

REGION 7 - ADIRONDACK-CHAMPLAIN

JOHN M.C. PETERSON

Discovery Farm, RR 1 Box 230, Elizabethtown NY 12932-9721

Despite snow on Whiteface Mountain by 4 September, early autumn was rather pleasant, or extremely dry, depending upon one's outlook. September saw little rain and the High Peaks were again snow-covered on 1 October, while by 23 October Inlet and Lake Placid had 4 inches of snow on the ground. A warm front pushed Plattsburgh thermometers to 61°F on 1 November, with welcome two-day rains across the Region. A 5.0 Richter Scale earthquake with its epicenter at Quebec City shook things up on 6 November. Another 2 inches of rain fell on 9 November, pushing monthly totals 1.5 inches above normal, and seasonal brooks began to flow. By 25 November, however, Inlet dropped to 5°F and Limekiln Lake froze, and this was followed by a memorable 16" Thanksgiving snowfall, ending the season with a blanket of white.

Early indications suggested a winter invasion by a host of boreal birds. Northern waterfowl arrivals included Horned Grebe at Cumberland Head 19 October, Red-necked Grebe at Little Tupper Lake 4 October, Snow Goose at Plattsburgh 27 September, **Ross's Goose** at Point au Roche 15 October, Brant at Limekiln Lake 24 October, Common Goldeneye at Indian Lake, FRAN, 13 November, and Barrow's Goldeneye at Ausable Point 20 November. Northern passerines included Northern Shrike at Speculator 31 October, American Tree Sparrow at Owls Head 22 October, Snow Bunting at Essex 26 October, Pine Grosbeak at Inlet 3 November, Common Redpoll at Saranac Lake 25 October, and Hoary Redpoll at Owls Head by 10 November. All winter finches except Purple Finch were present in good numbers, with Evening Grosbeaks the most numerous in recent years. However, American Goldfinch numbers declined as the season progressed.

Thanks to field trip leader Pat Thaxton, her team of High Peaks Audubon guides, and the excellent birders from all over the state, the 12-14 September Federation meeting at Lake Placid yielded some fine Adirondack birds: two Bald Eagles - one attacked by a Merlin - at Spitfire Lake, Black-backed Woodpeckers at Paul Smiths and South Meadow, ubiquitous Common Ravens, Gray Jays at Bloomingdale and Spring Pond Bogs, Boreal Chickadees at the same bogs and on Whiteface, and American Pipit and Lincoln's Sparrow at Bloomingdale Bog.

A Dark-eyed Junco, banded near Louisa, VA, 23 Nov 1996, struck a window at Lake Clear, FRAN, on 22 October. The bander was none other than Federation Papers Session chairman Wesley Lanyon, who reports that this is the first recovery from more than a thousand birds banded in west-central Virginia since the fall of '94. Bud adds, "We're not on a well-defined flyway here, and I hadn't really expected that any would be intercepted elsewhere." Our thanks to Joanne Manning of Lake Clear for her prompt report.

In addition to the **Ross's Goose** that lingered at Point au Roche 15-18 October, rarities included a **Eurasian Wigeon** at Wilcox Dock near Plattsburgh 1 November, a **Whimbrel** at Chazy Rivers 4 September, two **Hudsonian Godwits** at King's Bay 1-4 November, a **Parasitic Jaeger** at Westport 7-8 November, an adult **Black-headed Gull** at Ausable Point 18 November, and a 2nd-winter **Thayer's Gull** (!) at Ausable Point 28 September. Add to these a Great Egret, the drake Barrow's Goldeneye, a Spruce Grouse, at least **four** Little Gulls, plus a couple of Hoary Redpolls, and one finds that this was a memorable fall season.

Surprisingly, the total of 17 shorebird species was lower than the 22 found during last year's high water, and even below the 18 species of the drought of '95. Similarly, the overall species count was a relatively low 176, well below the seasonal record of 192 established last autumn, or the previous record of 186 set the prior year. But we found some good boreal birds for Federation visitors, a few Regional rarities, and could look forward to an El Niño winter of invasive Canadian birds.

Our warmest congratulations to authors Bill Krueger and Charlie Mitchell on the appearance of their monumental *Birds of Clinton County*, Second Edition (1997), just published by High Peaks Audubon Society, Inc. This is a successor to the 1979 *Birds of Clinton County* by Philip H. Warren. Special thanks go to Publications Chairman and editor John Thaxton for his encouragement, diligence, and care in seeing this long-awaited and much needed work through the press. Finally, we offer congratulations to Rich MacDonald of Upper Jay upon his appointment as editor of *High Peaks Audubon Newsletter*, a vital link to Regional birders for the past quarter-century.

Contributors: Ethel & Tom Baker, William Brown, Mary Buehler, Joan Clark, Jess Darney, Charlcie Delehanty, Tom Dudones, Claire DuRoss, Bernard Duso, Federation field trips, Bill Frenette, Susie Frenette, Mark Gretch, Bea Guyett, Judy & Roger Heintz, Al Hicks, Anne Hungerford, Selma Isil, Paul Kelly, Bill Krueger, Wesley Lanyon, Julie Latrelle, Gary Lee, Richard MacDonald, Theodore Mack, Joanne Manning, Dave McMahon, Charles Mitchell, Sean O'Brien, John Parke, John & Susan Peterson, Frederick Pratt, George Roberts, Dave Russell, Nina Schoch, Robert & Susan Spahn, Dean Spaulding, Trisha Spaulding, Patricia Tarkowski, John & Pat Thaxton, Mary Thill, Jan Trzeciak, Gary Worthington.

Abbreviations: AP - Ausable Point WMA; BB - Bloomingdale Bog; CR - between the Chazy & Little Chazy Rivers; CH - Cumberland Head; IL - Indian Lake (FRAN); Kg - King's Bay; PtR - Point au Roche SP; SPB - Spring Pond Bog; TL - Tupper Lake.

Red-throated Loon: CH 15 Sep (NO); IL 30-31 Oct (JT), scarce here.

Com. Loon: max 35 CH 20 Oct (BK).

LOONS-DUCKS

Horned Grebe: max 14 CH 19 Oct (BK).
Red-necked Grebe: Little TL 4 Oct (CD); PtR 15 Oct; Wilcox Dock 16 Oct; max 5 IL 30 Oct (JT); AP 1 Nov, a good showing.
Double-crested Cormorant: max 70 Willsboro Bay 1 Nov (TD), late for so many.
Great Blue Heron: CR & Valcour 30 Nov, fairly late.
Great Egret: Barber Pond, ESSE 5 Sep (BD)-8 Sep (JP,J&PT).
Snow Goose: 1 arr Plattsburgh 27 Sep (RM,JP); reported max 3,000 (+ 25 "Blue" Geese) PtR 1 Nov (TD); many neck collars again read & reported.
ROSS'S GOOSE: ad PtR 15 Oct (BK) to 18 Oct (J&RH,BK).
Canada Goose: max 1,000 Westport 25 Oct (JP,J&PT); neck collars TL & Westport.
Brant: 30 Limekiln L 24 Oct (GL); TL 26 Oct-10 Nov (CDr); Mirror L 11-16 Nov (RM,NS), an excellent showing.
EURASIAN WIGEON: Wilcox Dock 1 Nov (J&RH), an outstanding find.
Green-winged Teal: 4 SLHS 23 Oct; hen PtR 1 Nov (TD), rarely reported.
Ring-necked Duck: St. Regis L 13 Sep, prob local; arr Hadley Pd 27 Sep (RM,JP), early ESSE transients.
Surf Scoter: 2 Snug Harbor marina 18 Nov (BK,CM), only report.
White-winged Scoter: 3 CH 20 Oct; Plattsburgh 23 Oct; AP 29 Oct; TL 9 Nov (CD), where more unexpected.
Black Scoter: drake IL 25 Oct (JT), a good find.
Oldsquaw: max 47 Plattsburgh 6 Nov; 4 IL 6 Nov (JT) and Deer R Flow 11 Nov (TD,RH,TM), less expected locations.
Bufflehead: arr 13 Mountain View L 22 Oct (JT).
Com. Goldebeeye: arr Indian Lake FRAN 13 Nov.
Barrow's Goldeneye: arr drake AP 20-30 Nov (BK,CM).
Hooded Merganser: drake L Arnold (3,772' elev.) 7 Oct (NO), highly noteworthy; max 110 IL and Mt View L 4 Nov (JT).
Red-breasted Merganser: Mooney Bay 27 Sep (J&RH), early CLIN by 35 Days.
RUDDY DUCK: hen Westport 23 Nov (TM,SO,JP,DS) and 24 Nov (WB,RM), 4th ESSE record and new late date.

HAWKS-ALCIDS

Bald Eagle: 2 Spitfire L 13 Sep; Middle Saranac L 21 Sep; ad TL 23 Oct, 9 Nov; Westport 8 Nov; ad SL 12 Nov, typical of recent years.
Sharp-shinned Hawk: killed Com. Grackle Speculator 6 Sep (PK).
Rough-legged Hawk: arr Northway exit 38 12 Nov (BK).
Merlin: CR 5 Sep; NCCC Pd 5 Sep; attacking Bald Eagle Spitfire L 13 Sep; ad Wilcox Dock 14 Sep; CH 4 Nov; North Farm Rd. CLIN 22 Nov, a good showing.
Peregrine Falcon: CR 21 Sep; ad TL 29 Sep, less common than previous species.
Ring-necked Pheasant: 1,414 reared John White Game Farm near Buffalo released by NYS DEC in Region 7 (476 CLIN, 469 ESSE, and 469 FRAN), but only 3 reported from Essex & PtR.
Spruce Grouse: 1 Kildare, FRAN 14 Sep (BF), only solid sighting.
Wild Turkey: max 18 Limekiln Rd 8 Sep; hen TL 23 Oct; 5 Blue Mountain Lake 28 Oct; 15 Speculator by late Nov, but none from Champlain or St. Lawrence lowlands.
Com. Moorhen: AP 30 Sep (BK,CM), only report.
Black-bellied Plover: Plattsburgh 29 Oct; KB 2 Nov, good finds.
Am. Golden-Plover: 20 CR 21 Sep (BK,CM), only report.
Semipalmated Plover: AP 16 Sep; 2 KB 18 Sep, scarce.
Greater Yellowlegs: 5 Limekiln L 3 Sep (TD); 6 at 7th L 30 Oct (GL), unexpected; usual reports from AP & CH.
Lesser Yellowlegs: 6 7th L 30 Oct (GL), first HAMI; usual KB & Plattsburgh area sightings.
WHIMBREL: CR 4 Sep (BK,CM), observed 30 min. at 50-300' and 60x, also heard.
HUDSONIAN GODWIT: 2 n. shore KB 1 Nov (TD) - 4 Nov (BK,CM), excellent find.
Semipalmated Sandpiper: AP 1 Nov (TM,SO), late.
Western Sandpiper: AP 1 Nov (TD), rarely reported.

White-rumped Sandpiper: 2 KB 1 Nov (TD) - 8 Nov (J&RH); max 6 KB 4 Nov (BK).

Pectoral Sandpiper: max 8 KB 27 Sep (BK,CM); Plattsburgh 2 Nov, late.

Dunlin: max 25 KB 1 Nov (TD), where present 27 Sep-8 Nov; also PtR 17-18 Oct.

Am. Woodcock: near top Weston Mt 10 Oct (J&PT), highly unexpected.

PARASITIC JAEGER: dark form main lake Westport 7 Nov (BG,JP,FP,J&PT) - 8 Nov (RM), 3rd ESSE record and new late date.

Little Gull: imm Westport 5 Nov; ad Westport 7 Nov (GW); ad AP 18 Nov (BK,CM); ad & imm AP 22 Nov (GW), an outstanding showing here.

BLACK-HEADED GULL: ad AP 18 Nov (BK), 1st CLIN and 2nd Regional record.

Bonaparte's Gull: max 100 Westport 8 Nov.

THAYER'S GULL: 2nd winter AP 28 Sep (J&RH!).

Com. Tern: TL park ballfield 28 Oct (TD), highly unusual.

PIGEONS-WOODPECKERS

Black-backed Woodpecker: South Meadow 12 Sep (MG); Paul Smiths 13 Sep (J&RH,R&SS), only reports.

N. Flicker: Perkin's Clearing, HAMI 7 Dec (WB,AH,RM), late for interior.

FLYCATCHERS-WAXWINGS

N. Shrike: arr imm Speculator 31 Oct (PM); Monty Bay 11 Nov; killed Am. Robin MRRA 13 Nov.

Philadelphia Vireo: TL 22 Sep (CD), only report.

Gray Jay: 3-4 BB 14-15 Sep (WL,R&SS); 4 SPB 14 Sep (R&SS); pr Lost Pds, HAMI 4 Oct; Raquette L feeder 5 Nov (GL).

Com. Raven: ubiquitous FNYSSBC meeting field trips 12-14 Sep.

Horned Lark: arr TL 12 Nov (CD); 5 Heart Lake Rd 21 Nov (J&PT), where also unusual.

Boreal Chickadee: BB, Mt. Colden (4,200'), Red R. Slide Brook trail, Phelps trail, Lower WolfJaw, Upper WolfJaw, Orebed Brook, Armstrong, SPB, Whiteface, an excellent showing.

Tufted Titmouse: max 5 Crown Point feeder; other reports from AP,

Elizabethtown, Plattsburgh, TL, and Westport, more than usual.

Carolina Wren: singing Westport 1 Nov.

House Wren: Speculator 9 Oct (PK), late for HAMI.

Veery: Silver L Bog 4 Oct (BK,CM), late CLIN by 36 days.

Am. Pipit: arr BB 14 Sep (WL); max 20 SLHS 25 Oct (TD)

WARBLERS

Pine Warbler: AP 30 Sep (BK,CM), ties CLIN late date; (max 100 NCCC Pd 2 Oct (TD); last TL 3 Oct (CD).

Palm Warbler: 2 BB 13 Sep (R&SS); TL 3 Oct (CD), only reports.

Ovenbird: Hurricane Mt 10 Oct (J&PT), late ESSE.

Mourning Warbler: TL 26 Sep (CD), only report.

TANAGERS-WEAVERS

Am. Tree Sparrow: arr 6 Owls Head 22 Oct (AH).

Vesper Sparrow: 2 Essex 25 Oct (JP,J&PT), only report.

Fox Sparrow: arr PtR 27 Sep (J&RH); SLHS 18 Oct; Speculator 19 Oct-5 Nov; "rusty" type SLHS 25 Oct (TD); Heart L Rd 8 Nov.

Lincoln's Sparrow: BB 13-14 Sep, last reports.

Dark-eyed Junco: banded nr Louisa, VA, 23 Nov 96 (WL) struck window Lake Clear, FRAN 22 Oct (JM); max 100 Speculator 25 Oct (PK).

Snow Bunting: arr 6 Essex 26 Oct (J&PT); max 300 Wadhams Thanksgiving; subsequent reports Bay Pd, Malone, MRRA, Paul Smiths, Westport.

Red-winged Blackbird: ca. 200 uncut cornfield Malone 18 Nov (JT); New Russia 22 Nov, late.

Rusty Blackbird: flock Keene Valley 2 Oct (RM,NS); 1 Malone 18 Nov (JT), good finds.

Com. Grackle: max 400⁺ Speculator 20 Oct (PK); New Russia 13 Nov, late.

Pine Grosbeak: arr Inlet feeder 3 Nov (GL); subsequent reports from Auger L, Bloomingdale, Indian L, HAMI, Keene Valley, Malone, Owls Head, Perkin's Clearing, Lake Pleasant, Ray Brook, Valcour, Westport, and Whallonsburg;

reported feeding on highbush cranberry & winterberry.

Red Crossbill: SUNY Plattsburgh 21 Oct (J&RH); AP 20 Nov (BK,CM), only reports in spite of bumper white pine cone crop.

White-winged Crossbill: 3 Lake Pleasant 12 Nov (PK), only sighting.

Com. Redpoll: arr 20 SLHS 25 Oct (TD); arr 50 Mt Jo 26 Oct (WB,RM), early ESSE; other reports Elizabethtown, Hogansburg, Owls Head, Speculator.

Hoary Redpoll: arr 1 Owls Head 10 Nov (JT); arr 1 Essex 22 Nov (JP), early ESSE.

Pine Siskin: max 20 Keene Valley 10 Oct; only other reports from Elizabethtown and Speculator.

Am. Goldfinch: declined as season progressed.

Evening Grosbeak: max 100⁺ Speculator 1 Nov; plus flocks of 50 Elizabethtown, 20 Keene Valley, 8 Perkin's Clearing, best fall showing in recent years.

ADDENDUM

Pine Siskin: male banded 22 mi. e. of Keene, ESSE, 18 Apr 97 (RM) found dead Gardiner, MT, 30 Jun 97 (Joan Winters); recovery location is just north of Idaho - Wyoming state lines, for a flight of ca. 2,000 mi. in just over two months. Bull (1974) and Yunick (**NABB** 1997, 22:1) report previous recoveries of NYS-banded Pine Siskins in Saskatchewan in Jul 1963 and British Columbia on 18 Jan 1994.

==