

REGION 5 - ONEIDA LAKE BASIN

Bill Purcell

281 Baum Road, Hastings, New York, 13076
wpurcell@twcny.rr.com

The season was much warmer and slightly wetter than the long-term average. The September temperature averaged 65.4° F, 4.1° above normal, with 1.75 inches of precipitation, 2.4 inches below normal. The temperature in October averaged 52.4° F, 2.3° above normal, with 6.41" of rain, 3.21" above normal. The first seven days of October averaged 12° above normal, with southerly winds most of the time. This may have contributed to some late sightings. In November, the average temperature was 44.0°, 4.3° above normal, with 4.66" of precipitation, which was 0.89" over the average. There was 8.4" of snow for the month. Cold weather from November 22-27 froze most small ponds in the Region. It was wet in the Adirondacks, with some precipitation on 37 days in October and November.

The waterfowl flight was mostly unimpressive, even on the cold fronts, which often produce a good many birds. Flocks of Snow Geese rarely topped 150, the Wood Duck flight at Toad Harbor seems to have dispersed, and numbers of teal, Gadwall and N. Pintail were low. Divers present in good numbers included White-winged Scoter, Black Scoter, Hooded Merganser, and Red-breasted Merganser, while numbers of Greater Scaup, Surf Scoter, Bufflehead, and Common Merganser were particularly low. There were two Cackling Goose sightings, one photographed and the other well described, as well as other "small Canada Geese" that could not be viewed closely.

Large numbers of Common Loons staged at Fair Haven and Oswego in early November, as south winds stopped them from moving south over the rivers and lakes they use as migration routes. There were many reports of loons, mostly Red-throated, grounded on roads from 24-25 November, that were picked up and turned into rehabilitators. The birds were quickly released on nearby waterways, but there must have been many that perished before being found. The cause was a quick moving cold front, and the loons landed on silvery waterways that turned out to be roads. Great Egret was very scarce, with only a single bird reported.

The hawk migration was not monitored very much this season resulting in very low numbers for most species. The pluses included a late Osprey, 5 Golden Eagles, Merlins well into the season, and several Peregrine Falcons. By the end of the season there seemed to be few Northern Harriers and American Kestrels still present, but Rough-legged Hawk reports did not indicate any concentrations of that irruptive species.

Observers seemed to tire of shorebirds after the good summer season at Delta Lake, because there were few autumn reports. Common species such as Sanderling, Semipalmated and Least sandpipers, and Dunlin were reported in very low numbers, while Red Knot, Baird's Sandpiper, Red Phalarope, and the dowitchers were not reported. There was a single Stilt Sandpiper and never more than one Purple Sandpiper at Fair Haven. There were some nice numbers for Am. Golden-Plover and Pectoral Sandpiper

It was a good season for Parasitic and Pomarine jaegers at Derby Hill, including birds on 1 September moving in the aftermath of Hurricane Katrina. A Black-headed Gull was seen at Fair Haven, while at Derby Hill there were numerous Black-legged Kittiwakes, Northern Gannet on several dates, and the only Little Gull for the season. Single Iceland and Glaucous gulls were found, but Forster's Tern was missed.

There were several Snowy Owls in late November, and Short-eared Owls returned to a traditional site. Long-eared and N. Saw-whet owls were not reported. A Monk Parakeet was photographed in Syracuse. The bird was likely an escapee, but on the chance that it is a colonizer it is included in the report. It is unlikely that the species could prosper given the rigorous winter in these parts.

The observers who spent little time with shorebirds were sighting a wealth of land birds. There were many sightings of species such as Great Crested Flycatcher, Eastern Kingbird, Yellow-throated Vireo, Veery, and Wood Thrush, which sometimes are not reported in the fall. Species such as Olive-sided Flycatcher, Purple Martin, Blue-gray Gnatcatcher, and Mourning Warbler were found in October; all established or tied record late dates. The birds may have lingered during the mild weather or they have been reverse migrants on south winds early in the month.

Birders finally managed to find **Cave Swallow** in the Region. The species has recently become a regular late fall migrant to the Great Lakes, and there is a previously unpublished record for Cave Swallow found near Oneida Lake on 5 November 1999. At least seven flew past Derby Hill on 6 November, and later in the month three more lingered at Fair Haven before they either left or perished following the passage of a cold front. A White-eyed Vireo was found in October, Northern Shrike arrived in about average numbers, and Red-Breasted Nuthatch was on the move although most reports did come from breeding areas. There were a few Bohemian Waxwings and many reports of both Scarlet Tanager and Rose-breasted Grosbeak. At least 14 Philadelphia Vireos were reported this season. Without making any judgments, the Regional Editor hopes that everyone is aware of the similarities in plumage of fall Warbling and Philadelphia vireos.

A large night flight on 15 September included many Swainson's and Gray-

cheeked thrushes although no numbers were recorded. Tufted Titmouse and Northern Cardinal at feeders in Old Forge in early November were pushing their range boundaries. There were few, if any, outstanding maxima for warblers this season, but there were many reports of species lingering far into the season. A Yellow-throated Warbler was seen sporadically at a feeder in November; Orange-crowned, Cerulean and Cape May warblers were all reported; and 17 species were found in October.

After the warm start of October, sparrows arrived in large numbers by 9 October, with good counts through the end of the month. The blackbird migration peaked on 22 October, with thousands of birds moving down the eastern shore of Lake Ontario. The only Red Crossbill for the season was recorded that day. Evening Grosbeaks and Pine Siskins started moving through in the middle of October and some persisted at higher elevations. There were no Pine Grosbeaks, White-winged Crossbills, or Common Redpolls reported.

For the season, 230 species plus a probable escape were reported; an average year. The big rarities for the season included N. Gannet, Black-headed Gull, White-eyed Vireo, **Cave Swallow**, and Yellow-throated Warbler. Other less common species were Cackling Goose, Golden Eagle, Buff-breasted sandpiper, Little Gull, Lesser Black-backed Gull, and Cape May Warbler.

CONTRIBUTORS

Betty Armbruster, Faith Baker, Brenda Best, Sue Boettger, Joseph Brin, Bernie Carr, Jared Caster, Dorothy Crumb, Greg Dashnau, Bill Gruenbaum, Estelle Hahn, Barbara Herrgesell, Jody Hildreth, Gene Huggins, John Kapshaw, David Nash, David Mark, Kevin McGann, Matt Perry, Bill Purcell, Marge Rusk, Tom Salo, Mickey Scilingo, Gerald Smith, Greg Smith, Maureen Staloff, Andrew Van Norstrand, Noah Van Norstrand, David Wheeler, Mike Winslow, Judy Wright, Matt Victoria, Matt Young.

ABBREVIATIONS

Bvle – Baldwinsville; BRH – Bishop Road Hawkwatch, Pulaski; CM - Clay Marsh; DH - Derby Hill; DL – Delta Lake; Dvl – Durhamville; FH - Fair Haven, Little Sodus Bay and vicinity; Geo – Georgetown; HIWMA – Howland Island WMA; NS - Noyes Sanctuary, New Haven; OneiL - Oneida Lake; SCH – T Schroepfel; SHF - Sky High Sod Farms, T Sullivan; SFNS - Spring Farm Nature Sanctuary, Kirkland; SPd – Sandy Pond; SSSP - Selkirk Shores State Park; StMC – St Mary’s Cemetery, Dewitt; Syr – Syracuse; TRWMA - Three Rivers WMA; UM - Utica Marsh; WM – West Monroe; WPd – Woodman Pond, Hamilton.

WHISTLING DUCKS-VULTURES

Snow Goose: max 210 DH 6 Nov; 80-150 per day many locations after 10 Oct.

Canada Goose: max 18,000 s MADI 20 Nov.

Cackling Goose: 1 Sauquoit 3 Oct (JH); 1 Fulton 26-27 Oct (AVN, JC).

Brant: max 803 DH 26 Oct; 300 Dvl 8 Oct, good inland number.

Mute Swan: max 6 FH after 2 Nov.

Trumpeter Swan: 1 Pulaski 13 Nov, with wing tag 807.

Tundra Swan: max 53 Oneil 25 Nov.

Wood Duck: max 355 WM 11 Sep, low numbers

Gadwall: max 16 FH 19 Oct.

Am. Wigeon: max 100 FH 7 Oct.

Am. Black Duck: max 108 Orwell 27 Nov.

Blue-winged Teal: max 20 DH 29 Sep; last 1 Sangerfield 10 Oct.

N. Shoveler: 2 DL 29 Sep; max 9 UM 24 Nov.

N. Pintail: 12 DH 1 Sep, early; max 40 DH 29 Sep & 16 Oct.

Green-winged Teal: max 65 DL 24 Sep.

Canvasback: FH 2 Nov; Bridgeport 25 Nov.

Redhead: max 29 FH 23 Oct.

Ring-necked Duck: max 182 WPD 20 Nov.

Greater Scaup: arr 2 DH 29 Sep; max 56 DH 16 Oct.

Lesser Scaup: max 120 Bridgeport 25 Nov.

Surf Scoter: max 16 DH 8 Nov.

White-winged Scoter: 1 DH 1 Sep, early; max 406 DH 26 Oct.

Black Scoter: max 213 DH 26 Oct.

Long-tailed Duck: arr 30 DH 18 Oct; max 114 DH 14 Nov.

Bufflehead: max 26 FH 8 Nov.

Com. Goldeneye: arr DH 9 Oct; max 380 Sterling 5 Nov.

Hooded Merganser: 228 Oneil 26 Nov; 40 Skaneateles L 27 Nov; 286 Otisco L 27 Nov; 201 SPd 27 Nov, large late-Nov flight.

Com. Merganser: max 120 Oneil 18 Nov.

Red-breasted Merganser: max 1450 Sterling 5 Nov.

Ruddy Duck: 1 FH 7 Oct; max 48 Skaneateles L; 30 WPD 20 Nov.

Red-throated Loon: arr DH 16 Oct; max 23 FH 4 Nov.

Com. Loon: max 928 FH & Oswego 5 Nov.

Pied-billed Grebe: max 12 FH 23 Oct.

Horned Grebe: max 70 Sterling 5 Nov.

Red-necked Grebe: 1 DH 1 Sep, early; max 17 Rainbow Shores 6 Nov.

NORTHERN GANNET: 1 imm DH 7, 10, 14 Nov (GD, DW, BP), all days with strong W-NW winds.

Double-crested Cormorant: max 1400 Oswego 23 Oct.

Am. Bittern: 1 WM 4, 11 Sep.

Great Egret: 1 Great Swamp Conservancy thr 3 Nov.

Green Heron: 1 CM 11 Sep; max 3 per day to last DL 14 Sep.

Turkey Vulture: max 570 BRH 9 Oct.

HAWKS - ALCIDS

Osprey: max 4 Dvl 8 Oct; last WPD 20 Nov.

Bald Eagle: 3 ad Stillwater Res 12 Nov; 1-2 per day major lakes and rivers now expected.

N. Harrier: many reports of 1-2 per day thru.

N. Goshawk: 4 reports.

Red-shouldered Hawk: 1 Hastings 21 Oct, only report.

Broad-winged Hawk: max 9 Hastings 18 Sep; last 2 Hastings 23 Sep.

Red-tailed Hawk: max 25 BRH 9 Oct.

Rough-legged Hawk: arr Mexico 15 Oct; scattered singles thru.

Golden Eagle: 1 DH 18 Oct; 2 Sterling 21 Oct; 1 SSSP 23 Oct; 1 Camillus 13 Nov.

Am. Kestrel: max 8 Camillus 23 Sep; 7 Dvl 8 Oct.

Merlin: 11 reports, all after 5 Oct.

Peregrine Falcon: 4 reports plus the Syr resident pair.

Virginia Rail: WM 4 Sep; HIWMA 10 Sep.

Sora: 3 reports to last UM 13 Sep.

Com. Moorhen: max and last 4 UM 10 Oct.
Am. Coot: max 60 FH 7 Oct.
Black-bellied Plover: max 10 SHF 1 Sep.
Am. Golden-Plover: max 49 SHF 1 Sep; 20 Sauquoit 4 Oct.
Semipalmated Plover: max 14 DL 24 Sep; last 1 FH 7 Oct.
Killdeer: max 30 per day thru Oct.
Greater Yellowlegs: max 14 DL 24 Sep; 1 FH 7 Oct.
Lesser Yellowlegs: max 15 Sullivan 1 Sep; last SSSP 22 Oct.
Solitary Sandpiper: last 2 CM 11 Sep.
Spotted Sandpiper: last FH 21-27 Oct, late.
Ruddy Turnstone: max 5 SHF 1 Sep.
Sanderling: max 6 per day; last SPD 6 Nov.
Semipalmated Sandpiper: 2 reports of 6 total; last 4 Sep.
Least Sandpiper: last 4 DL 24 Sep.
White-rumped Sandpiper: max 8 Sullivan 1 Sep; last FH 21 Oct.
Pectoral Sandpiper: max 56 DL 24 Sep; 1 Sangerfield 10 Oct.
Purple Sandpiper: arr FH 27 Oct; sporadic 1 per day after.
Dunlin: 3 FH 7 Oct; max 6 SPD 12 Nov; last 2 FH 27 Nov.
Stilt Sandpiper: 1 DL 11 Sep.
Buff-breasted Sandpiper: max 4 SHF 1-2 Sep.
Wilson's Snipe: max 9 SVB 22 Nov.
Am. Woodcock: last Hastings 12 Nov.
Red-necked Phalarope: 1 DH 29 Sep.
Pomarine Jaeger: 1 DH 1 Sep; 1 DH 29 Sep; 1 Oswego 1-2 Nov, chasing gulls in harbor; 1 FH 5 Nov; 6 DH 7 Nov.
Parasitic Jaeger: 8 DH 1 Sep; 6 DH 29 Sep; 3 DH 18 Oct; 1 DH 7 Nov; 1 DH 10 Nov.
Little Gull: 1 DH 7 Nov.
BLACK-HEADED GULL: 1 FH 6 Nov (DW).
Bonaparte's Gull: max 200 SVB 5 Sep; 125 DH 7 Nov.
Iceland Gull: 1 DH 14 Nov.
Lesser Black-backed Gull: 1 SVB 4 Sep (BB).
Glaucous Gull: 1 SVB 13 Nov.

Black-legged Kittiwake: max 12 DH 16 Nov; 7 DH 26 Oct; 1 DH 7, 14 Nov; 1 FH 19 Nov.
Caspian Tern: last 2 FH 7 Oct.
Com. Tern: 12 DH 1 Sep; last FH 21 Oct.
Black Tern: 1 DH 1 Sep, only report.

PIGEONS - WOODPECKERS

MONK PARAKEET: 1 Syr thru Oct 31 (*fide* MS), probable escape.
Snowy Owl: arr FH 18 Nov; 1 Oswego after 26 Nov.
Short-eared Owl: arr Verona 16 Oct; 1 FH 4 Nov; max 4 Verona 18 Nov.
Com. Nighthawk: max 5 Camillus 1 Sep; last Hannibal 13 Sep.
Chimney Swift: last Hannibal 23 Sep.
Ruby-throated Hummingbird: max 5 DH 3 Sep; last Dewitt 3 Oct.
Red-bellied Woodpecker: 1 Albion 27 Nov, Tug Hill expansion progressing slowly.
Yellow-bellied Sapsucker: max 4 per day 1-10 Oct.
Black-backed Woodpecker: 1 Stink L HERK 5 Nov.
N. Flicker: max 15 CM 2 Oct.

FLYCATCHERS - WAXWINGS

Olive-sided Flycatcher: 1 Lysander 15 Oct (GrS), ties record late.
E. Wood-Pewee: max 5 Mexico 5 Sep.
Yellow-bellied Flycatcher: 4 reports, last Geo 16 Sep.
Least Flycatcher: 9 reports, last NS 17 Sep.
E. Phoebe: max; 5 FH 12 Oct; last StMC 29 Oct.
Great Crested Flycatcher: 11 reports; last TRWMA 18 Sep.
E. Kingbird: 12 reports; last Hastings 21 Sep.
N. Shrike: arr Oswego 23 Oct; reports at other locations.
WHITE-EYED VIREO: 1 CM 2 Oct (DN).
Blue-headed Vireo: max 5 Dvl 5 Oct.
Yellow-throated Vireo: 4 reports to last Van Buren 25 Sep.
Warbling Vireo: max 3 per day to 15 Sep; last 23 Sep.

Philadelphia Vireo: at least 14 individuals; last 4 Oct.
Red-eyed Vireo: max 22 NS 17 Sep; last TRWMA 14 Oct.
Blue Jay: max 667 Hastings 20 Sep; 534 Hastings 21 Sep.
Fish Crow: 1 Bvll 14 Sep, new location.
Com. Raven: max 7 BRH 9 Oct; several Stillwater Res 12 Nov.
Horned Lark: max 120 Mexico 22 Oct.
Purple Martin: max 15 Camillus 1 Sep; 1 Dvl 8 Oct (BB), record late.
Tree Swallow: 12 DH 6 Nov, late.
N. Rough-winged Swallow: last HIWMA 10 Sep.
Bank Swallow: last HIWMA 10 Sep.
Cliff Swallow: last 2 SHF 3 Sep.
CAVE SWALLOW: 4 DH 6 Nov (BP); 3 more later in the day DH 6 Nov (DW, GeS), first live Regional sightings; 3 FH 16-17 Nov (GD (ph, mob)).
Barn Swallow: max 15 SHF 3 Sep; last 2 Pompey 18 Sep.
Black-capped Chickadee: max 55 Nine Mile Pt 5 Oct.
Tufted Titmouse: 1 Old Forge 6 Nov, unusual.
Red-breasted Nuthatch: max 9 SVB 4 Sep; few sightings away from breeding areas.
Carolina Wren: mostly singles at expected sites.
House Wren: max 5 SPd 15 Sep; last 2 StMC 8 Oct.
Winter Wren: max 5 CM 2 Oct.
Marsh Wren: 1 CM 2 Oct.
Golden-crowned Kinglet: max 80 NS 2 Oct.
Ruby-crowned Kinglet: arr NS 17 Sep; max 80 SFNS 15 Oct.
Blue-gray Gnatcatcher: 2 Liverpool 9 Sep; 1 SSSP 9 Oct (DW), record late.
E. Bluebird: max 50 Maple View 26 Oct.
Veery: max & last 4 NS 17 Sep.
Gray-cheeked Thrush: 5 reports 10-25 Sep; nocturnal flight 15 Sep.
Swainson's Thrush: nocturnal flight 15 Sep; max 4 NS 17 Sep; last Van

Buren 17 Oct.
Hermit Thrush: max 8 NS 2 Oct.
Wood Thrush: max 4 TRWMA 9 Sep; 4 NS 17 Sep; last 1 NS 5 Oct.
Gray Catbird: max 21 SPd 15 Sep; last UM 24 Nov.
Brown Thrasher: 7 reports of 11 birds; last TRWMA 9 Oct.
Am. Pipit: max 110 DL 24 Sep.
Bohemian Waxwing: 1 DH 30 Oct; max 5 DH 19 Nov.
Cedar Waxwing: max 85 DH 23 Oct.

WARBLERS

Blue-winged Warbler: 1 Bvll 9 Sep; 1 HIWMA 10 Sep.
Golden-winged Warbler: Nick's L 1 Sep; SFNS 4 Sep.
Tennessee Warbler: 6 Sep reports; last SFNS 3 Oct.
Orange-crowned Warbler: TRWMA 9-10, 19 Oct; Geo 15 Oct.
Nashville Warbler: max 7 SFNS 1 Oct; widespread; last TRWMA 19 Oct.
N. Parula: max 4 HIWMA 10 Sep; last SFNS 17 Oct.
Yellow Warbler: 1 Camillus 4 Sep; 2 Mexico 5 Sep; 1 Camillus 9 Sep; last FH 21 Sep.
Chestnut-sided Warbler: 1-2 per day to last Camillus 21 Sep.
Magnolia Warbler: max 20 NS 17 Sep; widespread; last CM 16 Oct.
Cape May Warbler: 2 Hastings 10 Sep; 1 WM 18 Oct.
Black-throated Blue Warbler: 2-3 per day to last SFNS 16 Oct.
Yellow-rumped Warbler: max 60-75 per day 9-18 Oct.
Black-throated Green Warbler: max 10 SFNS 27 Sep; widespread; last SFNS 17 Oct.
Blackburnian Warbler: 8 reports to last TRWMA 14 Oct;
YELLOW-THROATED WARBLER: 1 Jamesville 3-4, 14 Nov (DC, BB, NYSARC), at private residence.
Pine Warbler: max 3 Durhamville 15 Oct; last SFNS 17 Oct.
Palm Warbler: 1 SVB 4 Sep;

max 6 Geo 15 Oct; last TRWMA 19 Oct.
Bay-breasted Warbler: 7 reports to last NS 5 Oct.
Blackpoll Warbler: 9 singles to last SFNS 15 Oct.
Cerulean Warbler: 1 Dvl 6 Sep.
Black-and-white Warbler: max 3 NS 17 Sep; last SFNS 21 Sep.
Am. Redstart: 10 reports to last SFNS 30 Sep.
Ovenbird: 9 reports; last NS 2 Oct;
N. Waterthrush: last HIWMA 10 Sep.
Mourning Warbler: 1 SFNS 14, 22 Sep; 1 Van Buren 27 Sep; 1 CM 16 Oct (DN), record late.
Com. Yellowthroat: max 4 per day; last SFNS 16 Oct.
Hooded Warbler: 1 Camillus 10 Sep. only report
Wilson's Warbler: 1-2 per day to 21 Sep; last Camillus 30 Sep.
Canada Warbler: 1 HIWMA 4 Sep. only report

TANAGER - WEAVER

Scarlet Tanager: max 5 NS 17 Sep; last 4 Camillus 30 Sep.
E. Towhee: max 10 TRWMA 10 Oct; last SFNS 28 Oct.
Am. Tree Sparrow: arr Hannibal 18 Oct; max 6-7 per day.
Chipping Sparrow: max 60 Hastings 15 Sep.
Field Sparrow: max 150 TRWMA 9 Oct.
Vesper Sparrow: max 3 Van Buren 28 Oct; singles at three other sites.
Savannah Sparrow: 2 Pompey 4 Sep; 2 Van Buren 9 Oct.
Fox Sparrow: arr SFNS 9 Oct; max 3-4 per day; last SFNS 26 Nov.
Song Sparrow: max 150 TRWMA 9 Oct.

Lincoln's Sparrow: arr 1 SPd 15 Sep; max 4 TRWMA 9 Oct; last Van Buren 24 Oct.
Swamp Sparrow: max 24 WM 27 Oct.
White-throated Sparrow: 27 SPd 15 Sep, first large influx; max 1000 TRWMA 10 Oct.
White-crowned Sparrow: arr SPd 17 Sep; max 200 TRWMA 9 Oct.
Dark-eyed Junco: max 127 WM 27 Oct.
Lapland Longspur: max 3 Lysander 26 Nov.
Snow Bunting: arr 3 FH 19 Oct; max 78 FH 8 Nov.
N. Cardinal: 1 Old Forge 6 Nov.
Rose-breasted Grosbeak: max 9 SFNS 9 Sep; last TRWMA 14 Oct.
Indigo Bunting: 5 Sep reports; last FH 12 Oct.
Bobolink: max 20 Van Buren 1 Sep; 4 SFNS 5 Sep; last SFNS 13 Sep.
Red-winged Blackbird: max 10,500 Richland 22 Oct.
E. Meadowlark: max 50 Mexico 9 Oct.
Rusty Blackbird: max 800 Richland 22 Oct.
Com. Grackle: max 3600 Richland 22 Oct.
Brown-headed Cowbird: max 166 N Syr 29 Sep.
Baltimore Oriole: 2 WM 4 Sep. only report.
Purple Finch: max 11 Geo 23 Oct; widespread 4-8 per day thru Oct; sharp decrease in Nov.
Red Crossbill: 1 Richland 22 Oct. only report.
Pine Siskin: max 25 W Winfield 5 Nov; most reports 15 Oct-25 Nov.
Evening Grosbeak: arr 2 Hastings 21 Oct; max 18 DeRuyter 2 Nov; low numbers across Region.