

REGION 10 – MARINE

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The weather was warm and dry again this season. There was little snow and there were few cold days. After the warmest November on record, December's mean temperature was 44.1°F. There were four new record highs, three at the beginning of the month and one in the middle. The temperature did not dip below freezing until month's end. Then, January had a mean of 39.9° versus a 32.1° norm. January was the eighth warmest on record. Without any new highs, February tied for warmest February on record, with a mean temperature of 40.6° versus a 34.6° norm.

December's rainfall totaled 2.27", 1.63" below normal; January had 1.93" and 2.19" below normal; and February, 0.71", 2.44" below normal. With a trace of snow, February was the third driest on record and tied for the second lowest snowfall for a February.

The majority of the Christmas Bird Counts in the Region occurred on the first available weekend. This was during a period of unprecedented warm weather, both prior to and during mid December. As a consequence, they reported a spate of late

and/or delayed migrants and an abundance of half-hardies.

With the results now on the Internet (although not completely easy to use), it is possible to examine reports systematically. In viewing the 11 Long Island counts, in Kings, Queens, Nassau and Suffolk counties, 77 Great Egrets were reported, a remarkable number. The Southern Nassau count had 49 of this total. Another species we looked at was Red-tailed Hawk, now resident in Manhattan's Central Park and evidently also in Brooklyn recently. There were 274 on Long Island and an additional 53 on Staten Island. These large raptors are doing remarkably well.

A **Pacific Loon** in near alternate plumage was found by Steve Biasetti in Seatuck Creek, East Hampton on 22 December. It subsequently appeared in Tuthill Cove, East Moriches and Center Moriches until at least the end of the month.

On 1 December, Dave Russell, of Elmira, joined a pelagic trip out of Brielle, New Jersey, into New Jersey and New York waters. In New York waters, he reported 30 **Northern Fulmars**, 2 Manx Shearwaters, 100 Northern Gannets, 400 Red Phalaropes, 12 Pomarine Jaegers, 1 Parasitic Jaeger, 3 Laughing Gulls, 50 Bonaparte's Gulls, 3 Lesser Black-backed Gulls, 1000 Black-legged Kittiwakes, 2 Razorbills and 1 Atlantic Puffin. He commented, "It was a great trip!" (Phil Jeffrey posted a similar report.)

A number of Greater White-fronted Geese wintered in the area from Calverton to the Hamptons. Some of these appeared to be hybrids with Canada Geese. The **Ross's Goose** seen late last season in Calverton, Suffolk County, was found again in early December, returned on 5 January, and stayed to be seen on and off to 6 February. Several small form Canada Geese were reported from the same place and at Hook Pond, East Hampton. Although these almost always seem to be called "Richardson's" subspecies, with no explanation for how this was determined, that designation cannot be assumed.

The **Barnacle Goose** reported last season remained. A second, which may have been present all along, was also found. The birds, never in the same area at the same time, were found on various ponds on both the North and South forks in mid February. A third bird was located on Oakland Lake in Bayside, Queens on 1 January by Art Skopec. It was subsequently reported there by others on 3 and 23 February.

The provenance of Barnacle Goose on the east coast remains an ongoing problem. Interestingly, more than a half-dozen others were reported this winter at various places in the mid-Atlantic and Northeast. It is not known how the various state records committees will act on reports submitted. It might be noted that the breeding range of this species in Europe has recently undergone a change, with birds nesting far south of their historic Arctic range. Perhaps, as new breeding/migration patterns emerge, this might be an explanation for these birds.

A Tufted Duck was found on Swan Pond, Patchogue on 12 January and was last reported 21 January. Also on that date, a bird appearing to be a drake Tufted Duck, but with a short tuft, was spotted on Massapequa Lake. On 24 February, the latter bird was identified as a Tufted Duck/scaup hybrid by Ken Feustel and others.

This season we seem to have had a proliferation of both western and European

waterfowl, including Greater White-fronted Goose, Ross's Goose, Barnacle Goose, Eurasian Wigeon, "Eurasian" Green-winged Teal, Tufted Duck and Barrow's Goldeneye. Is it the weather?

On 27 January, Steve Nanz and Inara Schwartz reported a large white falcon by the lake in Prospect Park, Brooklyn. Steve subsequently identified the bird as a Gyrfalcon. A NYSARC report was requested.

A Lesser Yellowlegs was at Center Moriches 24 December. Another was found on the Southern Nassau CBC at Massapequa Preserve 30 December. The latter stayed through the winter, along with a large group of Greater Yellowlegs and 3-4 Long-billed Dowitchers. Among other out-of-season shorebirds was a Willet on the Quogue-Watermill CBC 15 December.

A **White-winged Dove** appeared at a feeder in Theodore Roosevelt County Park, Montauk, 6-7 December.

The two **Calliope Hummingbirds**, reported last season at Fort Tryon Park, Manhattan, but identified just as this season started, remained until 26 and 27 December. On 25 December, while birding in Central Park with a group, Tom Fiore came across a hummingbird, tentatively identified as a member of the *Selasphorus* group.

On 16 December, Richard Guthrie reported that Kenn Kaufman, Scott Haber and others birding in Central Park saw and heard an *Empidonax* flycatcher. The observers noted it as "99% sure it is a **Least Flycatcher**," per Kaufman's comments that the remaining uncertainty was "because we could not rule out Dusky." Later in the morning, some vocalizations (call notes only) were heard, which Kaufman used to eliminate most other *Empidonax* species. "We did note a small bill, rather distinctive eye-ring, and other more subtle features which will be enumerated on the rare bird sighting report to be submitted to NYSARC." This date for an *Empidonax* flycatcher, regardless of species, is remarkable.

On 1 December, Steve Walter reported an Ash-throated Flycatcher at Fort Tilden, Queens, along with a late Blue-gray Gnatcatcher. The gnatcatcher was found again 15 December on the Brooklyn CBC. Another Ash-throated Flycatcher was found on the Central Suffolk CBC along Wading River Road on 22 December. An Eastern Phoebe was seen on the Montauk CBC 15 December. There were also two different Western Kingbirds, one at Mashomack Preserve, Shelter Island, from 7 December to 4 January, and the other at Oak Beach, Suffolk County, on 7 December.

This very warm winter produced its share of the usual wintering warblers, including: Orange-crowned, Yellow-rumped and Palm warblers, Common Yellowthroat and Yellow-breasted Chat. In addition, an additional ten species were seen for shorter periods, including: **Tennessee Warbler**, six Nashville Warblers, two Northern Parulas, four Pine Warblers, two Blackpoll Warblers, Black-and-white Warbler, American Redstart, two Ovenbirds, Northern Waterthrush and two Wilson's Warblers. That totals 15 warbler species for the winter season, probably a record number for the state!

There was a reasonably large movement of northern finches this past fall, but

few remained to winter. If birds that migrated through our area on the way south were on the move, they seemed to have returned by a different route.

CONTRIBUTORS

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ABBREVIATIONS

APP – Alley Pond P QUEUE; CP – Central P; DP – Democrat Pt FI; FBF – Floyd Bennett Field; FI – Fire I; FP – Forest P QUEUE; FTR – Ft. Tyron P Manhattan; FTT – Fort Tilden QUEUE; GC – Green-wood Cemetery KING; GRP – Grumman Pd, Calverton SUFF; HP – Hook Pd, Southampton; INP – Inwood P, Manhattan; JBCH – Jones Beach; JBWE – Jones Beach West End; JBWR – Jamaica Bay Wildlife Refuge; LI – Long I; MAP – Massapequa Preserve NASS; MNSA – Marine Nature Study Area, Oceanside; MP – Montauk Pt; MSH – Mashomack Preserve, Shelter I; NYRBA – New York Rare Bird Alert; PAL – Patchogue L SUFF; PBP – Pelham Bay P BRON; PEL – pelagic trip to Hudson Canyon; PL – Pt Lookout side Jones Inlet; PP – Prospect P KING; RB – Ransom Beach, Bayville NASS; SHIN – Shinnecock Inlet; SHU – Shu Swamp (Mill Neck Preserve) NASS; SI – Staten I; SP – Shorts Pd, Bridgehampton; VCP – Van Cortlandt P BRON.

Christmas Bird Count designations (These 4 letter codes can also be used to look up full results on the Internet) NJLH – Lower Hudson 16 Dec; NYBR – Brooklyn 15 Dec; NYBW – Bronx-Westchester 23 Dec; NYCA – Captree 16 Dec; NYCS – Central Suffolk Co 22 Dec; NYMK – Montauk 15 Dec; NYNN – Northern Nassau Co 22 Dec; NYOR – Orient 29 Dec; NYQU – Queens 15 Dec; NYQW – Quogue-Watermill 15 Dec; NYSG – Sagaponack 16 Dec; NYSI – Staten Island 15 Dec; NYSM – Smithtown 27 Dec; NYSN – Southern Nassau Co 30 Dec.

LOONS – DUCKS

PACIFIC LOON: Seatuck Creek East Hampton 22 Dec (SB) to end of month.
N. FULMAR: 30 PEL 1 Dec.

Manx Shearwater: 2 PEL 1 Dec.

N. Gannet: 100 PEL 1 Dec.

Great Egret: 77 on 11 LI CBCs, including 49 NYSN 30 Dec.

Snowy Egret: BBP 23 Dec-26 Jan.
Little Blue Heron: NYCA 16 Dec;
 NYOR North Haven 29 Dec.
Tricolored Heron: PL 5 Jan (KF).
Cattle Egret: NYSG Bridgehampton 16 Dec (PAB, SM).
Turkey Vulture: 7 FTR 7 Dec; 3 NYBK 15 Dec; NYQU 15 Dec; CP 22 Jan; FBF & JBWR 26 Jan; Northville 14 Feb; 2 Montauk 16 Feb; Calverton & Rocky Mt Conservation Area & Sag Harbor 22 Feb.
Greater White-fronted Goose: up to 4 wintered from Calverton to the Hamptons; also several white-fronted x Canada hybrids.
Snow Goose: large number wintered JBWR; others.
ROSS'S GOOSE: GRP last season, early Dec, returned 5 Jan, then on and off to 6 Feb.
Canada Goose: small forms HP & GRP.
BARNACLE GOOSE: 1 reported last season continued & 2nd, which may have been present all along, at various ponds both forks LI into mid Jan, reappeared mid Feb; Oakland L Bayside QUEE 1 Jan, 3 & 23 Feb (AS).
Tundra Swan: sev HP and ponds in East Hampton area thru; max 7 but mostly 2-3.
Wood Duck: 20 SHU 5 Jan.
Eurasian Wigeon: GC & RB thru; PAL and 3-4 others to the east.
Green-winged "Eurasian" Teal: VCP thru; NYSN Oceanside 30 Dec; Baldwin 4 Jan; Speonk 25 Dec-21 Jan; NYCS, Ransom Beach 22 Dec- late Jan; Short's Pd Bridgehampton 12-26 Jan.
Tufted Duck: Swan Pd Patchogue 12-21 Jan.
Tufted Duck x scaup sp: looked like a drake Tufted Duck with a short tuft Massapequa L 21 Feb thru, identified as hybrid 24 Feb (KF, et al).
King Eider: small numbers MP thru.
Com. Eider: PL 10 Dec; JBWE 19 Dec; daily MP; max 1000 MP 26 Jan.
Harlequin Duck: up to 7 PL thru; LI Sound at Northville; 2 off Georgica Cut;

3 Horton Pt; off Ransom Beach Bayville; MP.

scoters: at MP were in the thousands, perhaps 10,000 White-winged and 5000 Surf, with numbers of Black lower, but with good numbers along the South Shore at places like Ditch Plains and Georgica Pd 19 Jan.

Barrow's Goldeneye: NYOR 29 Dec, east side Shelter I 29 Dec; RB late Dec thru.

HAWKS – ALCIDS

Osprey: JBWR 15 Dec; 2 arr Napeague Meadow Rd East Hampton 16 Feb, record early.

Bald Eagle: FTR 8 Dec; NYSG East Hampton Town Dump 16 Dec; NYNN Lloyd Harbor 22 Dec; Riverside P 2 Jan.

Red-tailed Hawk: 274 on 11 LI CBCs 15-30 Dec; 53 NYSI 15 Dec.

Rough-legged Hawk: 2 light morph Cutchogue 2 Dec; dark morph East Hampton Town Dump 16 Dec; Montauk 15 & 22 Dec; 2 NYSN 30 Dec.

Gyr Falcon: white morph PP 27 Jan (SN, IS); NYSARC report requested.

Wild Turkey: INP 16 Dec & 7 Feb; 5 NYSG 16 Dec; GRP area 1 Jan.

N. Bobwhite: 27 NYMK 15 Dec; 11 NYSG 16 Dec.

Virginia Rail: 6 NYMK 15 Dec; 3 NYSG 16 Dec; 3 NYNN 22 Dec; 2 NYSN 30 Dec; MAP 4 Jan; SHU 5 Jan.

Com. Moorhen: imm Aquebogue 15 Jan; on a creek along Hall's Ln Bridgehampton 17 Jan.

Am. Oystercatcher: 10 DP 5 Dec; 19 NYSN 30 Dec.

Greater Yellowlegs: sev MAP 30 Dec thru.

Lesser Yellowlegs: Center Moriches 24 Dec; MAP 30 Dec thru.

Willet: NYQW 15 Dec.

Red Knot: sev dozen in Dunlin/Black-bellied Plover flock JBWE thru.

Purple Sandpiper: rock jetties Breezy Pt KING to MP; numbers at each place much

smaller this year.

Dunlin: 2000-3000 on beach JBWE with Black-bellied Plover, Red Knot, Sanderling thru.

Long-billed Dowitcher: 3-4 MAP 30 Dec thru.

dowitcher sp: 2 NYNN 22 Dec.

Com. Snipe: 2 NYBK 15 Dec; 2 NYNN 22 Dec; MAP late Dec thru; East Quogue; others.

Red Phalarope: 400 PEL 1 Dec.

Pomarine Jaeger: 12 PEL 1 Dec.

Parasitic Jaeger: 1 PEL 1 Dec.

Laughing Gull: 3 PEL 1 Dec.

Little Gull: PL 14 Jan then sporadically thru; SHIN 3 Feb.

Black-headed Gull: Georgica Pd thru; 2-3 PL thru; PP 1 Jan thru.

Iceland Gull: widely scattered.

Lesser Black-backed Gull: 3 PEL 1 Dec; others widely scattered.

Glaucous Gull: JBCH 20 Jan; Agawam Pd 26-27 Jan; SHIN 3 Feb; PAL 10 Feb.

Black-legged Kittiwake: 1000 PEL 1 Dec; numbers wintered off MP.

Dovekie: oil-soaked bird found at Three Mile Harbor 1 Dec, died next day at rehabilitator; fly-by MP 29 Jan.

Forster's Tern: Georgica Pd 5 Dec.

Com. Murre: MP 25 Feb (JF).

Thick-billed Murre: MP 26 Dec (JC), 1 Jan (PL).

Razorbill: large numbers wintered MP, max 75; 2 PEL 1 Dec; 4 Cedar Pt East Hampton 29 Dec; JBCH fishing piers 1 Jan; 2 Long Beach 19 Jan; 2 FTT 19 Jan; Culloden Pt 19 Jan; 6 off SHIN 24 Feb.

Atlantic Puffin: PEL 1 Dec.

DOVES – WOODPECKERS

WHITE-WINGED DOVE: Theodore Roosevelt County Pk Montauk 6-7 Dec, at feeder.

Monk Parakeet: 23 NYBK 15 Dec; 2 Fort Schuyler (NY Maritime College) 26 Jan; 7 Lynbrook 9 Feb; resident PBP.

Barn Owl: FBF 23 Dec; 2 NYSN 30 Dec.

Snowy Owl: Gilgo 5 Dec; 3 JBWE thru;

Dune Rd near Ponquogue Bridge; Breezy Pt 1 Jan thru; 3 Breezy Pt 16 Feb; Nassau Pt south of Cutchogue early to mid Feb; Great Kills P SI.

Barred Owl: INP 16 Dec, 27 Dec, 5 Jan.

Long-eared Owl: East Hampton 9-10 Dec; NYMK 15 Dec; 2 NYSG 16 Dec; Center Moriches badly injured 26 Dec.

Short-eared Owl: NYQU 15 Dec; NYSG 16 Dec; NYCS 22 Dec; Dune Rd west of Ponquogue Bridge 1 Jan thru; JBWE 10 Feb.

N. Saw-whet Owl: 4 PBP 2 Dec; NYBK 15 Dec; NYQU 15 Dec; 2 NYSG 16 Dec; 2 BRON 23 Dec; PBP 29 Dec; NY Botanical Gardens BRON 2 Jan; JBWR 27 Jan; 3 PBP 3 Feb.

CALLIOPE HUMMINGBIRD: 2 FTR thru 26 Dec and 27 Dec

HUMMINGBIRD SP: possible

Selasphorus seen by five birders CP 25 Dec (TF, et al).

Red-headed Woodpecker: 2 CP thru; Captree 8 Dec; Three Mile Harbor 14-16 Dec; MSH 29 Dec; TNC's Uplands Farm Sanctuary, Cold Spring Harbor 6 Jan; Muttontown Preserve 19-20 Feb.

FLYCATCHERS – WAXWINGS

LEAST FLYCATCHER: *Empidonax* flycatcher seen and call notes heard CP 16 Dec, "99% sure it is a Least," (KK), call notes used to eliminate most other "empid" species. NYSARC report to be submitted. Extremely late date for either Least or an unlikely Dusky, the other possibility (KK, SH, RG).

E. Phoebe: NYMK 15 Dec.

ASH-THROATED FLYCATCHER:

FTT 1 Dec; NYCS Wading Ri Rd 22 Dec.

W. Kingbird: MSH 7 Dec-4 Jan; Oak Beach SUFF Co 7 Dec.

N. Shrike MSH 10 Dec.

Tree Swallow: MP 1 Dec; FTT 2 Dec.

House Wren: NYBK 15 Dec; NYSG East Hampton landfill 16 Dec; Smithtown 14 Jan.

Winter Wren: PBP 29 Dec; SHU 5 Jan;

MAP 10 Jan, 24 Feb.

Marsh Wren: HP 2 Dec; 10 NYSG 16 Dec; MAP 24 Feb.

Blue-gray Gnatcatcher: FTT 1 Dec, 15 Dec; MP 23, 30 Dec; Bayshore 30 Dec; all very late.

Am. Pipit: Heckscher SP SUFF 2 Dec; 60 Cutchogue 2 Dec; 12 NYBK 15 Dec; 3 NYSG 16 Dec; 18 JBWE 30 Dec.

WARBLERS

TENNESSEE WARBLER: PAL 10 Feb (TB, AG, ph), 2nd winter record, 1st in Feb.

Orange-crowned Warbler: some widely scattered.

Nashville Warbler: PP to 5 Jan; NYQU 15 Dec; VCP 23 Dec; MNSA 4, 8 Jan, 6 Feb; FTR 29 Jan; PAL 10 Feb.

N. Parula: CP 1 Jan (TF); CP 16 Dec (RG).

Yellow-rumped Warbler: our usual wintering warbler.

Pine Warbler: CP 1 Dec; NYQU 15 Dec; GRP area 1 Jan; MAP 12 Jan; PAL 10 Feb.

Palm Warbler: dozen Brooklyn to Montauk.

Blackpoll Warbler: CP 1 Dec (TF); MP 10 Dec (AB).

Black-and-white Warbler: APP 9 Dec (AG); very late, seen on 4 prior LI CBCs.

Am. Redstart: CP 1 Dec (TF), very late.

Ovenbird: FTR 5-30 Dec, 26 Jan; NYSN Tobay 30 Dec.

N. Waterthrush: NYMK 15 Dec.

Com. Yellowthroat: CP 1 Dec; MP 10 Dec; 2 NYBK 15 Dec; 2 NYMK 15 Dec; 2 NYNN 22 Dec; VCP 23 Dec; 2 NYSN 30 Dec; INP 26 Jan.

Wilson's Warbler: PP to 6 Jan; Pleasant Valley SI 29 Dec (HFi *fide* HFI).

Yellow-breasted Chat: some widely scattered.

TANAGERS – WEAVERS

Chipping Sparrow: PP 12 Dec; 4 NYBK 15 Dec; 10-19 near GRP 5 Jan-17 Feb;

Dead Horse Bay KING 5 Jan.

Vesper Sparrow: DP 5 Dec.

Nelson's Sharp-tailed Sparrow: NYCA 16 Dec; 2 NYSM 27 Dec.

Saltmarsh Sharp-tailed Sparrow: MNSA Jan.

sharp-tailed sparrow sp: 3 NYSN 30 Dec.

Lapland Longspur: NYQW 15 Dec; NYOR 29 Dec; East Hampton 25 Jan; St Charles Cemetery NASS 5 Feb thru.

Dickcissel: JBCH to mid Dec.

Com. Grackle: Northville itinerant flock of 3000+ blackbirds, mostly this sp 12-17 Jan.

Boat-tailed Grackle: 186 JBWR 15 Dec; SHIN.

Baltimore Oriole: FTR 6, 12 Dec; PP 12 Dec; NYMK 15 Dec; CP 16, 22 Dec; NYSN 30 Dec; 2 Garden City feeder 21 Feb; Elmont feeder Feb.

Red Crossbill: 12 JBWE 10 Dec; NYCA 16 Dec; 4 Hunter's Garden Eastport 5 Jan.

White-winged Crossbill: 22 Fieldston School BRON 12 Dec; NYQW 15 Dec; 4 NYMK 15 Dec; NYCA 16 Dec; 4 NYBW Wave Hill 23 Dec.

Com. Redpoll: Accabonac 14 Dec; NYSG 15 Dec; 2 flew in off the water MP 3 Feb; Hither Hills feeder 11, 15 Feb; 6 MP 16 Feb; JBWR 17 Feb.

Pine Siskin: 12 Fieldston School BRON 12 Dec; 3 Montauk Village 13 Dec; NYQW 15 Dec; NYCA 16 Dec; 12 NYNN 22 Dec.

Evening Grosbeak: Fireplace feeder 14 Dec; NYMK 15 Dec.

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