

REGION 9 — HUDSON-DELAWARE

JOHN P. ASKILDSEN

The weather for the fall 1992 can be termed in a word as "good" for the birds. Twenty-two cold fronts passed through the Region. These fronts brought some unseasonably cold temperatures, even in September, and five were accompanied by punishingly severe thunderstorms, even as late as in November. High winds (66 mph on 12 Nov), torrential downpours (4 inches in the evening of 9 Sep in WEST), and even a tornado (WEST on 9 Sep) caused road closings due to tree falls and flooding, and widespread power outages throughout the Region. Tropical Storm Danielle passed through the Region on 3 Sep, unaccompanied by unusual bird reports. At the Poughkeepsie Airport in September temperatures showed a high for the month of 87°F on 17 Sep, and a low of 34°F on 30 Sep. Rhinebeck recorded a Regional low of 25°F the same day! The first frost came on 24 Sep in the Catskills. Rainfall was highly variable through the Region. It was slightly higher in WEST and ROCK, but mostly lower than average to the north; the Poughkeepsie Airport recorded 1.98 inches during September, 1.68 inches below the norm. October's high of 80°F was recorded at the

Poughkeepsie Airport on 3 Oct and the low of 25°F was set on 28 Oct. The first snowfall was recorded on 18 Oct, when one inch fell on Slide Mountain in the Catskills. The 1.28 inches of rain recorded at the Poughkeepsie Airport for October was 2.02 inches below normal. Severe drought conditions were reported through the entire lower Hudson Valley region during October. The first three weeks of November were quite cold, with northwest winds. The last ten days were much warmer, dulling hopes for a winter like December. The low for the month was 13°F on 20 Nov, the high 69°F on 23 Nov. November was wet, with 4.54 inches of rain at the Poughkeepsie Airport, almost an inch more than normal.

The fall migration had its ups and downs. A total of 249 species was reported. For a change, passerine migration was impressive some days, as is reflected by the multiple reports of such hard to find species as Orange-crowned Warbler, Connecticut Warbler and Dickcissel. The major Blue Jay passage days were between 21-29 Sep. Thousands of Canada Goose and lesser numbers of Snow Goose and Brant were noted moving from 1-4 Oct, and thousands of Brant were reported to have passed over the Region on 25 Oct. A major sparrow migration took place the night of 17 Oct; White-crowned Sparrow was very conspicuous from mid to late October. Finally, the American Robin migration window was 19-24 Oct, when several observers reported "many thousands". In contrast, even though there were many "classic" cold fronts to usher birds south, raptors remained inconspicuous. Numbers were down in almost all categories, and certain species were *way* down. Particularly alarming were Sharp-shinned Hawk, whose numbers continue to nose dive, and Northern Harrier, whose numbers were on average *half* of the fall of 1991's already depressed totals. The overall dip in numbers may be due to the poor weather conditions that are effecting many other birds of the tundra and northern coniferous forests. Let's hope this is not a permanent trend.

There were many reports of Wild Turkey from all over Region. Cedar Waxwing was well reported, but low numbers of American Coot, Spotted Sandpiper, and Northern Cardinal were found, and Horned Grebe went unreported. Winter finches were very scarce this season.

This season's rarities included some very interesting species indeed. **Northern Gannet** again penetrated Long Island Sound as far as WEST. An **Eurasian race Green-winged Teal** was complimented by a **Tufted Duck**. A **King Rail** was seen crossing a marsh bordered causeway road in Kent PUTN on 13 Sep by Andrew Taylor. If that doesn't make your mouth water, the **Yellow Rail** seen at Crueger's Island in DUTC surely

will. On 16 Sep, Mark De Dea was fishing on the causeway when the bird flew in next to him and landed on the causeway where all field marks were noted. A write-up was submitted to the NYSARC for review. **Hudsonian Godwit** was a welcome visitor to the Marshlands Conservancy in Rye, and two **Lesser Black-backed Gull** had returned to Rye, for the umpteenth year in-a-row, by mid November. An **Iceland Gull** was a surprise visitor to SULL, and a **Black Skimmer**, always a noteworthy away from the coast, strayed to ROCK. **Black Vulture** reports were frequent this fall, with too many to enumerate. Reports of groups up to seven in ROCK, and lesser numbers from all counties except WEST were received. A **Swainson's Hawk** graced the skies over Hook Mountain ROCK again this fall. A single **Snowy Owl** reached the Region by the season's end. Unexpected passerine reports began with an unseasonal **Summer Tanager**, followed by a small group of **Lapland Longspur**, and ended with a very obliging **Clay-colored Sparrow**.

Other unusual sightings included a Red-throated Loon picked up on the ground in SULL, apparently crash landing unharmed after becoming confused in dense fog near the Delaware River on 25 Nov. The bird, which was released on 27 Nov onto the same river, was a first record of this species for SULL (VF). White-winged Scoter was reported in numbers from several inland locations, including one in ULST in November and several groups of up to 15 individuals in WEST. Photographs of a leucistic Field Sparrow, which visited an ORAN feeder for a week in November, were submitted and an albino Red-tailed Hawk continues west of Pound Ridge Reservation in WEST.

With this issue Dr. John P. Tramontano, our ORAN sub-regional editor for 22 years, will step down. This editor and The Federation are indebted to John for his many years of faithful service. If anyone is willing to fill the position, please contact the Regional editor.

Contributors: Larry Alden, John P. Askildsen, Andrew Baldelli, Bedford Audubon Society, Michael Bochnik, Frank Bonanno, Lysle Brinker, Thomas W. Burke, Judith Cinquina, Mark De Dea, Edgar A. Mearns Bird Club, Dr. Valerie Freer, Padraic French, Walter Fritton, Roger Frost, Andrew Guthrie, Richard Guthrie, Chuck Harten, Highlands Audubon Society, John Burroughs Natural History Society, Robert J. Kurtz, Anthony J. Lauro, Doris Metreaux, Frank Murphy, Dick Reid, Sullivan County Audubon Society, Dr. Andrew Taylor, Dorwin Teague, Drew Panko, Dr. Seldon Spencer, Dr. John P. Tramontano, Edward D. Treacy, Michael Usai, Ralph T. Waterman Bird Club, Yonkers Audubon Society.

Abbreviations: EGR - Edith G. Read Sanctuary, Rye; HR - Hudson River; MC - Marshlands Conservancy, Rye; PP - Piermont Pier, ROCK.

Fall reports: **Red-throated Loon:** one at PP 7 Nov, One 23 Nov DUTC; *intro.* **Com. Loon:** 6 at Rye 7 Nov, 3 HR ORAN 18 Nov. **Pied-billed Grebe:** 17 reports DUTC in Nov. **N. GANNET:** two off Rye 1 Nov (TB). **Great Cormorant:** arr Rye 25 Oct. **Double-crested Cormorant:** remained on coast through period. **Am. Bittern:** one MC 3 Oct (TWB). **Little Blue Heron:** one at MC 19-24 Sep. **Green-backed Heron:** last DUTC 14 Oct. **Snowy Egret:** max 25 MC 24 Sep, one dyed pink; another color dyed bird HR near Croton Pt in Sep; last MC 1 Nov. **Yellow-crowned Night-Heron:** max three MC 20 Sep. **Snow Goose:** max 870 ORAN 7 Nov; many 100's reported 25 Oct. **Brant:** *intro.* **Canada Goose:** *intro.* **Wood Duck:** max 22 DUTC 17 Nov. **Green-winged Teal:** high numbers reported late Oct; one EURASIAN RACE 6-and-1/2 Station Sanctuary marsh 28 Nov (JT). **Redhead:** one EGR 26 Nov. **Canvasback:** 40 EGR 21 Nov. **TUFTED DUCK:** male returned to Playland L Rye 3 Nov (TWB). **Greater Scaup:** max 3000 EGR 7 Nov. **Lesser Scaup:** 300 EGR 21 Nov. **White-winged Scoter:** *intro.*

Hawk watch totals (nm denotes non-migrant):

	Butler Sanctuary	Mount Peter	Hook Mountain	Port Jervis	Bear Mountain
Black Vulture		nm 7	1		nm5
Turkey Vulture	280	24	431		
Osprey	299	142	373		16
Bald Eagle	21	12	33	3	6
N. Harrier	80	40	71	18	2
Sharp-shinned Hawk	1598	921	2211	4	62
Cooper's Hawk	171	66	88	9	
N. Goshawk	1	6	12	4	2
Red-shouldered Hawk	119	29	86	1	
Broad-winged Hawk	6628	8130	5500		2357
Swainson's Hawk			1		
Red-tailed Hawk	316	370	180	980	244
Rough-legged Hawk					
Golden Eagle	4	1	2	2	
Am. Kestrel	367	134	320		
Merlin	50		28		2
Peregrine Falcon	12	10	28	1	2

BLACK VULTURE: *intro.* **Bald Eagle:** six over Bear Mtn in Sep (EDT). **N. Harrier:** *intro.* **Sharp-shinned Hawk:** *intro.* **Broad-winged Hawk:** 3000 over Somers 13 Sep (DR). **SWAINSON'S HAWK:** imm light morph Hook Mt 4 Oct (PF, mob). **Red-tailed Hawk:** 138 Port Jervis 26 Oct, max 583 there 6

Nov and 259 on 7 Nov (EDT); *intro*. **Golden Eagle**: arr two Stissing 18 Nov; two Port Jervis 26 Oct (EDT). **Merlin**: scattered reports away from hawk watches. **Peregrine Falcon**: ad female on Beacon-Newburgh Bridge entire season. **N. Bobwhite**: five reported from DUTC. **YELLOW RAIL**: *intro*. **Clapper Rail**: two MC to 14 Nov. **KING RAIL**: *intro*. **Virginia Rail**: one MC to 9 Nov. **Sora**: up to four MC to 1 Nov. **Com. Moorhen**: one MC 16 Sep, rare there in fall. **Black-bellied Plover**: one DUTC 1 Nov; 17 MC 25 Oct, last 12 there 9 Nov. **Lesser Golden-Plover**: 147 Warren Turf Farm ORAN 7 Sep (JPA, AJL, AB); 100 there through Oct (JPT). **Semipalmated Plover**: 15 MC 21 Sep, last there 24 Oct. **Killdeer**: 37 L Welch ORAN 7 Oct. **Greater Yellowlegs**: 10 MC 1 Nov. **Lesser Yellowlegs**: one MC 1 Nov, late. **Solitary Sandpiper**: one MC 12 Oct; one DUTC 10 Nov very late. **Upland Sandpiper**: up to 20 Warren Turf Farm ORAN late Aug (JPT), last two on 6 Sep (HAS). **Whimbrel**: one MC 24 Sep (TWB). **HUDSONIAN GODWIT**: three MC 20 Oct (TWB), one remaining to 30 Oct. **Ruddy Turnstone**: one EGR 26 Sep. **Semipalmated Sandpiper**: max 75 MC 5 Sep, last 24 Oct. **W. Sandpiper**: eight MC 6 Sep (TWB). **Least Sandpiper**: max 12 MC 5 Sep. **White-rumped Sandpiper**: arr at MC 10 Sep; three there 20 Oct (TWB); four L Welch ORAN 17 Nov, late inland (WF). **Pectoral Sandpiper**: singles only. **Purple Sandpiper**: four EGR 30 Oct. **Dunlin**: max 70 MC 1 Nov. **Stilt Sandpiper**: one MC 10-17 Oct. **Short-billed Dowitcher**: six MC 5 Sep. **Com. Snipe**: widespread singles only. **Am. Woodcock**: two MC 24 Oct. **Laughing Gull**: 32 EGR 30 Nov. **Bonaparte's Gull**: arr two EGR 3 Nov, max 52 there 24 Nov. **ICELAND GULL**: ad Woodbourne SULL 23 Nov (VF). **LESSER BLACK-BACKED GULL**: *intro*. **Com. Tern**: Rye 26 Sep. **Forster's Tern**: arr Rye 25 Sep, max 46 on 27 Oct, last three on 14 Nov; one SULL 15 Oct and one on HR at Cold Spring. **BLACK SKIMMER**: one PP 23 Nov (CH, ph), first ROCK record.

E. Screech-Owl: one MC 4 Sep, uncommon on coast. **SNOWY OWL**: one PP 17 Nov (DT, mob). **Long-eared Owl**: one DUTC 29 Nov. **Com. Nighthawk**: max 100 Rock 3 Sep. **Whip-poor-will**: one DUTC 8 Sep. **Ruby-throated Hummingbird**: last DUTC 25 Sep. **Red-headed Woodpecker**: one ULST 30 Oct, two n WEST 12 Sep and 24 Oct, only reports. **Pileated Woodpecker**: 14 reports DUTC in Nov.

Olive-sided Flycatcher: eight reports SULL and DUTC in Sep. **Yellow-bellied Flycatcher**: one DUTC 14 Sep. **Willow Flycatcher**: one MC 5 Sep (TWB). **Least Flycatcher**: one MC 12 Sep (TWB). **Horned Lark**: max 325 Warren Turf Farm ORAN 15 Oct. **Purple Martin**: two MC 5 Sep. **Tree Swallow**: last MC 23 Oct. **Barn Swallow**: last n WEST 17 Oct. **Blue Jay**: *intro*. **Com. Raven**: regular in n SULL, two in DUTC 7 Sep. **Winter Wren**: arr WEST 13 Sep. **Marsh Wren**: one EGR 14 Nov. **Am. Robin**: *intro*. **Am. Pipit**: max 36 MC 23 Oct.

White-eyed Vireo: one DUTC 2 Sep, two MC 12 Sep. **Philadelphia Vireo:** five reports Sep. **Orange-crowned Warbler:** singles Yonkers 18 Oct, DUTC 17 Sep-early Oct, and Rye 25-26 Nov. **Connecticut Warbler:** three Sep reports from DUTC. **Mourning Warbler:** one MC 1 Sep. **Hooded Warbler:** one DUTC 21 Sep. **Yellow-breasted Chat:** one s WEST 11 Sep.

SUMMER TANAGER: one MC 2 Sep (TWB). **Dickcissel:** singles MC 30 Sep-1 Oct, Yonkers 4 Oct, and DUTC 22 Oct. **Am. Tree Sparrow:** arr DUTC 16 Oct. **Chipping Sparrow:** last in WEST 30 Oct. **CLAY-COLORED SPARROW:** one EGR 21-23 Nov (AG, JPA, mob), few WEST records. **Field Sparrow:** *intro.* **Vesper Sparrow:** two DUTC in Oct. **Sharp-tailed Sparrow:** max seven MC 2 Oct, last two on 1 Nov. **Fox Sparrow:** arr WEST 25 Oct. **Lincoln's Sparrow:** arr WEST 30 Sep. **White-throated Sparrow:** arr WEST 20 Sep. **White-crowned Sparrow:** arr n WEST 3 Sep, early, not reported elsewhere before late Sep. **LAPLAND LONGSPUR:** six Ashokan Res ULST 12 Oct (FM, LA). **Snow Bunting:** small numbers widespread by early Oct. **E. Meadowlark:** max 100 Millerton 14 Nov, very high count. **Rusty Blackbird:** arr Rye 25 Sep. **Purple Finch:** almost non-existent in WEST, small numbers reported in n section of Region. **Red Crossbill:** one pair Clairville 16 Sep (SCAS). **Pine Siskin:** four DUTC 30 Oct. **Evening Grosbeak:** small numbers reported in n part of Region.

Exotics: Black-headed Parakeet: two ORAN 10 Oct.

Correction: *Kingbird* 42(3):196 — **Red-necked Grebe** should read 12+ (not 124) in Rye.

Post Office Box 32, Chappaqua, New York 10514-0032