

REGION 5 – ONEIDA LAKE BASIN

BILL PURCELL

281 Baum Road, Hastings NY 13076

The Region had cooler temperatures and drier weather than typical. September's average temperature of 60.7°F was 0.8° below normal, and the 3.13" of rain was 0.66" below normal. October's averages were 50.9°, +0.2°, and 2.55" of rain, -0.99". November's average temperature was 2° below the norm at 38.5°, with only 2.68" of precipitation, 1.04" below the average. There were 20.2" of snow for November.

The fall may have been dry but birding in the Region was still influenced in part by the wet spring and early summer. There was little need to draw down Delta Lake to fill the Barge Canal and high water at Delta meant loss of habitat for dabbling ducks and shorebirds, as well as the falcons and Bald Eagles seeking prey.

Red-throated Loons, Common Loons and the three grebe species were all well-reported this season. There were two sightings of first year Northern Gannets moving past Derby Hill in November; the species had not been seen in the Region since 1983. For the fourth consecutive year, a Great Cormorant arrived in Oswego Harbor in November. Great Egrets were found in several locations and lingered into October. A Greater White-fronted Goose was found in Baldwinsville, commuting between two sites for a few days, and two Canada Geese described as the "Richardson's" race were reported, one of them videotaped, at Utica Marsh. There was a record migration of White-winged Scoters at Derby Hill in October, but Surf and Black scoter numbers were not high. Other waterfowl reported in low numbers were Snow Goose, both teal, American Wigeon, *Aythya* ducks and American Coot. The Wood Duck count at Toad Harbor has "suffered" due to a wealth of habitat so that the evening flight can no longer be seen from a single point.

Near Lake Ontario, there was a strong early September flight of Northern Harriers, Sharp-shinned Hawks, Broad-winged Hawks and American Kestrels. Turkey Vultures and Red-tailed Hawks were moving in good numbers by the middle of October, Rough-legged Hawks arrived in mid October but were not concentrated in any areas by the end of the period. Golden Eagle sightings continue to increase in the fall. Five for the season may not seem very many, but compare that with only six sightings for the entire 38 year period from 1957 through 1994! Peregrine Falcon numbers were good, with a pair apparently establishing themselves in Syracuse.

Shorebirds were generally disappointing. Besides Delta Lake, numbers at both Fair Haven and Sylvan Beach were low while Sandy Pond sightings were about average. There was a brief American Golden-Plover migration, only two White-rumped Sandpipers, one Purple Sandpiper and no phalaropes. Good finds were Whimbrel, Western Sandpiper and Stilt Sandpipers at Sandy Pond and a good flight of American Woodcock at Thendara in late October. Jaegers were one of the high spots of the season, with several good days in September and October. A **Long-tailed Jaeger** on 11 October, in the company of several Parasitics and a Pomarine, was only the third Regional record of a live bird. Northern gulls had made only a little push into our area by the end of the season, with only one Glaucous reported. Several Black Terns, unreported in August, could be found at Sandy Pond well into September and stayed longer than Forster's Tern, which usually lingers into October.

Many observers noted calling Eastern Screech-Owls in September. A Barn Owl was found again in the Town of Victory, where it was seen and heard several times during the summer, and Snowy Owls made their first big push into our area since

1997. It appeared that the November snow pushed most Short-eared Owls out of the area. A *Selasphorus* hummingbird was videotaped by Donna Trumble at her feeder in Port Byron and was thought to be a Rufous, although positive identification has not yet been made. It is the first record of a *Selasphorus* species for the Region. In northern Herkimer County, Black-backed Woodpecker, Gray Jay and Boreal Chickadee were all found.

Flycatcher reports were few; only single Olive-sided and Yellow-bellied and no Eastern Kingbirds were noted. Northern Shrike looked as if it would be plentiful over the winter, while a Loggerhead Shrike was very late on 21 October, especially considering its now rare status in the state. Swallows were nearly unreported for the season, with extremely early last dates for Tree and Barn swallows.

The Energy Information Center in Scriba is known as a spring hotspot and it proved to be good this fall as well. Rarities included White-eyed Vireo, Connecticut Warbler, several Gray-cheeked Thrushes and a Dickcissel. Many of the warbler and sparrow reports for the season also came from the EIC but fall warbler numbers were very low, especially away from Lake Ontario. Daily counts of most species other than Yellow-rumped seldom reached a handful and Cape May Warbler was not reported. The sparrow migration started well, with a good count of Lincoln's Sparrows at Lake Ontario and a rare fall Grasshopper Sparrow, but ended with very low numbers for American Tree and Fox sparrows.

Pine Siskins moved through in October in small numbers, White-winged Crossbills moved into the Adirondacks, but there were few elsewhere, and almost no Red Crossbills were found anywhere. Purple Finches were quite scarce for the season, and even American Goldfinches seemed to disappear for a time, probably the result of the breeding birds moving out and a lag until migrants arrived to fill the gap.

A total of 233 species was reported for the season. Rare species for the Region included **Northern Gannet**, Great Cormorant, Greater White-fronted Goose, **Long-tailed Jaeger**, **Barn Owl**, *Selasphorus* hummingbird, **Loggerhead Shrike**, White-eyed Vireo and Dickcissel. Other hard-to-find species were Whimbrel, Western and Purple sandpipers, Pomarine Jaeger, Forster's Tern, Gray-cheeked Thrush, Orange-crowned and Connecticut warblers and Grasshopper Sparrow.

CONTRIBUTORS

Sue Adair, Ginny Alfano, Sue Boettger, Joseph Brin, Bernie Carr, Dorothy W. Crumb, Jim D'Angelo, Natalia Garcia, Bill Gruenbaum, Barbara Herrgesell, Larry Hogan, Gene Huggins, Mary Alice Koeneke, Gary Lee, Robert Long, Kevin McGann, Margaret Napoleon, David Nash, Matt Perry, Gerard Phillips, Bill Purcell, John Rogers, Marge Rusk, Tom Salo, Mickey Scilingo, Tony Shrimpton, Gerald Smith, Maureen Staloff, Matt Victoria, Judy Wright, Ken Zoller.

ABBREVIATIONS

Adks – Adirondacks; BRH – Bishop Road Hawkwatch, Pulaski; Bvll – Baldwinsville; CM – Clay Marsh; DH – Derby Hill; DL – Delta Lake; EIC – Niagara Mohawk Energy Information Center at Nine Mile Point; FH – Fair Haven, Little Sodus Bay and vicinity; GSC – Great Swamp Conservancy MADI; HIWMA – Howland Island WMA; LOL – Lake Ontario Littoral; OnonL – Onondaga Lake; SFWS – Spring Farm Wildlife Sanctuary, Kirkland; SPd – Sandy Pond; SSSP – Selkirk Shores State Park; StMC – Saint Mary's Cemetery, Dewitt; SVB – Sylvan and Verona Beach; Syr – Syracuse; UM – Utica Marsh; WPd – Woodman Pond

LOONS – DUCKS

Red-throated Loon: arr DH 8 Oct; max 15 FH 19 Nov; Dart's L 21 Nov, unusual Adks.

Com. Loon: arr SPd 10 Sep; max 300 Nine Mile Pt 26 Oct.

Pied-billed Grebe: max 11 UM 20 Oct.

Horned Grebe: arr 22 DH 11 Oct; max 53 Sterling 19 Nov.

Red-necked Grebe: 3 DH 21 Oct; 2 SSSP 9 Nov; 2 Minoa 14-18 Nov; 3 Nine Mile Pt 29 Nov.

NORTHERN GANNET: single first winter birds DH 4 Nov (KM) and 11 Nov (BP), both to NYSARC, first Regional sightings since 1983.

Double-crested Cormorant: max 140 OnonL 13 Sep; Big Moose L 24 Nov, late for Adks.

GREAT CORMORANT: arr Oswego 16 Nov; max 2 Oswego 30 Nov.

Great Egret: max 5 GSC and DL 3 Sep; W Monroe to 7 Sep; Old Fly Marsh 19 Sep; 2 DL 2 Oct, late.

Green Heron: max 18 CM 7 Sep; last W Monroe 13 Oct.

Black-crowned Night-Heron: 2 OnonL 2 Sep; SPd 3 Sep; UM 14 Sep.

Turkey Vulture: max 111 BRH 15 Oct; 53 in 15 minutes Bvll 10 Oct, headed south.

Snow Goose: max 65 W Winfield 2 Oct.

Greater White-fronted Goose: Bvll 11-14 Oct (JB, mob), unconfirmed reports of one same area to 3 Nov.

Canada Goose: big flights 28 Sep, 15 Oct; 10 Nov; max 4000 Sauquoit 10 Nov; single "Richardson's" UM 11 Oct (ph) and Bvll 24 Oct.

Brant: arr DH 28 Sep; max 800 DH 11 Oct; 385 over Pompey 15 Nov; flight period earlier and more spread than many years.

Mute Swan: 2 FH 5 Sep; 2 GSC 21 Oct; 2 WPd thru.

Tundra Swan: arr 3 FH 6 Nov; max 8 FH 25 Nov.

Wood Duck: max 730 Toad Harbor 5 Sep; 80 UM 26 Oct, late for large numbers.

Gadwall: max 11 FH 1 Nov.

Am. Wigeon: arr 5 DH 21 Sep; max 80 FH 5 Nov.

Am. Black Duck: max 53 DH 28 Oct.

Blue-winged Teal: max 20 DL 25 Sep; last FH 5 Nov.

N. Shoveler: arr SVB 1 Sep; max 12 FH 8 Oct.

N. Pintail: HIWMA 16 Sep; max 20 FH 22 Oct..

Green-winged Teal: max 14 GSC 5 Nov.

Canvasback: max only 3 FH 10 Nov and WPd 16 Nov.

Redhead: max 5 FH 24 Nov.

Ring-necked Duck: max 120 Clay 16 Nov.

Greater Scaup: max 40 DH 19 Nov.

Lesser Scaup: 3 FH 5 Nov.

Surf Scoter: max 11 DH 8 Oct.

White-winged Scoter: max 1600 DH 11 Oct (GP), record flight.
Black Scoter: arr and max 35 DH 28 Sep.
Long-tailed Duck: arr 2 DH 11 Oct; max 690 DH 11 Nov; UM 12-17 Nov, unusual.
Bufflehead: arr DH 29 Oct; max 50 Clay 16 Nov.
Com. Goldeneye: arr DH 28 Oct.
Hooded Merganser: 9 Minoa 18 Nov; max 48 Brewerton 25 Nov.
Com. Merganser: max 800 OnonL 28 Nov.
Red-breasted Merganser: max 282 FH 8 Nov.
Ruddy Duck: max 65 Minoa 16 Oct.

HAWKS – ALCIDS

Osprey: max 8 BRH 4 Sep; last FH 10 Nov.
Bald Eagle: max 8 BRH 4 Sep.
N. Harrier: max 18 BRH 4 Sep.
Sharp-shinned Hawk: max 41 BRH 4 Sep.
Cooper's Hawk: 11 for season.
N. Goshawk: BRH 2 Sep; Tassel Hill ONEI 7 Oct; Green Lakes SP 19 Nov.
Red-shouldered Hawk: singles SFWS 18 Sep and FH 27 Oct.
Broad-winged Hawk: max 576 BRH 4 Sep, early for a large flight; last 6 Oneida Hill T Augusta 26 Sep.
Red-tailed Hawk: max 88 BRH 15 Oct.
Rough-legged Hawk: arr and max 5 BRH 15 Oct.
Golden Eagle: singles BRH 15 Oct, T Sullivan 21 Oct, Durhamville 22 Oct, DH 28 Oct, L Julia 30 Oct; continues recent trend of increased fall reports.
Am. Kestrel: max 21 BRH 4 Sep.
Merlin: 7 reports for period; Oswego 30 Nov, may be trying to winter.
Peregrine Falcon: max 3 DL 3 Sep; T Sullivan 3 Sep; 2 Fabius 24 Sep; 2 LOL 6 Oct; 2 Syr after 10 Oct; DH 11 Nov.
Ring-necked Pheasant: only 8 reported.

Ruffed Grouse: max 5 SFWS 12 Nov.
Wild Turkey: expected; flocks of up to 15 common; 2 reports of early Sep FL.
Com. Moorhen: max and last 13 W Monroe 7 Sep.
Am. Coot: max 65 WPd 16 Nov; FH max only 20 on 6 Nov.
Black-bellied Plover: max 21 SPd 15 Oct; SPd 24 Oct.
Am. Golden-Plover: 2 DH 21 Sep; 9 Victory 25-27 Sep; 9 T Augusta 27 Sep; DL 28 Sep; a very brief migration.
Semipalmated Plover: max 18 SPd 10 Sep; last 3 FH 30 Sep.
Killdeer: max 190 Victory 25 Sep.
Greater Yellowlegs: max 6 DL 7 Sep; last FH 26 Oct.
Lesser Yellowlegs: max 12 SPd 11 Sep; last 2 DL 2 Oct.
Solitary Sandpiper: max 2 DL 2-4 Sep; last Baltimore Woods 19 Sep.
Spotted Sandpiper: singles DL to 12 Sep; last OnonL 26 Sep.
Whimbrel: SPd 11 Sep (MR).
Ruddy Turnstone: 6 singles, last FH 30 Sep.
Red Knot: max 4 SPd 3 Sep; last SPd 4 Oct.
Sanderling: max 120 SPd 23 Sep; last 14 SPd 24 Oct..
Semipalmated Sandpiper: max 35 SVB 4 Sep; last 3 SPd and 6 DL 23 Sep.
Western Sandpiper: SPd 17 Sep (BP, KM).
Least Sandpiper: max 24 DL 3 Sep; last SPd 18 Sep.
White-rumped Sandpiper: SVB 4 Sep; DL 28 Sep.
Baird's Sandpiper: OnonL 13 Sep; max 2 SPd 12 Sep.
Pectoral Sandpiper: max 35 DL 28 Sep; last 2 SPd 15 Oct.
Purple Sandpiper: FH 11 Nov (JB).
Dunlin: arr 6 SPd 23 Sep; max 31 SPd 15 Oct; last 2 FH 24 Nov.
Stilt Sandpiper: 4 SPd 11 Sep (MR).
Short-billed Dowitcher: 2 SPd 3 Sep;

only report.

Com. Snipe: max 8 Bvle 1 Oct.

Am. Woodcock: 18 Thendara 28 Oct, feeding on golf course; SVB 27 Sep; 2 Cicero 15 Oct.

Parasitic Jaeger: 3 DH 21 Sep; DH 8 Oct; 7 DH 11 Oct.

Pomarine Jaeger: 2 DH 11 Oct; DH 21 Oct.

LONG-TAILED JAEGER: DH 11 Oct (report to NYSARC) (GP!, KM, JW).
jaeger species: DH 21 Sep; 5 DH 11 Oct.

Little Gull: DH 28 Oct.

Bonaparte's Gull: max 105 SVB 4 Sep.

Glaucous Gull: arr FH 19 Nov.

Black-legged Kittiwake: singles DH 11 and 29 Oct.

Caspian Tern: max 46 SPd 3 Sep; last 7 SPd 23 Sep.

Com. Tern: max 85 SPd 12 Sep; last DH 19 Oct.

Forster's Tern: 1-2 SPd 11-18 Sep.

Black Tern: max 3 SPd 13 Sep; last SPd 23 Sep.

PIGEONS – WOODPECKERS

Yellow-billed Cuckoo: HIWMA 16 Sep; EIC 23 Sep.

BARN OWL: Victory 26 Sep, same location as summer report (JD).

E. Screech Owl: reports of 13 calling in Sep, typical.

Great Horned Owl: pairs calling Scriba, Ava, Durhamville, CM.

Snowy Owl: arr Oswego, FH 5 Nov; at least 6 individuals for month.

Barred Owl: 2 Highland Forest 24 Sep; 2 SSSP 15 Oct.

Short-eared Owl: 3 Verona 19 Nov.

Com. Nighthawk: Otisco 25 Sep, only report.

Chimney Swift: max 3 several locations, low.

Ruby-throated Hummingbird: max 5 SPd 17 Sep; last DH 21 Sep.

SELASPHORUS SP: imm male Port

Byron 30 Sep (ph) (Donna Trumble, *fide* DC, BP, Kevin McGowan); first Regional record.

Yellow-bellied Sapsucker: max 12 EIC 23 Sep; last StMC 11 Nov.

Black-backed Woodpecker: Lost Brook HERK 29 Oct.

N. Flicker: max 20 Durhamville 26 Sep.

FLYCATCHERS – WAXWINGS

Olive-sided Flycatcher: HIWMA 9 Sep, only report.

E. Wood-Pewee: 2 reports of early Sep FL; max 5 Whiskey Hollow 5 Sep; last 2 EIC 17 Oct.

Yellow-bellied Flycatcher: EIC 23 Sep, only report.

Least Flycatcher: last EIC 8 Oct.

E. Phoebe: max 7 DH 10 Oct; last 4 EIC 17 Oct.

Great Crested Flycatcher: 3 reports; last Split Rock 29 Sep.

N. Shrike: arr DL 20 Oct, W Winfield 24 Oct; about 8 others after 12 Nov.

LOGGERHEAD SHRIKE: Bvle 21 Oct (JB, report to NYSARC); late, especially considering now rare status.

WHITE-EYED VIREO: EIC 17 Oct (GP).

Yellow-throated Vireo: max and last 3 HIWMA 16 Sep.

Blue-headed Vireo: max 6 CM 11 Oct; last 2 EIC 17 Oct.

Warbling Vireo: 5 reports to 19 Sep.

Philadelphia Vireo: max 4 UM 22 Sep; 7 other singles 5 Sep-15 Oct.

Red-eyed Vireo: max 6 EIC 24 Sep; last 27 Sep.

Gray Jay: Thendara 27 Oct.

Blue Jay: max 100 SVB 27 Sep.

Am. Crow: max 2050 BRH 22 Oct.

Com. Raven: not reported outside Adks.

Horned Lark: max 20 Sullivan 3 Sep; widespread Oct-Nov, less than 10 per day.

Tree Swallow: max 350 Victory 24 Sep; last Victory 30 Sep.

N. Rough-winged Swallow: max and last 11 SPd 10 Sep.
Bank Swallow: max and last 8 SPd 10 Sep.
Cliff Swallow: T Sullivan 3 Sep, only report.
Barn Swallow: max 90 SPd 10 Sep.
Boreal Chickadee: Lost Brook HERK 31 Oct (GL).
Tufted Titmouse: max 11 Whiskey Hollow 10 Sep.
Red-breasted Nuthatch: max 14 Pratts Falls 22 Sep; many in breeding areas thru.
Carolina Wren: Baltimore Woods 19 Sep; Syr 16 Nov.
House Wren: max 52 EIC 22 Sep (MV); last Van Buren 15 Oct.
Winter Wren: max 7 EIC 22 Sep.
Marsh Wren: max 9 CM 7 Sep; last CM 15 Nov.
Golden-crowned Kinglet: max 70 StMC 14 Oct.
Ruby-crowned Kinglet: max 150 EIC 17 Oct; last DH 28 Oct.
Blue-gray Gnatcatcher: 2 Whiskey Hollow 3 Sep; last HIWMA and Durhamville 16 Sep.
E. Bluebird: max 16 Pompey 3 Sep.
Veery: 2 SVB 4 Sep; HIWMA 16 Sep; last Oneida 17 Oct (BB), late.
Gray-cheeked Thrush: EIC 24 Sep; 2 EIC 8 Oct.
Swainson's Thrush: arr SPd 10 Sep; 5 other reports to 17 Oct.
Hermit Thrush: max 20 EIC 17 Oct.^f
Wood Thrush: last 1 SVB and 3 Nine Mile Pt 27 Sep.
Gray Catbird: max 9 W Monroe 7 Sep; last 3 EIC 17 Oct.
Brown Thrasher: EIC 23 Sep; Syr 27 Sep; DH 28 Sep.
Am. Pipit: max 50 per day 27 Sep-15 Oct various sites; last 3 Bvll 10 Nov.
Cedar Waxwing: max 108 StMC 22 Nov.

WARBLERS

Tennessee Warbler: 10 reported to 28 Sep.
Orange-crowned Warbler: arr SPd 16 Sep; Hastings 25 Sep; 2 EIC 17 Oct.
Nashville Warbler: max 6 DH 28 Sep; last EIC and SFWS 17 Oct.
N. Parula: few reports; last Pompey 30 Sep.
Yellow Warbler: max 3 SPd 10 Sep; last EIC 25 Sep.
Chestnut-sided Warbler: only 4 reported to 22 Sep.
Magnolia Warbler: max 5 StMC 23 Sep; last 3 EIC 17 Oct.
Black-throated Blue Warbler: 1-2 per day after 9 Sep; last Nine Mile Pt 18 Oct.
Yellow-rumped Warbler: max 30 EIC 17 Oct.
Black-throated Green Warbler: max 22 SFWS 13 Sep; last CM 11 Oct.
Blackburnian Warbler: only 1 per day to 27 Sep.
Pine Warbler: DH 26 Sep; only report.
Palm Warbler: 1-2 per day 13-24 Sep.
Bay-breasted Warbler: max 3 SFWS 15 Sep; last SVB 19 Sep.
Blackpoll Warbler: 1-2 per day to 30 Sep.
Black-and-white Warbler: max and last 3 EIC 24 Sep.
Am. Redstart: last 2 FH 30 Sep.
Ovenbird: 3 reports; last EIC 26 Sep.
N. Waterthrush: Bvll 7 Sep; only report.
Connecticut Warbler: EIC 22 Sep (MV).
Mourning Warbler: Cicero 19 Sep; EIC 22 Sep.
Com. Yellowthroat: max 11 EIC 24 Sep; last SFWS 16 Nov.
Hooded Warbler: 3 Whiskey Hollow 3 Sep; only report.
Wilson's Warbler: max 6 EIC 13 Sep; last DH 8 Oct.
Canada Warbler: SVB 22 Sep.

TANAGERS – WEAVERS

Scarlet Tanager: max 2 EIC 24 Sep; last DL 28 Sep.

E. Towhee: max 5 CM 11 Oct.

Am. Tree Sparrow: arr W Winfield, SFWS 6 Nov; max 7 CM 15 Nov; scarce.

Chipping Sparrow: max 12 Scriba 8 Oct.

Field Sparrow: max 7 EIC 17 Oct; last DL 25 Oct.

Vesper Sparrow: Oneida 17 Oct; 2 Van Buren 21 Oct.

Savannah Sparrow: max 9 Pompey 3 Sep; last Van Buren 21 Oct.

Grasshopper Sparrow: Hastings 28 Sep, rare in fall.

Fox Sparrow: arr EIC 9 Oct; last StMC 11 Nov; only 6 reports.

Song Sparrow: max 60 W Monroe 13 Oct.

Lincoln's Sparrow: arr LOL 13 Sep; max 12 EIC 23 Sep; last LOL 17 Oct; 2 SFWS 25 Sep and 1 StMC 14 Oct, only inland reports.

Swamp Sparrow: max 40 W Monroe 13 Oct.

White-throated Sparrow: max 90 W Monroe 13 Oct.

White-crowned Sparrow: arr EIC 27 Sep; max 18 SPd 18 Oct.

Dark-eyed Junco: max 24 Beaver L 26 Nov.

Dark-eyed "Oregon" Junco: Parish 20 Nov thru.

Lapland Longspur: 3 FH 1 Oct; Verona 28 Oct; 2 Scriba 11 Nov.

Snow Bunting: arr FH 22 Oct; max 250

Scriba 11 Nov.

Rose-breasted Grosbeak: max 6 EIC 23 Sep; last Syr 27 Sep.

Indigo Bunting: last Pompey 19 Sep.

DICKCISSEL: EIC 23 Sep (GP, MAK).

Bobolink: last 10 T Sullivan and 30 BRH 3 Sep.

E. Meadowlark: only 4 reports; last Bvll 24 Nov.

Rusty Blackbird: arr CM 5 Oct; max 60 W Monroe 13 Oct.

Com. Grackle: max 18000 Hastings 26 Oct, 15 minutes of counting.

Brown-headed Cowbird: max 400 W Winfield 25 Nov.

Baltimore Oriole: Green Lakes SP 3 Sep; only report.

Purple Finch: max 3 per day 15 Oct-10 Nov.

Red Crossbill: 2 Clark Reservation SP 27 Sep.

White-winged Crossbill: displaying throughout N HERK; 2 Boylston 9 Sep, only other report.

Com. Redpoll: arr Big Moose L 19 Nov.

Pine Siskin: arr 2 SVB 1 Oct; max 30 DH 19 Oct; small Oct flight.

Am. Goldfinch: max 80 Pompey 19 Sep.

Evening Grosbeak: 2 Clayville 11 Oct; only report outside Adks.

CORRIGENDUM

Vol 50(3): **Am. Redstart:** arr 3 May, not 3 Apr.

wpurcell@dreamscape.com
315-668-2871

