

REGION 1 – NIAGARA FRONTIER

Dick Miga
38 Elm Street
Fredonia, NY 14063-1937

September began with a stretch of six days of midsummer heat and humidity. This was finally broken by the edge of dying tropical storm Dennis, which brought the month's heaviest rains on the 7th, with over one-third of the monthly total recorded on that date. Fortunately, Region 1 was too far west to be affected by Hurricane Floyd, with just some clouds here on the 16th. However, strong winds did cause some limited tree damage on the 23rd, and the Region did get a scare late on the 29th when a tornado watch was placed in effect. Statistically, the average temperature for the month was 64.3°F, 2.4° above normal, making this the warmest September in 28 years. The rainfall total of 3.95" was just over the norm and varied in amounts over the Region.

October continued as a typical autumn month, with the main weather event strong to severe thunderstorms that swept across the area on the 13th. This event followed a sharp cold front that crossed the Region, dropping temperatures over 30° in six hours. Many reports of hail and damaging wind gusts came from Niagara County and the southern region of Erie County. Statistics for the month included an average temperature at the Buffalo Airport of 50.1°. Rainfall total was just less than 3", contributing to continued low subsurface soil moisture and water table levels.

November's main weather event was an intense storm that moved from the Gulf Coast straight north across western New York during the evening of the 2nd. The barometric pressure fell to 29.01" at Buffalo, the lowest at any time since 1992, and the lowest November reading since 1913. Over 3" of rain fell on the suburbs of Buffalo, creating widespread flooding and road closures. The average temperature of 43.9° was 3° above normal. It was the eighth warmest November of the century. Precipitation for the month totaled just over 3" at the airport, just below normal. Over half (1.65") of this rain fell during the storm of the 2nd, establishing a new daily record for the date. (Note that this was only half of some of the reports from the suburbs.) The only snowfall recorded for the month occurred on the 30th, with varying amounts recorded throughout the Region. Meteorological data were obtained from the website of the National Weather Service *Monthly Weather Data and Summary* for Buffalo, NY.

The fall period gave birders in Region 1 hope that a strong winter irruptive movement was in the making, as early reports of Red-breasted Nuthatches, Pine Siskins, Common Redpolls, Evening Grosbeaks and both crossbills were recorded. The outcome of this activity will await the winter report. In any event, it was a positive start.

Rare bird sightings for the period included a **Western Grebe** observed on 27 November in the Niagara River from the community of Youngstown in Niagara County by Donald Ford. This record, if accepted by NYSARC, will be the fifth for the state since the Western/Clark's Grebe split in 1985. Two **Greater White-fronted Geese** were located by Mike Morgante, Kurt Fox and Bill Watson at Iroquois National Wildlife Refuge near Batavia in Genesee County on 13 November. Tom O'Donnell scored a spectacular sighting of a **Ross's Goose**, also at Iroquois NWR, on 11 November. Two reports of **Parasitic Jaeger**, accepted by the Buffalo Ornithological Society Records Committee, were received during the fall, one from Golden Hill State Park in Niagara County on 25 October by Brendan Klick and the second on 13 November from Lakeside Beach State Park in Orleans County by Kurt Fox. Both reports came from the south shore of Lake Ontario, which has been an excellent area for jaeger sightings over the years. As expected, the Niagara River region, already respected worldwide for its gathering of gulls in winter, produced again with an observation of a **California Gull** by Willie D'Anna and Brendan Klick at Devil's Hole State Park on 7 November. Reports of this gull continued through the month from several locations along the river. A **Loggerhead Shrike**, located in the Town of Somerset in Niagara County on 17 October by Sue and Tom O'Donnell, was one of very few reports of this species in recent years in this Region. Ten **Bohemian Waxwings** were reported on 30 October at Golden Hill State Park by Willie D'Anna and Bill Watson and four to nine were spotted at Fort Niagara State Park over the period 21-29 November, beginning with the annual Niagara River field trip led by Bob Brock. Finally, Richard and Dorothy Rosche observed an adult male **Brewer's Blackbird** in the Town of Orangeville in Wyoming County on 27 October, a first record for that county.

Other significant sightings for the period included: Least Bittern on 30 October, tying the late date; **Northern Goshawk** at two locations; Northern Saw-whet Owl at the third earliest fall date on 6 October, unfortunately picked up after fatally striking a window; **Common Raven** in the Town of Charlotte in Chautauqua County; White-crowned Sparrow arriving early on 19 September and Evening Grosbeak observed by William Horne on 24 September, setting a new early arrival date for that species.

The 64th Annual Buffalo Ornithological Society October Bird Count, conducted on the 10th, identified 159 species totaling 144,875 individuals. According to compilers Mike Hamilton, Gail Seamans and Terry Yonker, significant sightings included: two **Glossy Ibis**, a first record for the count, although two ibis (sp.) were recorded in 1990; a Lesser Black-backed Gull, a second report for the count, the first occurring last year; and, for the first time in a decade, a Philadelphia Vireo.

CONTRIBUTORS

Robert Andrie, Jim Berry, Buffalo Ornithological Society, Bruce Chilton, Willie D'Anna, Mike Davis, Kurt Fox, Mike Galas, Barbara Henderson, Linda Holmes, William Horne, Dave Junkin, Brendan Klick, Hans Kunze, Dick Miga, Mike Morgante, David Neveu, Tom O'Donnell, Susan O'Donnell, Vivian Pitzrick, Betsy Potter, Frances Rew, Gerald Rising, Donald Roberson (DRo), Richard Rosche, Dorothy Rosche, Olga Rosche, Gail Seamans, Jack Skalicky, Richard Sowinski, David Suggs (Buffalo RBA), William Watson, Jim Wojewodzki, Peter Yoerg.

ABBREVIATIONS

BWWTP – Batavia Waste Water Treatment Plant, GENE; DH – Dunkirk Harbor, City of Dunkirk; FMCSP – Four Mile Creek State Park, NIAG; FNSP – Fort Niagara State Park, NIAG; GHSP – Golden Hill State Park, NIAG; GI – Goat Island, Niagara Falls; INWR – Iroquois National Wildlife Refuge, GENE/ORLE; LBSP – Lakeside Beach State Park, ORLE; OOWMA – Oak Orchard Wildlife Management Area, GENE; SPNP – Sinking Ponds Nature Preserve, East Aurora, ERIE; Tift NP – Tift Nature Preserve, Buffalo; TWMA – Tonawanda Wildlife Management Area, WYOM; WB – Woodlawn Beach, ERIE.

LOONS – DUCKS

Red-throated Loon: arr 3 T Shadigee 21 Oct (MM); max 328 GHSP 21 Nov (MM).

Com. Loon: max 300 T Somerset NIAG & T Yates ORLE 30 Oct (WD, BOS).

Red-necked Grebe: Olcott NIAG 31 Oct; 1-3 L Ontario 13-23 Oct.

WESTERN GREBE: Youngstown NIAG 27 Nov (DF!).

Double-crested Cormorant: max 1052

The Kingbird 2000 March; 50(1)

Buffalo 9 Sep (WW).

Am. Bittern: TWMA 17 Oct (BK).

Least Bittern: Sheldon Trail T Chautauqua CHAU 30 Oct (JB!), ties record late date.

Great Egret: 11-33 INWR 19 Sep-8 Oct.

Black-crowned Night-Heron: WB 10 Sep; BWWTP 2 Oct.

Glossy Ibis: 2 BOS Oct Count 10 Oct, first for the count.

GREATER WHITE-FRONTED GOOSE:

2 INWR 13 Nov (MM!, KE, WW).

Snow Goose: arr INWR 28 Sep (RS!).

ROSS'S GOOSE: INWR 11 Nov (TO!).

Canada Goose (*B. c. hutchinsii*): 28

INWR 21 Oct (MM!); 32 INWR 13 Nov

(MM!); 10 INWR 21 Nov (MM!).

Brant: arr 450 GHSP, 190 Olcott NIAG 18

Oct (BC); max 1045 T Somerset NIAG 24

Oct (WD, mob).

Trumpeter Swan: OOWMA 4 Oct-8 Nov

(BK), had band, origin unknown.

Wood Duck: SPNP 13 Nov (LH).

Am. Wigeon: 220 OOWMA 3 Oct.

Am. Black Duck: 50 OOWMA 23 Oct.

Blue-winged Teal: BWWTP 7 Nov (GS).

N. Shoveler: 300 BWWTP 24 Oct (GS,

BOS); 135 BWWTP 28 Nov (GS).

Green-winged Teal: 113 BWWTP 23 Oct.

Canvasback: arr TWMA 31 Oct.

Redhead: arr Tift NP 1 Oct.

Ring-necked Duck: arr 4 BWWTP,

OOWMA 19 Sep.

Greater Scaup: max 7600 Niagara Falls

14 Nov (BK).

Surf Scoter: arr 2 T Somerset NIAG 4

Oct.

White-winged Scoter: max 358 LBSP 13

Nov.

Black Scoter: max 105 Somerset NIAG

25 Oct (BK).

Ruddy Duck: 2-780 many locations 19

Sep-21 Nov.

HAWKS - ALCIDS

Osprey: SPNP 21 Oct (LH).

N. Goshawk: NIAG 24 Sep (SO); WB 27

Sep (BK); both early fall dates.

Merlin: T Sheridan CHAU 6 Oct.

Peregrine Falcon: Niagara Falls 21 Nov

(WD).

Com. Moorhen: 2 BWWTP 2 Oct.

Black-bellied Plover: BWWTP 2 Oct.

Am. Golden-Plover: 2 T Wilson NIAG 24

Oct.

Greater Yellowlegs: 2 INWR 13 Nov

(MM).

Lesser Yellowlegs: 2 INWR 31 Oct.

Semipalmated Sandpiper: BWWTP 23

Oct.

Baird's Sandpiper: BWWTP 19 Sep.

Red-necked Phalarope: BWWTP 3 & 5
Oct (GS).

Red Phalarope: Bird I Pier Buffalo 24
Nov (BC).

PARASITIC JAEGER: GHSP 25 Oct

(BK); LBSP 13 Nov (KF).

CALIFORNIA GULL: Niagara River

area 1-27 Nov (WD, mob).

Thayer's Gull: 2 Lewiston NIAG 29 Nov

(BK).

Iceland Gull: arr Niagara Falls 9 Nov.

Lesser Black-backed Gull: 1-8 St.

Columbans CHAU on L Erie to Niagara

Falls 1 Oct-28 Nov.

Sabine's Gull: DH 9 Nov (DM-ph, DN,

mob).

Caspian Tern: LaSalle P Buffalo 30 Sep.

Forster's Tern: Niagara Falls 25 Oct, 6

Nov (RR, WD, BP).

PIGEONS - WOODPECKERS

Yellow-billed Cuckoo: Tift NP & GI 13,

15, 19 Sep.

Snowy Owl: T Belmont ALLE 21 Nov.

Short-eared Owl: T Shelby ORLE 11 Nov

(SO).

N. Saw-whet Owl: Jamestown CHAU 6

Oct (JB), window kill to Roger Tory

Peterson Institute collection, 3rd earliest

fall date.

Com. Nighthawk: 2 Amherst & 1

Lancaster ERIE 28 Sep.

Chimney Swift: 1000 Bird I Pier Buffalo

30 Sep (WW, mob).

Ruby-throated Hummingbird: Amity L

ALLE 30 Sep (VP).

Red-Headed Woodpecker: FNSP 29

Nov (MG).

FLYCATCHERS - WAXWINGS

E. Wood-Pewee: 2 GI 8 Oct (DRo).

Yellow-bellied Flycatcher: T Charlotte

CHAU, T Wheatfield NIAG 26 Sep (FR,

BP).

E. Kingbird: 4 Tillman WMA ERIE 6 Sep.

N. Shrike: arr 2 T Yates ORLE 24 Oct;

many more reports from various sites.

LOGGERHEAD SHRIKE: T Somerset

NIAG 17 Oct (S&TO), scarce in recent

years.

Blue-headed Vireo: Forest Lawn

Cemetery Buffalo & Salamanca CATT 17 Oct.

Warbling Vireo: GI 25 Sep (DRo).

Philadelphia Vireo: T Wheatfield NIAG 26 Sep; BOS Oct Count 10 Oct.

Com. Raven: 2 T Charlotte CHAU 4 Sep (FR), new location, most reports are from ALLE.

Tree Swallow: INWR & T Sheridan CHAU 24 Oct (BK, DN).

N. Rough-winged Swallow: 54 INWR 2 Oct (MM, mob).

Barn Swallow: 3 INWR 3 Oct.

Marsh Wren: 2 BWWT 17 Oct (BK).

Golden-crowned Kinglet: arr 3 T Wilson NIAG 18 Sep (WD, BP).

Ruby-crowned Kinglet: T Sheridan CHAU 14 Nov (DN).

Blue-gray Gnatcatcher: Pt Gratiot CHAU 27 Sep (DN).

Veery: FNSP 22 Sep.

Gray-cheeked Thrush: arr Tonawanda ERIE 7 Sep (PH); many reports thru 10 Oct, several banded Wethersfield WYOM (DJ).

Hermit Thrush: arr T Wilson NIAG 18 Sep.

Am. Pipit: arr BWWT 19 Sep.

BOHEMIAN WAXWING: 10 GHSP 30 Oct (WD, BOS, WW); 4-9 FNSP 21-29 Nov (BOS field trip, mob).

WARBLERS

Blue-winged Warbler: 2 Amity ALLE 7 Sep (VP).

Orange-crowned Warbler: 1 each 5 locations in ERIE, WYOM, NIAG Sep, Oct.

Yellow Warbler: Tiff NP 25 Sep (PY).

Magnolia Warbler: T Sheridan CHAU 22 Oct (DN).

Black-throated Blue Warbler: T Somerset NIAG 24 Oct (WD, BP).

Pine Warbler: arr GI 14 Sep.

Prairie Warbler: Amity L ALLE 1 Sep (VP).

Palm Warbler: arr GI 14 Sep.

Bay-breasted Warbler: GI 11 Oct.

Blackpoll Warbler: GI 11 Oct.

Hooded Warbler: Tiff NP 5 Oct (BC).

TANAGERS - WEAVERS

Scarlet Tanager: WB 25 Sep.

Chipping Sparrow: T Wales ERIE 16 Nov (OR).

Fox Sparrow: arr T Wethersfield WYOM 5 Oct, banded.

Lincoln's Sparrow: arr 3 FMSCP 22 Sep.

White-throated Sparrow: arr Niagara Falls 15 Sep.

White-crowned Sparrow: arr Eden Valley ERIE 19 Sep (RA), tied early fall arrival date.

Lapland Longspur: arr 6 T Somerset NIAG 21 Oct.

Snow Bunting: arr 20 Olcott NIAG 19 Oct.

Rose-breasted Grosbeak: Amity L ALLE 19 Sep.

Indigo Bunting: Warsaw WYOM 3 Oct (HK).

Rusty Blackbird: 10 TWMA 26 Sep.

BREWER'S BLACKBIRD: Orangeville WYOM 27 Oct (R&DR).

Baltimore Oriole: 2 Amity L ALLE 15 Sep.

Red Crossbill: arr 2 GHSP 31 Oct (BK).

White-winged Crossbill: 1, 4 GHSP 13, 19 Nov (WD, MG, GR).

Com. Redpoll: arr T Colden ERIE 9 Nov (JW).

Pine Siskin: arr BWWT 2 Oct.

Evening Grosbeak: arr T Lewiston NIAG 24 Sep (WH), record early arrival date.

Remelm2463@aol.com

