

REGION 7 ADIRONDACKCHAMPLAIN

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Although changeable, the fall was largely warm and windy. Lake Champlain stood at 96.69 ft and a tepid 70°F on 4 September, while Plattsburgh reached a sultry 87° on 6 September. Following snow in the Ausable Valley on 8 September and 1.06 inches of rain at Malone the next day, temperatures returned to 74° on 11 September and 69° with 97% humidity on 13 September. At month's end, Plattsburgh was still a rainy 67°. October was blustery, opening with gusts of 50 mph. Light rains brought us to 47.5 inches annual precipitation by 4 October, within 3 inches of the old record. Plattsburgh was 73° on 18 October. Gusts

reached 30 mph on the 20th, and Whiteface Mountain had 5" of snow by 22 October. The rest of the month was mild, closing with annual precipitation at 49.03". November was also windy, with 23 mph winds on 2 November and a gust of 26 mph the next day. Thermometers reached daily highs in the 40°-50° range throughout the month, while winds reached 55 mph on Veterans Day, bringing down trees. The ground was snow covered across much of the Region by 17 November, but reappeared soon thereafter. The season closed with Malone 61° and Inlet 64° on 30 November, accompanied by 26 mph gusts. Yearly precipitation had reached 50.05", just a few raindrops shy of the 1983 record of 50.16". Gary Lee commented, "I only saw about 10 clear days in my diary for the period, as fronts moved by so fast."

If autumn provides any indication, a fairly birdless winter lies ahead. Only 154 species were reported this fall, far short of the record 192 found in 1996, or even last fall's relatively low 176. Snow Geese put in appearances at several locales in Essex and Franklin counties, in addition to their usual Clinton County stopover near Point au Roche, with several thousand at Chateaugay in late November. Most northern waterfowl arrivals were later than last year. A total of 21 shorebird species was reported, a respectable showing in light of near record annual rainfall and high lake levels. Winter passerine arrivals included Northern Shrike at Hogansburg 22 October, Bohemian Waxwings at Raquette Lake 30 November, American Tree Sparrows at Westport 24 October, and Snow Buntings at Moose River Plains 18 October. The only abundant winter finches were American Goldfinches, and even those were sparse between the departure of nesting birds in mid-September and the arrival of wintering flocks in late November. There were no Pine Grosbeaks or redpolls.

Birders visiting the Chazy Riverlands, the remarkable birding area described by Mitchell and Krueger in *Birds of Clinton County*, Second Edition (1997) and by Wells in *Important Bird Areas in New York State* (1998), surely had no complaints, however. Here they saw the first Regional **Northern Gannet**. Here, too, was a **Greater White-fronted Goose**, the first Regional **Cinnamon Teal** and **American Avocet**, a **Whimbrel**, and a **Hudsonian Godwit**, to name but a few of the greater rarities. Finds like a Merlin, Peregrine Falcons, and Western, White-rumped, and Stilt sandpipers at the same productive site seem to pale by comparison.

There were good finds elsewhere, too. Bill Krueger, Charlie Mitchell, and later Tom Dudones, had a rare blue morph Ross's Goose at Point au Roche, while Susan Turner reported an adult male Yellow-headed Blackbird in Keene.

While local observers concentrated on the Champlain lakeshore, the few visiting birders focused on Adirondack boreal habitats. This may have enriched the seasonal list at the expense of more mundane birds, notably flycatchers, vireos, wrens, warblers, and sparrows (no mention of Song Sparrow during the three months!). So the "embarrassment of riches," as Bill Krueger so aptly phrased it, may have been responsible in part for the low species total of 154.

We're also delighted to pass along Forest Ranger Gary Lee's report that the Ferd's Bog boardwalk has finally been installed by the NYS DEC. Ferd LaFrance would be pleased, especially by the Black-backed Woodpecker, Gray Jay, and Boreal Chickadee already seen from the new, easier access to the bog that carries his name.

Finally, we note with great sorrow the passing of the foremost observer of the Adirondack-Champlain Region and one of the great birders of New York State, Geoffrey Carleton of Elizabethtown. Jeff was an original, and he will be missed.

CONTRIBUTORS

Jim Bailey, Margaret Bolster, Ray Brousseau, Mary Buehler, J.C. Cribbs, Dorothy Crumb, Charlcie Delehanty, Tom Dudones, Don Fasking, William Frenette, Joseph Gentles, Judy & Roger Heintz, David Hoag, Paul Kelly, Hal Klein, Bill Krueger, Bill Lenhart, Richard MacDonald, Theodore Mack, Jeff Meyers, Charles Mitchell, Sean O'Brien, Paul Osenbaugh, Michelle Patnode, John & Susan Peterson, John & Patricia Thaxton, Mary Thill, Susan Turner, Drew Vail, Gary Worthington, Tom Worthington.

ABBREVIATIONS

AP - Ausable Point WMA; BB Bloomingdale Bog; CH Cumberland Head; CR - between the Chazy & Little Chazy Rivers; FB Ferd's Bog; FBI Four Brothers Islands; KB King's Bay; MRRR Moose River Recreational Area; PtR Point au Roche SP; TL Tupper Lake; WRS Webb Royce Swamp.

LOONS-DUCKS

Com. Loon: ads & chick banded Beaver L Aug present 9 Oct(GL).
Horned Grebe: arr CR 17 Aug (GW), 2nd CLIN Aug record.
Red-necked Grebe: max 13 Westport 29 Nov (JP,J&PT).
N. GANNET: 1 imm CR 19 Oct (BK,CM!), first Regional record.
Double-crested Cormorant: max 250 FBI 12 Sep.
Black-crowned NightHeron: FBI 12 Sep (RM).
Turkey Vulture: max 13 CR 6 Sep (BK,CM,GW), at stillborn calf.
GREATER WHITE-FRONTEDGOOSE: imm, acquiring ad plumage, CR 27 Oct (DH, photo), with 1,500 Canada Geese; orange bare parts suggest Greenland race.
Snow Goose: arr CR 21 Sep; 8,000 PtR 1 Nov; 2500 Westport and 1000 Essex 29 Nov; thousands Chateaugay same day (fide HW); injured bird Blue Mt L all Nov (TW).
ROSS'S GOOSE: ad blue morph PtR 23 Oct (BK,CM) to 5 Nov (TD).
Canada "Richardson's" Goose: PtR 5 Nov (BK).
Brant: arr PtR 12 Oct (J&RH); 1 L Flower 418 Nov (TD).
Mute Swan: Monty Bay 5 Nov (TD), only sighting.
Tundra Swan: 2 ads Wilcox Dock, Plattsburgh 20 Oct (BK); same Cumberland Head 25 Oct (PO); last Plattsburgh Bay 29 Nov (BK,CM).
CINNAMON TEAL: CR 20 Sep (BK,CM), first Regional record.
N. Pintail: 3 PtR 1 Nov (TD).
Green-winged Teal: max 6 WRS 22 Nov (TM,SO).

Canvasback: arr 3 KB 25 Nov (J&RH).
Redhead: arr KB 22 Oct (BK).
Lesser Scaup: arr L Alice 19 Sep (TD).
Surf Scoter: arr 8 PtR 14 Oct (BK).
Whitewinged Scoter: arr 6 PtR 1 Nov (TD); max 13 AP 13 Nov.
Black Scoter: arr Plattsburgh 27 Oct (BK).
Oldsquaw: arr 24 Plattsburgh 27 Oct (BK).
Hooded Merganser: 4 L Pleasant & 3 L Algonquin 20 Nov (PK), late in HAMI.
Red-breasted Merganser: max 35 Peru 12 Oct (DF).
Ruddy Duck: arr Ticonderoga 20 Oct (MY); max 3 PtR 1 Nov (TD).

HAWKS-ALCIDS

Osprey: 2 CR 6 Sep, one mobbed by 3 Bonaparte's Gulls; summit Mt. Skylight 11 Sep (J&PT).
N. Harrier: 3,800 ft on Ridge Trail to Giant Mt 23 Oct (J&PT).
Cooper's Hawk: summit Mt Skylight 11 Sep (J&PT).
Red-tailed Hawk: 2 NunDaGaO Ridge 5 Sep (J&PT); max 25 over Frederica Mt, near L Lila, 23 Oct (WF).
Rough-legged Hawk: arr CLIN 12 Oct (J&RH).
Am. Kestrel: max 11 PAFB 10 Sep.
Merlin: CR 20 Sep (BK,CM); Valcour 29 Sep (HK).
Peregrine Falcon: CR 20 Sep; ad male CR 26 Sep; Plattsburgh 12 Nov.
GYRFALCON: dark morph arr Plattsburgh 5 Nov (TD).
Wild Turkey: hen with 7 growing yg TL (RB), first young reported there; max 30 Westport lighthouse 12 Sep (DV) and s. Westport 27 Oct (JG).
Am. Coot: Plattsburgh 12 Nov (HK);

Westport 22 Nov thru (TM,SO).

Black-bellied Plover: CR to 12 Nov (BK,CM), late; max 4 CR 8 Sep.

Am. Golden-Plover: max 48 CR 5 Oct (GW), present CR to 25 Oct.

Semipalmated Plover: max 7 CR 8 Sep; CR 19 Oct.

Killdeer: 3 TL 30 Oct (CD), late.

AM. AVOCET: CR 1421 Sep (BK,CM!).

Greater Yellowlegs: CH 4 Nov (BK).

Lesser Yellowlegs: KB 21 Sep (BK,CM).

WHIMBREL: CR 68 Sep (BK,CM,GW), 3rd CLIN record.

HUDSONIAN GODWIT: CR 6 Sep22 Oct (BK,JM,CM), rare here.

Semipalmated Sandpiper: TL 30 Sep (CD), scarce in interior.

Western Sandpiper: CR 26 Oct (BK,CM,GW), well seen in excellent light.

Least Sandpiper: max 22 CR 5 Sep (BK).

White-rumped Sandpiper: Cr 5 Sep18 Oct; max 2 CR 6 Sep (BK,CM,GW).

Pectoral Sandpiper: CR 5 Sep25 Oct; max 11 CR 6 Sep (BK,CM,GW).

Dunlin: max 20 CR 5 Nov (BK,CM).

Stilt Sandpiper: max 2 CR 5 Sep (BK,CM,GW); CR 14 Sep (BK,CM), late CLIN by 8 days.

Bonaparte's Gull: max 165 Westport 24 Oct (JP,J&PT).

PIGEONS-WOODPECKERS

Mourning Dove: max 38 TL 18 Oct (CD), high for interior Adks.

Black-backed Woodpecker: male NunDaGaO Ridge 5 Sep; BB; FB.

Pileated Woodpecker: banded Elizabethtown 22 Oct (JP).

FLYCATCHERS-WAXWINGS

N. Shrike: arr Hogsburg 25 Oct (HW);

subsequent sightings Elizabethtown, MRRA, Keene, Riley Bk.

Gray Jay: Brown's Tract Pds and FB, usual sites.

Com. Raven: 1 L Colden has learned to scrounge after black bear attacks campers' food, little fear of humans (J&PT).

Horned Lark: arr MRRA 5 Nov (GL).

Boreal Chickadee: feeding yg Opalescent R 11 Sep (J&PT), late for dependent young; also FB, Giant Mt, MRRA, South L.

Am. Pipit: arr Stetson Rd, CLIN, 14 Sep (BK,CM), early; 3 Paul Smiths 18 Sep (TM), also early; max 8 TL 2 Nov (TD).

Bohemian Waxwing: arr 50 Racquette L 30 Nov (GL), quite rare in HAMI.

WARBLERS

Nashville Warbler: banded

Elizabethtown 23 Oct (JP), late.

Yellow-rumped Warbler: last banded Elizabethtown 18 Oct.

Pine Warbler: Paul Smiths & Ray Brook 22 Sep; "doing well in white pines Paul Smiths" (TM).

"Western" Palm Warbler: SL 12 & 20 Sep (TD); unspecified race AP 21 Sep (J&RH).

"Yellow" Palm Warbler: SL 12 Oct (TD).

TANAGERS-WEAVERS

Am. Tree Sparrow: arr 6 Westport 24 Oct (JP,J&PT).

Clay-colored Sparrow: Arena Marsh, SL, 12 Sep (TD), an excellent find, especially in fall.

Field Sparrow: Trudeau Rd 11 Oct (TD), last.

Fox Sparrow: SL, PtR, Upper Jay, between 17 Oct5 Nov.

White-crowned Sparrow: arr summit Mt Skylight (4,926 ft) 12 Sep (J&PT), record early ESSE.

Snow Bunting: arr MRRA 18 Oct (GL); later PtR, Banker Rd, Blue Mountain Lake; max 75 Essex 721 Nov.

YELLOW-HEADED BLACKBIRD: ad male Keene 17 Oct (ST).

Rusty Blackbird: arr max 85 Whallon's Bay Rd 9 Oct (J&PT); SL 12 Oct (TD); last Redford 29 Nov (DF), a good showing.

Purple Finch: Elizabethtown to 2 Sep; Speculator Sep only; Inlet feeder 7 Nov; occasional Keene, extremely scarce after departure of nesting birds.

House Finch: Westport 24 Oct 29 Nov, only report.

Red Crossbill: HAMI late in season, only report.

White-winged Crossbill: some HAMI early in season, only report.

Pine Siskin: 4 South L outlet 18 Sep (BL);

Elizabethtown 30 Nov (JP), only reports, **Am. Goldfinch:** Speculator Sep only; Elizabethtown to mid Sep and from mid Nov; intro.

Evening Grosbeak: few HAMI (GL); 2 FB 3 Oct (BL); elsewhere, not even overhead transients were reported after the departure of nesting birds in summer.

ADDENDA

ROSS'S GOOSE: Point au Roche 25 Mar 1998 (DH!).

Canada "Richardson's" (*hutchinsii*)

Goose: Point au Roche 25 Mar 1998 and a dark *minima* type seen there the following day, 26 Mar (DH, photo!).

"Yellow" Palm Warbler: Madawaska 13 Jun 1998 (SO), along abandoned RR grade near Madawaska Pd, a new possible breeding area.