

REGION 8—HUDSON-MOHAWK

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Fall 2005 began with the remnants of Hurricane Katrina causing a strong northwest wind to blow through the Region. September was 5.6° F warmer than average, mostly clear, and largely dry. October was wet, with 5.77 more inches of rain than average and a solid drenching of 3+ inches in Albany on 7-8 October. The average October temperature was 52.2° F, 2.9° above average. November continued mild and rainy. Halloween ushered in the first light frost, 31° F, with mostly above freezing temperatures following until a hard frost, 24° F, on 11-12 November. The first significant snowfall occurred on 30 November with 1.26 inches recorded at Albany International Airport. All bodies of water remained completely unfrozen through the end of the season.

Waterfowl migration was unremarkable, with no large build up of birds and little in terms of species diversity. Twenty-three hundred Snow Geese at the Tomhannock Reservoir in Rensselaer County was a novelty for that location. Saratoga County usually hosts the largest gatherings each fall. Barb Putnam received kudos for photographing the Region's first official **Cackling Goose**, observed among other Canada Geese at Bacon Hill in Saratoga County.

Shorebirds were likewise lackluster, with major gaps in our normal fall shorebird checklist. Peep numbers were either down or the birds passed through unnoticed. Water levels were high throughout the Region, which may have contributed to low numbers. Rich Guthrie, who routinely searches around his Hudson River home for uncommon gulls, found an immature **Laughing Gull**.

The Camp Pinnacle Hawkwatch troupe struggled this year with rain and misty mountain ridges, unfortunately during the usual peak migration time of mid October. Numbers were down across the board. The only bright spot was a good movement of 57 Sharp-shinned Hawks on 15 October. Perhaps discouraged by the weather, volunteer coverage was spotty towards the end of the season. This year's numbers, which are summarized in the species accounts, should be judged with caution on account of adverse weather conditions.

A **Rufous Hummingbird** is rare anywhere in New York State but especially rare in the hand of a bird bander. Bob Yunick banded a hatching-year male at a feeder in Fonda, Montgomery County, thought to be only one of a few ever banded within the state. The owners of the feeder had been providing sugar water for Ruby-throated Hummingbirds through the summer

months and grew concerned when they noticed one hummingbird had 'lingered' into chilly November. They called local birders for advice, and Yunick was summoned to capture and band the bird. Yunick submitted the kind of impeccable identification notes that only a bander can produce. Unfortunately, few birders in the Region enjoyed the rarity since the landowners requested that their address not be made public.

Passerine migration peaked around the second week of October, with birds pushing through in large mixed flocks on the clear nights of 6, 10, and 11 October. Many of the late dates were assembled, as is customary each season, by sifting through the Hudson-Mohawk and Alan Devoe Bird club sightings. The task of assigning late and early dates for common passerine species would be nearly impossible without the support of these two Regional organizations. Special thanks go to Phil Whitney (Hudson-Mohawk) and to Bill Cook (Alan Devoe) for compiling the sightings for this largely thankless, but important service.

An exciting end to the season for Alison Heaphy and Rick Werwaiss involved a Northern Parula that visited their feeder in Chatham from 24 November all the way until **15 December**. Parula occur rarely on some upstate CBCs, but seldom, if ever, has a parula lingered this long and this late at an upstate location. The bird was reportedly feeding on suet and quickly learned to exploit the well-stocked supplies of a number of feeders in Chatham, Columbia County.

Additionally, a locale with an ominous name produced some interesting warblers this fall. The Greene County Industrial Development Agency site turned up 3 Connecticut Warblers, each banded by Rich Guthrie.

Finally, another interesting feeder bird was the female White-winged Crossbill found at the homes of Nancy Kern and Ellen Scott in Austerlitz, Columbia County. The last one seen in the county was in 1997. This bird adds yet more evidence to the argument that you don't necessarily need to go tramping through the wilderness to find rarities—ah, what a pleasure when they come to us.

A portion of last season's species list was inadvertently omitted due to a printing error; it is included as an addendum below.

CONTRIBUTORS

Alan Devoe Bird Club monthly sighting reports, Larry Alden, Bill Cook, Jane Graves, Rich Guthrie, Alison Heaphy, Hudson-Mohawk Bird Club's Birdline of Eastern New York, Nancy Kern, Bill Lee, Andrew Mason, Gail & Rich Nord, Barbara Putnam, Will Raup, Ellen Scott, Alison Van Keuren, Rick Werwaiss, Carol & Owen Whitby, Phil Whitney, Robert Yunick.

ABBREVIATIONS

AUS – T Austerlitz COLU; COX – T Coxsackie GREE; CPHW – Camp Pinnacle Hawk Watch ALBA; HR – Hudson Ri; MEA – T Meadowdale

ALBA; MR – Mohawk Ri; NBA – T New Baltimore GREE; NOR – T Northumberland SARA; TR – Tomhannock Reservoir RENS; VF – Vischer Ferry T Saratoga SARA.

WHISTLING-DUCKS - VULTURES

Snow Goose: max 2300 TR 28 Nov.

Brant: 12 HR COLU 9 Oct; 2

Thompsons L ALBA 11 Oct; State

Office Campus ALBA 18 Oct;

Broadalbin FULT 5-16 Nov.

ACKLING GOOSE: NOR 27 Oct (BP, photo).

Tundra Swan: 2 Galway SARA 5 Nov, only report.

Gadwall: MR 26 Nov, only report.

Am. Widgeon: max 30 Stanton Pd 16 Oct.

Blue-winged Teal: max 35 Collins L 9 Oct.

N. Pintail: 10 Stanton Pd 10 Oct, only report.

Green-winged Teal: last 20 VF 20 Oct.

Ring-necked Duck: last 11 TR 28 Nov.

Surf Scoter: 2 Rensselaerville RENS 10 Oct.

White-winged Scoter: 5 Rensselaerville RENS 10 Oct; 29 Thompsons L 11 Oct; last Nassua L RENS 19 Oct; last 2 Lock 7 SCHE 5 Nov.

Black Scoter: 2 Lock 7 SCHE 5 Nov.

Hooded Merganser: max 105 TR 28 Nov.

Ruddy Duck: max 200 COX Res GREE 11 Nov; 5 TR 28 Nov.

Com. Loon: Jenny Lake SARA 9-10 Sep; Ft Miller WASH 3-9 Nov; TR 5 Nov; max 4 Alcove Res ALBA 27 Nov.

Pied-billed Grebe: last Copake COLU 26 Nov.

Horned Grebe: L George WARR 12 Nov (BC), only report.

Double-crested Cormorant: last TR 5 Nov.

Am. Bittern: last Port of Albany 25 Sep.

Great Egret: max 11 Cohoes ALBA 12 Sep; 4 Collins L 9 Oct; last Gateway Bridge at Collins Park 21 Oct.

Green Heron: last Black Creek Marsh ALBA 16 Oct.

Black-crowned Night-Heron: last Waterford SARA 13 Sep.

Turkey Vulture: last Copake COLU 6 Nov; total 160 CPHW 8 Sep-2 Nov.

HAWKS - ALCIDS

Osprey: last Canaan COLU 16 Oct; total 12 CPHW 8 Sep-2 Nov.

Bald Eagle: total 7 CPHW 8 Sep-2 Nov.

N. Harrier: max 4 NOR 12 Oct; total 6 CPHW 8 Sep-2 Nov.

Sharp-shinned Hawk: total 133 CPHW 8 Sep-2 Nov; max 57 CPHW 15 Oct, high count.

Cooper's Hawk: total 27 CPHW 8 Sep-2 Nov.

N. Goshawk: 2 Niskayuna SCHE 9 Oct; Hudson COLU 11 Oct; total 3 CPHW 8 Sep-2 Nov.

Red-tailed Hawk: total 165 CPHW 8 Sep-2 Nov.

Red-shouldered Hawk: total 7 CPHW 8 Sep-2 Nov.

Broad-winged Hawk: last S RENS 12 Oct; total 496 CPHW 8 Sep-2 Nov.

Rough-legged Hawk: 2 NOR 16-29 Nov; Taghkanic COLU 25 Nov, scarce.

Peregrine Falcon: total 4 CPHW 8 Sep-2 Nov.

Am. Kestrel: total 26 CPHW 8 Sep-2 Nov.

Merlin: Black Creek Marsh ALBA 8 Sep; Niskayuna SCHE 11 Nov, feeding on chickadee; COX Boat Launch 18 Nov; total 4 CPHW 8 Sep-2 Nov.

Virginia Rail: last VF 5 Sep.

C. Moorhen: last VF 5 Sep.

Am. Coot: VF 14 Oct, Chatham COLU 31 Oct; 2 Stanton Pd 11-14 Nov.

Semipalmated Plover: last 2 VF 21 Sep.

Greater Yellowlegs: last Galway L SARA 12 Nov.

Lesser Yellowlegs: last VF 2 Oct.

Solitary Sandpiper: last Ann Lee Pd 24 Sep.

Spotted Sandpiper: last Livingston COLU 9 Oct.

Semipalmated Sandpiper: last VF

21 Sep.
Least Sandpiper: last GREE IDA
 25 Sep.
Pectoral Sandpiper: Niskayuna SCHE
 12 Sep; Lock 7 SCHE 12 Sep (RY).
Short-billed Dowitcher: VF 21 Sep.
Wilson's Snipe: last GREE IDA 21 Oct.
Am. Woodcock: last 5 Florida MONT
 12 Nov.
LAUGHING GULL: COX Boat
 Launch 25 Sep (RG).
Iceland Gull: COX Boat Launch GREE
 18 Nov.

PIGEONS - WOODPECKERS

Yellow-billed Cuckoo: last Ann Lee Pd
 24 Sep.
Short-eared Owl: 4 FtE 27 Nov.
N. Saw-whet Owl: found dead Exit 23
 NYS Thruway 5 Nov, only report.
Com. Nighthawk: max 12 Albany
 7 Sep; last Waterford 13 Sep.
Chimney Swift: last 75 Germantown
 COLU 4 Oct.
Ruby-throated Hummingbird:
 last AUS 30 Sep.
RUFIOUS HUMMINGBIRD: Fonda
 MONT 19-23 Nov, banded (RY).
Yellow-bellied Sapsucker: 2 MEA15
 Oct; 2 AUS 31 Oct; NBA 29 Nov;
 many other reports.

FLYCATCHERS - WAXWINGS

E. Wood-Pewee: last Canaan COLU
 10 Oct.
Least Flycatcher: last VF 18 Sep.
Great Crested Flycatcher: last VF
 10 Sep.
N. Shrike: VF 20 Oct; Galway SARA
 4 Nov; Albany 19 Nov; MEA 24 Nov,
 all sightings listed.
White-eyed Vireo: MEA 1 Oct (LA).
Yellow-throated Vireo: last L
 Taghkanic COLU 12 Sep.
Blue-headed Vireo: last VF 15 Oct.
Warbling Vireo: last VF 24 Sep.
Philadelphia Vireo: 2 Saratoga SARA
 4 Sep; 2 VF 25 Sep; Peebles I SARA
 3-28 Sep.
Red-eyed Vireo: last NBA 5 Oct.
Horned Lark: max 30 NOR 29 Nov.
Tree Swallow: last 100 Mechanicville

SARA 12 Oct.
N. Rough-winged Swallow: last VF 24
 Sep.
Barn Swallow: last Germantown COLU
 18 Sep.
Ruby-crowned Kinglet: last AUS 1
 Nov.
Veery: last Burnt Hills SARA 23 Oct.
Swainson's Thrush: last Saratoga
 Springs SARA 29 Oct, window-killed.
Wood Thrush: last Albany 14 Oct.
Gray Catbird: last Chatham COLU 25
 Nov, late.
Am. Pipit: max 50 NOR 26 Oct; 13
 Moreau SARA 27 Oct (BP).

WARBLERS

Blue-winged Warbler: last NBA 1 Sep.
"Brewster's" Warbler: NBA 1 Sep.
Orange-crowned Warbler: VF 24 Sep.
Nashville Warbler: last AUS 10 Oct.
N. Parula: at feeder N Chatham COLU
 25 Nov-15 Dec (RW, AH), record late
 date for Region 8.
Chestnut-sided Warbler: last MONT
 4 Oct.
Magnolia Warbler: last Albany 5 Oct.
Black-throated Blue Warbler: last
 Clifton Park SARA 22 Oct, inside Home
 Depot store.
Black-throated Green Warbler: last
 MEA15 Oct.
Blackburnian Warbler: last Peebles I
 SARA 24 Sep.
Pine Warbler: last Black Creek Marsh
 ALBA 6 Oct.
Prairie Warbler: last AUS 1 Oct.
Palm Warbler: last Burnt Hills SARA
 23 Oct.
Blackpoll Warbler: last VF 13 Oct.
Worm-eating Warbler: AUS 15-20 Sep.
Connecticut Warbler: 3 GREE IDA
 21 Sep, banded by RG.
Com. Yellowthroat: last Meadowdale
 15 Oct.
Wilson's Warbler: VF 5 Sep; NBA 9
 Sep; VF 10 Sep; Albany 14 Oct.
Canada Warbler: Claverack COLU 5
 Sep; Canaan COLU 10 Oct.

TANAGERS - WEAVERS

Scarlet Tanager: last VF 30 Sep.

Am. Tree Sparrow: arr Albany 10 Oct.

Chipping Sparrow: last MEA 15 Oct.

Fox Sparrow: 5 Rivers ALBA 1 Nov;
Jefferson SCHO 12 Nov; Myosotis L
14 Nov; several Oct reports.

Lincoln's Sparrow: last Gansevoort
SARA 27 Oct.

White-crowned Sparrow: last
Jefferson SCHO 27 Oct.

Snow Bunting: 20 COX 13 Nov;
10 COX Boat Launch 18 Nov; 12 Wilton
SARA 28 Nov.

Rose-breasted Grosbeak: last VF
30 Sep.

Indigo Bunting: last NBA 5 Oct.

E. Meadowlark: max 5 Ghent COLU
18 Sep, only report.

Rusty Blackbird: 4 VF 15 Oct;
max
50 Black Creek Marsh ALBA 16 Oct;
20 VF 20 Oct; last Copake COLU 20
Nov, all sightings listed.

Red Crossbill: max 15 Jenny L SARA
16 Sep (RY).

White-winged Crossbill: at feeder
AUS 25-31 Oct (NK, ES).

Pine Siskin: max 15 Hudson Falls
WASH 29 Oct; E Greenbush RENS
22 Nov; Albany 25 Nov, widespread.

Evening Grosbeak: 9 Jefferson
SCHO 22 Oct; E Greenbush RENS
5 Nov; max 30 Berlin RENS
18 Nov; New Salem 19-24 Nov;
10 Albany 29 Nov, very modest
irruption.

ADDENDUM

The following entries were inadvertently
omitted from the summer report

WARBLERS (in part)

Hooded Warbler: New Scotland
ALBA 12 Jun.

Canada Warbler: Rural Grove MONT
4-18 Jun; Berne ALBA 8 Jun; CP 25
Jun; Blenheim SCHO 13 Jul; Cocksackie
GREE 20 Aug; Schneider Rd COLU
20-26 Aug.

TANAGERS - WEAVERS

Grasshopper Sparrow: 5 SHA
30 Jun; Ghent COLU 10-30 Jul.

HENSLOW'S SPARROW: 3 SHA 17-
30 Jun (mob), probable nesting colony.

White-throated Sparrow: CP 25 Jun;
Conesville SCHO 29 Jun; FULT 5 Jul;
DICKCISSEL: 2 m & 3 f Goodrich Rd
SHA 10 Jun-? Aug, successfully fledged
4 nestlings.

E. Meadowlark: 4 FtE 4-16 Jun;
Conesville SCHO 6 Jun; Cocksackie
flats GREE 25 Jun; Gilboa SCHO
29 Jun.

Orchard Oriole: Cocksackie GREE
24 Jul, only report.

Purple Finch: max 33 banded JL
15 Aug (RY).

Red Crossbill: JL 31 Jul, 16 Aug,
22 Aug; 4 JL 26 Aug (RY),
subspecies ?.

Evening Grosbeak: JL 4 Jul,
banded bird originally from
Elizabethtown, NY, 8yrs,
2months old (RY).