

VAGRANT HUMMINGBIRDS IN NEW YORK STATE: AN UPDATE

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In the fall of 2001, Shai Mitra and Michael Bochnik wrote an article on vagrant hummingbirds in New York State (Mitra and Bochnik 2002). Their article covered all known western species and several Ruby-throated Hummingbirds (*Archilochus colubris*) that were found out of their normal season. There were a total of 14 records over a twenty-one-year period since the first record of a **Rufous Hummingbird** (*Selasphorus rufus*) in 1980. One additional older record of a Ruby-throated Hummingbird was also covered. In this update, I present newer records of extralimital species and out-of-season Ruby-throated Hummingbirds in New York State. Most notable is the fact that in the eight years since the last article, there have been 33 new records of vagrant hummingbirds. Rufous Hummingbird now occurs so frequently as to be considered a regularly occurring species in the state, often with multiple birds present each fall. Do these trends reflect an increase in astute observers, an increase in hummingbird feeding stations, or simply a considerable increase in the number of western birds that are moving eastward on migration?

In view of the accelerating pace of vagrant hummingbird occurrence noted in the last article and continuing through the present time, it was almost expected that some more very special birds would show up. In due course, the state's second record of **Calliope Hummingbird** (*Stellula calliope*) came just a few months after Mitra and Bochnik's summary was published. This immature male was found by Ben Cacace at Wagner Park, New York County, on 19 Nov 02 and remained until 24 Nov. This was followed two years later by another Calliope Hummingbird at a private feeder in Larchmont, Westchester County, 4-7 Nov 04. Photos taken by the homeowner verified its identification. The summer of 2006 featured New York's first records of **Broad-billed Hummingbird** (*Cynanthus latirostris*). A bird was first seen on 24 Jun 06 at a private feeder in the town of Rose, Wayne County. The bird returned the following day and photos were obtained, confirming its identification. The bird did not return after that day. That bird or another later showed up in August at the home of Jim Ballard in Town of Owego, Tioga County. This bird remained through 27 Aug and was also photographed, confirming it to be an adult male Broad-billed Hummingbird, as in the Wayne County record.

The next spectacular hummingbird find occurred in Sullivan County. Renee Davis informed me that she had been told of a hummingbird coming to a private residence in late October. Renee had tried to see the bird on three occasions without success. She was leaving for Florida the next day so I asked if she could get me permission to try to see the bird. The following day, 29 October, I was standing in the yard of Dave and Linda Boyce in Liberty when only moments later the bird flew within just four feet of me. My initial disappointment at it not

being a *Selasphorus* hummingbird was short lived. I noticed the bird was not typical for a Ruby-throat. The color was different, as was the size. This bird was larger and more robust. I took dozens of photos over the next couple of hours and took them home to study. The most valuable resource in my research was Howell's "Hummingbirds of North America". Though I consulted other references, this book helped me clinch the identification. The bird was an immature female **Anna's Hummingbird** (*Calypte anna*)! Though the homeowners had asked me not to make the bird's presence known, I convinced them to let a few local birders see it. I then arranged for Tom Burke to come and verify my identification. Ultimately, Shai Mitra was able to come to see the bird as well. I maintained regular visits with the bird. During the week of 19 November, the bird began to act strangely. We were having exceptionally cold weather with temperatures in the low teens nightly. On the 19th the bird failed to eat properly, attempting to eat through the side of the glass feeder. This continued another day and we thought the bird would perish. On my last visit on 21 November the bird seemed improved and actually fed appropriately several times. Thanksgiving morning, 22 November, the bird was found dead under its regular perch. It was an extremely sad day. Renee Davis had some connections and arranged for the hummingbird to be donated to American Museum of Natural History in New York where its identification was further verified. It is the only specimen of an Anna's Hummingbird to come from northeastern North America.

Since 2002, there have been an amazing 17 new records of Rufous Hummingbird as well as seven records of Rufous/Allen's Hummingbird! The latter resulted from inconclusive evidence to confirm the birds as to species. There have yet to be any confirmed Allen's Hummingbirds (*Selasphorus sasin*) in New York State. Additionally, there have been four new records of Ruby-throated Hummingbird out of its normal season. See the list below for specific occurrences.

Whether the significant increase in vagrant hummingbirds is the result of climate change, increase and expansion of individual species, or more food sources (i.e., late blooming plants and feeders remaining up late in season), clearly occurrences continue to increase. A number of species have actually been recorded northeast of New York. Green Violetear (*Colibri thalassinus*), Black-chinned Hummingbird (*Archilochus alexandri*), and Allen's Hummingbird have all been confirmed in either Maine or Massachusetts. How did they get there without passing through New York? The trend also continues throughout the rest of the country as well. The Gulf and Mid-Atlantic states have all had increasing numbers of post-breeding dispersal as well as over-wintering hummingbirds. Even Mexican vagrants such as Green-breasted Mango (*Anthracothorax prevostii*) have been found as far east as Georgia. With the numbers we have experienced in only the last eight years, I'm sure that each coming year will hold exciting new finds as we continue our fascination with these smallest of birds!

RECORDS OF VAGRANT HUMMINGBIRDS 2002-2009

Broad-billed Hummingbird *Cynanthus latirostris*

Town of Rose, Wayne (Region 2), 24-25 Jun 06, male.

Owego, Tioga (Region 4), early Aug-27 Aug 06, male, Jim Ballard's feeder.

Ruby-throated Hummingbird *Archilochus colubris*

Farmingville, Suffolk (Region 10), 16-17 Nov 02, Joe Manzione's feeder.

Babylon, Suffolk (Region 10), 16-20 Nov 08, Ken & Sue Feustel's feeder, ph.

Orchard Park, Erie (Region 1), 7 Nov-5 Dec 08, Kathy Krodhart's feeder, female.

Fonda, Montgomery (Region 8), 14 Nov 2009, Deborah Oare's feeder.

Anna's Hummingbird *Calypte anna*

Liberty, Sullivan (Region 9), 29 Oct - 22 Nov 07, Linda & Dave Boyce's feeder, imm. female, NYSARC 2007-56-A, specimen to AMNH.

Calliope Hummingbird *Stellula calliope*

Wagner Park, New York (Region 10), 19-24 Nov 02, Ben Cacace *et al.*, NYSARC 2002-44-A/B.

Larchmont, Westchester (Region 9), 4-7 Nov 04, NYSARC 2004-43-A.

Rufous Hummingbird *Selasphorus rufus*

Lenoir Nature Preserve, Westchester (Region 9), 28 Oct 02 - Dec 02.

Central Park, New York (Region 10), 10-23 Nov 02, Nick Wagerik *et al.*, ph.

Washingtonville, Orange, 31 Jul-2 Aug 03, Rick Horn *et al.*, ad male, NYSARC 2003-29-A/B, video.

Oxford, Chenango (Region 4), 4 Nov 03, Fred von Mechow, ad male, NYSARC 2003-47-A.

Orient, Suffolk (Region 10), 23 Nov - early Dec 03, Ruth Olivia's feeder, imm female.

Central Park, New York (Region 10), 30 November 04, ad female.

Fonda, Montgomery (Region 8), Nov 05, imm male.

Andes, Delaware (Region 4), 30 Sep to 6 Nov 06.

Petersburg, Rensselaer (Region 8), 17 Sep 06, Woody Gillies feeder, imm male.

Lenoir Nature Preserve, Westchester (Region 9), 23-30 Nov, Mike Bochnik *et al.*, NYSARC 2006-49-A/B.

Northport, Suffolk (Region 10), 26 Nov 06-29 Jan 07, Norm Klein *et al.*, NYSARC 2006-59-A, "Ilsa."

Houghton, Allegany (Region 1), 10-21 Oct 07, Larry Wilson's feeders, imm female, banded 17 Oct.

Houghton, Allegany (Region 1), 14-20 Oct 07, Larry Wilson's feeders, imm male, present with the above bird.

West Walworth, Wayne (Region 2), 10 Oct-1 Dec 07, Bill & Loretta Groell's feeders, ad male.

Northport, Suffolk (Region 10), 9-11 Nov 08, Norm Klein's feeder.

Clarkstown, Rockland (Region 9), 24 Sep-10 Oct 08 (two additional sightings on 26 Oct & 10 Nov 08), Beverly Simone's feeder, ad male.
Grymes Hill, Richmond (Region 10), 10 Oct-24 Dec 09, Howie Fischer's feeder, imm male.

Rufous/Allen's Hummingbird *Selasphorus rufus/sasin*

Georgica, East Hampton, Suffolk (Region 10), 23 Nov 03 into Dec.
Glenwood., Erie (Region 1), Second week of Oct through 9 Dec 05, Bob & Loraine Sherman's feeder.
Lake Delaware shore, Delhi, Delaware (Region 4), 17 Sep-21 Dec 06, Ruth Pedersen *et al.*, NYSARC 2006-34-A, ph.
Patchogue, Suffolk (Region 10), 1-6 Nov 06, James F. C. Osterlund, NYSARC 2006-43-A, ph.
Dryden, Tompkins (Region 3), Dec 06 one day.
Bronx Botanical Garden, Bronx (Region 10), 19 Sep 07.
Bronx Botanical Garden, Bronx (Region 10), 10-13 Nov 07.

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