

REGION 3—FINGER LAKES

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Weather this season was typical; rainfall was slightly below average, and temperatures were slightly below normal. Several light snowfalls came in the last two weeks of November, but no storm exceeded 2" in accumulation.

Goose migration was not overwhelming in quantity this fall, but the species composition was very interesting, with new Regional high counts for Ross's Goose (nine at MNWR on 24 October) and Cackling Goose (16 at MNWR on

17 October). Increasing numbers of Ross's Goose records statewide can probably be attributed to the continued population growth of mid-continent Snow and Ross's Geese. Increasing observer coverage and knowledge of goose identification might explain the continued increase in Cackling Goose observations. Continued documentation of Cackling and small Canada Goose sightings is requested even as Cackling Goose becomes less "novel" since the AOU split in 2004. Most records appear to pertain to "Richardson's" Cackling Goose (*B. h. hutchinsii*), but there is uncertainty with some individuals, including the possibility that Lesser Canada Goose is regularly present in small numbers. Eurasian Wigeon were also present at MNWR in larger than usual numbers, with up to six males reported. A Pacific Loon at Aurora Bay 1-3 November and another at Sheldrake 23 November may be the same individual and could be the same bird that has returned to Cayuga Lake for several years running. Probably related to the remnants of Hurricane *Ike* that pushed many birds north across the continent toward the Great Lakes, an adult male Magnificent Frigatebird was found at Myers Point on 21 September (see p. 16 & Fig. E, p. 53). Many observers were able to view the bird as it floated up and down the south end of Cayuga Lake between Myers Point and Stewart Park. The bird was found dead under its roost tree in Ithaca the next morning, and the specimen has been preserved at the Cornell University Museum of Vertebrates. This represents the second inland report for New York and a first record for the Cayuga Lake Basin.

Southern waders made a small but well-documented late-season appearance in the Region, with a juvenile Little Blue Heron at Sapsucker Woods from 4-20 November and a Glossy Ibis at MNWR on 18 October.

Larids were largely typical, with notable records including a juvenile Laughing Gull photographed at Dryden on 29 September and a California Gull at Aurora Bay from 1-4 November. The adult California Gull represents the first record for the Cayuga Lake Basin (see p. 47 & Fig. E, p. 53).

Although jaegers are regular fall transients on the south shore of Lake Ontario just to our north, they are very rarely detected in Region 3. Therefore, two jaeger reports this season are noteworthy. One was identified by the observer as a dark juvenile Parasitic Jaeger at Long Point State Park on 16 October, and the other was not identified to species, seen at Myers Point on 22 October. Neither was photographed. More lake-watching effort earlier in the season might produce more reports of jaegers.

Passerine migration was largely typical, though a late Blue-winged Warbler at Horseheads on 30 October was exceptional. A vagrant Scissor-tailed Flycatcher near Moravia on 17-18 November was outstanding.

Although warblers and sparrows were not outstanding, the beginning of a massive Pine Siskin and White-winged Crossbill invasion was nicely documented this fall by many observers. Pine Siskin arrived in Ithaca on 8 October and were soon found throughout the Region. Initially most siskins were reported as flyovers. As the season wore on, more were found "on the ground" in favored feeding trees as well as at backyard birdfeeders. White-winged Crossbills were first detected 29 September at Summerhill State Forest and

became a welcome sight for birders late this quarter, especially at consistent feeding areas in Summerhill State Forest and Dryden, where up to 260 were reported. Subsequent seasonal reports will likely continue to highlight this invasion as it develops in winter 2008-2009 and spring 2009.

CONTRIBUTORS

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ABBREVIATIONS

CU – Cornell University, Ithaca; DuP – Durland Preserve, Dryden; EHCP – Ellis Hollow Creek Preserve, Dryden; LPSP – Long Point State Park; MNWR – Montezuma National Wildlife Refuge; MyPt – Myers Point; StP – Stewart Park, Ithaca; SSF – Summerhill State Forest; SW – Sapsucker Woods.

WHISTLING-DUCKS – VULTURES

Greater White-fronted Goose: MNWR thru (mob); last 4 MNWR 9 Nov (JBr), high.

Ross's Goose: arr 2 MNWR 5 Oct; max 9 MNWR 24 Oct (SB, TBJ), high; last MNWR 17 Nov (KR).

Snow x Canada Goose hybrid: MNWR 23 Sep-26 Oct (PH, CWo, MI, TL, TJ).

Cackling Goose: arr MNWR 27 Sep; max 16 MNWR 17 Oct (CWo, MI, TL, TJ), high; last MNWR 23 Nov (LG).

Eurasian Wigeon: MNWR thru (mob); max 6 MNWR 24-26 Oct (SB, TJ), high.

PACIFIC LOON: Aurora Bay 1-3 Nov (SB; mob); Sheldrake 23 Nov (LG).

Com. Loon: 1340 MyPt 30 Oct, high; 642 MyPt 18 Nov, high.

MAGNIFICENT FRIGATEBIRD: MyPt, StP 21 Sep (TJ, SB; mob), first record for Cayuga Lake Basin.

LITTLE BLUE HERON: SW 4-20 Nov (KR, SKe; mob).

GLOSSY IBIS: MNWR 18 Oct (TJ, mob).

HAWKS – ALCIDS

Dunlin: max 300 StP 21 Oct (DN), high.

Sandhill Crane: thru; max 44 MNWR 22 Nov (TJ, TL, SB, MM, CWl), State record high.

LAUGHING GULL: Dryden 29 Sep (KM).

CALIFORNIA GULL: Aurora Bay 1-4 Nov (TJ; mob), first record for Cayuga Lake Basin.

Iceland Gull: arr StP 23-29 Oct (PH), early.

Lesser Black-backed Gull: arr MNWR 13 Sep.

Glaucous Gull: arr StP 24 Oct (DN), early.

PARASITIC JAEGER: LPSP 16 Oct (TJ).

JAEGER SP: MyPt 22 Oct (BM).

PIGEONS – WOODPECKERS

Red-headed Woodpecker: Caroline 15 Sep (AF); CU 25 Nov (ET).

FLYCATCHERS – WAXWINGS

SCISSOR-TAILED FLYCATCHER:

Moravia 17-18 Nov (mob).

Fish Crow: max 74 Dryden 11 Nov (TJ), high.

Gray Catbird: last CU 25 Nov (RD), late.

WARBLERS

Blue-winged Warbler: last Horseheads 30 Oct (MP), late.

CONNECTICUT WARBLER: EHCP 2 Sep (DM); CU 18 Sep (TJ).

TANAGERS – WEAVERS

CLAY-COLORED SPARROW: CU 3 Oct (TJ); CU 11 Oct (RD); presumably different individuals.

Nelson's Sharp-tailed Sparrow: 2 Ithaca 7-11 Oct (TL, CWi).

White-crowned Sparrow (West Taiga): Burdett 20 Nov (JG).

Dickcissel: 2 Lansing/ Ithaca 21 Sep (RD, BM).

RED CROSSBILL: SSF 22 Sep (BM); SSF 3 Nov (MC); SSF 9 Nov (BM).

WHITE-WINGED CROSSBILL: arr 2 SSF 29 Sep (MY), max 260 Dryden 30 Nov (EI), high.

Pine Siskin: arr Ithaca 8 Oct (TJ); max 60 Shindagin Hollow 19 Oct (SF).

Evening Grosbeak: SSF 1 Nov (SF), only report.