

REGION 7 — ADIRONDACK-CHAMPLAIN

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Badly needed autumn rains finally began to relieve Regional drought conditions, but didn't dampen the spirits of observers who reported 166 species, 11 more than last fall. Early September was cool and dry, with the first widespread frost 13 Sep, when Newcomb was a nippy 27°F. Thermometers rebounded to the 80's by 16 Sep, followed by rain 18 Sep and more frost 21-22 Sep. Another inch of rain fell 25 Sep, and Malone added a quarter inch on 29 Sep. As the month closed, Piseco Lake dropped to a chilly 20°F. Both monthly possible sunshine and precipitation were above average, but yearly precipitation still short of the long-term average. October began with rain, then turned hot and clear, before an inch of rain fell 6 Oct. The High Peaks had snow by 13 Oct, followed by a pleasant week. A cold front brought rain, and even light snow in the Adirondacks,

on 19 Oct. A lovely stretch of Indian Summer followed from 22-26 Oct, then blustery rain 27 Oct, and a clear, cool end of the month. By early Nov, Lake Champlain was again over 95', with much of the month cool. Saranac Lake was 14°F by 9 Nov, but a final spell of warm weather provided relief from 19-21 Nov, before winter began to arrive in earnest.

The great advantage of the lingering drought was the continued exposure of mudflats along Champlain, which started the season at a low 94.35' on 1 Oct. Shorebird variety and numbers were the best in recent memory, especially at the Plattsburgh mudflats and, to a lesser extent, Westport beach. A total of 21 shorebird species was recorded, including several Regional rarities: Ruddy Turnstone, Red Knot, Western Sandpiper, White-rumped Sandpiper, Baird's Sandpiper, and **Purple Sandpiper**.

As summer breeders left, more northern rarities began to arrive. Red-throated Loon and Red-necked Grebe are seldom seen in this Region. Two adult **Little Gull** were found. Rough-legged Hawk arrived early, and two Snowy Owl appeared after mid November. A Bohemian Waxwing was feeding in a mountain ash outside Saranac Lake in company with 6 Am. Robin on 8 Nov; this waxwing has now appeared in all but two winters since the winter of 1979-80, or 11 of the last 13 years. Northern Shrike arrived early at Essex and in HAMI. Based upon fall arrivals, this doesn't bode well for a "winter finch" winter, except perhaps for Am. Goldfinch. Reasons for the presence of two other rarities, **Cattle Egret** and **European Goldfinch**, in the Region remain a mystery.

Another apparent northern arrival was the banded Canada Goose at Westport on 5 Sep which joined the flock of nine that had been present since mid July. Jeff Carleton and Mike Peterson were able to read the number with the help of a spotting scope. The goose [#768-57678] had been banded as an adult male 36 miles north of Fort Chimo, Quebec, on 7 Aug 1986, and had reached an age of 6 years., 3 months. The banding site is near the mouth of the Whale River in the Alukpaluk Bay portion of southern Ungava Bay, north of Lat. 58°.

Although the NYSDEC stocked 1,057 Ring-necked Pheasant by 1 Oct (532 CLIN, 525 ESSE), the only reports were of a hen at a Saranac Lake village feeder, a pair in Clinton County, and 4 visiting the trailer court near Lake Clear airport. DEC Regional Director Tom Monroe admits that the Adirondacks generally have poor pheasant range, adding: "Studies have shown that fewer than 5% of the pen-raised birds that are stocked survive to the following breeding season due to a variety of negative factors including

poor habitat, weather, and predation."

Bald Eagles continued to be reported with some regularity, and some of this recovery should be credited to the DEC "megahack" program of the 1980s. Now there may be a glimmer of hope for our other eagle, as well. Walter Chapman reported [!] an imm **Golden Eagle** seen from the summit of Goodnow Mt., ESSE, 2 and 21 Oct, engaged on the latter date in aerobatics with a 2-3 ft long "scraggly branch." On 22 Oct, Gary Lee had a **Golden Eagle** [!] at the Moose River Recreation Area, HAMI, near the last active eyrie in the State, and a pair was present there on 8 Nov.

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Abbreviations: CRF - Cedar River Flow; FBI - Four Brothers Islands; MRRA - Moose River Recreational Area.

LOONS-DUCKS: Red-throated Loon: arr Westport 12-29 Nov. Com. Loon: ad, two yg Coll I, ESSE (RK), extremely rare breeder on L Champlain. Pied-billed Grebe: Upper Chateaugay L 18 Sep, Bradley Pd 14 Oct; rarely reported. Horned Grebe: arr two Whallon's Bay 10 Nov. Red-necked Grebe: arr Corlear Bay 27 Sep; others at Coll Bay and North West Bay 5 Nov. Double-crested Cormorant: max 150 FBI 7 Sep; others Westport, Ticonderoga, Tupper L. **Cattle Egret**: two feeding among Holsteins outside Whallonsburg 24 Oct (KM!, Mike Peterson), very late. Snow Goose: arr 200 Whallon's Bay 12 Oct. Brant: one MRRA 4 Nov (GL), unexpected. Canada Goose: *intro*; albino with pink eyes, bill, feet in flock of 100 Miner Center, CLIN, late Oct-early Nov (NG). Blue-winged Teal: FBI 7 Sep, only report. Gadwall: FBI 7 Sep, last two Mt View L 19 Sep (MT). Am. Wigeon: hen Malone Rec Pk 27 Sep, only report. Ring-necked Duck: max 65 Moody Pd, EESE, 5 Nov (RH), more than usual and especially on this tiny village pond. White-winged Scoter: arr Plattsburgh 27 Oct. Bufflehead: arr 35 L Colby 4 Nov. Ruddy Duck: drake Plattsburgh 14 Nov (C&JH), rarely reported here.

HAWKS-ALCIDS: Bald Eagle: *intro.*, imm CPP 7-8 Sep (GF), three imm Tupper L 3 Oct, ad there 6 Nov (CD), ad Franklin Falls 7 Nov (RH), mouth Boquet R 30 Nov (RB, KB). Rough-legged Hawk: arr CLIN 29 Sep, early. **Golden Eagle**: *intro*. Merlin: Saranac L 3 Oct, Ausable Pt 23 Nov, infrequently reported. Ring-necked Pheasant: *intro*. Com. Moorhen: Plattsburgh 2-7 Oct, uncommon here. Am Coot: one-three Ausable Pt 23-25 Nov, unusual location. Lesser Golden-Plover: max five Plattsburgh 8 Sep. Killdeer: 23 Westport 1 Sep, max 68 Plattsburgh 26 Sep (WK), good numbers.

Yellowlegs (sp.): max 25 Mt View L 22 Nov, excellent numbers and late, whichever species they were. Solitary Sandpiper: Plattsburgh to 10 Sep. Ruddy Turnstone: turning stones at the mouth of the Saranac R 10-18 Sep. Red Knot: two Plattsburgh to 2 Sep. W. Sandpiper: one Plattsburgh 2 Oct. White-rumped Sandpiper: five Plattsburgh 3 Sep. Baird's Sandpiper: one Westport 1-5 Sep. **Purple Sandpiper**: one Plattsburgh 14 Sep (HK, WK, CM, !). Dunlin: Plattsburgh 30 Sep- 2 Oct, uncommon here. Am Woodcock: fresh roadkill Hoffmeister, HAMI, 3 Nov (RM), late; Sagamore, HAMI, 17 Nov (GL), extremely late. **Little Gull**: ad Westport 10 Nov (TM, the Petersons, !); another ad between Ausable Pt and Valcour I 25 Nov (WK!). Bonaparte's Gull: max 150 Westport 12 Nov, 30 still there 29 Nov.

PIGEONS-WOODPECKERS: Yellow-billed Cuckoo: Elizabethtown 20 Sep (J&SP). Snowy Owl: arr Ausable Pt 19 Nov; another near Plattsburgh shortly thereafter. N. Saw-whet Owl: banded Elizabethtown 22 Sep (J&SP). Three-toed Woodpecker: Shallow L 8 Sep; also s Sagamore. Black-backed Woodpecker: Bloomingdale Bog 7 Nov; also s Sagamore. Pileated Woodpecker: ad male and imm male at Saranac L village suet feeder 3 Sep-14 Nov (RH).

FLYCATCHERS-STARLINGS: Horned Lark: CRF 22 Nov (GL), an unusual location. Gray Jay: CRF lean-to and Eighth L 22 Oct, MRRA 26 and 31 Oct. Boreal Chickadee: Bear Pd, HAMI; MRRA; North Meadow, ESSE; and s Sagamore, fairly typical. Tufted Titmouse: Essex, Paradox, and Saranac L, only reports. Winter Wren: CRF early Nov, late. Gray-cheeked Thrush: one (wing chord 97 mm, subspecies?) banded Elizabethtown 26 Sep (JP); one *minimus* (wing 103 mm) banded Keene Valley 11 Sep (WL) and another (wing 108 mm) banded Elizabethtown 1 Oct (JP). N. Mockingbird: Chateaugay after 27 Oct (MH), only report. Bohemian Waxwing: *intro*. Cedar Waxwing: max 50 CRF early Sep. N. Shrike: arr Essex 24 Oct, Moose River Recreational Area HAMI 26 Oct early; several others reported.

VIREOS-WARBLED: Philadelphia Vireo: Peru 5 Sep (C&JH), Tupper L 25 Sep (CD), rarely reported in fall. Pine Warbler: last Tupper L 15 Sep. Palm Warbler: "Western" banded Elizabethtown 4 Oct, seen there 6 Oct; "Yellow" two banded Elizabethtown 15-19 Oct (JP), seen New Russia 16 Oct (SI). Mourning Warbler: hatching year banded CRF 15 Sep (RM). Wilson's Warbler: arr Tupper L 1 Sep (CD).

TANAGERS-WEAVERS: Am. Tree Sparrow: arr three Essex 23 Oct (KM, JP). Field Sparrow: MRRA to 16 Oct. Vesper Sparrow: transients Saranac Lake 7 Oct (RH), New Russia 16 Oct (SI). Lincoln's Sparrow: banded CRF 13 Sep; Jiffy the cat added one to her lifeless list Owls Head 20 Sep (*fide* JT). White-crowned Sparrow: arr New Russia 16 Oct (SI). Snow Bunting: arr seven Paul Smiths 6 Nov, at Jay feeder in Nov; others Crown Pt peninsula, CRF, and Fourth L. E. Meadowlark: MRRA 23 Nov (GL), late. Rusty Blackbird: Raquette L 19 Sep; max 100 migrants Elizabethtown 30 Sep (JP), other migrants Elizabethtown 17 Oct, Essex 24-26 Oct, and last Ausable Marsh 29 Oct. Com. Grackle: max 80 Vermontville 7 Nov; singles Inlet and Lake Clear feeder 21 Nov, late. Pine Grosbeak: arr two Ord Falls, Hudson R, ESSE, 26 Oct (TM). Purple Finch: max 12 CRF Sep; Chateaugay 14 Oct, MRRA 26 Oct, and Elizabethtown feeder 21 Nov, only other reports. House Finch: Chateaugay and L Colby, only reports. Red

Crossbill: two e Indian L, HAMI, 14 Oct (RB), only report. White-winged Crossbill: Lake Clear airport 10 Oct and MRRA 26 Oct, only reports. Com. Redpoll: arr 15 feeding on birch catkins Tupper L 12 Nov, a dozen there 17 Nov; 12 Heart L 17 Nov; rather sparse, but perhaps indicative of things to come. Pine Siskin: small numbers reported from just 8 locations through the season. Am. Goldfinch: still feeding yg Elizabethtown 22 Sep, where only two banded in Oct, but 150+ during Nov with few repeats, suggesting a good flight. **European Goldfinch**: one Crown Pt Village feeder 2-3 Nov (A&JT!). Evening Grosbeak: only reports from CRF, Elizabethtown, Limekiln L, and Tupper L, where max 35 was reported.

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