

REGION 7—ADIRONDACK-CHAMPLAIN

John M.C. Peterson

477 County Rte 8, Elizabethtown, NY 12932

jmcp7@juno.com

September was largely sunny and pleasant but with the first frosts at Saranac Lake on 11 September (29°) and again on 22-23 September (26°), and the month was extremely dry, with little rain. Early October was clear and cool, with the first snow at Inlet on the 3rd and a heavy frost on the 19th that saw a morning temperature of 15° at Saranac Lake. Rain returned on the 21st, with 0.34" at Plattsburgh followed by snow squalls the following day that left 7" on Whiteface Mountain and 3" on Lyon Mountain. More rain and winds on 28 October left 11,000 without power before turning to snow 29-30 October, dumping 13" at Inlet and 11" at Malone but leaving only a dusting along the Champlain corridor. Early November was exceptionally warm, with a four-day stretch in the low 60s between 4 and 7 November, before temps dropped later in the month, with Inlet -5° on the 23rd. Lake Champlain stood at an unusually high 97.73' on 1 September, more than two feet higher than the same date in 2007 and three feet above the 83-year median daily statistic. The lake dropped to 95.21' by 25 October, before late autumn rain and snow lifted it to 96.01' at season's end. There was a bumper crop of wild foods, with a good cone crop on tamarack, spruce, and pine; fruits on apple, cherry, hawthorn, mountain ash, and mountain holly; and seeds on beech and birch.

As expected, birders along the Champlain corridor found a rich variety of species, including several rarities and even a new Regional shorebird. Greater White-fronted Goose (probably Geese) was found in both Beekmantown and Champlain, Barrow's Goldeneye at Noblewood Park, Great Egret at the Chazy Riverlands, a Regional record six Sandhill Cranes in Beekmantown, Stilt Sandpiper at Chazy Riverlands, both Little Gull and Black-headed Gull at Westport, a juvenile Sabine's Gull at Noblewood Park, Parasitic Jaeger on Treadwell Bay, an unidentified jaeger at Cumberland Head the following day, two Snowy Owls in Champlain and another in Peru, Short-eared Owl at Cumberland Head, Red-bellied Woodpecker at a Chazy feeder, White-eyed Vireo at Ausable Point, a half-dozen reports of Carolina Wren (including a nest with four young on Willsboro Point), and a late Sedge Wren and an early Bohemian Waxwing at Ausable Point. The real highlight, however, was the discovery and careful 20-minute identification of the first **Curlew Sandpiper** for Clinton County and Region 7, at Gilbert Brook Marina in the Town of Chazy, on the morning of 16 September. The observers eliminated the possibility of similar species with which they are familiar, Dunlin and Stilt Sandpiper, for example, which they also saw this fall. Details have been provided to NYSARC.

The Regional history of Sandhill Crane deserves a short review. Following the first at Point au Roche 18 May 1977 and second at Blue Mountain Lake 21 June 1986, there were no sightings during the 1990s. The floodgates opened

after northbound singles passed over Wadhams 13-14 April 2002, with the first multiple sightings of two cranes at both Tupper Lake and Gabriels in May-June 2005. That maxima was broken 8 September 2007, with four flying north from Fort Covington toward Quebec. The six in Beekmantown this fall, on 5 September, represent yet another new high count, but probably not the last. There have now been 14 separate sightings of Sandhill Crane in Region 7 since 1977, with all but two of those between 2002-08.

Within the Adirondacks, White-winged and Black Scoters and Long-tailed Duck were found on both Mirror Lake and Lake Placid. A dead Short-eared Owl outside Lake Placid was an unhappy surprise. All of the expected boreal birds, including Spruce Grouse, were reported with the exception of American Three-toed Woodpecker. The most notable event was the continued invasion of White-winged Crossbill which had begun in early July. By early November as many as 200 might be encountered in a day in the central Adirondacks, but only 30 along the lake at Port Kent on 5 November. Curiously, there were no autumn reports of Red Crossbill, which had been present in all counties except Clinton from 5 July until 11 August. Numbers of Pine Siskin, which had been scarce in summer, greatly increased. Most were found in the Adirondack highlands, although they were also found at Ausable Point, Westport, and Willsboro.

The total of just 166 species was far short of the record 194 species reported in 2007, as well as the previous record of 175 in 2004. Nevertheless, there are still some gems in the list that follows.

CONTRIBUTORS

Mary Anne Allen, Nancy Carter, Joan Collins, John Conroy, Charlotte Demers, Diane Demers, Don Fasking, Elizabeth & Holland Fitts; Donna Fletcher, Judith Heintz, David Hoag, Mary Humiston, Suzy Johnson, Bill Krueger, Dayna Lalonde, Linda LaPan, Julie Latrelle, Rodney LaValley, Gary Lee, Robert Lee, Theodore Mack, Mark A. Manske, Lawrence Master, Brian McAllister, Melanie A. McCormack, Matthew D. Medler, Charles Mitchell, Charles Mitchell, Jr., Michael & Wanda Moccio, Allan Mueller, Megan A. Murphy, Sean O'Brien, Nancy Olsen, Lydia & Paul Osenbaugh, John & Susan Peterson, Dana Rohleder, Laura Smith, William Stahl, Eric K. Teed, John & Patricia Thaxton, Eve D. Ticknor, Jan Tzeciak, Cecelia Wojciukiewicz, Matthew Young.

ABBREVIATIONS

AP – Ausable Pt; BB – Bloomingdale Bog; CH – Cumberland Head; CR – Chazy Riverlands; FB – Ferd's Bog; GBM – Gilbert Brook Marina; T Chazy; LL – Long L; LP – L Placid; ML – Mirror L; MRRA – Moose River Rec Area; NP – Noblewood Pk; PtR – Pt au Roche; SB – Sabattis Bog; SL – Saranac L; TL – Tupper L; WB – Whallon's Bay; WD – Wilcox Dock.

WHISTLING-DUCKS – VULTURES

Greater White-fronted Goose: Deyo Rd, T Beekmantown 8 Nov (BK), prob *flavirostris*; Lake Shore Rd, T Champlain 10 Nov (WS); Conroy Rd, T Beekmantown 12 Nov (MAMc), now ~10 CLIN & 11 Reg 7 records since 1943.

Snow Goose: arr 125 Elizabethtown 30 Sep (JP), early ESSE; many 1000s CR & PtR Oct-Nov; ad "Blue" T Beekmantown 10 Nov (LS).

Ross's Goose: T Beekmantown 9 Nov (SO,J&PT), with ~2500 Snow Geese.

Brant: arr 3 PtR 30 Oct (WS); WB 3 Nov

(BM); 2+ T Beekmantown 10 Nov (LS); Falls Pd trail 18 Nov (GL), with Snows; max 6 WD 20 Nov (DR), late CLIN.

Canada Goose: max 1200 WD 20 Nov (DR).

Gadwall: Westport 26 Oct (TM,SO), CH 18 Nov (NO), nice finds.

Am. Wigeon: Westport 26 Oct (TM,SO), also good.

N. Pintail: AP 9 Nov (JH,MAMc), only sighting.

Green-winged Teal: Scotion Cr 15 Nov (WS); max 8 WD 20 Nov (DR).

Ring-necked Duck: max 100s Moody Pd 1 Nov (LM).

Greater Scaup: arr Mirror L 30 Oct (LM).

Lesser Scaup: arr 3 Mirror L 30 Oct (LM); AP & 2 WD 20 Nov (DR).

scaup (sp.): max 500 NP 8 Nov (MDM).

White-winged Scoter: arr CH 15 Sep (BK); 1-22 NP 5 Oct-8 Nov (MDM); 2 Mirror L 30 Oct; 3 LP 1 Nov (LM), good finds.

Black Scoter: arr 2 Mirror L 30 Oct; max 6 LP 1 Nov (LM); 2 f WB 3 Nov (BM); Pt Kent 6 Nov (DR), good finds.

Long-tailed Duck: arr 2 Mirror L 30 Oct; LP 1 Nov (LM); AP 9 Nov (JH,MAMc); m Mirror L 10 Nov (LM), somewhat low numbers.

Bufflehead: arr Grass Pd 24 Oct (GL), ties early HAMI; 30 Golden Beach 17 Nov (GL), ties max HAM; numerous other reports.

Barrow's Goldeneye: arr m NP 8 Nov (MDM), always welcome.

Red-breasted Merganser: 2 WD 20 Nov (DR), only report.

Ruffed Grouse: f, 3 *small y* Baxter Mt Lane, Keene 23 Oct (J&PT).

Spruce Grouse: Spring Pd Bog 7 Sep (AM), well-known location.

Pied-billed Grebe: 3-5 CR 12 Sep-17 Oct (BK); AP 21 Sep-6 Nov, max 16 there 5 Oct (DR).

Horned Grebe: arr 22 NP 5 Oct (MDM), max 35 WD 20 Nov (DR), many other reports.

Red-necked Grebe: arr 3 Westport 26 Oct (TM,SO); max 4 LP 1 Nov (LM); also AP, Mirror L, WD.

Double-crested Cormorant: Sixth L to 5 Oct (GL), rare transient HAMI.

Great Egret: CR 7 Sep (NO) & 25 Sep (BK,CM), only locale.

Green Heron: Brown's Tract stream 4 Sep (GL), late HAMI.

HAWKS – ALCIDS

Osprey: Rouses Pt 10 Nov (WS); CR 12 Nov (BK,CM), last.

Bald Eagle: AP; Ausable R; T Black Brook; Noonmark; Pt Kent; TL, now typical.

Rough-legged Hawk: arr Westport 6 Oct (DR).

Golden Eagle: 2 ads Bombay 20 Sep (MAMa); 3 ads, juv Azure Mt 17 Oct (JC).

Am. Kestrel: ad m trapped T Moira 27 Sep (MAMa), banded as nestling Winthrop, STLA 8 Jul '03, now aged 5 yrs, 3 mos.

Merlin: Keene 10 Sep (J&PT); Lincoln Pd 30 Sep (MAMu, EKT); Westport 6 Oct (DR), only reports.

Peregrine Falcon: 4 Noonmark 5 Oct (MAMu,EKT); CH 17 Oct (BK); Plattsburgh 18 Oct (DR), also low.

Com. Moorhen: CR 7 Sep (NO); CR 12 & 25 Sep (BK), but only location.

Am. Coot: AP 5-9 Nov (BK,CM,MAMc); max 6 CR 10 Nov (WS).

Sandhill Crane: max 6 US 9 & Spellman Rd, T Beekmantown 5 Sep (JCo), 6th CLIN record & new max Reg 7.

Black-bellied Plover: PtR 22 Sep (BK,CM); Essex harbor 26 Oct (L&PO); AP 5 Nov (JH).

Am. Golden-Plover: arr CR 17 Sep (BK), after none in summer.

Semipalmated Plover: CR 17 Sep (BK); NP 24 Sep (DL); max 7 CR 28 Sep (BK).

Solitary Sandpiper: River Rd, LP 1 Sep (TM), after none in summer.

Greater Yellowlegs: CR 25 Sep (BK); max 2 NP 26 Oct (L&PO).

Lesser Yellowlegs: AP 27 Sep (BK,CM); CR 28 Sep (BK), expected.

yellowlegs (sp.): AP 21 Sep (MAMc).

Sanderling: max 2 NP 7 Sep (MAMc,MDM); NP 24 Sep (DL), typical.

Semipalmated Sandpiper: 2 CR 25 Sep (BK), noteworthy as only report.

Least Sandpiper: max 8 GBM 9 Sep; CR 17 Sep; 2 CR 28 Sep (BK).

Pectoral Sandpiper: arr juv CR 12 Sep; GBM 16 Sep (BK,CM); max 4 CR 25-28 Sep (BK).

Dunlin: 4 CR 7 Sep (NO); max 9 CR 25 Sep; 8 CR 28 Sep; GBM 24 Oct (BK).

CURLEW SANDPIPER: GBM 16 Sep (BK,CM!), on tires 9:40 a.m., white rump, slender bill decurved much of its length, flew north 10 a.m., 1st CLIN & Reg 7 record.

Stilt Sandpiper: arr juv CR 25 & 28 Sep (BK), late CLIN & Reg 7.

Wilson's Snipe: max 14 CR 28 Sep (BK), a good number.

Little Gull: Westport 27 Oct (BM,JP,EKT), always a good find.

BLACK-HEADED GULL: Westport 26 Oct (TM,SO), 3rd ESSE & 5th Reg 7 record.

Bonaparte's Gull: max ~1000 Westport 26 Oct (TM,SO); also 5-175 NP 6 Sep-5 Oct (MDM).

SABINE'S GULL: juv NP 6 Sep (MDM, photo), 5th ESSE & Reg 7 record.
Black Tern: 2 NP 7 Sep (MAMc,MDM,NO), always welcome.

Com. Tern: max 370 NP 6 Sep (MDM), high ESSE & Reg 7; 80 NP 7 Sep (MAMc,MDM); 1st winter NP 26 Oct (L&PO), last.

Parasitic Jaeger: Treadwell Bay 14 Sep (DH), 5th CLIN, but now ~20 Reg 7 records.

jaeger (sp.): CH 15 Sep (BK), still a good sighting.

PIGEONS – WOODPECKERS

Rock Pigeon: 2 white pigeons Spruce Hill (Elizabethtown/Keene line) 2 wks in late Oct (J&PT), lost in the woods.

E. Screech-Owl: Keene 26 Sep (J&PT); Akey Rd, T Cadyville 3 Nov (CM,Jr), both nice finds.

Snowy Owl: arr 2 imm Banker Rd, T Champlain 9 Nov (RL), early CLIN; imm Peru 20 Nov (CM,Jr), with hopes of more to come.

Barred Owl: leucistic owl first seen Witherbee 25 Nov '07 returned 14 Sep-4 Nov (MAA,CW).

Short-eared Owl: CH 30 Sep (NO), where seen 15 Dec '07; Adk Loj Rd late Oct (LM), found dead.

Whip-poor-will: Ticonderoga 2-3 Sep (NC), last.

Red-bellied Woodpecker: f Chazy feeder 20 Nov thru (DF), as range expansion continues.

Yellow-bellied Sapsucker: Mountain View 27 Nov (JT), late FRAN.

Black-backed Woodpecker: BB; Grass Pd; Inlet; Mitchell Pds; MRRA; Red R; Wilson Pd, known locales.

FLYCATCHERS – WAXWINGS

E. Wood-Pewee: Witherbee to 10 Sep (CW), only report.

E. Phoebe: Redford 1 Nov (DF), late CLIN.

E. Kingbird: AP 30 Sep (BK), late CLIN.

N. Shrike: arr MRRA 23 Oct (JC); Adk Loj Rd 1 Nov (LM), a weak start.

White-eyed Vireo: AP 9 Nov (JH,JL,MAMc), 1st CLIN record.

Blue-headed Vireo: singing m SL 21 Oct (TM); banded Elizabethtown 25 Oct (JP), late ESSE.

Gray Jay: FB; Helldiver Pd; Newcomb; SB, usual locales.

Boreal Chickadee: BB; Boreas R; FB; Gothics-Saddleback; LL; Newcomb; Pyramid-Armstrong; Red R; Wolf Cr, expected locales.

Tufted Titmouse: CH; Elizabethtown; Inlet; Keeseville; NP; Pt Kent; SL; Willsboro Bay; Witherbee, barely indicative of current range.

Carolina Wren: nest with 4 y Willsboro Pt (RL), fledged c. 30 Sep; CH 2 Oct (BK); Plattsburgh 5 Oct; CH 18 Oct (NO); Westport 26 Oct (TM,SO); pr Essex 15 Nov (EDT), all excellent reports from developing strongholds.
Sedge Wren: AP 30 Sep (BK), late CLIN & Reg 7.

Bicknell's Thrush: Pyramid, 4 Gothics 7 Sep (DD); Whiteface Mt 8 Sep (AM); max 6 Gothics 21 Sep (DD).

Am. Robin: ~100 Inlet 21 Oct (GL); ~100 LP 30 Oct (LM), good numbers.

Brown Thrasher: transient banded Elizabethtown 2 Oct (JP), only report.

Am. Pipit: 4600' Gothics 21 Sep (DD), the 8th High Peak where found during Sep-Oct; max 12 Reynolds Rd, T Chazy 19 Oct (BK,CM).

Bohemian Waxwing: arr AP 19 Nov (BK), but only report.

Cedar Waxwing: max 50 Willsboro Bay 16 Nov (LS), other reports BB; Elizabethtown; LL; LP; Peru; Pt Kent; Witherbee.

WARBLERS

Yellow-rumped Warbler: Inlet 28 Oct (GL), in yard on snow, late HAMI.

Palm Warbler: 2 "Western" 4400' Saddleback jct 7 Sep (DD); BB 13 Sep (BM); "Yellow" banded Elizabethtown 3 Oct (JP).

Blackpoll Warbler: Gothics-Saddleback 7 Sep (DD); max ~50 Armstrong 21 Sep (DD), record high ESSE; 3 banded Elizabethtown 21 Sep (JP); Rand Hill 5 Oct (JH).

TANAGERS – WEAVERS

Am. Tree Sparrow: arr Pt Kent 5 Nov (DR).

Field Sparrow: Inlet 31 Oct (GL), only report.

Vesper Sparrow: MRRA 23 Oct (JC), late HAMI.

Fox Sparrow: Inlet; Keene; LP; Pt Kent, only locations.

Song Sparrow: max 25 Pt Kent yard 7 Sep (DR).

Lincoln's Sparrow: near summit of Pyramid (4100') 7 Sep (DD); banded Elizabethtown 22 Sep (JP).

White-crowned Sparrow: arr Peru 1 Oct (EF), later reports Azure Mt; Peru; PtR; Pt Kent to 5 Nov.

Dark-eyed Junco: 95 banded Elizabethtown 22 Sep-10 Nov (JP), widespread.

Snow Bunting: arr 2 T Beekmantown 19 Oct (BK,CM); later reports of 6-50 AP; Essex; Limekiln Rd; LL-Newcomb; LP; WB.

N. Cardinal: transient f banded Elizabethtown 5 Oct (JP).

Red-winged Blackbird: max 100+ CR 10 Nov (WS).

Rusty Blackbird: Limekiln L 2 Nov (GL); 3 AP 6 Nov (JH), only reports.

Com. Grackle: max 70 CH 6 Sep (NO).

Purple Finch: BB; Keeseville; MRRA; Westport, only reports.

House Finch: 5 CH 22 Oct (NO); Keeseville feeder (JL), but only locations.

White-winged Crossbill: Invasion that began 9 Jul continued, with reports of up to 200/day by Nov from BB; Golden Beach; Inlet; Keene; LL; Madawaska; Minerva; Mitchell Pds; MRRA; Mt View, Newcomb; North Elba; Paul Smiths, Pt Kent; Red R; Sagamore; SB; TL;

Union Falls; Wolf Creek.

Pine Siskin: Numbers increased, with reports of up to 100/day by Nov from AP; Azure Mt; BB; FB; Keene; LL; LP; Minerva; MRRA; Newcomb; Union Falls; Westport; Willsboro.

Am. Goldfinch: max 35 Pt Kent feeder 5 Nov (DR); scattered reports from AP; BB; Elizabethtown; Keeseville; LL; LP; Mitchell Pds; Union Falls, mostly at feeders.

Evening Grosbeak: max 20+ LL 29 Nov (JC); other reports Minerva; Newcomb; SB, but generally scarce.