

REGION 3 – FINGER LAKES REGION

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Fall weather in the Finger Lakes Region was fairly normal on average. September had a near normal average temperature of 59.1° F, but lows were warmer and highs were cooler than normal. October highs were also cooler than normal, causing the average temperature to be 1.4 F° cooler than normal. November lows and highs were both warmer than normal, yielding an average that was 3.9 F° above normal. September rainfall was more than one inch below normal, October's was an inch above normal, and November's just a 0.19" below normal. The only snowfall occurred in November with only trace accumulations.

The first highlight of the season was a juvenile Sabine's Gull, first spotted by Glenn Seeholzer off Stewart Park. Several observers were with Glenn when he located it and others found it from East Shore Park. The bird soon flew north over Cayuga Lake and was subsequently seen by still more observers at Myers Point in the Town of Lansing.

Two Connecticut Warblers appeared in Tompkins County. Thorsten Balsby and Mark Chao located one in Sapsucker Woods. Shawn Billerman and Tom Johnson noted the thick eye ring of one flying close by during a nocturnal migrant vigil at Cornell University's Schoellkopf Stadium. The stadium lights, combined with a low cloud cover, attract many migrants within easy hearing distance and many within easy viewing distance. Other notable birds traversing the stadium this season included Cape May Warbler, Upland Sandpiper, Dickcissels, and Ruddy Turnstones.

A second-hand report of a male Yellow-headed Blackbird at Montezuma National Wildlife Refuge rounded out the September highlights. A member of a group of birders from Albany saw the bird fly in with Red-winged Blackbirds and perch briefly before joining the other birds in grasses near the Thruway.

Nelson's Sharp-tailed Sparrow was again found by various observers at Hog Hole, an area in Treman Marina State Park at the southwest corner of Cayuga Lake, through the first half of October. Tim Lenz and Chris Wood located a singing White-eyed Vireo along Towpath Road in the Montezuma Wetlands Complex on the way to checking Puddler's Marsh for shorebirds. Shorebird numbers and variety at this location were good throughout the season, but may have been better had it not been for the Peregrines hunting there. As many as three Peregrine Falcons were seen there on Montezuma Muckrace day.

Steve Cooper observed three Black Vultures at the Elmira-Corning Regional Airport in Big Flats. This is only the second fall report in the region in at least the last ten years.

A flock of five Pine Grosbeaks flew over West Elmira in early November, but this was not to be part of a big movement either of that species or of other winter finches. In September, Mark Chao reported the only Pine Siskin. Red

Crossbills were occasionally heard flying over. Elaina McCartney had one stop briefly in her Ithaca yard.

Jeff Gerbracht, Tim Lenz, and Chris Wood found a Pacific Loon in Aurora Bay on Cayuga Lake on 7 November. It continued to be seen there through the end of the season. The Pacific Loon was also seen one day at the Town of Ovid Park at Sheldrake where one was often seen the previous winter. The year before that, a suspected but too distant bird was occasionally seen near the south end of the lake. The first confirmation of the species came that spring (2005) when one was found closer to the north end of the lake. It seems very possible that all of these reports have been of the same bird.

Mary Wentworth found a Cattle Egret in a pasture near King Ferry. The same or another bird was found in Tyre by SUNY-ESF students on a field trip. Both sightings were in mid-November.

On 18 November, an Eared Grebe again appeared in the region. This year, however, it showed up at Willard Point on Seneca Lake instead of on Cayuga Lake. Tim Lenz discovered this bird. Also on that day, Mike Harvey and Tom Johnson found a remarkable flock of geese at the Savannah Mucklands which included four Greater White-fronted Geese, five Ross' Geese, two Ross' - Snow Goose hybrids, and at least one Cackling Goose.

CONTRIBUTORS

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ABBREVIATIONS

AuB – Aurora Bay CAYU; BH – Beam Hill TOMP; CU – Cornell University; DLP – Dryden L P TOMP; DLT – Dryden L Trail TOMP; EIRW – East Ithaca Recreation Way TOMP; ESP - E Shore P; FRCG – Freese Road Community Gardens TOMP; HoHo – Hog Hole TOMP; KH – Kestrel Haven Avian Migration Observatory SCHU; MNWR – Montezuma NWR; MtPl – Mt. Pleasant TOMP; MWC – Montezuma Wetlands Complex; MyPt - Myers Pt TOMP; SaMu – Savannah Mucklands SENE; StP – Stewart Park TOMP; SW – Sapsucker Woods TOMP.

WHISTLING DUCKS–VULTURES

GREATER WHITE-FRONTED GOOSE:

4 SaMu 18 Nov (MiH, TJ, ph), only report, high.

Snow Goose: arr 150 Danby 5 Oct; max 5000 SaMu 19 Nov; last 2000 MNWR 24 Nov.

SNOW GOOSE X ROSS'S GOOSE: 2 SaMu 18 Nov (MiH, TJ, ph).

Ross' Goose: arr MNWR Oct 18-21 (TL, CW); max 5 SaMu 18 Nov (MiH, TJ), high; last 3 MWC 26 Nov (GCh), late.

Brant: arr 25 MtPl 6 Oct; max 400 MyPt 22 Oct; last 5 SaMu 18 Nov.

Cackling Goose: arr MNWR 21 Oct; last SaMu 18 Nov.

Tundra Swan: arr MNWR 24 Oct; max 475 SaMu 15 Nov.

Trumpeter Swan: arr 10 MWC 21 Oct, late.

Wood Duck: max 300 MWC 9 Sep (RS, ASt, KW), high; last 2 StP 11 Nov.

Eurasian Wigeon: MNWR 23-26 Sep; max 3 MNWR 15 Oct (MiH, TJ), high; last MNWR 24 Oct, early.

Am. Black Duck: max 6 StP 4 Oct, low.

Blue-winged Teal: max 20 MWC 9 Sep; last 3 SW 25 Oct.

N. Shoveler: max 30 MWC 9 Sep; last MNWR 26 Nov.

N. Pintail: max 2400 MWC 21 Oct (F&JBl), high.

Green-winged Teal: arr 14 MNWR 2 Sep; max 50 MWC 9 Sep.

Canvasback: max 2000 MNWR 14 Nov (SBl), high.

Lesser Scaup: arr DLP 20 Oct; max 15 StP 13 Nov.

Surf Scoter: arr ESP 26 Oct; max 4 DLP 27 Oct; last 2 MyPt 17 Nov (BB), late.

White-winged Scoter: arr AuB 21 Oct; max 15 MyPt 28 Oct.

Black Scoter: arr ESP 25 Oct; max 210 ESP 15 Nov (BoM), high; last ESP 28 Nov (DN), late.

Long-tailed Duck: arr 5 ESP 26 Oct; max 6 ESP 14 Nov.

Bufflehead: arr MyPt 21 Oct; max 20 StP 13 Nov.

Com. Goldeneye: arr & max 2 Ithaca Yacht Club TOMP 29 Oct, low.

Hooded Merganser: max 11 DLP 12 Nov, low.

Red-breasted Merganser: arr & max 3 Long Pt SP 26 Oct, low.

Ruddy Duck: max 450 MNWR 24 Nov (St&SuF), high.

Red-throated Loon: arr AuB 22 Oct; max 9 StP 19 Nov.

PACIFIC LOON: AuB 7-28 Nov (JGe, TL, CW); 1 T Ovid P 24 Nov (St&SuF!).

Com. Loon: arr 2 MyPt 15 Oct; max 337 Taughannock Falls SP 18 Nov, low.

Horned Grebe: 1 Eldridge P CHEM thru 25 Oct AT max 20 Seneca L SP 19 Nov.

Red-necked Grebe: arr 3 MyPt 28 Oct (MeH) max 5 AuB 28 Nov (JGe, TL, CW), high.

EARED GREBE: Willard Pt SENE 18-20 Nov (MiH, TJ), late.

Am. Bittern: last MNWR 9 Sep.

Least Bittern: max 2 MWC 3 Sep; last MNWR 9.

Great Egret: max 85 MNWR 25 Sep (AM), high; last MNWR 24, early.

CATTLE EGRET: Genoa 10-11 Nov (MWe); Tyre 15 Nov (AB, SUNY-ESF).

Green Heron: max 8 Big Flats Bird Sanctuary CHEM 5 Sep; last MNWR 1 Oct.

Black-crowned Night-Heron: max 20 MWC 9 Sep; last HoHo TOMP 5 Oct.

BLACK VULTURE: 3 Elmira-Corning Regional Airport 20 Oct (SC), high.

Turkey Vulture: max 100 CU 5 Oct; last Lansing 28 Nov.

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HAWKS--ALCIDS

Osprey: max 2 StP 12 Sep; last DLP 27 Oct.
Broad-winged Hawk: max 40 CU 14 Sep; last 2 MacKenzie-Childs Pottery CAYU 20 Sep.
Red-tailed Hawk: max 7 MtPl 6 Oct, low.
Rough-legged Hawk: arr Caroline 1 Nov, late; max 2 MtPl 18 Nov.
Golden Eagle: arr Tompkins County Airport 19 Nov, late.
Am. Kestrel: max 2 SENE 15 Oct, low.
Virginia Rail: last MNWR 9 Sep.
Sora: last MWC 9 Sep.
Com. Moorhen: max 25 MWC 9 Sep; last HoHo TOMP 10 Oct.
Sandhill Crane: max 9 SaMu 19-22 Nov (MCh, mob), high; last 5 MNWR 24 Nov.
Black-bellied Plover: max 15 MWC 1 Sep; last MWC 9 Sep, early.
Am. Golden Plover: max 10 MWC 3 Sep; last MNWR 2 Oct.
Semipalmated Plover: max 40 MWC 9 Sep; last MyPt 16 Sep, early.
Killdeer: max 130 Herman Road Fields TOMP 3 Sep; last 2 George Road Flooded Field TOMP 30 Nov (StF), late.
Spotted Sandpiper: last HoHo TOMP 5 Oct.
Solitary Sandpiper: max 4 Willow Creek Golf Course CHEM 7 Sep; last May's Pt Road N Pd SENE 9 Sep.
Greater Yellowlegs: max 20 MWC 9 Sep; last KH 16 Nov.
Lesser Yellowlegs: max 100 MNWR 2 Sep; last 11 George Road Flooded Field TOMP 25 Oct, early.
Upland Sandpiper: last CU 19 Sep (MiH, TJ, GS), late.
Hudsonian Godwit: max 4 MWC 3 Sep; last 2 MWC 4 Sep, early.
Ruddy Turnstone: last MNWR 3 Sep.
Sanderling: MWC 15 Sep; last MyPt 16 Sep, early.
Semipalmated Sandpiper: max 75 MNWR 2 Sep; last MyPt 22 Oct.
Least Sandpiper: max 35 MNWR 2 Sep; last MNWR 9 Sep, early.
White-rumped Sandpiper: max 20 MWC 3 Sep; last MWC 23 Sep.
Baird's Sandpiper: max 2 Purvis Road Field TOMP 15 Sep; last Purvis Road Ponds TOMP 1 Oct.
Pectoral Sandpiper: max 20 MNWR 2 Sep; last MWC 5 Nov.
Dunlin: arr 2 MNWR 30 Sep; max & last MWC 5 Nov.
Stilt Sandpiper: max 104 MWC 3 Sep (MeH, TJ), high; last MWC 26 Sep.

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Buff-breasted Sandpiper: max & last 3 MWC 2 Sep.
Short-billed Dowitcher: max 30 MNWR 2 Sep; last 2 MNWR 1 Oct.
Long-billed Dowitcher: max & last 40 Waterloo 28 Oct.
Wilson's Snipe: max 5 MNWR 4 Sep; last MNWR 2 Oct.
Am. Woodcock: max 2 Caroline 12 Oct; last Union Springs 11 Nov.
Wilson's Phalarope: MWC 3 Sep; last MWC 9 Sep.
Red-necked Phalarope: max 3 MWC 3 Sep; last MWC 9 Sep.
Lesser Black-backed Gull: arr MyPt 2 Sep; StP 18 Oct.
SABINE'S GULL: StP 3 Sep (GS, mob).
Caspian Tern: max 15 MWC 9 Sep (RS, AS, KW), high; last 12 Ithaca 25 Sep.
Com. Tern: Owasco L 4 Nov (CW), late, only report.

PIGEONS--WOODPECKERS

Rock Pigeon: max 40 Ovid 6 Oct, low.
Snowy Owl: arr Tyre 28-29 Nov (FM), only report.
Short-eared Owl: arr Ledyard 22 Nov, late.
Com. Nighthawk: max 149 Elmira 6 Sep (BO), high; last MNWR 9 Sep.
Chimney Swift: last Ithaca Commons TOMP 13 Oct.
Ruby-throated Hummingbird: last 2 KH 6 Oct.
Red-headed Woodpecker: Enfield 5 Sep; last Lansing 23 Nov (RH), late.
Downy Woodpecker: max 5 MyPt 30 Sep, low.

FLYCATCHERS--WAXWINGS

Olive-sided Flycatcher: last Lansing 14-15 Sep (CW), late.
E. Wood-Pewee: max 2 SW 1 Sep, low; last CU 25 Sep.
Yellow-bellied Flycatcher: last SW 1 Sep, early.
Least Flycatcher: last CU 5 Sep, early.
E. Phoebe: max 6 HoHo TOMP 5 Oct; last DLT 20 Oct, early.
E. Kingbird: max 3 StP 7 Sep (DN), high; last EIRW 16 Sep.
N. Shrike: arr KH 2 Nov; MNWR 15 Nov.
WHITE-EYED VIREO: MWC 18 Oct (TL, CW).
Blue-headed Vireo: max 3 SW 19 Sep; last SW 29 Sep, early.
Warbling Vireo: max 2 CU 5 Sep; last SW 26 Sep.
Philadelphia Vireo: max 2 SW 5 Sep; last SW 19 Sep.

Red-eyed Vireo: max 9 SW 16 Sep; last CU 6 Oct.

Blue Jay: max 12 SENE 2 Oct, low.

Purple Martin: max & last 10000 MWC 9 Sep (RS, ASt, KW), high.

Tree Swallow: max 25000 MWC 9 Sep; last "several" MyPt 28 Oct.

N. Rough-winged Swallow: max 500 MWC 9 Sep; last 2 MNWR 1 Oct.

Bank Swallow: max 200 StP 4 Sep; last 3 MWC 9 Sep.

Cliff Swallow: last 5 MWC 9 Sep, early.

Barn Swallow: max & last 50 MWC 9 Sep.

Black-capped Chickadee: max 13 SW 23 Sep, low.

Brown Creeper: max 10 STEU 23 Nov (JVN), high.

House Wren: max 2 Lansing 16 Sep; last BH 21 Oct.

Marsh Wren: last HoHo TOMP 12 Oct.

Ruby-crowned Kinglet: max 20 MWC 23 Sep; last Taughannock Falls SP 18 Nov (TL).

Veery: last CU 19 Sep.

Gray-cheeked Thrush: arr CU 6 Sep (MiH), early; last SW 28 Sep.

Swainson's Thrush: max 10 Ithaca 26 Sep; last SW 1 Oct.

Hermit Thrush: max 6 BH 21 Oct; last KH 28 Nov (J&SGr), late.

Wood Thrush: CU 20 Sep; last SW 23 Sep.

Am. Robin: max 1000 KH 1 Nov (J&SGr), high.

Gray Catbird: max 25 DLT 23 Sep; last Ithaca 18 Nov.

Brown Thrasher: MWC 23 Sep; last SW 26 Sep.

Am. Pipit: arr 2 MWC 9 Sep; max 200 Purvis Road Field TOMP 25 Oct; last 4 Purvis Road Field TOMP 19 Nov.

WARBLERS

Tennessee Warbler: DLT 23 Sep; last MyPt 30 Sep.

Orange-crowned Warbler: arr SW 5 Sep; last Dryden 23 Oct.

Nashville Warbler: max 5 SW 16 Sep; last CU 5 Oct.

N. Parula: arr 2 SW 5 Sep; max 4 EIRW 16 Sep; last CU 6 Oct.

Yellow Warbler: last 2 StP 12 Sep.

Chestnut-sided Warbler: max 6 CU 16 Sep; last SW 29 Sep.

Magnolia Warbler: max 10 SW 5 Sep; last SW 29 Sep.

Cape May Warbler: arr KH 5 Sep; last SW 16 Sep.

Black-throated Blue Warbler: max 2 SW 29 Sep; last CU 6 Oct.

Yellow-rumped Warbler: max 30 CU 6 Oct; last MWC 26 Nov.

Black-throated Green Warbler: max 5 EIRW 16 Sep; last Ithaca 1 Nov.

Blackburnian Warbler: max 2 EIRW 16 Sep; last SW 29 Sep.

Pine Warbler: max 2 Mark Twain State Park 4 Sep; last CU 1 Nov.

Palm Warbler: arr StP 5 Sep; max 2 Stevenson Road Compost Piles TOMP 5 Oct; last SW 20 Oct.

Bay-breasted Warbler: last EIRW 16 Sep.

Blackpoll Warbler: max 2 CU 18 Oct; last CU 21 Nov.

Black-and-white Warbler: max 3 SW 5 Sep; last SW 27 Sep.

Am. Redstart: max 5 SW 5 Sep; last CU 16 Sep, early.

Ovenbird: last 2 SW 16 Sep.

CONNECTICUT WARBLER: SW 9 Sep (TB, MCh); CU 15 Sep (SBI, TJ).

Mourning Warbler: last SW 16 Sep.

Com. Yellowthroat: max 4 CU 16 Sep, low; last 2 CU 15 Nov.

Hooded Warbler: CU 7 Sep.

Wilson's Warbler: last 2 MWC 23 Sep.

Canada Warbler: last SW 16 Sep.

TANAGERS--WEAVERS

Scarlet Tanager: max & last 5 Lansing 16 Sep.

E. Towhee: max & last 3 BH 21 Oct, low.

Am. Tree Sparrow: arr SW 23 Oct; max 22 Hector 13 Nov.

Chipping Sparrow: max 30 BH 27 Oct; last Dryden 10 Nov.

Field Sparrow: max 8 Dryden 23 Sep; last 3 MyPt 15 Oct.

Vesper Sparrow: max 4 SENE 15 Oct; last SW 20 Oct.

Savannah Sparrow: max 6 FRCG TOMP 28 Sep; last 3 SENE 15 Oct.

NELSON'S SHARP-TAILED SPARROW: HoHo TOMP 4-14 Oct (TL).

Fox Sparrow: arr BH 22 Oct; max 24 Hector 25 Oct (ND), high; last Caroline 15 Nov.

Song Sparrow: max 35 DLT 23 Sep.

Lincoln's Sparrow: arr DLT 23 Sep; max 2 FRCG TOMP 30 Sep; last MyPt 15 Oct.

White-crowned Sparrow: arr 2 SW 23 Sep; max 7 KH 6 Oct; last 2 KH 27 Nov (J&SGr), late.

Lapland Longspur: arr & max 2 SaMu 5 Nov.

Snow Bunting: arr 2 MNWR 27 Oct; max 300 SaMu 15 Nov (SBI), high.

Rose-breasted Grosbeak: max 5 EIRW 16 Sep; last SW 26 Sep.

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Indigo Bunting: max 5 FRCG 16 Sep; last 2 FRCG 28 Sep.

Dickcissel: arr Lansing 15 Sep (RD), early; last SW 24 Oct.

Bobolink: max 20 MWC 9 Sep; last 3 EIRW 16 Sep.

Red-winged Blackbird: max 2000 MNWR 26 Oct; last 6 MWC 19 Nov.

E. Meadowlark: max 4 MtPl 6 Oct; last SENE 15 Oct, early.

YELLOW-HEADED BLACKBIRD: MNWR 25 Sep (fide AM).

Rusty Blackbird: arr 2 Lansing 5 Sep (RD), early; max & last 12 Connecticut Hill TOMP 11 Nov, low.

Com. Grackle: max 6000 Hector 5 Nov; last 3 Etna 25 Nov.

Brown-headed Cowbird: max & last "several dozen" Genoa 11 Nov.

Baltimore Oriole: last DLT 23 Sep (JM), late.

PINE GROSBEAK: 5 Elmira 5 Nov (BO), early & high.

Red Crossbill: arr Ithaca 30 Oct (EM), early.

Pine Siskin: arr CU 10 Sep (MCh), only report.

Am. Goldfinch: max 28 SENE 3 Sep, low.