

REGION 3 - FINGER LAKES

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Fall 2011 had fairly average weather conditions. October and November were both within 15% of average precipitation levels. Though September received 10 inches of precipitation, 200% of normal levels, roughly half this rain was due to Hurricane *Lee* on 8 September. Temperatures were average overall, though a bit milder than average in November, making the first part of winter feel unusually warm.

A good waterfowl flight on 27 October carried large numbers of Brant and scoters through the Region. Jay McGowan counted 2,865 **Brant** from Myers Point over the morning, while Bill Purcell reported 98 **Surf Scoters** and 53 **White-winged Scoters** from Fair Haven State Park. Tim Lenz reported 200 **Black Scoters** from Stewart Park.

Though no vagrant waterfowl were found this fall, the typical assortment of uncommon geese was reported. A **Greater White-fronted Goose** frequented the Montezuma NWR Visitor Center for much of October, and another was reported from Towpath Road on 6 and 7 November. Multiple **Ross's Geese** were reported from Montezuma's Snow Geese flocks in late October through mid November. Similarly, there were scattered reports of **Cackling Geese** throughout the Region. Though not "countable," a **hybrid Snow x Canada Goose** was present at the Montezuma NWR Visitor Center throughout October into early November.

On 16 September, Chris Wood saw a flyover **Cattle Egret** from Warren Road in Ithaca. Despite efforts to relocate the bird, it was never seen on the ground. Several observers reported a ***Plegadis ibis* sp.** from the Montezuma area in early and mid September. The reports suggest that there were two individuals in the area: one an adult and the other a first-year bird. The multiple sighting locations (Knox-Marcellus Marsh, the Main Pool, and Railroad Rd. in Wayne County) also seem to suggest this.

A reasonable assortment of unusual shorebirds was reported this fall. The highlight was undoubtedly a juvenile **Red Phalarope** present along the Montezuma NWR Wildlife Drive on 8-9 October. Originally found by Mark Miller, this bird gave excellent views to many observers. Additionally, an **American Avocet** inhabited Puddler's Marsh from 16 September to 27 October. A **Whimbrel** visited Union Springs on 22 September.

This fall also brought several interesting gulls to the Region. Dave Nutter found a second-year **Laughing Gull** at Stewart Park on 4 September. This bird continued on 5 September and was seen again on 8 September. On 6 September, Dave Nutter discovered a **Franklin's Gull** at Stewart Park. This bird was a clear adult, answering any doubts regarding its separation from the previously

reported Laughing Gull. This bird was also seen though 8 September. On 23 November, Jay McGowan photographed two adult **Black-legged Kittiwakes** seen from Myers Point. Kevin Ripka found a sitting **Long-tailed Jaeger** at Stewart Park on 9 September.

A report of a **Snowy Owl** at West Barrier Bar County Park on 23 November heralded the start of the irruption year. There were also scattered reports of **Long-eared Owl**, including one in Mark Chao's Cayuga Heights backyard, which many observers saw and photographed.

Many observers saw the **Red-headed Woodpecker** that visited Sapsucker Woods on 13 September. Chris Wood found a **Connecticut Warbler** at Roy H. Park Preserve on 16 September, and Steve Kelling reported another in Slaterville on 25 September.

The passerine highlight of the fall, however, was a **Lark Sparrow** that David Wheeler found at Fair Haven State Park on 11 September. The bird stayed only a brief while before flying west. Additional unusual sparrows include a **Clay-colored Sparrow** found by Ken Rosenberg and Arvind Panjabi at Hog Hole on 18 October. As in past falls, Hog Hole also proved fruitful for **Nelson's Sparrows**, with reports throughout mid October. **Nelson's Sparrows** were also reported in Ithaca from Hanshaw Road and Bluegrass Lane on 22 and 23 October, respectively. More **Dickcissels** than usual were reported this fall, though the vast majority were heard-only records of their distinctive flight call. One, however, was seen near Ithaca's Freese Road on 24-25 September.

247 species were reported this fall.

CONTRIBUTORS

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ABBREVIATIONS

CCampus – Cornell University campus, TOMP; FHSP – Fair Haven SP, CAYU; HoHo – Hog Hole at Treman Marina, TOMP; HowI – Howland Island, CAYU; MWR – Montezuma NWR; MWC – Montezuma Wetlands Complex; MyPt – Myers Pt, TOMP; RPP – Roy H. Park Preserve, TOMP; SalPt – Salt Point, TOMP; SaW – Sapsucker Woods, TOMP; StP – Stewart Park, TOMP; WBB – West Barrier Bar CP, CAYU.

WHISTLING-DUCKS - VULTURES

Greater White-fronted Goose: MWR 8-30 Oct; MWC 6-7 Nov.
Ross's Goose: 2 MWC 30 Oct; MWC 7 Nov; MWC 13 Nov; 2 MWC 19 Nov.
Brant: max 2865 MyPt 27 Oct (JM); 1025 FHSP 27 Oct.
Cackling Goose: max 7 Fayette 25 Nov.
Snow x Canada Goose: MWR 9 Oct-6 Nov.
Tundra Swan: max 500 MWC 19 Nov.
Wood Duck: max 85 HowI 10 Sep.
Eurasian Wigeon: MWR 1 Nov (CS).
Green-winged Teal: max 2000 MWC 30 Oct.
Surf Scoter: max 98 FHSP 27 Oct (BP).
White-winged Scoter: max 53 FHSP 27 Oct (BP).
Black Scoter: max 200 StP 27 Oct (TL).
Bufflehead: max 65 FHSP 19 Nov.
Red-throated Loon: max 3 MyPt 16 Nov.
Com. Loon: max 500 Romulus 30 Oct.
Pied-billed Grebe: max 34 StP 23 Oct.
Am. Bittern: last Slaterville Springs 25 Oct (SK).
Great Egret: max 70 MWR 4 Sep.
CATTLE EGRET (R3): Ithaca 16 Sep (CW).
Black-crowned Night-Heron: last MWR 29 Oct (DK).
PLEGADIS SP (R3): MWC 10 Sep (BP); MWC 17-18 Sep (mob), possibly same bird continuing from late August, possibly two birds, see also Region 2 report.
Turkey Vulture: max 250 CCampus 23 Oct.

HAWKS - ALCIDS

Broad-winged Hawk: 150 CCampus 9 Sep.
Rough-legged Hawk: first MWC 8 Oct, early.
Am. Kestrel: max 11 MtPI 18 Sep.
Virginia Rail: last MWR 5 Oct.
Com. Gallinule: last MWR 6 Nov, late.
Am. Coot: max 350 StP 28 Oct.
Sandhill Crane: 16 MWC 13 Nov.
Am. Golden-Plover: max 20 MWC 10 Sep (RS), at one site.
AMERICAN AVOCET (R3): MWC 16 Sep – 27 Oct.

Spotted Sandpiper: max 8 StP 10 Sep; last Sheldrake Pt 25 Nov (JM), late.
Greater Yellowlegs: last Horseheads North 22 Nov (MP), late.
WHIMBREL (R3): Union Springs 22 Sep (FB).
Hudsonian Godwit: max 3 MWC 3 Oct; last MWR 2 Nov.
Red Knot: WBB 3 Sep (DW).
Sanderling: last Aurora 23 Oct (JM).
Semipalmated Sandpiper: last HoHo 13 Nov; 2 MWC 13 Nov.
White-rumped Sandpiper: max 45 MWC 6 Oct; last MWR 13 Nov (NS).
Pectoral Sandpiper: last 4 MWC 13 Nov.
Long-billed Dowitcher: last 4 MWR 6 Nov.
Wilson's Snipe: last 3 Ithaca 16 Nov.
Am. Woodcock: last SaW 8 Nov.
RED PHALAROPE (R3): MWR 8-9 Oct (mob), molting juvenile.
BLACK-LEGGED KITTIWAKE (R3): 2 MyPt 23 Nov (JM), adults.
LAUGHING GULL (R3): 1 2nd w StP 4-5, 8 Sep (mob).
FRANKLIN'S GULL (R3): 1 ad StP 6-8 Sep (mob).
Lesser Black-backed Gull: arr MWR 18 Sep; max 3 Dean's Cove 30 Oct.
Glaucous Gull: FHSP 20 Nov (MT).
Black Tern: last MWC 19 Sep.
Com. Tern: WBB 27 Sep (DW).
LONG-TAILED JAEGER: StP 9 Sep (KR).

PIGEONS - WOODPECKERS

Snowy Owl: arr WBB 23 Nov.
Long-eared Owl: MWC 9 Sep (MS); RPP 29 Oct (JBA, CW); Cayuga Heights 7 Nov (mob).
Short-eared Owl: first MyPt 10 Nov.
Ruby-throated Hummingbird: last Hopewell Center 4 Oct (JA).
Red-headed Woodpecker: SaW 13 Sep (mob).

FLYCATCHERS - WAXWINGS

E. Wood-Pewee: last Bristol 23 Oct (KK).
Yellow-bellied Flycatcher: last Ithaca 1 Oct.
Great Crested Flycatcher: last Bath 27 Sep.
N. Shrike: arr SaW 25 Oct.

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Yellow-throated Vireo: last SaW 27 Oct (TS), late.

Warbling Vireo: last SaW 30 Sep.

Philadelphia Vireo: last Dryden 2 Oct; Ithaca 2 Oct.

Red-eyed Vireo: last Ithaca 23 Oct (KR), late.

N. Rough-winged Swallow: last 8 Tyre 25 Oct (DT), late.

Barn Swallow: last MWC 23 Oct (JM), late.

Cliff Swallow: last MWR 1 Oct (WF).

Blue-gray Gnatcatcher: last Connecticut Hill 11 Oct (CySm).

Veery: last Horseheads 8 Oct (MP).

Swainson's Thrush: max 300 Ithaca 22 Sep (KR), by flight call.

Wood Thrush: max 50 HowI 10 Sep (RS).

Am. Pipit: max 225 Ithaca 29 Oct (JB).

LONGSPURS - WARBLERS

N. Waterthrush: last SaW 22 Sep (JM).

Tennessee Warbler: last SalPt 28 Oct (JM), late.

Nashville Warbler: last StP 3 Nov (JM), late.

CONNECTICUT WARBLER (R3): RPP 16 Sep (CW); Slaterville 25 Sep (SK).

Com. Yellowthroat: SalPt 30 Nov (JM), bird continuing from early November.

Cape May Warbler: StP 3 Nov (JM), very late.

Cerulean Warbler: last 2 MWC 17 Sep (mob).

Yellow Warbler: last StP 22 Oct (TL), late.

Blackpoll Warbler: last StP 10 Nov (DNu), late.

Wilson's Warbler: last MWC 10 Oct (AS).

TOWHEES - WEAVERS

Chipping Sparrow: last Dryden Lake 24 Nov.

CLAY-COLORED SPARROW (R3): HoHo 18 Oct (CW, KRo, AP).

Field Sparrow: last SaW 10 Nov.

LARK SPARROW: WBB 11 Sep (DW).

Nelson's Sparrow: HoHo 8-10 Oct; HoHo 18-19 Oct; Ithaca 22 Oct; Ithaca 23 Oct.

Song Sparrow: max 120 HoHo 18 Oct.

Swamp Sparrow: max 75 HoHo 18 Oct.

Rose-breasted Grosbeak: last SaW 29 Oct (CD).

Dickcissel: arr Ithaca 10 Sep (JM), flight call; last Etna 7 Oct (CTH), flight call.

Rusty Blackbird: max 250 Cato 20 Nov.

Com. Grackle: max 10,000 MWC 13 Nov.

Baltimore Oriole: last SalPt 17 Nov (JM), very late.

Red Crossbill: Summerhill 13 Nov (GK).

White-winged Crossbill: max 12 Summerhill 12-19 Nov; 3 Summerhill 21 Nov.

Pine Siskin: max 92 Summerhill 27 Nov.

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