

## **REGION 4 - SUSQUEHANNA**

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Fall was a little cooler and wetter than normal with a fairly average September and October. November, however, was five degrees colder than usual and had about three inches more precipitation than normal, most of it falling as rain and most of that on 8 November. That day saw a tornado hit Norwich and such one day record rainfalls as: 3.62" at Delhi, 3.41" at Goodyear Lake, and 2.33" at Binghamton. The storm triggered severe flooding in DELA, which still hadn't recovered from last January's floods. Rivers and creeks were soon over their banks everywhere. By 10 November flooded fields looked like late March with Canada Geese and ducks swimming about. Other than the November storm, fall weather was quite bland. There were few cold fronts and south winds dominated until late October. A succession of coastal storms generally veered away from us, although Binghamton caught the tail of storms 17 September and 19 October suffering heavy rains as a result. The first snow held off until 3 November. Wild foods were abundant throughout.

Water levels remained high as this wet year continued. Ponds and lakes seemed the habitat of choice for most water birds, perhaps because river currents were running fast and strong. Excellent counts of grebes and good

flights of Snow Geese and Brant were reported. A hybrid White-fronted Goose x Canada Goose was studied and photographed at Whitney Pt. Reservoir by Chris Barnes, Marie Petuh and Eric Sullivan. Waterfowl highlights included an uncommon Northern Shoveler and high counts of Bufflehead and Ruddy Duck. Most surprising were 10 species of shorebirds including a Regionally rare **Black-bellied Plover** and a flight of rare **Sanderlings**, as well as very late departures of Spotted Sandpiper and Least Sandpiper, the latter at a record late 25 October. Supposedly, shorebirds' sandy, gravelly, muddy feeding areas were flooded over! Diligent observers, afield despite poor conditions, were rewarded!

The scarcity of NW winds and good cold fronts this fall probably had their worst effect on hawk flights. All time lows for Red-tailed Hawk, Northern Harrier and Sharp-shinned Hawk were reported at Franklin Mt. Hawkwatch by Chris Vredenburg, compiler for this sixth full season at the DELA site. "Our best day was 28 October," noted Chris, "the only 'classic' day with birds riding past on the ridge. Best birds that day were 13 Golden Eagles (fair number) and 163 Red-tails (terrible count)". The best hawk day for all areas was 18 September, the first fall day of strong NW winds. BROO's Weed Walkers, on a field trip to Boland Pond, were surprised by a flight of 70 Broad-winged Hawks. Tom Salo counted 44 Broad-wings at Wooley Hill, OTSE, while FMHW counted 22 Ospreys, the season's maximum one-day count for that species. Tom Salo's most exciting raptor experience occurred 14 November near his West Burlington home. He suddenly spotted a mature Golden Eagle in an attack flight and closing in on a feeding Great Blue Heron. Equally suspenseful were the heron's avoidance maneuvers and escape flight and the eagle's final departure in defeat.

Migration for most passerines was generally meager and spotty. There were no good "fallouts". Roundtop Park, Endicott, which had been an excellent site for August migration, had a decent "wave" 5 September and a small, final push 16 September. Some good counts were also reported 21 September in CHEN, the only county participating in the second annual fall North American Migration Count.

The first Regional fall report of **Acadian Flycatcher** was a season's highlight. Birds with high counts for the season included Chimney Swift, Yellow-bellied Flycatcher, White-throated Sparrow and, surprisingly, Magnolia Warbler. Most warbler species were present, but at best, in average numbers. In addition to American Robin and Eastern Bluebird, which often remain through November, were Yellow-bellied Sapsucker and Northern Flicker. A record late departure was noted for Blackpoll Warbler **24 October** and a tie for record late for White-crowned Sparrow was recorded on 27 November. Particularly scarce this fall were Veery, Wood Thrush, Northern Mockingbird, Brown Thrasher, and Savannah Sparrow. Missed entirely were Great Crested Flycatcher, Blue-

gray Gnatcatcher and Indigo Bunting, the bunting for the third year in the last four.

Winter birds failed to move south this fall, reportedly content with abundant foods in their northern territories. A single Northern Shrike and a fair number of Snow Buntings was reported. Pine Siskin stopped briefly at a few select feeders late November but quickly moved on, as did two Red Crossbills.

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**Abbreviations:** BPd-Boland Pond, BROO: BrPd-Brick Pond, TIOG: BF1-Burlington Flats, OTSE: BUNP-Binghamton University Nature Preserve; CinL-Cincinnati Lake, bisected by CHEN and CORT, CrL- Crumhorn Lake, OTSE: FMHW - Franklin Mt. Hawkwatch; GdL-Goodyear Lake, OTSE; Lpd - Long Pond, CHEN; MPd-Mead Pond, CHEN; MBRes-Mill Brook Reservoir, CHEN; MirL-Mirror L, CHEN; NAMC - North American Migration Count, 9 Sep; OnRes- Oneonta Reservoir; OtsL- Otsego Lake, RTPk-Round Top Park, Endicott; WHHW-Wooley Hill Hawk Watch, OTSE: WPR-Whitney Point Reservoir.

**LOONS- DUCKS: Com. Loon:** max four Susquehanna River TIOG 9 Nov; two FMHW 20 Nov and one 24 Nov; two WPR 21 Nov; singles On Res 10 Sept; Cin L 25, 27 Oct, good count. **Pied-billed Grebe:** arr B Pd 13 Sep; max five M Pd 10 Nov; four Chenango River Norwich 3 Nov; three MB Res 4 Nov; at Ots L from 28 Sep max three; three singles BROO Oct; WPR 16 Nov; matches last year's record numbers. **Horned Grebe:** Ots L 5, 19 Oct; WPR 14, 23, 29 Oct, 16 Nov, high count. **Red-necked Grebe:** two CHEN NAMC, often missed. **Double-crested Cormorant:** max five Gd L 1 Sep, three 15 Sep; three FMHW 18 Sep; three singles BROO Sep, one Oct; last FMHW 10 Nov, average count. **Great Blue Heron:** max seven near Milford 1 Sep; one attacked by Golden Eagle W Burlington 14 Nov, *intro*. **Great Egret:** max six TIOG Sep; two Chenango River Binghamton 18 Sep; last 30 Sep, average. **Green Heron:** six reports Sep max three; last M Pd 13 Oct, very late departure. **Black-crowned Night-Heron:** imm Br Pd 29 Sep, missed some falls. **Greater White-fronted Goose x Canada Goose:** WPR 25-30 Oct, "Identification made after 45 minute observation, photographing and subsequent research (IES,MP,CB! NYSARC). **Brant:** max 515 FMHW 3 Nov; 440 there 26 Oct; 500 M Pd 16 Nov (EH); 100 Norwich 6 Nov (DW), rare before 1990, high numbers last three years. **Canada Goose:** continue abundant in ponds and fields. **Wood Duck:**

max 39 Chen NAMC; 14 WPR 27 Sep; 10+ FMHW 13 Oct; last OTSE 10 Nov, generally fewer. **Green-winged Teal**: singles CHEN NAMC; Cin L 27 Oct, scarce. **Am. Black Duck**: max 21 two CHEN sites 1 Nov; ten Can Res 15 Oct. **Mallard**: good numbers Oct, Nov. **N. Pintail**: DELA 13 Oct, first fall since 1990. **N. Shoveler**: only one BR Pd 7 OCT (ES), first fall report in more than 15 years. **Gadwall**: BR Pd 5 Nov, often missed. **Am. Wigeon**: one Br Pd 3, 20 Oct. **Canvasback**: two Cin L; one WPR 14 Oct; single TIOG thru, first fall since 1991. **Lesser Scaup**: max five WPR 1 Nov; pair there 16 Nov, only reports. **Com. Goldeneye**: singles WPR 2 Nov, TIOG. **Bufflehead**: max 34 WPR 1 Nov; two each at two OTSE & one CHEN sites 10 Nov; last nine WPR 26 Nov, high count. **Hooded Merganser**: max 28 L Pd 1 Nov; 23 Cin L 23 Oct; two CHEN NAMC; four other reports Nov; last 11 WPR 26 Nov, high count. **Com. Merganser**: max 250 WPR 16 Nov (BNC); B F1 farm pond 19 Oct - 11 Nov, max 35 (NW); 48 FMHW 13 Nov, high counts. **Ruddy Duck**: arr Mir L 7 Oct; six WPR 22 Oct; three Cin L 25 Oct (ES); max and last seven WPR 16 Nov (BNC), often missed.

**HAWKS - ALCIDS**: **Turkey Vulture**: max 37 Gd L 8 Sep; FMHW total 80. **Osprey**: FMHW total 41; max 22 FMHW 18 Sep. **Bald Eagle**: FMHW total 14; five Can Res 6 Oct. **N Harrier**: FMHW total 25, only half average count. **Sharp-shinned Hawk**: FMHW total 214; max 9 on 15 Oct, record lows; a line of five J City 16 Sep "flying south in quick succession" (MP). **Cooper's Hawk**: FMHW total 51, slightly better than average. **N. Goshawk**: FMHW total 12, only a third of average count. **Red-shouldered Hawk**: FMHW total 72, average; max 10 on 12 Nov. **Broad-winged Hawk**: FMHW total 463, below average; max 211 on 14 Sep; 70 B Pd and 44 WH 18 Sep. **Red-tailed Hawk**: FMHW total 918, record low, less than half average count. **Rough-legged Hawk**: FMHW total 13; single day record high three on 29 Oct, 27 Nov. **Golden Eagle**: imm arr FMHW 19 Sep, record early: total 79; max 13 on 28 OCT, "fair numbers" (CV). **Am. Kestrel**: FMHW total nine, vs average seven; **Peregrine Falcon**: FMHW total eight, same as last year; max two on 19 Sep, 3 Oct; Riley Rd CORT 14 Oct. **Ring-necked Pheasant**: several Tiog Sep; W. Burlington 5 Oct; two Bainbridge 6 Oct. **Ruffed Grouse**: max 11 T Preston 13 Nov, generally scarce. **Wild Turkey**: max 100 Chen 13 Nov, not so visible this year, abundant food in the woods. **Com. Moorhen**: max seven CHEN NAMC; B Pd 18 Sep, often missed. **Am. Coot**: Ots L from 28 Sep max 15; two BROO 22, 23 Oct, good count. **Black-bellied Plover**: one ?? 21 Sep, locally rare. **Killdeer**: max 30 Cin L 23 Oct; last CHEN 16 Nov, late. **Greater Yellowlegs**: singles Ots L 3 Sep; CHEN NAMC; BROO 1-3 Oct; CHEN 1 Nov, scarce. **Lesser Yellowlegs**: two Ots L 3 Sep (HK); Cin L 23, 26 Oct (ES), often missed. **Solitary Sandpiper**: three W. Burlington 1 Sep and BROO 3 Oct,

scarce. **Spotted Sandpiper**: max four Ots L 3 Sep; seven other reports, max three; last at three sites 23 Oct, high count late departure. **Sanderling**: seven FMHW 3 Nov (ISH.GS!), first since 1990. **Least Sandpiper**: Cin L 14-25 Oct, max five (ES), often missed, record late departure. **Com. Snipe**: two Cin L 27 Oct, first since 1992. **Am. Woodcock**: one CHEN 8, 13 Sept and 17 Oct; max two (EH); OTSE 26 Oct (TS); last Candor 19 Nov (JS), good count. **Ring-billed Gull**: max 300+ Milford farm fields 22 Oct, usual fall migration stopover site.

**DOVES - WOODPECKERS**: **Mourning Dove**: max 56 CHEN NAMC. **E. Screech Owl**: OTSE 9 Sep (TS); Vestal 13, 15 Sep (GK); TIOG Oct (SH); Candor Nov (JS), fewer than usual. **Great Horned Owl**: Ross Pk Zoo Binghamton 13 Oct "flushed out by crows" (MP); two Vestal Center 6 Sep; CHEN 3 Nov; two BROO 7 Nov; two Candor Nov. **Barred Owl**: Vestal 23 Sep; often T Preston Oct. Nov max three; two Candor Nov, good count. **Com. Nighthawk**: two singles BROO 3 Sep, ever more scarce. **Chimney Swift**: max 30 RT Pk 10 Sep; three FMHW 12 Sep, good numbers. **Belted Kingfisher**: max eight seen while canoeing Milford 1 Sep. **Red-bellied Woodpecker**: BUNP 11 Sep; CHEN NAMC; Br Pd 29 Sep; GdL feeder Sep; BROO feeder 26 - 30 Sep; two TIOG sites Nov, excellent count. **Yellow-bellied Sapsucker**: max 11 CHEN NAMC; Oneonta feeder 13 - 30 Nov, very late. **N. Flicker**: W Burlington "common through Nov" (TS).

**FLYCATCHERS- STARLINGS**: **Olive-sided Flycatcher**: RT Pk 17 Sep (MP,ES), often missed. **E. Wood-Pewee**: eight singles to mid Sep. **Yellow-bellied Flycatcher**: banded Vestal 8 Sep (GK); two Nuthatch Hollow Vestal 9 Sep (ES); Hunt's Pd 12 Sep (DW), excellent count. **ACADIAN FLYCATCHER**: banded Vestal (GK), first known Regional fall report. **Least Flycatcher**: three reports max and last two CHEN NAMC late departure. **E. Phoebe**: last Owego 4 Nov (C&JB), late departure. **E. Kingbird**: four singles to 10 Sep. **Horned Lark**: max five Riley Rd. CORT 29 Nov (BT); two CHEN 13, 14 Sep 25 Oct, scarce. **Tree Swallow**: max 500+ WPR 27 Sep (ES); 11 CHEN and single FMHW 11 Oct, last. **Barn Swallow**: OTSE and TIOG reports to 10 Sep, max 10. **Am. Crow**: max 520 FMHW 28 Oct. **Com. Raven**: total of 12 reports FMHW, TIOG and WHHW 6 Sep to 27 Nov, max three, mostly migrants. **Red-breasted Nuthatch**: max seven CHEN NAMC; scarce Oct, Nov. **Brown Creeper**: three to four singles a month, average. **Carolina Wren**: singles Vestal 24 Oct (MP); Endwell 26 Oct (JT), no recovery in sight. **House Wren**: twelve reports; max two thru 7 Oct, average. **Winter Wren**: max four J City 11 Oct; last of six singles 25 Oct. **Marsh Wren**: two CHEN NAMC, often missed. **Golden-crowned Kinglet**: six reports Oct max three. **Ruby-crowned Kinglet**: arr OTSE 12 Sep; max 10 J City 11 Oct; last BROO 20 Nov. **E.**

**Bluebird:** max 18 W. Burlington 18 Oct and B Pd 10 Nov, generally fewer. **Veery:** three singles to 30 Sep, scarce. **Gray-checked Thrush:** TIOG Oct (BH), missed some years. **Swainson's Thrush:** singles banded Vestal 19 and 26 Sep (GK), scarce. **Hermit Thrush:** max five J City 11 Oct: seven banded Vestal Oct; last BROO 13 Nov. **Wood Thrush:** six reports to 23 Sep max three, scarce and early departure. **Am. Robin:** "big flocks" FMHW 3 and 12 Nov. **N. Mockingbird:** Binghamton 30 Oct, 25 Nov (ES), lowest count in 20 years. **Brown Thrasher:** singles CHEN 13 Sep (EH); BROO 15 Sep (GK), scary scarce. **Cedar Waxwing:** max 300+ Milford 1 Sep; abundant thru. **N. Shrike:** T Preston feeder 13 Nov (EH), only report.

**VIREOS - WARBLERS:** **Solitary Vireo:** seven reports max two to 11 Oct, low count. **Yellow-throated Vireo:** Milford 2 Sep, only report. **Philadelphia Vireo:** RT Pk 5 Sep (MP,SK). **Red-eyed Vireo:** max 20+ Cr L 3 Sep. **Blue-winged Warbler:** CHEN NAMC, only one. **Tennessee Warbler:** CHEN NAMC, only report. **Nashville Warbler:** three singles Sep; last two banded Vestal 14 Oct, scarce. **N. Parula:** BROO 6 Sep, (BG), only report. **Yellow Warbler:** three OTSE 2 Sep; RT Pk and TIOG 5 Sep, early departure. **Chestnut-sided Warbler:** one OTSE, four CHEN reports to 22 Sep, average. **Magnolia Warbler:** 30+ birds including ten Binghamton 23 Sep (ES) and nine banded Vestal to 27 Sep, best count since 1985. **Cape May Warbler:** two RT Pk 5 Sep, continue scarce. **Black-throated Blue Warbler:** five singles Sep; last banded Vestal 13, 14 Oct, average. **Yellow rumped Warbler:** max 73 CHEN NAMC; last CHEN feeder 2 Nov, generally scarce. **Black-throated Green Warbler:** max seven CHEN NAMC; eight other widespread reports mid Sep max three, generally scarce. **Blackburnian Warbler:** max three RT Pk 16 Sep; Chen 14, 21 Sep, average count. **Pine Warbler:** max three RT Pk 16 Sep, usual one report. **Palm Warbler:** CHEN NAMC; banded Vestal 20 Oct; last Bainbridge 24 Oct, average count. **Bay-breasted Warbler:** three CHEN 5 Sep (EH), only report. **Blackpoll Warbler:** J City feeder 6 Oct (MP); Owego 24 Oct (C&JB), low count but record late departure. **Black-and-white Warbler:** four singles Sep, scarce. **Am. Redstart:** seven reports max three to 26 Sep, low count. **Ovenbird:** seven banded Vestal 1 - 13 Sep. **N. Waterthrush:** singles banded 8 and 9 Sep, only reports. **Mourning Warbler:** banded Vestal 7 Sep (GK), first fall since 1988. **Wilson's Warbler:** four banded Vestal 5 - 19 Sep, only reports. **Canada Warbler:** singles Vestal on 1, 9 Sep, never common.

**TANAGERS - WEAVERS:** **Scarlet Tanager:** max three CHEN NAMC; four singles to 21 Sep, generally scarce. **Rose-breasted Grosbeak:** six reports, max three imm Sherburne 3 Sep, low count. **Indigo Bunting:** none for third fall in last four. **E. Towhee:** max five BROO 24 Sep, good Oct numbers. **Am. Tree**

**Sparrow:** arr J City 11 Oct; max 28 T Preston 16 Nov. **Chipping Sparrow:** max 20 WPR 24 Sep; last Oneonta 19 Nov, late. **Field Sparrow:** max 12 CHEN NAMC. **Vesper Sparrow:** only one BROO 29 Sep. **Savannah Sparrow:** Sherburne 2 Sep; three reports of two each to 23 Oct, scarce. **Fox Sparrow:** 13 reports, max three from 21 Oct to 11 Nov, very limited areas. **White-throated Sparrow:** high counts through period. **White-crowned Sparrow:** max six T Preston 23 Oct; last 27 Nov, ties record late. **Dark-eyed Junco:** max 40 CHEN 26 Oct. **Snow Bunting:** arr late Nov; max 60 W Burlington 27 Nov. **Red-winged Blackbird:** big flocks FMHW 7 Oct, 3 Nov. **E. Meadowlark:** max eight W. Burlington 13 Oct, generally scarce. **Rusty Blackbird:** BROO 15 Nov (ES); CHEN 23 Nov (DW). **Com. Grackle:** max 750 Binghamton 21 - 23 Sep. **Brown-headed Cowbird:** max 80+ CHEN 2 Nov. **Baltimore Oriole:** max four RT Pk 5 Sep; last two there 10 Sep. **Purple Finch:** max 11 CHEN 17, 20 Oct, down from last year. **House Finch:** max 27 McGraw 10 Nov (BT), fewer most areas. **Red Crossbill:** two FMHW 3 Nov (GS). **Pine Siskin:** arr McGraw 10 Nov; max and last 60 there 19, 20 Nov, short stay. **Am. Goldfinch:** max 60 Oneonta 22 Nov, scarce early fall.