

REGION 8 — HUDSON-MOHAWK

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Weather patterns during the fall basically continued the trends of the past many months. September was slightly (by 1.3°) cooler than normal, the first such month since May, 1990. October and November returned to above normal average temperatures. September had normal precipitation. October and November were wetter; the latter month had precipitation on 20 different dates for a total over 1.7 inches above normal. The first snowfall of the season (1.5 inches in Albany) occurred on 11 Nov.

Generally uneventful weather during September and October may have accounted for another generally lackluster migration. Reporters did not note any major waves or groundings of migrants and many species were not even reported by observers. This adds yet another to a growing series of migrations, both spring and fall, when birds seemed scarce. How much of this is a function of weather and how much due to population declines among migrant species is difficult to say. Interestingly, the California coast experienced one of its best fall seasons ever for eastern vagrants, mostly warblers. One would not generally expect the occurrence of large numbers of vagrants from species whose populations have experienced a major diminution.

The series of mild, generally snowless winters has been favorable to Carolina Wren. The Hudson-Mohawk Bird Club Dial-A-Bird requested

sightings and received reports of more than 30 individuals. Most were in lowland areas in the river valleys, but a pair in Berne has been surviving for several years at that higher elevation, and one in Ballston L and two in L George Village WARR must be very near the northern limit of the species' range in this part of the state.

Fruit and berry crops were abundant throughout the Region and encouraged large numbers of American Robin to linger. With the exception of hemlock, cone crops were very poor. Crossbills, redpolls and Pine Grosbeak were essentially absent, Pine Siskin was scarce, and Evening Grosbeak continued the pattern of scarcity that has characterized recent winters. By mid November there was evidence of a good invasion of boreal raptors and Northern Shrike. Interestingly, numbers of these visitors seemed to peak in November and declined thereafter, suggesting perhaps that local prey abundances were not to their liking and they moved on. Snowy Owl arrived very early (late October) and some of them were in poor condition. One found dead in Livingston had apparently starved, and two recovered in Feura Bush and rehabilitated by the DEC were emaciated.

It was an excellent fall for rarities in this landlocked Region. These included **Great Cormorant**, **Greater White-fronted Goose**, **Eurasian Wigeon**, **Tufted Duck**, **Barrow's Goldeneye**, **Golden Eagle**, **Hudsonian Godwit**, **N. Hawk Owl** and **Bohemian Waxwing**.

This is my last Region 8 report. I want to thank all contributors for their reports during my tenure. The new Region 8 editor is: **Alan Mapes**, **Five Rivers Environmental Education Center, Delmar, New York 12054**.

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Abbreviations: BCRes - Basic Creek Res ALBA; DAB - Hudson-Mohawk Bird Club Dial-A-Bird tape; FiveR - Five Rivers Environmental Education Center, Delmar; SaraL - Saratoga Lake; TRes - Tomhannock Res RENS.

LOONS-DUCKS: Red-throated Loon: singles SaraL 13 Oct (SZ), Alcove Res ALBA 30 Oct (DM). Pied-billed Grebe: six reports encouraging; max 20 BCRes 21 Oct (KPA); two ad, one juv Nassau L 23 Oct. (PFC). **Great Cormorant**: imm Embough Bay GREE 6 Oct (RPG), third Regional record. Double-crested Cormorant: singles SaraL (BP) and Niskayuna (RPY) 24 Nov, late. Great Blue Heron: max 45 along Mohawk R 8 Oct (RPG). Great Egret: max 12 Vischer Ferry 1 Sep (BP), last five along Mohawk R 8 Oct (RPG). Black-crowned Night-Heron: only report Vischer Ferry 4 Sep (PF). Snow Goose: numbers down relative to recent years; max 100+ TRes 8 Nov (PFC). **Greater White-fronted Goose**: one Harrington Pd RENS 13 Oct (GR). Am. Wigeon: 50 Stanton Pd ALBA 21 Oct (KPA), large number. **Eurasian Wigeon**: one m Stanton Pd 21 Oct

(KPA). **Tufted Duck**: male SaraL 9 Nov through period (RP, GH, SZ, mob), second Regional record. **Black Scoter**: 78 TRes 8 Nov (PFC), large number. **Barrow's Goldeneye**: male SaraL 17 Nov (DAB). **Hooded Merganser**: 50 Loughberry L SARA, 65 TRes 8 Nov, large numbers. **Ruddy Duck**: 20 BCRes 21 Oct (KPA), large number.

HAWK-ALCIDS: **Bald Eagle**: continues in good numbers, 12 reports. **N. Goshawk**: slight increase with nine reports including two migrants passing Petersburg Gap RENS 21 Sep (JS). **Red-shouldered Hawk**: two still at breeding locale Cherry Plain 26 Oct (PFC). **Broad-winged Hawk**: max 120 Pinnacle 11 Sep (PFC). **Rough-legged Hawk**: arr SARA 8 Nov (BP). **Golden Eagle**: two singles reported without details, TRes 10 Nov (FM, *fide* BB), Black Dome Mt GREE 16 Nov (PR). **Wild Turkey**: continues to increase. **Am. Coot**: 15 BCRes 21 Oct (KPA), large number. **Lesser Yellowlegs**: three Greenport COLU 16 Nov (BC), very late. **Hudsonian Godwit**: one SaraL 14,15 Nov (GH, SZ, mob). **Am. Woodcock**: two Cambridge 6 Nov (JS), late. **Lesser Black-backed Gull**: near ad Colonie 14 Nov (KPA).

PIGEONS-WOODPECKERS: **Snowy Owl**: arr W Lebanon 16 Oct (*fide* RLF); 11 birds reported; *intro*. **N. Saw-whet Owl**: one Schodack Center 10 Oct (PFC), only report. **N. Hawk Owl**: one Fort Edward 16 Nov through period (GH, mob). **Whip-poor-will**: female found dead Albany 14 Oct (RPG), late. **Red-headed Woodpecker**: one RENS 1-2 Oct (JJC), only report. **Red-bellied Woodpecker**: continues slow expansion, one Fort Edward 24 Nov (BP). **Downy Woodpecker**: very low Jenny L (RPY).

FLYCATCHERS-STARLINGS: **Olive-sided Flycatcher**: one Vischer Ferry 29 Sep (DAB), late. **Blue Jay**: scarce Jenny L (RPY). **Com. Raven**: many reports including 22 Thirteenth L WARR 7 Sep (KPA), 18 Stephentown Center. 4 Oct (PFC), 15 Hague Landfill 23 Nov (LM). **Black-capped Chickadee**: not a flight year Jenny L (RPY). **White-breasted Nuthatch**: disappearing Jenny L, declining Schenectady (RPY). **Carolina Wren**: *intro*. **E. Bluebird**: good numbers. **Gray-cheeked Thrush**: three reports, first in several years. **Wood Thrush**: one found dead Colonie 17 Oct (RPG), late. **Gray Catbird**: one Gallupville through 25 Nov (BB, KB). **Bohemian Waxwing**: one Plotterkill Preserve 17 Nov (MW). **N. Shrike**: arr Gallupville 3 Nov (BB,KB), nine reports.

VIREOS-WARBLEDERS: **Orange-crowned Warbler**: one Goeffroy's Pd COLU 14 Sep (BC), rarely reported. **Yellow-breasted Chat**: one Chatham 28 Sep (PI), rare in fall.

TANAGERS-WEAVERS: **White-throated Sparrow**: another disappointing migration (RPY). **Dark-eyed Junco**: breeding population Jenny L continues low since 1985 collapse (RPY); good numbers in migration. **Rusty Blackbird**: very large numbers, max 10,000 Hague 31 Oct-4 Nov (DM, LM). **Pine Grosbeak**: two Mill Creek Preserve COLU 30 Nov (KD, EG), only report. **House Finch**: numbers down Cambridge (JS). **Com. Redpoll**: one report. **Pine Siskin**: arr FiveR 3 Oct (AM), very small numbers. **Evening Grosbeak**: arr Old Chatham 28 Sep; continues to be scarce, max 12 Clifton P.

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