

REGION 4 — SUSQUEHANNA

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Fall 1992 was a little colder and wetter than normal and generally lacked strong weather fronts. Both September and November temperatures averaged a degree colder than usual. October, however, was very chilly; its mean temperature of 44.5°F was 4.5° below normal. Each month had more precipitation than normal. September's rainfall was only 0.20 inches above the usual 3.32 inches. October precipitation exceeded the norm by half an inch, while November precipitation measured 3.78 inches, three-quarters of an inch over average. Most of the precipitation fell as rain, and only 6.30 inches of snow was officially reported for the season. The first snowfall dusted the hills on 1 Oct in northern areas of the Region. Wild foods were abundant. Trees and shrubs, evidently fortified by a good summer growing season, really held onto their seeds and berries. Often fruits drop and rot on the ground before the birds arrive. Evergreens were laden with cones.

Water levels were high everywhere through most of the period, as they had been all summer. The only exception was Whitney Point Reservoir, where the water level was lowered in mid October to permit bridge repairs according to Harriet Marsi. That event had as much impact on the fall reports as did the weather. Extensive mudflats stretched around the reservoir. Pied-billed, Horned and Red-necked Grebe all were seen for the first time since 1987. Black-crowned Night-Heron and Brant were present for the fourth straight fall, after absences

of 11 years. Fifteen species of duck is as good as this Region gets. Shorebirds had been written off for lack of habitat. Then Jay Lehman stopped at Whitney Point Reservoir on 18 Oct, and Elva Hawkin on the following day. Each spotted an **Hudsonian Godwit**, probably a Regional first (available records only date back to 1979). Jay tallied three Black-bellied Plover, among the more common shorebirds a Regional rarity not reported in at least 14 years. The next day Elva 11 of these plovers and counted an unprecedented 200 Dunlin. On 26 Oct, Harriet, Bruce Bozdos and Florence Linaberry added Semipalmated Plover, another Regional rarity, and an uncommon Lesser Yellowlegs. Finally, on 7 Nov Jay returned to find two **White-rumped Sandpiper**, believed to be another Regional first. For Jay it ended a long search in Region 4 for the late fall migrants. "What first got my attention", he wrote, "was the call, a thin single 'jeet'" (remembered from shorebirding in Delaware before he moved to Upstate New York). "They were huddled with a Pectoral, on a broken up roadbed, invisible to me until I 'kicked' them up as I walked the road. I confirmed the birds by seeing the dark tail and white rump above it as they flew."

As many as 600 Canada Geese a day migrated through the the Region periodically between 29 Sep and 16 Nov. One large flock in the Tioga area, however, didn't leave. The flock has been resident there the last few years. Jeannette Baldwin believes this dynasty may have started about six years ago. Her brother, who lives near the Baldwins, had bought a pair of young Canada Geese, their wingtips crushed to prevent flying, for his 23 acre lake. When old enough to mate, however, the gander chose a wild Canada Goose who had come into the lake. Together the gander and his "wild" goose raised five goslings. "She coaxed the male to fly with her as she taught the young, but in vain. Finally, in late October, she took off with the young, leaving the gander to call mournfully for several days. When she returned with the young the next March, it took several hours before the gander forgave his wandering mate." The pattern repeated itself another year, but the third winter, the female stayed. "This summer there were five nests on the dike at the lake and we are sure the 125 geese this fall are all descendants of the original pair."

Cheers were due observers at the Franklin Mt. Hawk Watch. Their season's total of 123 Golden Eagles tied the species' fall migration record for eastern North American hawk watch sites. The record, of many years standing, had been the sole property of the Wagner's Gap, PA, site. For the Oneonta group, the 1992 total of Golden Eagles was double the number seen last year, with a one-day record of 19 birds on 27 Oct. The

1992 total for all raptors at Franklin Mt. was 3589 birds, according to Ron Milliken. It was the best year yet with higher counts for all hawks, especially Sharp-shinned, Red-shouldered and Broad-winged Hawks, all nearly double last year's figures. A Ferruginous Hawk, very rare in eastern U.S, was reported 27 Nov but no documentation was submitted.

Migration of most passerines was barely noticeable. Most birds just trickled through and were gone about a week earlier than usual. Some good field work, however, especially in CHEN, located some uncommon species and better than average numbers for some less common species. Noteworthy was a rarely seen Long-eared Owl "harassed by Blue Jays" spotted in Homer by John Gustafson. Very little flocking of Eastern Bluebird and very low counts of Hermit Thrush indicate only fair to poor breeding success for those species. Most warbler numbers were low but 12 Cape May Warbler were counted, nine of them by the Chenango Bird Club on their 12 Sep field trip. This might ease concern for that species, at least momentarily. Of the 25 warbler species reported, Northern Parula, Prairie, Pine and Orange-crowned are often missed. High counts were reported for Lincoln's Sparrow and Swamp Sparrow, but figures for others of the species were low to average. Despite the abundant cone supply, winter finches weren't rushing to be enjoyed. Even American Goldfinch was scarce.

The fall total of 180 species reported ties the record high of 1990. Rarities included **Hudsonian Godwit** and **White-rumped Sandpiper**, believed to be the first seen in Region 4, Semipalmated Plover and Black-bellied Plover and Long-eared Owl. On the minus side, missing were Common Loon (probably for the first time) American Wigeon, both cuckoo species, Northern Shrike and Evening Grosbeak!

Congratulations are extended to Region 4's Marie Petuh for her book *Broome Birds & Byways*, which has just been published. It is a valuable field guide to some 75 birding areas, most within a 30-mile radius of Binghamton. The Cortland County Bird Club alerts observers to major developments they plan at the newly established Lime Hollow Nature Center in Corlandville. "Birding possibilities are probably the best in Cortland County," their newsletter claims. Financing will be from sale of a land tract in Virgil which had been given to the club 20 years ago.

Observers: Cutler & Jeannette Baldwin, Les Bemont, Reynolds Bennett, Bruce Bozdos, Chad Covey, Chenango Bird Club, Ingrid Casper, Marilyn Davis (MDv), Mary Dobinsky, Sadie Dorber, C. Eastwood, John Fritz, John Gustafson Elva Hawken, Spencer Hunt, Gail Kirch, Margaret Layton, Jay Lehman, Florence Linaberry, Andy Mason, Dave Messineo, Ron Milliken, Susan Moran, Marie Petuh, Steve Rice, Joe Sedlacek, Tom and Norene Tasber, Bill Toner, Donald Windsor, Irene Wright.

Abbreviations: ChenL - Chenango Lake; FHNC - Finch Hollow Nature Center; FMHW - Franklin Mt. Hawk Watch; NNM - North Norwich Marsh; OnRes - Oneonta Reservoir; OPM - Oneonta, Portlandville, Milford; REEC - Rogers Environmental Education Center, Sherburne; WPR - Whitney Point Reservoir.

Fall reports: **Red-throated Loon:** one WPR 7 Nov (JL), often missed. **Pied-billed Grebe:** singles Mead Pd 25 Oct and White's Pd 7 Nov (JL) ; one WPR 30 Nov (MDv), all late. **Horned Grebe:** two WPR 29 Nov (JL, CE) only report. **Red-necked Grebe:** two WPR 7 Nov (JL), only report. **Double-crested Cormorant:** max seven Chenango R between Chenango Bridge and Port Crane 10-17 Sep (mob); also two TIOG 12 Sep. **Am. Bittern:** one Willett 16 Sep (EH), often missed. **Great Blue Heron:** widespread to 16 Nov. **Great Egret:** one BROO 4 Sep (HM, BB, FL), not seen every year. **Green-backed Heron:** good numbers CHEN, OTSE; last 28 Sep. **Black-crowned-Night Heron:** *intro*. **Tundra Swan:** only one TIOG Nov (SH). **Snow Goose:** single REEC 2 Oct; small flock TIOG Nov, sparse. **Brant:** *intro*. **Wood Duck:** max 16 BROO 4 Sep; last 30 Nov, late. **Green-winged Teal:** four reports BROO Oct, Nov, last 6 Nov. **Am. Black Duck:** max seven WPR 7 Nov and OPM 13 Nov. **Blue-winged Teal:** only report six REEC 18 Sep. **Gadwall:** singles REEC 18 Sep; Hunts Pd SP 27 Sep and BROO 2 Oct, often missed. **Ring-necked Duck:** max 10 ChenL 13 Nov, two there 8 Nov, only reports. **Greater Scaup:** three WPR 7 Nov, two ChenL 22 Nov, only reports. **Lesser Scaup:** two OnRes 13 Nov, one ChenL 22 Nov, only reports. **Black Scoter:** only report WPR 7 Nov. **Com. Goldeneye:** only report BROO 20 Nov. **Bufflehead:** max 17 WPR 7 Nov, three other reports. **Hooded Merganser:** one FHNC 29 Sep; two CHEN 25 Oct; two OnRes 1 Nov; two BROO 9 and 20 Nov, scarce. **Com. Merganser:** max 50 WPR 7 and 22 Nov. **Red-breasted Merganser:** single White's Pd 8 Nov, often missed.

Turkey Vulture: FMHW total 100, max 32 on 17 Oct. **Osprey:** FMHW total 75, max nine 19 Sept. **Bald Eagle:** FMHW total 12, five other reports. **N. Harrier:** FMHW total 79, record high; best flights late Oct, early Nov. **Sharp-shinned Hawk:** FMHW total 435, max 96 on 17 Oct. **Cooper's Hawk:** FMHW total 27. **N. Goshawk:** FMHW total 23. **Red-shouldered Hawk:** FMHW total 69, max 11 on 31 Oct. **Broad-winged Hawk:** FMHW total 676, max 113 on 11 Sep. **Red-tailed Hawk:** FMHW total 1727, max 419 on 25 Oct. **Rough-legged Hawk:** FMHW total five; three others Nov. **Golden Eagle:** *intro*. **Am. Kestrel:** FMHW total 84 all Sep-Oct. **Merlin:** FMHW total seven, last 9 Nov, only reports. **Peregrine Falcon:** FMHW total three; one Norwich 6 Sep (JL, DW). **Ring-necked Pheasant:** max

three OPM 22 Oct (MD), probably recently released. **Ruffed Grouse:** "common" TIOG Oct-Nov (JS), scarce elsewhere. **Wild Turkey:** good counts Nov. **Virginia Rail:** only report Upper Lisle 26 Sep (T&NT). **Am. Coot:** singles BROO 26 Oct and OnRes 28 Oct, not seen every year. **Black-bellied Plover:** *intro.* **Semipalmated Plover:** *intro.* **Killdeer:** max 29 Glimmerglass SP 12 Sep (AM), scarce. **Greater Yellowlegs:** seven scattered singles, scarce. **Lesser Yellowlegs:** only one WPR 26 Oct. **Solitary Sandpiper:** arr OPM 1 Sep; two NNM 4 and 9 Sep; one Sherburne 6 Sep, scarce. **HUDSONIAN GODWIT:** *intro.* **WHITE-RUMPED SANDPIPER:** *intro.* **Pectoral Sandpiper:** four WPR 18 Oct; one 7 Nov (JL), only reports. **Dunlin:** *intro.* **Com. Snipe:** singles OTSE 1 Sep, BROO 26 Oct, only ones. **Am. Woodcock:** max 17 BROO 17 Nov (HM,BB,FL); seven Morris 30 Oct (JF), high counts. **Bonaparte's Gull:** singles OPM 27 Nov; WPR 29 Nov, uncommon. **Ring-billed Gull:** max 200 Glimmerglass SP 12 Sep. **Herring Gull:** max 10 WPR 29 Nov. **Great Black-backed Gull:** one Dean's Pd 27 Nov; imm WPR 29 Nov, uncommon. **Com. Tern:** singles CHEN 7 Sep; Cole P 9 Sep; WPR 16 Sep, often missed.

Great Horned Owl: max three, nine widespread reports. **Barred Owl:** one Triangle 27 and 29 Sep; two BROO Oct-Nov. **Long-eared Owl:** *intro.* **Com. Nighthawk:** 28 Binghamton 4 Sep flying NW to SE (SR), good count, only report. **Chimney Swift:** max 11 Norwich 6 Sep; daily Binghamton to 19 Sep. **Red-headed Woodpecker:** one Perkins Pd CHEN 16 Sep (EH), uncommon. **Red-bellied Woodpecker:** singles REEC Sep and TIOG through period, low. **Yellow-bellied Sapsucker:** last two Norwich 3 Oct. **N. Flicker:** last Norwich 22 Nov. **Pileated Woodpecker:** five to seven/month, good.

Olive-sided Flycatcher: singles Norwich 6 Sep and NNM 8 Sep, only third fall in last nine. **E. Wood-Pewee:** max three Norwich 5 Sep. **Yellow-bellied Flycatcher:** two Norwich 12 Sep (CBC), unusual. **Alder Flycatcher:** only report BROO 14 Sep (HM). **Willow Flycatcher:** only report CHEN 16 Sep (EH). **"Traill's" Flycatcher:** banded Vestal 19 Sep (GK). **E. Phoebe:** max nine (five y) Oneonta 11 Sep. **Great Crested Flycatcher:** max two NNM 4 Sep. **E. Kingbird:** max three OPM 1 Sep. **Horned Lark:** arr WPR 18 Sep; max 30 Millbrook Res CHEN 31 Oct (JL), only reports. **Tree Swallow:** max 50 CHEN 6 Sep and OPM 1 Oct, high compared to recent years. **Cliff Swallow:** only one Norwich 4 Sep. **Barn Swallow:** max 30 Norwich 4 Sep. **Red-breasted Nuthatch:** max seven Sep. **Carolina Wren:** widespread. **House Wren:** max three, eight Sep reports, one Oct, good. **Winter Wren:** last BROO 4 Oct. **Marsh Wren:** singles two CHEN sites 4 and 27 Sep, uncommon. **Golden-crowned Kinglet:** arr Norwich 12 Sep (CBC). **Ruby-crowned Kinglet:** one to four

widespread to 14 Nov. **E. Bluebird**: *intro*. **Swainson's Thrush**: daily Binghamton 20 Sep-12 Oct (SR), seven others, high. **Gray-cheeked Thrush**: arr Vestal 20 Sep; four others to 2 Oct, good count. **Hermit Thrush**: *intro*. **Wood Thrush**: max five CHEN 4 and 20 Sep. **N. Mockingbird**: four-six/month, good count. **Brown Thrasher**: nine reports, good numbers. **Am. Pipit**: Norwich 18 Sep only one.

Solitary Vireo: max four OPM 14 and 16 Sep; one Sep 26 (MD), late. **Yellow-throated Vireo**: two OPM 9 Sep, one 14 Sep, low. **Warbling Vireo**: ten reports CHEN, OTSE to 14 Sep, good. **Philadelphia Vireo**: arr Sherburne 5 Sep; singles Vestal 6 Sep and TIOG and Norwich 12 Sep, high count. **Red-eyed Vireo**: max six, 14 reports to 27 Sep. **Blue-winged Warbler**: two singles Norwich 4 Sep; one Vestal 5 Sep. **Tennessee Warbler**: max three 12 Sep (CBC). **Orange-crowned Warbler**: only one Norwich 20 Oct. **Nashville Warbler**: max two OTSE 5 Sep and CHEN 12 Sep. **N. Parula**: only one CHEN 16 Sep (EH). **Yellow Warbler**: max three CHEN 16 Sep. **Chestnut-sided Warbler**: max three imm OPM 5 Sep. **Magnolia Warbler**: max three Norwich 12 Sep, banded Vestal 27 Sep. **Cape May Warbler**: *intro*. **Black-throated Blue Warbler**: only four reports, max two. **Yellow-rumped Warbler**: max 100+ CHEN 18 Sep (EH). **Black-throated Green Warbler**: max four (two imm) OPM 5 Sep and 16 Sep. **Pine Warbler**: one BROO 1 Sep (MP) uncommon. **Prairie Warbler**: one Afton 5 Sep (SM), rare in fall. **Palm Warbler**: one Afton 18 Sep; one banded Binghamton 4 Oct, only reports. **Bay-breasted Warbler**: max two, five reports OTSE, CHEN. **Blackpoll Warbler**: max two REEC 3 Oct, one other. **Black-and-white Warbler**: singles OPM 1 Sep and Norwich 4 Sep, scarce. **Am. Redstart**: seven reports. **Ovenbird**: max four banded Vestal 1 Sep. **Com. Yellowthroat**: max 25 two Norwich sites 4 Sep. **Hooded Warbler**: one Norwich 6 and 7 Sep (JL), uncommon. **Wilson's Warbler**: one Binghamton 8-13 Sep (SR); three others. **Canada Warbler**: four reports

Scarlet Tanager: max and last four 16 Sep. **Rose-breasted Grosbeak**: max four Norwich 6 Sep. **Indigo Bunting**: max four CHEN; last TIOG 19 Sep (C&JB). **Am. Tree Sparrow**: arr CHEN 25 Oct; max 20 there 7 Nov. **Chipping Sparrow**: max 12 OPM 5 Sep. **Field Sparrow**: max 15 CHEN 3 Oct and BROO 4 Oct. **Vesper Sparrow**: only one Owego 13 Sep. **Savannah Sparrow**: two Norwich 5 Sep; three singles OPM to 26 Sep, scarce. **Fox Sparrow**: arr two OPM 22 Oct; last of four others 16 Nov. **Song Sparrow**: max 75 REEC 3 Nov. **Lincoln's Sparrow**: arr Morris 21 Sep (JF); four others, good count. **Swamp Sparrow**: max 50 NNM 3 Oct. **White-throated Sparrow**: max 13 Banded Vestal 12 Oct; 10 on 10 Oct, scarce.

White-crowned Sparrow: widespread reports 2-28 Oct max three, sparse. **Snow Bunting:** only one WPR 18 Oct. **Bobolink:** last and only two REEC 4 Sep. **Red-winged Blackbird:** max 200; last 7 Nov. **E. Meadowlark:** max 12 OPM 1 Oct; last BROO 26 Oct. **Rusty Blackbird:** arr singles BROO, CHEN 2 Oct; five NNM 23 Oct; four Sherburne 7 Nov, high. **Brown-headed Cowbird:** only three singles Oct, low. **Purple Finch:** max 19 Morris 20 Nov.

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