

REGION 6 - ST.LAWRENCE

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The fall of 1998 was very unusual in that it could not decide what type of a fall it was going to be. On 2 September about a half an inch of rain fell in Jefferson County followed by rain most of the next day. Wind gusts were up to 40 mph on the 6th of September, with a high of 66°F. On 8 September, lake effect rain occurred off and on, with hail in the early evening hours. On 15 September 0.35 inches of rain fell at Watertown. On 17 September the temperature at Watertown was 38°F, and at Henderson 36°F. Was fall on the way finally? No it was not! It turned hot and muggy, with a low of 72° at 3 am and a high of 78° on 21 September. The following day was cooled to a low of 51° by a NE wind, with a cold front moving through. On 25 September it was in the 70° range again, and a high of 72° was recorded at 5 am on the 27th. Temperatures then dropped to a low of 39° on the 28th of the month.

October started out with frost in St. Lawrence County on the 2nd. October 3rd saw frost at many locations in Jefferson and Lewis counties. Much of early October was cool and overcast, and then on 18 October it hit a high of 80°F at Watertown. The rest of October was cool and rainy, still the month was the warmest October on record. The first snowflakes fell on 2 November. The 6th saw snow flurries, but no snow, lasted through the day. On 9 November, Watertown's low temperature was 27°, and on the 11th rain, snow, and sleet fell all day with strong 50 mph

winds. St. Lawrence County, Town of Edwards saw 3.5 inches of snow on 16 November, with a low temp of 15° on the evening of the 17th. On 21 November much of southern portions of Tug Hill received about 8 inches of snow. Was winter getting started? Again, No! The high for 23 November was a sunny 61°, and on 30 Nov it was 65° at Watertown. November was the driest month in 44 years, and water bodies had no indication of ice formation.

Lake Ontario water levels were dropping to lows not seen in some years, and many rivers and streams also were at much lower levels than normal for the time of year. The fact that water bodies stayed open so long forebode the possibility of extreme lake effect snowstorms later on in the winter months ahead. A warm, wide-open Lake Ontario acts as a heat pump to pickup moisture from the Lake and to create heavy snowfalls in a short period of time off the eastern end of the lake. This is a condition many of us must live with during normal winters, but the potential for extreme snowfalls is very probable this year.

Winter visitants were slow to show up and hangers-on from the summer months were not as prevalent as one would expect. In fact many species were gone before the fall reporting period started. The openness of the water bodies made locating species such as loons and waterfowl in numbers difficult, as they were not concentrated as they normally would be following freeze up. There was no indications of any winter finches anywhere in the Region. Trips to Tug Hill and Adirondack areas were fruitless for finches.

Highlights for the season were: two *hutchinsii* race Canada Geese on the St. Lawrence River at Clayton, high numbers of Tundra Swans, high numbers of Gadwall and Am. Wigeon at Perch River WMA, a fair number of scaup in a raft in Black River Bay, good numbers of Ruddy Duck at Perch Lake, two coveys of Gray Partridge, high numbers of Am. Coot, an Am. Golden-Plover at El Dorado, a record late Yellow-billed Cuckoo, unbelievable numbers of crows, a record late Tree Swallow at Point Peninsula on 28 November, E. Bluebirds in very high numbers, and high numbers of Am. Pipits.

Negatives include: low numbers of all the ducks except Mallards, poor shorebird numbers even with so much exposed shore area, no Snowy Owls, low numbers of Horned Larks, low numbers of kinglets, and no winter finches.

Rarities for the period included **Sabine's Gull** in Massena, a **Black-Backed Woodpecker** in Cape Vincent, **White-Eyed Vireo** near Massena and a **Townsend's Solitaire** in Cape Vincent.

CONTRIBUTORS

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ABBREVIATIONS

CV - Cape Vincent, FD - Fort Drum, LWMA - Lakeview WMA, LiWMA-Littlejohn WMA in JEFF, Pt Pen - Point Peninsula, PRWMA - Perch River Wildlife Managment Area, SLR - St. Lawrence River, T - Town or Township of, WH - Wilson Hill WMA.

LOONS - DUCKS

Com. Loon: 6 Pt Pen 22 Oct; 1 Black River Bay 1 Nov; 2 Sawyer's Bay 13 Nov; 12 Pt Pen 28 Nov.

Pied-billed Grebe: 6 LWMA 7 Oct.

Horned Grebe: 5 Pt Pen 22 Oct; 3 Sawyer's Bay T Henderson 26 Oct; 17 Sawyer's Bay 13 Nov; 10 Pt Pen 28 Nov.

Red-necked Grebe: 1 WHWMA 10 Sep; 2 Robert Moses SP 31 Oct (TD); 1 Pt Pen 1 Nov; 1 Pt Pen 12 Nov.

Double-crested Cormorant: 1 Black River Bay 13 Nov.

Am. Bittern: 1 dead on road T Fine STLA 20 Sept (PO).

Black-crowned Night-Heron: 3 Beaver Meadows Marsh, Watertown 13 Sept.

Turkey Vulture: 1 Cranberry L 2 Oct; 112 LWMA 9 Oct; 22 Pt Pen 22 Oct; 1 LEWI 16 Nov; 1 T Clayton JEFF 27 Nov.

Snow Goose: 37 imm LWMA 9 Oct; 14 Woodville 19 Nov.

Canada Goose: 1 hutchinsii race on SLR Washington Is T Clayton 12 Nov (NL); 2 same on 13 Nov (LC,BH), photo.

Brant: 50 FD 21 Oct; 280 SLR Holmes Pt T Morristown STLA 25 Oct (RL).

Trumpeter Swan: 8 (2 ad, 6 imm) PRWMA 13 Nov.

Tundra Swan: 15 Black River Bay, Dexter Marsh WMA 1 Nov; 35 Pt Pen 12 Nov; 12 Three Mile Pt 22 Nov; 200+ Pt Pen 22 Nov; 14 WHWMA 23 Nov (Lee Harper fide PO); 8 Wilson Hill 29 Nov (SC).

Wood Duck: 50 Grass River Massena 10 Nov.

Gadwall: 200+ PRWMA 4 Nov; 10 SLR Clayton 15 Nov.

Am Wigeon: 400+ PRWMA 4 Nov; 220 PRWMA 6 Nov.

Am. Black Duck: more common than the previous two years.

Mallard: showing up in numbers near end of period.

Blue-winged Teal: 4 Pt Salubrious 5 Oct.

N. Shoveler: 6 PRWMA 6 Nov; 2 SLR near Clayton 13 Nov.

N. Pintail: 30 PRWMA 6 Nov; 2 Pt Pen 28 Nov.

Green-winged Teal: 1 Louisville STLA 10 Sep.

Canvasback: 2 Chaumont 15 Nov.
Redhead: 12 WHWMA 10 Sep; 18 WHWMA 2 Oct; 1 male PRWMA 6 Nov.
Ring-necked Duck: 40 WHWMA 10 Sep.
Greater Scaup: 7 El Dorado 7 Oct; 50 Black River Bay 1 Nov; 2000+ Black River Bay 13 Nov (LC&BH).
White-winged Scoter: 4 Pt Pen 31 Oct.
Oldsquaw: 4 Pt Pen 28 Nov.
Bufflehead: 1 Pt Pen 31 Oct.
Com. Goldeneye: numbers down from last year.
Hooded Merganser: 35 FD 9 Sep; 14 Kelsey Crk Watertown 27 Oct; 15 PRWMA 16 Nov; 50 Pt Pen 22 Nov.
Com. Merganser: 8 El Dorado 5 Oct; 20 Pt Pen 22 Nov.
Red-breasted Merganser: 2 Robert Moses SP 31 Oct.
Ruddy Duck: 5 PRWMA 6 Nov; max 12 Perch L PRWMA 10 Nov.

HAWKS - ALCIDS

Osprey: 4 LWMA 16 Sep.
Bald Eagle: 1 imm T Watson LEWI 15 Sep; 1 ad LWMA 9 Oct; 2 ad El Dorado 23 Oct; 1 imm Theresa 6 Nov.
N. Harrier: 11 imm Montario Pt LWMA 16 Sep; 10 Pt Pen 22 Nov; 13 around backroads T CV 23 Nov.
Sharp-shinned Hawk: 29 Montario Pt LWMA 16 Sep; 3 FD 18 Sep; 62 LWMA 9 Oct; 1 killed at window while patrolling feeder Kelsey Crk 19 Nov (RB).
Cooper's Hawk: 1 LWMA 16 Sep; 13 LWMA 9 Oct; 1 T CV 12 Nov.
N. Goshawk: 1 T Pitcairn STLA 5 Oct; 1 imm LWMA 9 Oct; 1 imm Pt Salubrious 10 Oct.
Red-shouldered Hawk: 2 Robert Moses SP Massena 31 Oct (TD).
Broad-winged Hawk: 1 FD 1 Sep; 2

LWMA 16 Sep.

Red-tailed Hawk: 30 imm Montario Pt LWMA 16 Sep; 70 LWMA 9 Oct; 210 Wescott Beach SP 26 Oct; 54 (including 1 imm rufous morph on Fox Crk Rd) on trip from Dexter to CV 28 Nov (GS&TC).
Rough-legged Hawk: 5 Wescott Beach SP 26 Oct; 18 Pt Pen 22 Nov; 14 Favret Rd to Mckeever Rd T CV 22 Nov; 51 on trip from Dexter to Cape Vincent 28 Nov (GS&TC).

Golden Eagle: 1 sub ad Wescott Beach SP 26 Oct (GS); 1 NY Route 177 New Boston LEWI 8 Nov (GS).

Am Kestrel: 13 Montario Pt LWMA 16 Sep; 2 LWMA 9 Oct; 4 Pt Pen 22 Nov; 2 T CV 23 Nov.

Merlin: 1 FD 18 Sep (MS); 1 Potsdam 20 Sep (SC); 1 Henderson Boat Launch on Stony Crk 30 Sep.

Gray Partridge: 10 T CV 16 Sep (GS); 10 T CV (different location) 29 Oct.

Ruffed Grouse: high numbers in Adirondacks, many road kills and at least 8 killed by raptors in various Forest Preserve Areas (PO); high numbers on Tug Hill; lower numbers on Lake Plain.

Wild Turkey: 26 FD 21 Oct; seen at Aldrich, Cranberry L and Tooley Pd Rd STLA deep in the Adirondacks.

Am. Coot: max 300 PRWMA 4 Nov; 256 PRWMA 6 Nov; 5 SLR CV 13 Nov.

Black-bellied Plover: 7 Pt Pen 12 Nov.

Am. Golden-Plover: 1 El Dorado Shores 14 Sep.

Killdeer: 60+ Adams 7 Oct; 70+ Woodville 7 Oct; 2 SLR Washington I T Clayton 12 Nov.

Greater Yellowlegs: 4 WHWMA 2 Oct.

Lesser Yellowlegs: 2 Pt Pen 12 Nov.

Upland Sandpiper: 1 FD 4 Sept.

Dunlin: 15 Coles Creek SP 15 Nov.

Short-billed Dowitcher: 1 Watertown 21 Sep.

Com. Snipe: 5 PRWMA 13 Sept; 1

Henderson vicinity 22 Nov.

Am. Woodcock; 1 Chaumont Barrens 1 Sep.

Bonaparte's Gull: 100 Moses Saunders Power Dam STLA 10 Sep; 32 Pt Pen 1 Nov; 17 Pt Pen 12 Nov; 3 CV breakwall 28 Nov;

Ring-billed Gull: more on the Lake Plain due to openness of Lake Ontario waters.

Great Black-backed Gull: 50 Moses Saunders Power Dam 10 Sep; 12 break-wall CV SLR 28 Nov.

SABINE'S GULL: 1 imm Moses Saunders Power Dam, Hawkins Pt 9 & 10 Sep (JVR,MB,BB) - the third record for this location.

Com. Tern: 100 Moses Saunders Power Dam 10 Sep.

DOVES - WOODPECKERS

Yellow-billed Cuckoo: 1 found recently dead Valley Rd T CV 4 Oct (MW), a late date, hard enough to find them in the summer months in this Region.

Great Horned Owl: 2 Patterson Rd T Louisville 1 Sep; 1 calling T Fine STLA 28 Sept.

Snowy Owl: 1 Hell Street T CV 28 Nov (GS), only report.

Barred Owl: 1 Route 56 Massena 16 Sep.

Com. Nighthawk: 2 Kelsey Crk Watertown 11 Sept; 1 Sawyer's Bay T Henderson 12 Oct; 1 Sawyer's Bay 18 Oct (GM).

Ruby-throated Hummingbird: 1 Henderson 26 Sep; 1 FD 6 Oct (Maria Mogg).

Belted Kingfisher: last at beaver flow Cranberry L Wild Forest STLA 6 Oct.

Red-headed Woodpecker: 1 imm Kelsey Crk feeder Watertown 29 Nov thru (RB).

Red-bellied Woodpecker: 1 LWMA 16 Sep; 1 Henderson 28 Sep; 1 Kelsey Crk feeder 29 Sept thru; 1 CV feeder mid Oct thru.

Yellow-bellied Sapsucker: 1 imm Kelsey Crk 14 Sept; 1 imm Henderson 16 Sep; 1 CV 4 Oct.

BLACK-BACKED WOODPECKER: 1 male CV 3 Oct (MW,NYSARC), way out of range.

N. Flicker: 1 Horace Forward Truck Trail LEWI 18 Nov.

Pileated Woodpecker: 1 Inmann Gulf, Tug Hill SF LEWI, 10 Sep; 1 Potsdam village 7 Nov.

FLYCATCHERS - WAXWINGS

E. Wood-Pewee: 1 Massena 17 Sep.

Least Flycatcher: 1 T Louisville STLA 1 Sep.

E. Phoebe: 1 T Louisville 11 Sep.

N. Shrike: 1 imm T CV 29 Oct; 1 ad Perch L PRWMA 25 Nov.

WHITE-EYED VIREO: 1 Massena 12 Oct (MB), previous records from this area.

Blue-headed Vireo: 1 Massena 16 Sep.

Warbling Vireo: 2 Massena 11 Sep; 1 singing Henderson 14 Sep.

Philadelphia Vireo: 1 Massena 17 Sep.

Red-eyed Vireo: 1 FD 17 Sept; 1 Massena 25 Sep.

Gray Jay: 8 being fed at hunting camps near Aldrich T Fine STLA thru Oct & Nov (PO).

Blue Jay: birds moving thru since beginning of period; 22 over Watertown 14 Sep; 35+ Watertown 22 Sep.

Am. Crow: 1000+ near Watertown at roost area almost daily after early Sep; many more on the Lake Plain than normal (LC).

Com. Raven: 1 Inman Gulf, Tug Hill SF LEWI 10 Sep; 2 T Ellisburg I-81 2 Oct; 7 FD 5 Oct; 5 DANC Landfill NY Rt 177 JEFF 9 Oct; 1 Evans Mills 2 Nov; 2 Mason Rd T CV 22 Nov, seen at this same location last year at about the same time.

Horned Lark: 10 CV 8 Nov, hard to find.

Tree Swallow: 100+ T Hounsfield 21 Sep; 10 Henderson 3 Oct; 60 Philadelphia 7 Oct; 14 CV 8 Nov; 1 Pt Pen 28 Nov (GS,TC), record late.

Barn Swallow: 2 FD 14 Sept (MS)

Tufted Titmouse: 2 Massena 15 Nov (MB), only report.

Red-breasted Nuthatch: 1 Henderson 7 Sep; 1 Watertown 11 Sep; 6 Inlet STLA 2 Oct, numbers down.

House Wren: 1 Henderson 7 Sep.

Golden-crowned Kinglet: 1 Watertown 13 Sep; large numbers thru Henderson all day 3 Oct.

Ruby-crowned Kinglet: 1 Watertown 13 Sep; not seen in normal numbers.

E. Bluebird: 3 Henderson 8 Sep; 6 Watertown Center 23 Sep; 16 Indian River Lakes area 27 Sep; 6 males Diamond Rd Tug Hill 6 Nov; 175 occurrences of birds near Harrisville T Pitcairn STLA first week of Oct at bluebird trail nesting box location (Cathy Luther).

TOWNSEND'S SOLITAIRE: 1 CV village in top of tree singing very sweetly 5 Nov (MW,NYSARC), a Regional first if accepted by NYSARC.

Veery: 1 Massena 1 Sep.

Swainson's Thrush: 5 Inlet STLA 2 Oct.

Hermit Thrush: 4 CV 4 Oct.

Am Robin: 30+ Inlet STLA 2 Oct; moving thru Henderson all day 24 Oct; 13 Barnes Corners, Tug Hill LEWI 6 Nov.

Gray Catbird: 1 FD 22 Sep; 1 Kelsey Crk Watertown 11 Oct.

N. Mockingbird: 1 Rt 37 Massena 10 Sep (MB); 1 Pt Pen 28 Nov (LC,BH).

European Starling: more on the Lake Plain than normal.

Am. Pipit: 8 El Dorado 10 Sep; 110 T CV 16 Sep; 200+ Woodville 7 Oct.

Cedar Waxwing: 34 FD 22 Sep; 4 Henderson 26 Sep: max 100+ Sawyer's Bay 22 Oct (GPM).

WARBLERS

Tennessee Warbler: 2 T Louisville STLA 18 Sep.

Nashville Warbler: 1 Massena 12 Oct.

Yellow Warbler: 2 T Louisville STLA 1 Sep.

Chestnut-sided Warbler: 1 Massena 16 Sep.

Magnolia Warbler: 1 T Louisville STLA 11 Sep.

Black-throated Blue Warbler: 1 FD 17 Sep.

Yellow-rumped Warbler: moving thru Henderson in numbers 30 Sep; 2 Massena 2 Oct.

Black-throated Green Warbler: 1 LiWMA 8 Sep; 3 FD 17 Sep; 2 Henderson 30 Sep.

Pine Warbler: 1 LiWMA 8 Sep.

Palm Warbler: 2 FD 2 Oct; last FD 5 Oct.

Bay-breasted Warbler: 1 T Louisville 19 Sep.

Blackpoll Warbler: 1 Potsdam 10 Oct.

Black-and-white Warbler: 2 FD 17 Sep.

Ovenbird: 1 FD 17 Sep.

Mourning Warbler: 1 Massena 17 Sep.

Wilson's Warbler: 1 Kelsey Crk Watertown 14 Sep.

TANAGERS-WEAVERS

Scarlet Tanager: 1 female Massena 16 Sep.

E. Towhee: 3 Chaumont Barrens 1 Sep.

Am. Tree Sparrow: first Pt Pen 27 Oct;

first Henderson 8 Nov.

Chipping Sparrow: 8 FD 2 Oct.

Vesper Sparrow: 4 FD 2 Oct; 1 FD 5 Oct.

Savannah Sparrow: 20 FD 8 Sep; 1 FD 6 Oct.

Fox Sparrow: 1 Kelsey Crk feeder 22 Oct; 2 Massena 22 Oct.

Song Sparrow: 1 Barnes Corners, Tug Hill, LEWI 6 Nov

Lincoln's Sparrow: 4 Pt Salubrious 5 Oct (GS).

Swamp Sparrow: 3 FD 6 Oct.

White-crowned Sparrow: 2 FD 6 Oct.

Dark-eyed Junco: moving in numbers thru Henderson 10 Oct; 35 Henderson 2 Nov.

Snow Bunting: 1 Sawyer's Bay T Henderson 22 Oct; 25 SBSP 24 Oct; 127 T CV 29 Oct.

N. Cardinal: numbers in Henderson and Lake Plain were down.

Bobolink: 1 FD 8 Sep.

Red-winged Blackbird: 2 Pt Pen 28 Nov

(GS,TC).

E. Meadowlark: 5 FD 5 Oct; 9 Pt Pen 27 Oct.

Rusty Blackbird: 1 Wanakena 2 Oct; 300 Pt Pen 3 Oct; 300-400 CV 4 Oct; 125 Theresa 6 Nov.

Com. Grackle: 200 Pt Pen 3 Oct; 2 FD 5 Oct; 2000+ thru Henderson in one flock 27 Oct; 2 Barnes Corners Tug Hill LEWI 6 Nov; 100 Massena 21 Nov.

Brown-headed Cowbird: numbers were down from a few years ago.

Baltimore Oriole: 1 Massena 1 Sep.

Purple Finch: 3 Henderson 1 Nov, low numbers.

House Finch: 30 Henderson 2 Nov.

Am. Goldfinch: numbers in Henderson increasing thru.

Evening Grosbeak: 6 Massena 20 Oct, only report.

House Sparrow: numbers at Henderson were down, as well as at many locations in farm country, JEFF.