

REGION 3 — FINGER LAKES

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After one of the coldest, wettest summers on record, birders were greeted by Regional weather patterns that brought near average temperatures and precipitation for the month of September. Less rain than usual but substantially colder than average temperatures characterized October, with a return to cold, wet weather in November. October temperatures averaged 4°F colder than normal for the Region and November precipitation was one to two inches above average.

Noteworthy migratory movements coincided with the passage of major cold fronts and strong northwesterly winds on 12, 22, 23, and 30 Sep, and on 25 and 31 Oct. At their banding station, Kestrel Haven

Farm, near Burdette, John and Sue Gregoire reported "hundreds" of White-crowned Sparrow on 23 Sep, with none seen the following day. The birds arrived ahead of a strong cold front passing across the Region from the northwest and departed as the front crossed our Region. A major movement of 339 Broad-winged Hawk occurred over Mount Pleasant on 12 Sep. On 30 Sep, Bernie Guirey counted 2470 Canada Goose in two hours migrating over the Mount Pleasant Hawk Watch, near Ithaca, ahead of a major cold front that brought 40 mph winds across Lake Ontario on 29 Sep. And significant flights of Common Loon and Brant occurred over Cayuga Lake on 25 Oct (684 loons, 1475 Brant) and 31 Oct and 1 Nov (nearly 1800 loons), ahead of similar cold fronts.

In addition to the usual fall birding activities, many observers added a project oriented flavor to their activities. John and Sue Gregoire continued banding activities at Kestrel Haven Farm, where they have been banding birds during migration since 1986. They banded 1726 birds of 84 species during 83 days of operation this fall. Bill Evans, with help from several members of the Cayuga Bird Club, made an intensive effort to count migrating Common Loon at Taughannock Falls State Park on the west shore of Cayuga Lake. A total of 4942 Common Loon was counted between 25 Oct and 18 Nov, with most flights occurring between 7 and 9 AM each day. And Bernie Guirey led another fall of hawk counts from the Mount Pleasant Hawk Watch, near Ithaca, with 14 species and nearly 1000 individuals counted during September, October, and November. All these projects, which focused on counting or banding a number of species at specific locations, and on keeping careful track of the effort involved, provide insights into the magnitude and timing of fall migratory movements through our Region. Hopefully, we will see more of this kind of project oriented bird study in the future.

The most noteworthy observations from the Region were **Eared Grebe**, **Mississippi Kite**, **Lesser Black-backed Gull**, **Forster's tern**, **Acadian Flycatcher** and **LeConte's Sparrow**, and a good variety of other hard to find species were reported. Common Raven also continues to be reported from the Elmira area, with additional observations from near Naples this season. A few Snowy Owls began to appear in the region in mid November. There were few reports of Short-eared Owl and Northern Shrike, and virtually no reports of winter finches, including Evening Grosbeak, from the Region. Several reports of Carolina Wren came from ravines along lake shores throughout the Region.

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Abbreviations: CHWMA - Connecticut Hill Wildlife Management Area; CL - Cayuga Lake; FLNF - Finger Lakes National Forest; KHF - Kestrel Haven Farm (banding station of John and Sue Gregoire); MNWR - Montezuma National Wildlife Refuge; MtP - Mount Pleasant, TOMP; MPt - Myers Point, e shore of Cayuga L; QCM - Queen Catharine Marsh, south end of Seneca L; SF - Seneca Falls; SL - Seneca Lake; StP - Stewart Park, s end of Cayuga L; TFSP - Taughannock Falls State Park, w shore of Cayuga L; WG - Watkins Glen.

Fall reports: **Red-throated Loon:** one CL 30 Oct and 5 Nov, one n end SL 15-25 Nov. **Com. Loon:** *intro.* **Red-necked Grebe:** one CL 6 and 9 Nov. **EARED GREBE:** one CL at TFSP 3 Nov (WE, NYSARC). **Double-crested Cormorant:** 261 in 3 hours over MtP 20 Oct. **Am. Bittern:** one MtP 11 Sep, one MNWR 4 Oct. **Least Bittern:** one MtP 11 Sep. **Great Egret:** one MNWR through 8 Nov. **Black-crowned Night-Heron:** one MNWR 3 Oct. **Tundra Swan:** max 177 MNWR 29 Nov. **Brant:** two StP 4 Oct, 1475 TFSP 25 Oct (WE), 225 TFSP 30 Oct (WE), one StP 8 Nov, eight s end SL 1 Nov; imm s end SL throughout Nov (JB); more than usual. **Canada Goose:** major movement (2470 in 2 hours over MtP) WG and MtP 30 Sep. **Wood Duck:** max 20 QCM 1 Oct. **Eurasian Wigeon:** one MNWR 4 Oct-28 Nov. **Canvasback:** max 3000 MNWR 21 Oct. **Redhead:** max 2500 MNWR 21 Oct. **Ring-necked Duck:** max 2000 MNWR 21 Oct. **Lesser Scaup:** max 2500 CL 29 Nov. **Oldsquaw:** two MNWR 15 Nov, one MNWR 21 Nov; max 30 CL 7 Nov. **Black Scoter:** two males StP 6-7 Nov, seldom reported. **Surf Scoter:** female CL 7-9 Nov, seldom reported. **White-winged Scoter:** 25 sightings of 1-24 individuals CL 4 Oct-15 Nov. **Ruddy Duck:** two WG 18-23 Nov, seven MNWR 21 Nov.

Turkey Vulture: total 111 MtP Sep-Nov. **Osprey:** last 5 Nov, late. **MISSISSIPPI KITE:** one King Ferry 9 Sep (KD, NYSARC), first Regional report. **Bald Eagle:** four MNWR throughout period; total three MtP Sep-Nov; imm Elmira 12 Sep. **N. Harrier:** total 50 MtP Sep-Nov. **Sharp-shinned Hawk:** total 98 MtP Sep-Nov. **Cooper's Hawk:** total 14 MtP Sep-Nov. **N. Goshawk:** total two MtP Sep-Nov. **Red-shouldered Hawk:** total 13 MtP Sep-Nov. **Broad-winged Hawk:** total 423 MtP Sep-Oct, max 339 on 12 Sep, last 9 Oct, late. **Red-tailed Hawk:** total 177

MtP Sep–Nov. **Golden Eagle**: total five MtP Sep–Nov, seldom reported. **Am. Kestrel**: total 32 MtP Sep–Nov. **Merlin**: one Elmira 17 Oct. **Peregrine Falcon**: one Elmira 18 Sep, one MtP Sep–Nov. **Virginia Rail**: one MNWR 3 Oct. **Black-bellied Plover**: three near SF 3 Oct; last near Elmira 1 Nov, late. **Lesser Golden-Plover**: six MNWR 4 Oct, 65 near Village of Cayuga 24 Sep (AB), high max. **Semipalmated Plover**: 20 near SF 11 Oct. **Lesser Yellowlegs**: last 21 Nov, late. **Solitary Sandpiper**: one MPt 17 Sep. **Hudsonian Godwit**: two MNWR 9 Oct (KD, WE), one Canoga Bait Pds near SF 19–25 Oct (FB, WE). **Ruddy Turnstone**: three MPt 17 Sep. **Red Knot**: one MNWR 23 Sep. **Sanderling**: one MPt 17 Sep, 10 MNWR 23 Sep. **White-rumped Sandpiper**: one MNWR 14 Sep–31 Oct, two MPt 3 Nov. **Baird's Sandpiper**: reported throughout Sep, last MNWR 4 Oct. **Pectoral Sandpiper**: max 55 MNWR 12 Oct, 20–25 near SF 25 Oct. **Dunlin**: 40–50 MNWR 9–30 Oct, three near SF 25 Oct. **Stilt Sandpiper**: one MNWR 18 Sep, two MNWR 4 Oct. **Long-billed Dowitcher**: six MNWR 4 Oct. **Com. Snipe**: one QCM throughout Oct. **Red-necked Phalarope**: one MNWR 3–4 Oct and four on 9–12 Oct. **Wilson's Phalarope**: one MNWR 6 Sep. **Bonaparte's Gull**: three MNWR 3 Oct. **LESSER BLACK-BACKED GULL**: one MNWR mid to late Oct, two ad MNWR 10 Oct, two StP 20 Nov, more than usual. **Caspian Tern**: max 12 StP 12 Sep; last 30 Sep, late. **FORSTER'S TERN**: one MNWR 29 Sep (WB).

E. Screech-Owl: only report one near Lansing 19 Sep. **Snowy Owl**: scattered singles widespread after mid Nov. **Short-eared Owl**: two FLNF 7 Nov. **Whip-poor-will**: one near Ithaca early Sep (J. Confer). **Com. Nighthawk**: 50 Southport 4 Sep, 12 Elmira 5 Sep, only reports. **Chimney Swift**: last 3 Oct, late. **Ruby-throated Hummingbird**: last 31 Oct, very late. **Red-headed Woodpecker**: one near Benton Center 18 Oct (FB), one MtP 22 Oct (WE), now seldom reported.

Yellow-bellied Flycatcher: last 30 Sep, late. **ACADIAN FLYCATCHER**: one CHWMA 12 Sep (NB). **Tree Swallow**: last 13 Keuka L 27 Nov, very late. **N. Rough-winged Swallow**: last 28 Oct. **Com. Raven**: two T Caton 3 Sep (DC), one near Naples mid-Oct (FB). **House Wren**: last 9 Nov, very late. **Veery**: last 4 Oct, late. **Gray-cheeked Thrush**: one near Ithaca 24 Sep, two near Elmira 25 Sep. **Brown Thrasher**: last 12 Oct, late. **Am. Pipit**: arr MtP 23 Sep, 50 Southport 25 Oct. **N. Shrike**: one MtP 22 Oct, one FLNF 28 Nov, only reports.

Solitary Vireo: last 27 Oct, very late. **Philadelphia Vireo**: one T Caton 12 Sep, one banded KHF 30 Sep. **Warbling Vireo**: last 19 Oct, very late. **Blue-winged Warbler**: last 8 Sep, late. **Golden-winged Warbler**: one CHWMA 19 Sep, only report. **Orange-crowned Warbler**: one banded KHF 30 Sep (J&SG), only report. **Yellow-rumped Warbler**: total 99

banded KHF (J&SG); last 31 Oct. **Black-and-white Warbler**: only one report. **Am. Redstart**: last 1 Oct, late. **Connecticut Warbler**: one CHWMA 19 Sep (NB).

Am. Tree Sparrow: arr 17 Oct. **Grasshopper Sparrow**: one Southport 4 Oct. **Henslow's Sparrow**: one Southport 23 Sep. **LECONTE'S SPARROW**: one MPt 3 Oct (KD, NYSARC). **Lincoln's Sparrow**: last 24 Oct, late. **White-crowned Sparrow**: *intro*. **Lapland Longspur**: three-15 near King Ferry 20-27 Oct. **Snow Bunting**: arr and max 28 MtP 25 Oct. **Rusty Blackbird**: three MNWR 8 Nov. **Red Crossbill**: one CHWMA 22 Nov, only report. **Pine Siskin**: none. **Evening Grosbeak**: one CHWMA 22 Nov, only report.

Exotics: Ringed Turtle-Dove: one still visiting Elmira feeder.

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