick and I were on his deck when we heard them coming. The sound was enough different to alert us to get our binocs." Previous Regional reports have been one or two singles.

A dead Peregrine Falcon and Cedar Waxwing were found in September by Ken Stalter beside his Franklin (DELA) home. The family believed the falcon had been pursuing the waxwing when they crashed into the side of the house with such force they both perished.

The total of 161 species, although down from last year's record 180, is about average for fall. Missed species included Semipalmated Sandpiper, Spotted Sandpiper, Yellow-bellied Flycatcher, Blue-gray Gnatcatcher, Blue-winged Warbler, Canada Warbler and N. Oriole, all of which had moved out in August, plus Am. Bittern, Horned Lark, American Pipit, N. Parula, Mourning Warbler and Vesper Sparrow

Interesting results from the 1991 Nest Box program in Cortland County submitted by compiler Bill Toner were received too late for the Summer report. For Am. Kestrel there were seven nesting attempts, of which five were successful producing 33 eggs; 22 hatched and 19 young fledged. Twelve nesting attempts were reported for E. Bluebird, of which seven were successful; 31 of the 38 eggs hatched and 24 young fledged. In Tree Swallow boxes, 42 nesting attempts were made, 18 were successful; a total of 191 eggs were laid; 135 hatched and 80 young fledged. Raccoon predation in one Tree Swallow location was blamed for failures to fledge.

Observers: Cutler & Jeannette Baldwin, Don & Judy Bell, Les Bemont, Bruce Bozdos, Laura Carter, David Clark, Mildred Clark, Chad Covey, Marilyn Davis, Mary Dobinsky, Sadie Dorber, John Fritz, Gail Kirch, Margaret Layton, Harriet Marsi, Rick Marsi, Andy Mason, Bud & Evelyn Mead, Robert & Jean Miller, Ron Milliken, Susan Moran, Maurice Noyes, Robert & Rita Pantle, Jewell & Charles Parchinski, Marie Petuh, Steven Rice, Harley Shultes, Joe Sedlacek, Ken Stalter, Tom & Norene Tasber, Bill Toner, Vestal Banding Station (manned by GK, HM, SR), Donald Windsor, Irene Wright.

Abbreviations: CVSP - Chenango Valley State Park; JC - Johnson City; FHNC - Finch Hollow Nature Center; FMHW - Franklin Mountain Hawkwatch, near Oneonta; NNM - North Norwich Marsh; OnRes - Oneonta Reservoir; OPM -

Oneonta, Portlandville, Milford; PM - Portlandville Marsh; WF - Whaupaucau Forest, CHEN; WPR Whitney Point Reservoir.

LOONS-DUCKS: Com. Loon: only one WPR 23 and 28 Nov (MP). Pied-billed Grebe: arr 28 Sep OnRes; last of five singles BROO 28 Oct. Red-necked Grebe: only one WPR 23 Nov (MDv). Double-crested Cormorant: seven scattered reports, max four, through Oct, increasing. Great Blue Heron: one to three widespread through period. Green-backed Heron: last TIOG Oct. Black-crowned Night-Heron: ad NNM 7 Sep, often missed (DW, CC). Snow Goose: arr 20 TIOG Sep; max 80 Afton L 12-13 Nov; last 12 Morris 24 Nov. Brant: *intro*. Canada Goose: max 1,600 CHEN 12 Oct; flocks of 100s widespread through period, more than usual. Wood Duck: last six BROO, OTSE 27 Oct, scarce. Green-winged Teal: only reports Bainbridge Sep-Oct (SM). Am. Black Duck: max 15 BROO 8 Nov. Mallard: max 78 BROO 25 Nov. Blue-winged Teal: only one NNM 17 Nov (DW). Am. Wigeon: max eight WPR 23 Nov (MDv; three other BROO reports Oct. Canvasback: five BROO reports late Nov; max four Dean's Pd 23 Nov. Lesser Scaup: two BROO 8 Nov (HM, BB) only report. Oldsquaw: 35 OnRes 8 Nov, unusual. Black Scoter: seven Goodyear L 8 Nov (HS, JM). Com. Goldeneye: five OnRes 8 Nov; two BROO 25 Nov, only reports. Bufflehead: max 23 Vestal Plaza 8 Nov; seven other Nov reports all BROO, more than usual. Hooded Merganser: arr OTSE 13 Sep; max 10 WPR 23 Nov. Com. Merganser: max 30 BROO 1 Nov.

HAWKS-ALCIDS: Turkey Vulture: FMHW total 78, max 17 28 Oct. Osprey: FMHW total 35, versus 61 last year. Bald Eagle: *intro*. N. Harrier: FMHW total 56, versus 34 last year. Sharp-shinned Hawk: *intro*. Cooper's Hawk: FMHW total 26. N. Goshawk: FMHW total 18; max five 17 Nov equals total for 1990. Red-shouldered Hawk: FMHW total 32, double last year. Broad-winged Hawk: max 105 FMHW 20 Sep, total there 212, down from 335 last year. Red-tailed Hawk: *intro*. Rough-legged Hawk: FMHW total 10. Golden Eagle: FMHW total 60, up from 41. Am. Kestrel: FMHW total 60, up from 36. Merlin: two FMHW. Peregrine Falcon: FMHW total five. Ring-necked Pheasant: seven singles through period. Ruffed Grouse: "common" BROO, TIOG early Nov (JS). Wild Turkey: max 60 OTSE 28 Sep; abundant BROO, TIOG through Nov (JS). N. Bobwhite: six OTSE crossing and recrossing road 9 Sep (LC). Virginia Rail: singles NNM and PM 2 Sep, only reports. Sora: last seen NNM 7 Sep (DW). Com. Moorhen: one Bainbridge 1 Sep (DW, CC). Am. Coot: one PM 25 Oct; one WPR 14 Nov; two Otsego L 29 Nov, good count. Killdeer: max 21 on 6 Sep; last two TIOG 2 Nov, scarce. Greater Yellowlegs: up to 15 OnRes 16 Oct-4 Nov, feeding in ever shrinking pools; one BROO 18 Sep; one WPR 4 Nov, good numbers. Least Sandpiper: only one NNM 2 Sep. Pectoral Sandpiper: up to five OnRes 16-27 Oct, only reports. Dunlin: only one Cole P 17 Oct (FHNC staff). Am. Woodcock: max three Morris 26 Oct (JF). Ring-billed Gull: max 80 OPM 29 Oct. Herring Gull: max 30 OPM 30 Nov.

PIGEONS-WOODPECKERS: Black-billed Cuckoo: juv JC 19 Sep (MP) often missed. Yellow-billed Cuckoo: one TIOG Sep (B&EM), uncommon in fall. E. Screech-Owl: two OTSE 2 and 22 Sep (JF); reported TIOG Sep and Nov (J&DB, B&EM). Great

Horned Owl: 16 scattered reports. Barred Owl: three BROO, TIOG Oct and Nov (JS). Com. Nighthawk: last and only one BROO 6 Sep (SR), scarce. Chimney Swift: CHEN 7 Sep; BROO through 17 Sep, scarce. Red-bellied Woodpecker: arr OTSE 17 Oct; one each BROO, TIOG, scarce. Yellow-bellied Sapsucker: OTSE, CHEN reports thru Sep. N. Flicker: last two TIOG 20 Oct, early departure. Pileated Woodpecker: good numbers continue.

FLYCATCHERS-STARLINGS: Olive-sided Flycatcher: two WF 8 Sep (DW), first since 1984. E. Wood-Pewee: max and last five OPM 13 Sep. Alder Flycatcher: last of three OPM reports 6 Sep. E. Phoebe: last BROO and OPM 14 Oct. Great Crested Flycatcher: five OPM reports. E. Kingbird: only one OPM 7 Sep. Tree Swallow: only one OPM 7 Sep. Barn Swallow: last few NNM and OPM 7 Sep. Tufted Titmouse: still expanding territory. Carolina Wren: "notable increase" (HM). House Wren: only five reports early Sep, scarce. Winter Wren: 12 reported Oct and Nov, good numbers. Golden-crowned Kinglet: arr BROO 4 Oct; widespread through Nov. Ruby-crowned Kinglet: arr OTSE 13 Sep; last 28 Oct. E. Bluebird: max 22 WF 13 Oct; last eight BROO 8 Nov. Veery: *intro*. Gray-cheeked Thrush: one banded Vestal 5 Oct, only report. Swainson's Thrush: only one banded 5 Oct. Hermit Thrush: max four OTSE 16 and 26 Oct; three banded Oct; last two BROO 2 Nov. Wood Thrush: *intro*. Gray Catbird: last of 33 fall bandings 19 Oct. N. Mockingbird: "holding their own, possibly increasing" (HM). Brown Thrasher: one TIOG through 10 Nov, late. Cedar Waxwing: max 50 Morris 26 Oct. N. Shrike: arr Norwich 27 Oct; one Morris 18 and 28 Nov.

VIREOS-WARBLER: Solitary Vireo: max five OPM 14 Oct. Yellow-throated Vireo: three scattered singles. Warbling Vireo: last of four OPM reports 9 Sep. Philadelphia Vireo: only one banded Vestal 28 Sep. Red-eyed Vireo: max eight OPM 13 Sep. Tennessee Warbler: five OPM. Nashville Warbler: max 3 OPM 9 Sep, scarce. Yellow Warbler: one TIOG 29 Sep; one CHEN early Oct (SM), rather late. Chestnut-sided Warbler: five at two sites OTSE 2 Sep; departed early. Magnolia Warbler: low numbers. Black-throated Blue Warbler: only two OPM 14 Sep. Yellow-rumped Warbler: max 48 JC 8 Oct. Black-throated Green Warbler: max four OPM 12 Sep. Blackburnian Warbler: two singles only. Pine Warbler: *intro*. Prairie Warbler: arr TIOG 1 Sep; last CHEN 5 Sep. Palm Warbler: Eastern race arr TIOG 4 Oct, last two banded 11 and 13 Oct; Western race banded Vestal 12 Oct for second successive year, uncommon. Bay-breasted Warbler: only two OPM 12 Sep. Blackpoll Warbler: arr three OPM 12 Sep; last of four banding reports 29 Sep. Black-and-white Warbler: one OPM 3 Sep and two there 5 Sep, only ones, scant. Ovenbird: nine singles Vestal in Sep. N. Waterthrush: only one TIOG 2 Sep. Com. Yellowthroat: max eight OPM 12 Sep. Wilson's Warbler: only two singles OTSE, BROO 2 and 3 Sep.

TANAGERS-WEAVERS: Scarlet Tanager: good numbers OTSE. Rose-breasted Grosbeak: scattered singles Sep; scarce. Indigo Bunting: one TIOG 9 Sep; two OPM 18 Sep, only reports. Rufous-sided Towhee: max six BROO 8 Oct. Am. Tree Sparrow: arr BROO late Oct (JS). Chipping Sparrow: max 25 OPM 12 Oct; last BROO 20 Oct. Field Sparrow: last BROO 28 Oct. Savannah Sparrow: three OPM reports thru 20 Sep, only reports. Fox Sparrow: last of eight reports one TIOG 17 Nov, good numbers.

Lincoln's Sparrow: one Morris 22 Sep; three banded Vestal, good numbers. Swamp Sparrow: last imm OPM 25 Oct, low numbers. White-throated Sparrow: max 24 JC 8 Oct; 44 banded Vestal Sep-Oct, encouraging. White-crowned Sparrow: arr three sites BROO, OTSE 13 Oct; scarce, shortest migration season of record. Bobolink: ten OPM 2 Sep, only report. Red-winged Blackbird: max 1,000 CHEN 10 Oct. E. Meadowlark: six BROO 2 Oct; one TIOG Oct, only reports. Rusty Blackbird: only one Owego 28 Sep (C&JB). Com. Grackle: max 72 BROO 30 Sep, early departure. Purple Finch: last of 16 reports 16 Nov. Pine Siskin: max 20 CVSP, 28 Nov feeding in White Cedar trees, scarce. Evening Grosbeak: arr TIOG Oct; max 20 Morris 19 Nov, scarce.

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