

REGION 9 - HUDSON-DELAWARE

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Is El Niño affecting the weather in the northeast and is it affecting the birds? The scientific debate continues and we'll have to leave it up to the meteorologists to eventually answer the first part of the question. December's average temperature turned out to be normal, but the month was drier than usual. Above average temperatures didn't come until January and February, long after most birds had settled into their winter habitats, so that little effect was seen. We'll have to wait for the spring to see if this extremely mild winter has affected the birds. There was an ice storm in mid January that affected the northern part of Region 9 but had little effect on the birds.

There was almost no snow in the southern part of Region 9, and only the northern sections and higher elevations had any sustained snow cover. Both January and February averaged 5 to 7 degrees above normal. The only effect may have been a wider dispersal of waterfowl and other birds dependent on open water.

An immature male oriole reported last season remained at Rockefeller State Park till the end of December. Much debate surrounds the identification of the bird. It was first thought to be a Bullock's due to; a orange-yellow throat with a thin black stripe down the middle, white belly, yellowish undertail coverts, and hint of a dark eye stripe, although the head was darker than a typical immature male Bullock's. Within a week and over the course of its stay at the feeders it turned markedly more orange although no orange was still seen in its belly or flanks. The face was atypical of either immature male Baltimore or Bullock's. The head did not have a blotchy appearance the way most immature male Baltimores are depicted. The bird did have a hooded appearance and lacked a light colored supercilliary but also had a darker eye stripe. Some experienced birders now considered it a Baltimore. But, with the lack of knowledge of the

variability of early winter immature male Baltimore and Bullock's orioles and a distinct possibility of a hybrid or a bird of mixed lineage, I will leave the identification up to debate.

Great Cormorants, common along Westchester's Long Island Sound shore were well reported inland. Many observers reported them along the Hudson River, and there were a couple reports of them on the larger reservoirs.

Both vulture species were well reported. Black Vultures continue their expansion, including a few reports from the east side of the Hudson. Turkey Vultures were much more common, with each county having sightings.

A Varied Thrush was found along Route 416 between Montgomery and Goshen on the Eastern Orange County Christmas Bird Count.

Only a few warblers were reported, all in December. A Nashville Warbler was reported on the Hudson Valley Bird Line in Hasting-on-Hudson 1 December. and an Orange-crowned Warbler, again in Hastings on 7 and 16 December. A Black-throated Green Warbler was in Purchase 14 December. Two Common Yellowthroats were found on the Bronx-Westchester CBC on 28 December, one in Rye the other in Larchmont.

It was a great winter for finches. Purple Finch, Red Crossbill, White-winged Crossbill, Common Redpoll, Pine Siskin, and Evening Grosbeak were all reported. All of the crossbill sightings were in December or early January, as most if not all wintered further south. Evening Grosbeak seemed to be most common in Sullivan County. Common Redpolls were seen in Ulster County in early December, and a huge flock of 400 was reported from Rockland County in February.

While the finches invaded, it was quite a different story for owls. Only single reports were received for Snowy and Northern Saw-whet owls.

A couple of remarkable half-hardies were found in February. A Rose-breasted Grosbeak visited a Dutchess County feeder in January and February (AB,BB,RTWBC). Two Baltimore Orioles were found, one at feeders in Sullivan County on 23,24 Feb (KC,GK) and one in Dutchess County on 27 Feb (PG).

Other highlights included: Eared Grebe, Greater White-fronted Goose, Tundra Swan, Eurasian Wigeon, Barrow's Goldeneye, Merlin, Iceland Gull, Lesser Black-backed Gull, Glaucous Gull, Northern Shrike, Lapland Longspur.

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Abbreviations: BWCBC-Bronx-Westchester Christmas Bird Count, CPP-Croton Point Park, DCCBC-Dutchess County Christmas Bird Count, EGR-Edith G. Read Wildlife Sanctuary, GA-Galeville Airport, GSCBC-Greenwich-Stamford Christmas Bird Count, JBNHS-John Burroughs Natural Historical Society, LHVBL-Lower Hudson Valley Bird Line, MC-Marshlands Conservancy, MRG-Mianus River Gorge, OCA-Orange County Airport, OCCBC- Eastern Orange County Christmas Bird Count, PCBC-Peekskill Christmas Bird Count, PCCBC-Putnam County Christmas Bird Count, PP-Piermont Pier, RCCBC-Rockland County Christmas Bird Count, RNC-Rye Nature Center, RTWBC-Ralph T. Waterman Bird Club, TPP-Thompson Pond Preserve.

LOONS-DUCKS

Red-throated Loon: common along Long Island Sound shore.

Com. Loon: 1 Croton Reservoir 14 Dec; common along Long Island Sound shore.

Pied-billed Grebe: 1 Crestwood Lake 28 Dec (BWCBC); 1 Kiamesha Lake 6 Dec; 4 Sylvan Lake 13 Feb.

Horned Grebe: common along Long Island Sound shore.

Red-necked Grebe: 1 Orange Co. 20 Dec (OCCBC); 1 Rye 21 Jan (TB); 1 Larchmont 29 Jan (TB).

Eared Grebe: 1 Larchmont 17 Jan - 21 Feb (TB).

N. Gannet: 2 EGR 24 Jan (TB).

Great Cormorant: 1 Rockland SP 1-6, 31 Dec; 1 Kensico Reservoir 6 Dec; 10 Charles Point 14 Dec; 12 Cornwall Bay 20 Dec (OCCBC); 1 Croton Reservoir 20 Dec (PCBC); 3 Charles Point 20 Dec (PCBC); 1 CPP 9 Jan; 34 Peekskill Bay 18 Jan; 7 Jones Point 14 Feb; common along Long Island Sound shore.

Double-crested Cormorant: 2 Orange Co. 20 Dec (OCCBC); 6 Westchester Co. 20 Dec (PCBC); 1 Rye 28 Dec (BWCBC); 1 Larchmont 19 Feb (TB).

Great Blue Heron: 40 EGR 28 Dec (BWCBC); 3 New Paltz 4 Jan (BC,AF); well reported in Dutchess Co., Feb.

Black Vulture: 1 GA 6 Dec (ET); 3 Yorktown 20 Dec (PCBC); 5 Rockefeller SP 11 Jan; 3 Cortlandt Lake 8 Feb; 11 GA 7 Feb; 4 GA 15 Feb; 3 Newburgh 15 Feb; 3 Iona Island 14 Feb.

Turkey Vulture: 12 Westchester Co. 28 Dec (BWCBC); 2-3 GA 7,22 Feb; 3 Ashokan Reservoir 28 Feb (BC,AF); other scattered reports, much more common this winter.

Greater White-fronted Goose: 3 Round Pond, Amenia 7 Dec (DF).

Snow Goose: 3 CPP 1- 14 Dec (HVRBA); 13 Round Pond, Amenia 7 Dec (DF); 1 Rockland SP 31 Dec - 1 Jan; 1 Stanfordsville 1 Jan - 10 Jan; 1 Domin Farm 15, 22 Jan; 7 Tivoli 1,21 Feb (CC).

Brant: 72 WEST 28 Dec (BWCBC); 1 Ellenville 20 Dec (VF).

Tundra Swan: 2 Tymor Park 20 DEC (DCCBC); 1 Narrowsburg. 26 Jan - 28 Feb (VF,RD,LH).

Wood Duck: 1 ORAN 20 Dec (OCCBC); 8 WEST 28 Dec (BWCBC); 1 Ellenville 1 Jan - 4 Feb (PB); 2 Bashakill 14 Feb (MC,VF,PJ); 1 George's Island 28 Feb. (MB).

Eurasian Wigeon: 1 Rye 28 Dec- 21 Jan; 1 Premium Mill Pond 27-28 Dec (TB,PL).

N. Pintail: 4 WEST 28 Dec (BWCBC); 1 Pleasant Valley 16-17 Feb (EP).

Green-winged Teal: 5 Bashakill 6 Dec; 2 Round Pond, Amenia 8 Dec; 3 ROCK 21 Dec (RCCBC); 30 WEST 28 Dec (BWCBC).

Canvasback: reported widely on the Hudson River, low numbers at EGR.

Ring-necked Duck: 1 Kaiaimesha Lake 6 Dec; some Round Pond, Amenia 7 Dec; 12 Scarsdale 28 Dec (BWCBC); 20 Abel's Pond, DUTC 8 Jan; 10 Round Pond, Amenia 11 Jan; 7 Brown's Pond, Newburgh

15 Feb; 35 Lake Walton 23-27 Feb (AM,BM).
Greater Scaup: 6503 EGR 28 Dec (BWCBC).
Lesser Scaup: 450 EGR 28 Dec (BWCBC).
Surf Scoter: 2 EGR 28 Dec (BWCBC); 1 Larchmont 19 Jan (TB).
White-winged Scoter: 1 Larchmont 24 Jan (TB).
Oldsquaw: common along Long Island Sound shore.
Barrow's Goldeneye: 1 f Rye Beach 25-28 Feb.

HAWKS-ALCIDS

Bald Eagle: Widely reported on the Hudson River and in the larger reservoirs and wetlands.
N. Harrier: 4 GA 8 Dec.
Sharp-shinned Hawk: 10 WEST 28 Dec (BWCBC).
Cooper's Hawk: 9 ORAN 20 Dec (OCCBC); 6 WEST 28 Dec (BWCBC).
N. Goshawk: 1 Claryville 19 Dec, feeding on deer carcass(JW); 2 ORAN 20 Dec (OCCBC); 1 Brewster, Carmel 10 Jan; 1 DUTC 3 Feb (RO).
Red-shouldered Hawk: few reports from each county, more prevalent this year.
Red-tailed Hawk: common throughout the Region.
Rough-legged Hawk: 1 Muscoto Park 15 Dec; 1 WEST 20 Dec (PCBC); 1 ORAN 7 Feb; one Pine Island late Feb (JS,ET).
Golden Eagle: 2 TPP 31 Dec-Feb (BB,AV,HVRBA); 1 Mongaup 11 Jan, 8 Feb (JA); 1 Rio dam 7 Feb.
Merlin: 1 CPP 15 Feb; 1 EGR 28 Feb (TB).
Peregrine Falcon: 1 ROCK 21 Dec (RCCBC); 1 Lenoir Preserve 28 Dec (KD); 1-2 Newburgh-Beacon Bridge all winter(ET); 1 Rio Reservoir 7 Feb; 1 Rio dam 8 Feb (JA); 1 Cold Spring 16 Feb; 1 Bear Mt. Bridge 20 Feb.
Ruffed Grouse: 1 Claryville 4 Dec, displaying and drumming(JW); 5 OCA 20 Dec (OCCBC); 1 Rombout Rd.,DUTC 18 Jan; 1 Domin Farm 3 Feb (CV).
Wild Turkey: many reports from entire Region, numbers still expanding.
N. Bobwhite: 2 Old Cramby Rd.,DUTC 2,7,19 Dec.
Virginia Rail: 2 Rye 28 Dec (BWCBC).

Am. Coot: 200 Sylvan Lake, Feb
Killdeer: 1 Fishkill Cemetery 13 Feb; 1 Kingston 19 Feb.
Ruddy Turnstone: 5 Long Island Sound shore 28 Dec (BWCBC)
Sanderling: 3 Larchmont 28 Dec (BWCBC).
Dunlin: 51 Long Island Sound shore 28 Dec (BWCBC)
Com. Snipe: 5 OCA 20 Dec (OCCBC); 1 Rye 28 Dec (BWCBC).
Am. Woodcock: 1 MC 25 Jan (TB); few West Point 22 Feb (ET).
Bonaparte's Gull: 58 Rye 28 Dec (BWCBC).
Iceland Gull: 1 Watch Tower Dumpsite, Walkill 6 Dec; 5 Fallsburg 27 Dec (HVRBA); 1 Woodbourne 12-14 Feb (VF); 1 EGR 27 Feb (TB).
Lesser Black-backed Gull: 1 Piermont Pier 16 Feb; 1 Piermont Pier 27 Feb (ET).
Glaucous Gull: 1 EGR 30 Dec (HVRBA).

PIGEONS-WOODPECKERS

E. Screech-Owl: commonly reported on Christmas Bird Counts.
Great Horned Owl: commonly reported on Christmas Bird Counts.
Snowy Owl: 1 Briarcliff 12 Jan (HVRBA).
Barred Owl: 1 OCA 20 Dec (OCCBC); 1 WEST 20 Dec (PCBC); 1 Woodstock 24 Feb (BC,AF); 1 Old Camby Rd, DUTC 27-28 Feb (BB).
Short-eared Owl: up to 10 GA 8 Dec- 28 Feb (DC,SC,AV,HVRBA); 1 CPP 10 Jan (HVRBA).
N. Saw-whet Owl: 2 Ward Road Liv Manor 14 Feb (RD).
Red-headed Woodpecker: 1 White Plains 28 Dec (DF,MF); 1 Blue Chip Farm 15 Feb.
Red-bellied Woodpecker: 106 WEST 28 Dec (BWCBC); numbers still increasing.
Yellow-bellied Sapsucker: reported from ROCK, DUTC and WEST.
Pileated Woodpecker: 6 OCA 20 Dec (OCCBC); 1 WEST 28 Dec (BWCBC); many scattered reports from DUTC doing very well in ULST (JBNHS).

FLYCATCHERS-WAXWINGS

E. Phoebe: 1 Bashakill 7 Dec; 1 Katonah 1 Feb; 1 Bashakill 14 Feb (MC,VF).

N. Shrike: 1 GA 4 Jan - 22 Feb (AV,HVRBA); 1 Rombout Rd., DUTC 19 Jan (JA); 1 Stump Pond Rd 8 Feb (RD); 1 Grahamsville 15 Feb (SG).
Fish Crow: 1 ORAN 20 Dec (OCCBC); 6 WEST 20 Dec (PCBC); 8 WEST 28 Dec (BWCBC).
Com. Raven: 2 Rio Reservoir 15 Feb, observed carrying nesting material (HVRBA); many reports of 1-4 in each county.
Horned Lark: 2 EGR 12 Dec; 84-87 OCA 20 Dec, 2 Jan; 60-200 Anemia during Jan, 8 Feb.
Red-breasted Nuthatch: widely reported in very good numbers.
Brown Creeper: 1 Woodstock 22 Feb (BC,AF); scattered reports further south.
House Wren: 1 MC 6-28 Dec, 14 Jan (TB).
E. Bluebird: Rye 28 Dec (BWCBC); 2 Blue Chip Farm 22 Feb.
Hermit Thrush: 7 CPP 6 Dec.; 8 WEST 28 Dec (BWCBC).
VARIED THRUSH: 1 Rte. 416 between Montgomery and Goshen 20 Dec. (OCCBC).

WARBLERS

Orange-crowned Warbler: 1 Hastings 7, 16 Dec (HVRBA).
Nashville Warbler: 1 Hastings 1 Dec (HVRBA).
Black-throated Green Warbler: 1 Purchase 14 Dec (HVRBA).
Com. Yellowthroat: 1 Rye 28 Dec (BWCBC); 1 Larchmont 28 Dec (BWCBC).

TANAGERS-WEAVERS

Chipping Sparrow: Iona Island 2 Jan (HVRBA); 1 Hennessey Ln, DUTC 14 Feb (JA); 1 Lenoir Preserve 22 Feb (MB).
Fox Sparrow: 6 WEST 28 Dec (BWCBC); many other scattered reports.

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Lapland Longspur: 1 OCA 31 Dec (HVRBA).
Snow Bunting: 1 EGR 2 Dec; 12 Kensico Reservoir 6 Dec; 6 EGR 12 Dec; 92 OCA 2 Jan (HVRBA); 1 EGR 25 Feb.
Rose-breasted Grosbeak: 1 DUTC feeder 5 Jan thru (AB,BB,RTWBC).
Red-winged Blackbird: 1 Kingston Point Park 20 Feb, first arrival for ULST(AV).
Rusty Blackbird: 14 ORAN 20 Dec (OCCBC); 1 WEST 20 Dec (PCBC); 20 Domin Farm 1 Jan; 2 Rombout Rd, DUTC 9 Jan.
Baltimore Oriole: 1 SULL 23-24 Feb (KC,GK); 1 DUTC 27 Feb (PG).
Oriole, sp: 1 Rockefeller SP 1 Dec. - 28 Dec.
Purple Finch: 12 ORAN 20 Dec (OCCBC); 3 ROCK 21 Dec (RCCBC); few scattered reports.
Red Crossbill: 6 MRG 21 Dec (GSCBC); 43 Teatown Reservation 20 Dec (PCBC).
White-winged Crossbill: 5 MC 3 Dec; 11 MRG 21 Dec (GSCBC); 24 North Castle 21 Dec (HVRBA); 1 RNC 28 Dec (BWCBC).
Com. Redpoll: Scattered reports in ULST in early Dec; many reports in good numbers from SULL Dec-Feb; 2 Newburgh 15 Dec; 80 Cranberry Lake 21 Dec (GSCBC); 20 TPP 31 Dec (HVRBA); 20 Somers 21 Dec; 38 Fahnestock 28 Dec; 40 Monticello 1 Jan (HVRBA); scattered reports from DUTC only during Jan and Feb; 400 Rockland SP 8 Feb; 150 Nyack Beach SP 21 Feb.
Pine Siskin: widely reported in all counties; 100 Shrub Oak 20 Dec (PCBC); 580 PUTN 3 Jan (PCCBC).
Evening Grosbeak: many reports in Dec; well reported from SULL in early Jan and early Feb.

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