

REGION 10 – MARINE

SEYMOUR SCHIFF

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The season's temperatures appeared depressingly normal, because no record high or low appeared throughout. However, all three months were decidedly on the cool side. It was 2°F below normal in September and November and slightly below in October. September was wet at 5.82" vs. a 3.89" norm. October was very dry, with almost no rain: 0.68" vs. a 3.56" norm. November was more normal at 3.63", only 0.10" below the norm. However, this was not the whole story. Adverse winds, due to the jet stream position, seriously affected the usual weather patterns and thus migration patterns and the hawk flights. The Region saw an unusual influx of birds. These included Ross's Geese, Sandwich Terns, Bridled Terns, *Selasphorus sp.* hummingbirds, a number of western flycatchers and a super sparrow.

On 7 October, Tom Burke and Gail Benson found an unfamiliar sparrow along the fence on the west side of Jones Beach Parking Lot 6. The bird was identified as a member of the *Aimophila* genus. Determining the exact species in this group of skulkers is a daunting task. It wasn't until the next day that a positive identification of **Cassin's Sparrow** (*Aimophila cassinii*) was made by Burke. This rare vagrant to the east stayed until 11 October, affording fleeting, cursory looks and adequate, if not fully satisfactory, photos. Pending NYSARC review, this would become an addition to the NYS Checklist.

The West Pond at Jamaica Bay Wildlife Refuge harbored one and then two Eared Grebes starting on 16 September. At least one was seen to 29 November. An immature **Ross's Goose** was found at Jamaica Bay Wildlife Refuge 8 October in a flock of 40-50 Snow Geese. At various times during this period, two immatures of this species were seen. On 20 October, Bob Kurtz counted 400+ Snow Geese in the Jamaica Bay area.

On 7 October, an adult "Black" Brant was found by Nick Laviola and others in Zachs Bay in a flock of 50 Brant. It was seen until the 10th.

On 28 September, the busiest single hawk day of the season occurred at both the Central Park and Fire Island hawkwatches. The former counted 1877 on that day, 41% of the season's total of 4536. Fire Island on the same day counted 635 hawks, 20% their season's total of 3046. At both watches, all common species were down substantially this year. An anomaly was a very large kettle of Broad-winged Hawks seen on 28 September this year in Central Park. Without this Broad-winged tally, the day's total was still 36% of the season's count at the Central Park watch.

The following table of comparisons is of interest:

Species	Central Park		Fire Island	
	1999	2000	1999	2000
TV	237	278	0	0
OS	433	350	389	327
BE	29	30	5	4
NH	53	34	228	183
SS	700	643	496	257
CH	68	86	25	7
NG	1	1	1	2
RS	50	50	0	1
BW	478	2342	0	0
RT	461	184	1	1
RL	1	0	3	1
GE	0	1	0	0
AK	385	365	1500	1212
ML	34	28	2570	875
PG	24	12	253	148
Unid	174	32	33	28
Totals	3128	4436	5504	3046

On 24 November, Steve Walter observed a **Sandhill Crane** soaring overhead on the Point Lookout side of Jones Inlet. It flew off to the west and out of sight.

On 2 September, Andy Baldelli found an American Avocet at Mecox. It stayed only one day. Buff-breasted Sandpipers were numerous this fall, but mostly confined to the sod fields on eastern Long Island. The peak was 48 in three locations on 4 September. Up to 20 occurred in late September, the last being a single bird on 1 October.

This season there were reports from two pelagic trips and several fishing trips. On 2 September, a trip (PT#1) from Brielle, NJ to the Hudson Canyon produced reports in NY waters of 7 Cory's, 25 Greater and 7 Audubon's shearwaters, 500 Wilson's Storm-Petrels, 12 Red-necked Phalaropes, 4 Pomarine Jaegers, 5 **Bridled Terns**, including 2 sitting on floating debris, and 1 Black Tern.

On 10 September, a trip (PT#2) to the continental shelf south of Shinnecock (to The Dip and eastward to The Fishtail) was listed as "uneventful," but produced 32 Cory's, 21 Greater and 1 Manx shearwaters, 386 Wilson's Storm-Petrels, 3 Red-necked Phalaropes, 3 Parasitic, 7 Pomarine and 1 unidentified (possibly Long-tailed) jaegers.

On 7 October, a fishing boat 35 miles south of Shinnecock (PT#3) encountered 2 **Northern Fulmars** and 3 Greater Shearwaters. At Montauk Point, on the same day, 2 Parasitic Jaegers were seen offshore charging through a large tern flock. On 13-14 October, Orhan Birol, on a fishing trip (PT#4) south of Shinnecock, found 100+ Greater Shearwaters and a Wilson's Storm-Petrel, a very late date for the latter.

On 8 September, Andrew Bernick and Jarrod Santora were doing bird counts for the National Park Service in Jamaica Bay when they spotted a **Sandwich Tern** in a large mass of gulls and terns (1500 Laughing Gulls, 350+ Common Terns and 24 Forster's Terns) on some expansive flats east of Cross Bay Boulevard in a restricted area adjacent to JFK Airport. Another **Sandwich Tern** was seen along with five Royal Terns by Mike Cooper at Pike's Beach in Westhampton on 10 September. On 6 October, another was found at Democrat Point, Fire Island. None of these were associated with the type of storms that usually bring these southern terns to our area.

Two possible *Selasphorus* hummingbirds appeared late in the season during the same week. One bird, in Water Mill, was seen on 28 November and appeared to be an adult female. It was captured and subsequently died. The specimen is being forwarded to the American Museum of Natural History for positive identification. A second bird appeared in East Hampton on 25 November, was present through the 28th, and appeared to be an immature female **Rufous Hummingbird**. Both of the birds were on private property and access was not available for birders.

On 5 September, Michael Duffy found a pale-throated *Myiarchus* flycatcher on the West Pond path at Jamaica Bay Wildlife Refuge. Subsequently identified as an **Ash-throated Flycatcher**, it remained until the 12th. Then, at the end of the season, three *Myiarchus* flycatchers appeared in one week. Two were additional **Ash-throated Flycatchers**, one at Prospect Park, Brooklyn from 27 November on and the other at Alley Pond Park, Queens from 29 November on. Both were photographed and studied to confirm the identification. The third bird was found by Robert DeCandido and Randy Schutz at Jamaica Bay Wildlife Refuge on 24 November and was identified as a very late **Great Crested Flycatcher**. It remained until the 29th. A number of Western Kingbirds moved through the Region, starting with one at Accabonac on the South Fork 22 September, one in a backyard in Hither Hills 5 October and one at Robert Moses State Park 4-5 November. Another bird that arrived at Ft. Tilden on 11 November was still present at the end of the season.

The warbler migration peaked on 25 September when 25 species were seen in Central Park and 19 in Prospect Park. In addition, 21 were along the Jones Beach strip on 23 September. This fall saw an explosive increase in Golden-winged Warbler sightings. There have been few reports in the period 1988-1999. In 1992, there were four in August and three in September; in 1996 there were two in August and four in September; a third of these years had none. All occurred from mid August to late September, with a mean of mid September. This year's reports were eight for August, nine for September and five for October. The last date was an unprecedented **23 October**. The previous latest dates for the state were 10 and 17 October. Reports came from Staten Island to Montauk and all 22 of the late summer/fall sightings are listed in the species account so the full picture of this year's movement can be seen in one place.

On 14 October, Andy Baldelli, Hugh McGuinness and Bob Wilson found Long Island's third (or fourth) **Le Conte's Sparrow** at Montauk Point. It stayed until the

next day.

As highlights, the season brought us **Ross's Geese** from the north, **Bridled Tern** and **Sandwich Tern** from the south, ***Selasphorus*** **hummingbirds**, **Ash-throated Flycatchers** and **Le Conte's Sparrow** from the west, and best of all, a **Cassin's Sparrow** from the southwest.

CONTRIBUTORS

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ABBREVIATIONS

APP – Alley Pond Park; CB – Cedar Beach; CCP – Cupsogue County Park; CLP – Clove Lake Park RICH; CP – Central Park; CSP – Caumsett SP; DP – Democrat Pt, FI; FBF – Floyd Bennett Field; FI – Fire Island; FP – Forest Park; FT – Fort Tilden QUEE; HP – Hook Pond, Southampton; JBCH – Jones Beach; JBWE – Jones Beach West End; JBWR – Jamaica Bay Wildlife Refuge; LI – Long Island; MEB – Mecox Bay; MOR – Moriches; MP – Montauk Pt; NYRBA – NY Rare Bird Alert; PB – Pike's Beach, Westhampton; PBP – Pelham Bay Park; PL – Pt Lookout side Jones Inlet; PP – Prospect Park; PT#1 – 2 September pelagic trip to Hudson Canyon (NY waters only); PT#2 – 10 September pelagic trip to continental shelf south of Shinnecock; PT#3 – 7 October fishing trip 35 miles s of Shinnecock; PT#4 – 13-14 October fishing trip s of Shinnecock; RMSP – Robert Moses SP; RP – Riis Park; SHIN – Shinnecock Inlet; SI – Staten Island; VCP – Van Cortlandt Park BRON; ZB – Zachs Bay

LOONS – DUCKS

Red-necked Grebe: Spring Creek 29 Oct; 3 MP 25 Nov; Little Neck Bay QUEE 26 Nov.
Eared Grebe: JBWR 16-29 Sep; 2

JBWR 30 Sep-15 Oct; JBWR 15 Oct-29 Nov.

NORTHERN FULMAR: 2 PT#3.

Cory's Shearwater: 7 PT#1; 32 PT#2.

Greater Shearwater: 25 PT#1; 21

PT#2; PT#3; 100- PT#4.
Manx Shearwater: PT#2.
Audubon's Shearwater: 7 PT#1.
Wilson's Storm-Petrel: 500 PT#1; 386 PT#2; PT#4, a very late date.
Least Bittern: VCP 4-6 Sep.
Tricolored Heron: JBWR to 29 Nov.
Cattle Egret: JBWR 30 Sep-1 Oct; Buffalo Farm in Riverhead 10-13, 19 Oct.
Turkey Vulture: 278 season total CP Hawkwatch; 19 CP 28 Sep; PP 13 Oct; 34 CP 22 Oct; others on eastern LI.
Greater White-fronted Goose: ad Greenlawn 19-20 Nov.
Snow Goose: up to 1000 JBWR at season's end; others.
ROSS'S GOOSE: JBWR 16-29 Sep (MD); 2 JBWR 30 Sep- 15 Oct, then 1 there to 29 Nov.
"Black" Brant: ZB 7-10 Oct (NL *et al*).
Tundra Swan: 7 Hook Pd, Easthampton 19 Nov thru.
Wood Duck: 18 PP 25 Sep; CP thru 27 Nov.
Eurasian Wigeon: JBWR 17 Sep thru; Centerport 26 Oct, 16 Nov; FBF 19 Nov; Marratooka L, Mattituck 28 Nov.
King Eider: MP 15 Oct; others.
Com. Eider: MP in lower numbers this year.
Harlequin Duck: 3 Horton Pt lighthouse, Southold 13 Nov thru; Ditch Plains 9 Nov; 6 PL 26 Nov; MP 25 Nov thru.

HAWKS – ALCIDS

Osprey: 101 FI Hawkwatch 28 Sep.
Bald Eagle: imm JBWR 3-4, 9-10 Sep; imm Riverhead 10 Sep; 30 CP Hawkwatch 13 Sep-19 Oct including 4 imm, 1 ad 28 Sep; Quogue 16 Sep; Riverhead 22 Sep; JBWR 8 Oct; imm Bridgehampton 19 Oct.
Red-shouldered Hawk: 50 season total CP Hawkwatch.
Broad-winged Hawk: 1615 CP 28 Sep;

2342 season total; last 22 Oct.
Red-tailed Hawk: 42 CP 22 Oct.
Rough-legged Hawk: Spring Creek 23 Oct; VCP 21 Nov.
Golden Eagle: imm CP 15 Oct; JBWR 29 Oct.
Am. Kestrel: 367 FI Hawkwatch 28 Sep.
Wild Turkey: 12 Culloden Woods, Montauk 3 Nov; PBP 17 Nov.
Com. Moorhen: JBWR 30 Sep, rarely seen now in a location where they formerly bred abundantly.
SANDHILL CRANE: PL 24 Nov (SW).
Am. Golden-Plover: max 65 fields at Riverhead 23 Sep; 48 there 3 Oct; last there 24 Oct; JBWR mid-late Sep; JBWE 14 Oct; others.
Piping Plover: 2 PB 21 Oct; Goff Pt, Napeague 11 Nov (AB, BB), late date.
Am. Oystercatcher: 100+ JBWR mid Oct; large numbers in bay at JBCH thru.
Am. Avocet: MEB 2 Sep (AB).
Lesser Yellowlegs: last 1 Oct.
Willet: last 1 Oct.
Spotted Sandpiper: PP 23 Nov (RJ).
Upland Sandpiper: Gabreski Airport and Riverhead fields early Sep.
Whimbrel: JBWR 2 Sep; SHIN 23 Sep; JBWE 8, 14 Oct; Dune Rd 25 Nov thru.
Hudsonian Godwit: 1-2 JBWR thru 4 Oct.
Marbled Godwit: PB 1-4, 9 Sep; MEB 4-5 Sep; JBWR 9 Sep; 2 ZB 7 Oct.
Semipalmated Sandpiper: last 1 Oct.
White-rumped Sandpiper: JBWR thru 4 Nov.
Baird's Sandpiper: JBWR 4-10 Sep; JBCH 9-10 Sep; MEB 17 Sep; 2 Riverhead 23 Sep; others.
Pectoral Sandpiper: last 8 Oct.
Purple Sandpiper: arr mid-Nov.
Buff-breasted Sandpiper: numerous this fall, but mostly confined to the Riverhead sod farms on eastern LI as follows: 15 on 1 Sep, 22 on 2 Sep; 22 on 3 Sep; 48 over 3 different locations (34 in one of them) 4 Sep, 20 on 7 Sep, 16 on 8 Sep, 20 on

16 Sep; 7 on 21 Sep, 19 on Sep 24, 1 on 1 Oct.

Wilson's Phalarope: 2 MEB 2 Sep; JBWR 2-3, 9, 30 Sep, 1 Oct; MEB 19 Sep.

Red-necked Phalarope: 12 PT#1; 3 PT#2.

Pomarine Jaeger: 4 PT#1; 7 PT#2.

Parasitic Jaeger: 6-3 PT#2; MP 7 Oct; 2 MP 14, 22, 28 Oct; CCP 16 Oct; JBCH 29 Oct.

Laughing Gull: Fort Pd 25 Nov.

Little Gull: L Montauk 25 Nov thru.

Black-headed Gull: Agawam 11 Nov.

Iceland Gull: MP 2 Oct; SHIN 18 Nov.

Lesser Black-backed Gull: now nesting in large numbers in Iceland, they are wintering throughout the eastern US including our Region.

Glaucous Gull: JBWE 29 Oct (DF).

Black-legged Kittiwake: MP mid-Nov thru.

Gull-billed Tern: 2 JBWR 4 Sep.

Caspian Tern: JBWR 4 Sep; DP 5 Sep; SI 9-10 Sep; MEB 19-20; 2 JBCH 21 Sep; 2 Tobay 27 Nov; others to 8 Oct.

Royal Tern: 142 CCP, most sitting on the sand bar inside the inlet 16 Oct (AL); MOR 11 Nov.

SANDWICH TERN: JBWR 8 Sep (ABe, JS); PB 10 Sep (MC); DP 6 Oct (JF); none associated with any storms.
Forster's Tern: 170 MEB 19 Sep.

Least Tern: last 20 Sep.

BRIDLED TERN: 5 PT#1 (MB, MV).

Dovekie: Ditch Plains 4 Nov (JP); MP 4 Nov; sea watch at Tobay 9 Nov (AW); MP 11 Nov (AB, BB, RP); MP 25 Nov.

Razorbill: SHIN 5 Nov; MP 11 Nov; 2 MP 26 Nov.

PIGEONS – WOODPECKERS

Monk Parakeet: roost in Bensonhurst and other Brooklyn locations.

Snowy Owl: on a building, West 14th St, Manhattan 2 Nov; Breezy Pt QUEE 5, 18 Nov; Napeague 8 Nov; JBWE 12 Nov

thru; SHIN 18 Nov thru; CCP 19-20 Nov.

Long-eared Owl: CP 23 Oct thru; lower Manhattan 1 Nov; 2 JBCH 7 Nov.

Short-eared Owl: RMSP 5 Nov.

N. Saw-whet Owl: Tobay 8 Nov; PBP 24 Nov; East Hampton 18 Nov.

Chimney Swift: 200+ flock PP 20 Sep, unusual but not near fall max of 1500; 4 PP 13 Oct.

Ruby-throated Hummingbird: last 15 Oct.

HUMMINGBIRD, possible

Selasphorus sp: Water Mill 28 Nov, died, specimen to AMNH for positive id; East Hampton 25-28 Nov, appeared to be imm Rufous.

Red-headed Woodpecker: Middle I 3 Sep; PP 29 Sep; RMSP 7 Oct; MP 14 Oct.

Red-bellied Woodpecker: now regular along the barrier beach in migration where formerly absent and later rare.

FLYCATCHERS – WAXWINGS

Olive-sided Flycatcher: JBWR 1 Oct (GT), 5 Oct, both very late dates.

E. Wood-Pewee: Dude Ranch 14 Oct (SM, PL).

E. Phoebe: last 29 Oct.

ASH-THROATED FLYCATCHER: JBWR 5-12 Sep (MD); PP 27 Nov thru; APP 29 Nov thru.

Great Crested Flycatcher: 24-29 Nov (RD, RS).

Western Kingbird: Accabonac 22 Sep; Hither Hills 5 Oct; RMSP 4-5 Nov; FT 11 Nov.

E. Kingbird: last 14 Oct.

N. Shrike: RMSP 28 Oct, 2 Nov.

White-eyed Vireo: Morton NWR 25 Nov (HT *fide* HMG).

Yellow-throated Vireo: last 27 Sep.

Blue-headed Vireo: last 29 Nov.

Warbling Vireo: last 22 Sep.

Philadelphia Vireo: good numbers to 8 Oct.

Red-eyed Vireo: last 23 Oct.
Purple Martin: last 17 Sep.
Cliff Swallow: MP 14 Sep (JA), 17 Sep (AB).
Barn Swallow: last 9 Sep.
Red-breasted Nuthatch: very few in migration and virtually absent thereafter.
Blue-gray Gnatcatcher: last 7 Oct.
Am. Pipit: 100+ fields at Riverhead 24 Nov.

WARBLERS

Blue-winged Warbler: last 26 Sep.
Golden-winged Warbler: 22 reports, although some may be repeat sightings of an individual bird, an unusually large number (max 7 days/yr in last 13 yrs) and latest date for the state (previous 10 and 17 Oct); listing from west to east: CLP 21 Aug; CP 3, 5 Sep; PP 19, 20, 25 Aug, 17, 20, 21 Sep, 6, 22, 23 Oct; FP 9 Sep; APP 20, 28, 29, 30 Aug, 5, 28 Sep, 2 Oct; East Hampton 9 Sep; MP 17 Sep.
Tennessee Warbler: last 7 Oct.
Orange-crowned Warbler: CP 1 Oct; numerous scattered on south shore east to MP to 11 Nov.
Nashville Warbler: last 9 Oct.
N. Parula: last 15 Oct.
Yellow Warbler: last 1 Oct.
Chestnut-sided Warbler: last 4 Oct.
Magnolia Warbler: last 15 Oct.
Cape May Warbler: last 17 Oct.
Black-throated Blue Warbler: last VCP 21 Nov.
Black-throated Green Warbler: last 15 Oct.
Blackburnian Warbler: last 7 Oct.
Pine Warbler: CP 13-14 Nov.
Prairie Warbler: last mid-Oct.
Bay-breasted Warbler: last 30 Sep.
Blackpoll Warbler: last 19 Nov.
Black-and-white Warbler: last 7 Oct.
Am. Redstart: MP 9 Nov (JA).
Worm-eating Warbler: Noyac 4-5 Sep; Hunter's Garden on Rt 51 sw of Riverhead 5 Sep; Forest P 14 Sep; PP

late Sep.
Ovenbird: Manhattan's West Side 13 Nov (WP).
Kentucky Warbler: JBWR 24 Sep; SHIN 30 Sep.
Connecticut Warbler: APP 16 Sep; Sag Harbor 18 Sep; Rocky Pt Management Area 18 Sep; Makamah Nature Preserve, Northport 22 Sep; JBCH 23 Sep; CP 25 Sep.
Mourning Warbler: last 29 Sep.
Com. Yellowthroat: last 24 Oct.
Hooded Warbler: PP 9 Sep; Caleb Smith SP 9 Sep; CP 24 Sep, 3 Oct; 2 CP 25 Sep-7 Oct; APP 7 Oct.
Wilson's Warbler: last 22 Oct.
Canada Warbler: last 25 Sep.
Yellow-breasted Chat: scattered singles thru.

TANAGERS – WEAVERS

Summer Tanager: PP 29 Sep.
CASSIN'S SPARROW: Field 6 JBCH 7-11 Oct (TB, *et al*, report to NYSARC); only a half dozen prior records for the Northeast; **first NYS record if accepted.**
Clay-colored Sparrow: FT 17 Sep; MP 23 Sep; 1-2 RMSP 24 Sep, 8, 9 Oct; FT 30 Sep; MP 7 Oct; 1-2 JBWE 14-15 Oct; MP 14-15 Oct.
Vesper Sparrow: mid-Oct.
Lark Sparrow: JBWE 7 Sep; FT 20 Sep; Easthampton 27-28 Sep; MP 7 Oct; JBCH 11-12 Oct; Tobay 15 Oct; RMSP 22 Oct.
LE CONTE'S SPARROW: MP 14-15 Oct! (AB, HMG, BW).
Nelson's Sharp-tailed Sparrow: 2 Gilgo 1 Oct; 2 CCP 21 Oct.
Lincoln's Sparrow: 2 FBF 16 Sep; 2 Aquebogue 20 Sep; PP 22 Sep; CSP 1 Oct; MP 23 Sep, 2 CP 25 Sep; CP 27 Sep; PP 29-30 Sep; FT 7, 9 Oct; JBWE 7 Oct; JBCH 11, 15 Oct; PP 27 Oct; RP 29 Oct; last CP 14 Nov.
White-crowned Sparrow: *Gambel's* race 15 Oct (RK).

Lapland Longspur: FT 22-24, 29 Oct, 19 Nov; SI 12 Nov; 3 Hook Pd 20 Nov; 2 Tiana Beach 25 Nov.

Rose-breasted Grosbeak: last 5 Oct.

Blue Grosbeak: JBWE 18 Sep; APP 21 Sep; 2 JBWE 23 Sep; MP 23 Sep; 2 Bridgehampton 23 Sep; Aquebogue 30 Sep.

Indigo Bunting: Cupsogue 18 Nov (DF, NL).

Dickcissel: ZB 7 Sep; JBWE 18 Sep; 2 JBWE 23 Sep; FI Hawkwatch 23-24 Sep; CSP 1 Oct; 2 JBWE 8 Oct; JBCH 11-12 Oct; Tobay 12 Oct; ZB 13 Oct; 3 JBWE 14 Oct, 1 on 15 Oct; 2 MP 15 Oct, 1 on 21, 29 Oct; others.

Boat-tailed Grackle: increasing in

Region; 350 JBWR; increased to 14 in Ponquogue Bridge area.

Orchard Oriole: CP 3 Oct.

Pine Siskin: 2 JBWE 14 Oct.

Evening Grosbeak: PP 24 Sep; CP 25 Sep; FT 25 Sep.

CORRIGENDUM

Vol 50(3): **YELLOW-NOSED ALBATROSS:** on the FI beach in a flock of Herring Gulls 9 May 2000. A bird in Massachusetts cited in the commentary as early May should also have been noted as 9 May (PB).

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