

REGION 4—SUSQUEHANNA

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September 2012 was about average in temperature and a bit drier than normal. October was wetter and a bit warmer than average while November was a couple of degrees cooler than the norm with only half the average precipitation. Of course, the main meteorological event was Superstorm *Sandy*, which affected the Region from 29-30 October. The main effects were gusts up to 49 mph and about an inch of rain. Our Region was very lucky to escape the brunt of the storm.

On 30 October there were a number of notable sightings of waterfowl. At Dorchester Park in northern Broome County, 200 Brant were spotted, while our average flock might be 15. Also seen were seven Red-breasted Mergansers, a Long-tailed Duck, 15 Bufflehead, two Surf Scoters, six White-winged Scoters, a Black Scoter, and four Ruddy Ducks. On the same day on the Susquehanna River in Broome County, two Black Scoters were seen, as well as 57 Double-crested Cormorants. In Otsego County on Allen Lake, there were seven Lesser Scaup and 110 Ring-necked Ducks, though Ring-necked Duck numbers had reached a maximum of 120 a week prior to *Sandy*. There was also a maximum of 15 Ruddy Ducks on 28 October at Dorchester Park. Usually we are lucky to see a pair of Ruddy Ducks. Most of these sightings are not common for the Region, especially that many in one day. It is apparent that Superstorm *Sandy* had a major effect on waterfowl migration, though I am not certain of the exact mechanics. Were these migrants that were stopped by *Sandy's* winds, or were these coastal birds who were blown inward?

Great Egrets made their late summer appearance with a maximum of four sighted on 4 September in the Chenango River in Binghamton. There were 14

Green Herons reported from Brick Pond in Owego on 9 September. Brick Pond seems to have a high concentration of Green Herons again this year; last year 20 were reported.

At season's end, Franklin Mountain Hawk Watch had counted 5,039 raptors, which is 6% below the 11-year average of 5,362. Bald Eagles, Sharp-shinned Hawks, and Broad-winged Hawks had very good counts compared to their 11-year averages. According to Andy Mason, the Sharp-shinned Hawk total of 637 was the third highest total recorded for that species. However, Turkey Vulture, Osprey, Cooper's Hawk, Northern Goshawk, Red-shouldered Hawk, Merlin, and Peregrine all had below-average numbers. Golden Eagles had a fairly good count, with 172 tallied versus the average of 179. On 5 November, 30 Golden Eagles were recorded, which was the maximum daily count. On 27 October, a female Golden Eagle with a GPS tag passed Franklin Mountain, which matched the ground observation of an adult Golden Eagle that very morning (from Andy Mason).

A newly renamed Common Gallinule was observed at West Corners Marsh in Endicott with observations from 5-26 September. At Dorchester Park on 20 October, Bob Grosek discovered a flock of shorebirds that contained 14 Pectoral Sandpipers, a Stilt Sandpiper, Dunlin, and a Black-bellied plover. Most of these species were seen and photographed by others. On a field trip by the Naturalists' Club of Broome County, a White-rumped Sandpiper was spotted on Cincinnatus Lake in Chenango County on 14 November.

A Great Black-backed Gull and a Common Tern were spotted on Otsego Lake in November. Another Common Tern was observed on Whitney Point Lake in Broome County on 30 September.

On 5 November a Short-eared Owl was observed at Franklin Mt. Hawk Watch, which was the only sighting in the Region for this species. A Barred Owl was also present at the Hawk Watch in early October.

At Tri-Cities Airport in Endicott, four Common Nighthawks were seen on 3 October, while at Franklin Mt. one was noted on 23 September. There were few sightings of Common Nighthawks in the Region, and I can remember when in the evening sky over Binghamton 30 years ago they seemed plentiful and booming.

Red-headed woodpeckers were reported from feeders in Delaware County and Otsego County in mid to late October. There were two observations of Olive-sided Flycatchers in early September in Broome and Delaware Counties. The first Northern Shrike of the season was seen at a feeder in Hancock on 22 October, as it unsuccessfully tried bird-feeding at the feeder.

Common Raven was well reported, with it being regular at Franklin Mt. Hawk watch, and it seems to be widespread and increasing. There were a few Tree Swallows in early November along the Susquehanna River in Endwell, with the last sighting on 8 November which is rather late for our Region. Were these sightings also related to Superstorm *Sandy*?

A lone Bohemian Waxwing was observed and photographed on 20 November by Jon Weeks; this was an uncommon sighting for our area. American Pipits arrived in a couple of large flocks (50+) in Otsego and Cortland

Counties in late October. Snow Buntings were reported from Dorchester Park on 8 November.

There seemed to be a good diversity of warblers seen, with 26 species being noted. Yellow-rumped Warblers were observed in high numbers (300) along the Susquehanna River in Vestal in late September, with wave after wave being described. Some commented that the flocks seen this fall were very diverse and in high numbers. Last year the total number of warbler species seen was 25.

A **Nelson's Sparrow** was spotted at the Tri-Cities Airport in Endicott by Bob Grosek on 2 October. Other observers were able to also see this sparrow, which stayed until 4 October. The only sighting of a Vesper Sparrow was also seen at Tri-Cities Airport on 28 October. Rusty Blackbirds were reported in Otsego County on 14 October and from the Franklin Mt. Hawk Watch on 4 November. A **Yellow-headed Blackbird** was photographed at a feeder in Milford in Otsego County on 30 November.

A flock of 30 White-winged Crossbills was reported from Otego, Otsego County, foraging in the crowns of White Pines from 4-9 November. A large movement of Pine Siskins swept through the Region from October to early November, with many feeder reports exceeding ten individuals. There were 77 reported from a feeder in Johnson City on 5 October. Common Redpolls were also beginning to be reported with a flock of 80 in Tioga County on 23 November. Evening Grosbeaks were also reported from every county in the Region, with good numbers coming in late October and November. There were comments of surprise and happiness from feeder proprietors as the Evening Grosbeaks suddenly appeared after years of absence.

It is with sadness that I report the death of Marie N. Petuh, who for many years guided and mentored the members of the Broome County Naturalists' Club. She was the author of *Broome Birds & Byways*, which provides a guide to the local flora and fauna with well-written directions and maps. Marie was an indomitable birder as well as an enthusiastic promoter of birding and the Club. She seemed to know every landowner and every feeder in three counties and could tell you what's been seen everywhere for the past 20 years or so. Plus she could really, really write. We will miss her greatly.

CONTRIBUTORS

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ABBREVIATIONS

ALL – Allen L, OTSE; AqPk – Aquaterra P, BROO; BHL – Buck Horn L, OTSE; BUNP – Binghamton University Nature Preserve, BROO; BpD – Boland Pd, BROO; BrPd – Brick Pd, TIOG; CanL – Canadarago L, OTSE; ChenRB – Chenango R, Binghamton, BROO; CherryVSF – Cherry Valley State Forest, OTSE; CVSP – Chenango Valley SP, BROO; DorP – Dorchester P, BROO; DHRd – Dunham Hill Road, BROO; FMHW – Franklin Mt. Hawkwatch, DELA; GrP – Greenwood P, BROO; JC – Johnson City, BROO; LHNC – Lime Hollow Nature Center, CORT; OtsL – Otsego L, OTSE; PrRd – Prentice Rd, Susquehanna R, Vestal, BROO; RivR – River Road, Endwell, BROO; SKAL – Skaneateles L, CORT; TrAir – Tri-Cities Airport, Endicott, BROO; UL – Upper Lisle, BROO; WCM – W Corners Marsh, BROO.; WNR – Wildwood Nature Reserve, TIOG.

WHISTLING-DUCKS – VULTURES

Snow Goose: max 9 CanL 15 Nov; other rep only singles.

Brant: max 200 DorP 30 Oct; last ChenRB 9 Nov.

Canada Goose: max 8000 CanL 29 Nov.

Mute Swan: OtsL 15-20 Nov.

Wood Duck: max 50 ALL 15 Oct.

Gadwall: 2 WNR 13 Oct, only rep.

Am. Wigeon: max 17 ALL 3 Nov.

Am. Black Duck: max 41 Hamden DELA 24 Nov.

Mallard: max 200 BrPd 23 Nov.

Blue-winged Teal: 4 Endicott BROO 28 Sept, only rep.

N. Pintail: BpD 16 Sep; 2 RivR 26 Oct, only reports.

Green-winged Teal: 17 rep; max 20 BrPd 23 Nov.

Redhead: OtsL 26 Nov, only rep.

Ring-necked Duck: 34 rep; max 120 ALL 22 Oct; 110 ALL 30 Oct; most rep from OTSE; good numbers.

Greater Scaup: arr 2 RivR 25 Oct.

Lesser Scaup: arr 7 ALL 30 Oct..

Scurf Scoter: arr 3 RivR 25 Oct, ph; 2 DorP 30 Oct; uncommon in Region.

White-winged Scoter: arr 6 DorP 30 Oct; uncommon in Region.

Black Scoter: arr 2 RivR 30 Oct; DorP 30 Oct; uncommon in Region.

Long-tailed Duck: arr DorP 30 Oct; SKAL 17 Nov; uncommon in Region.

Bufflehead: max 52 PrRd 13 Nov; 15 DorP 30 Oct.

Com. Goldeneye: max 34 CanL 16 Nov.

Hooded Merganser: max 34 ALL 21 Nov.

Com. Merganser: max 300 DorP 8 Nov.

Red-breasted Merganser: arr 7 DorP 30 Oct.

Ruddy Duck: max 20 DorP 28 Oct, 4 DorP 30 Oct; good numbers.

Ring-necked Pheasant: max 11 OTSE 10 Nov.

Ruffed Grouse: max 5 Tubbs Hill Rd TIOGA 21 Oct.; 25 rep across Region.

Wild Turkey: max 20 BROO 10 Oct; many rep.

Red-throated Loon: arr DorP 28 Oct.

Com. Loon: max 10+ FMHW 5 Nov.

Pied-billed Grebe: max 13 UL 7 Oct.

Horned Grebe: max 4 OtsL 7 Nov.

Red-necked Grebe: arr 2 PrRd 10 Nov.

Double-crested Cormorant: max 57 RivR 30 Oct; most rep in BROO along Susq R and Chenango R.

Great Egret: max 4 ChenRB 9 Sep; last ChenRB 23 Sep.

Green Heron: max 14 BrPd 9 Sep; last Bpd 23 Sep.

Black Vulture: 2 BROO 7 Sep, only rep.

Turkey Vulture: common thru mid-Oct; max (non HW) 28 OTSE 8 Oct; total 249 FMHW, 40% below avg.

HAWKS – ALCIDS

(FMHW totals cover 22 Aug to 30 Dec; averages reflect 2001-2011 data).

Osprey: total 90 FMHW, 37% below avg; 15 other rep, low.

Bald Eagle: total 185 FMHW, 21% above avg; many other rep; very widespread.

N. Harrier: total 75 FMHW, 2% above avg; 19 other rep.

Sharp-shinned Hawk: total 638 FMHW, 12% above avg; 18 other rep.

Cooper's Hawk: total 63 FMHW, 45% below avg; 16 other rep.

N. Goshawk: total 10 FMHW, 61% below avg; UL 13 Nov, only rep outside of FMHW.

Red-shouldered Hawk: total 43 FMHW, 31% below avg; 5 rep outside of FMHW; Owego, TIOG 29 Sep, parking lot at NYSOA meeting.

Broad-winged Hawk: total 1763 FMHW, 31% above avg; non-FMHW max 35 JC 10 Sep.

Red-tailed Hawk: total 1600 FMHW, 23% below avg; many other rep.

Rough-legged Hawk: total 2 FMHW, 81% below avg; arr Northern BROO 11 Nov.

Golden Eagle: total 172 FMHW, 4% below avg; Northern BROO Oct 30 to Nov 3, 3 rep.

Com. Gallinule: WCM 5-26 Sep, 3 rep at this location.

Am. Coot: max 73 OtsL 29 Nov.

Black-bellied Plover: arr DorP 10 Oct; last DorP 21 Oct.

Killdeer: max 25 TrAir 28 Sep; last 6 Cincinnatus L CHEN 14 Nov.

Spotted Sandpiper: Sidney OTSE 5 Sep, only rep.

Solitary Sandpiper: arr TrAir 10 Sep; last 2 TrAir 24 Sep.

Greater Yellowlegs: max 5 OtsL 14 Oct; last 3 OtsL 1 Nov.

Lesser Yellowlegs: max 4 DorP 17 Oct; last 2 OtsL 1 Nov.

Semipalmated Sandpiper: 6 DorP 17 Oct, only rep.

Least Sandpiper: DorP 20 Oct, only rep.

White-rumped Sandpiper: Cincinnatus L CHEN 14 Nov (DW), uncommon and late.

Pectoral Sandpiper: max 14 DorP 20 Oct (mob, ph), large count.

Dunlin: arr 2 DorP Oct 20.

Stilt Sandpiper: DorP Oct 20 (BG), only rep.

Long-billed Dowitcher: arr UL 30 Sep (DN), uncommon.

Wilson's Snipe: arr 2 TrAir 3 Oct, only rep.

Am. Woodcock: 4 rep, widely scattered.

Great Black-backed Gull: OtsL Nov 1, 15, 18, 20.

Com. Tern: UL 30 Sep; OtsL 1 Nov; only 2 rep.

PIGEONS – PARROTS

E. Screech-Owl: CVSP 16 Sep; CHEN 8 OCT; Binghamton BROO 15 Oct; only 3 rep.

Great Horned Owl: max 3 OTSE 13 Nov; 2 CHEN 8 Oct; 3 rep from BROO; low count.

Barred Owl: FMHW 2&4 Oct; CHEN Oct 7&9; 5 rep.

Short-eared Owl: FMHW 5 Nov, only rep.

Com. Nighthawk: FMHW 23 Sep; last & max 4 TrAir 3 Oct, late; only 4 rep.

Chimney Swift: last & max 30 Endicott BROO 15 Sep.

Ruby-throated Hummingbird: last TIOG 29 Sep.

Red-headed Woodpecker: Fly Creek OTSE 16 Oct; DELA 29 OCT to 1 NOV; both feeder rep.

Yellow-bellied Sapsucker: last Bing BROO 28 Oct.

Am. Kestrel: total 96 FMHW, 11% below avg; 25 other rep; good count outside of FMHW.

Merlin: total 15 FMHW, 44% below avg; 15 other rep.

Peregrine Falcon: total 15 FMHW, 12% below avg; many rep from Binghamton BROO of resident downtown pair.

FLYCATCHERS – WAXWINGS

Olive-sided Flycatcher: Cherry Ridge Forest DELA 2 Sep; AqPk 9 Sep; only two rep.

E. Wood-Pewee: last BROO 21 Sep.

Least Flycatcher: last ALL 5 Oct.

E. Kingbird: last AqPk 3 Oct, very late.

N. Shrike: arr Hancock DELA 22 Oct; 7 rep.

Yellow-throated Vireo: last PrRd Sep 20; 6 rep.

Blue-headed Vireo: last Vestal BROO 9 Oct; most last 2 weeks of Sep.

Warbling Vireo: last OTSE 17 Sep; most first 2 weeks of Sep.

Philadelphia Vireo: last OTSE 24 Sep; 8 rep, good count.

Red-eyed Vireo: last ALL 3 Oct; many rep.

Fish Crow: max 4 RivR 30 Sep; 5 rep.

Com. Raven: 37 rep, widespread; regular at FMHW.

Tree Swallow: max 50 PrRd 21 Sep; 4 rep RivR 1-8 Nov (GW, AK, BG), last 2 RivR 8 Nov, late, Sandy-related?.

Barn Swallow: last 2 ChenRB 11 Sep; 3 rep.

Red-breasted Nuthatch: 78 rep; good widespread count.

Brown Creeper: 36 rep; widespread.

Carolina Wren: 120+ rep; most from BROO & TIOG.

House Wren: 10 rep; all in Sep.

Winter Wren: 5 rep; max 2 Heiberg Forest CORT 21 Oct.

Marsh Wren: BUNP 2 Sep; 2 UL 30 Sep; BPd 11 Nov; 3 rep.

Blue-gray Gnatcatcher: 2 CVSP 9 Sep; CHEN 9 Sep; 2 rep.

Golden-crowned Kinglet: widely reported.

Ruby-crowned Kinglet: arr AqPk 20 Sep; last AqPk 11 Nov.

E. Bluebird: max 20 BROO 23 Sep; 50+ rep, widespread.

Veery: AqPk 2 & 8 Sep, only rep.

Gray-cheeked Thrush: max night flight 13 JC 15 Sep (DN).

Swainson's Thrush: max night flight 280 JC 15 Sep (DN).

Hermit Thrush: last BUNP 11 Nov; Glimmerglass SP OTSE 11 Nov.

Wood Thrush: night flight 1 JC 2 Sep (DN), only rep.

Gray Catbird: well reported thru early Oct; last BROO 20 Oct.

N. Mockingbird: 11 rep BROO; 1 rep Sydney DELA; distribution seems spotty and puzzling.

Brown Thrasher: 24 rep; many from feeder DELA; last DELA 6 Oct.

Am. Pipit: max 55 Springfield OTSE 26 OCT; 50 CORT 25 Oct; 5 rep.

Bohemian Waxwing: Vestal BROO 20 Nov (JW, ph).

Cedar Waxwing: well reported thru; max 100 PrRd14 Sep.

LONGSPURS – WARBLERS

Snow Bunting: Max 7 DorP 8 Nov; 5 rep all Nov.

Ovenbird: last UL 27 Sep; 5 rep.

Blue-winged Warbler: DELA 1 Sep; CHEN 10 Sep; 2 rep.

Black-and-white Warbler: last UL 27 Sep.

Tennessee Warbler: last PrRd 4 Oct; 12 rep, good count.

Orange-crowned Warbler: PrRd 29 Sep, uncommon, only rep.

Nashville Warbler: 21 rep; last CVSP 7 Oct; max 3 ALL 3 Oct; good count.

Mourning Warbler: 2 Moyer Rd OTSE 19 Sep, AqPk 29 Sep; only 2 rep.

Com. Yellowthroat: many rep; last Keibel Rd BROO 17 Nov.

Hooded Warbler: last Endicott BROO 30 Sep; 4 rep, all BROO.

Am. Redstart: 10 rep; last AqPk 29 Sep; TIOG 29 Sep.

Cape May Warbler: last WNR 14 Oct; DELA 1-26 Sep; good count.

N. Parula: last Endicott BROO 30 Sep; 5 rep.

Magnolia Warbler: 39 rep; last 2 Tubbs Hill Rd TIOG 29 Sep; good count.

Bay-breasted Warbler: Heiberg Forest CORT 8 Sep; Vestal BROO 14 Sep; only 2 rep.

Blackburnian Warbler: last BROO 25 Sep; 7 rep.

Yellow Warbler: last PrRd 29 Sep; 14 rep.

Chestnut-sided Warbler: last Glimmerglass SP 26 Sep; 14 widely scattered rep.

Blackpoll Warbler: CVSP 15-16 Sep, only rep; down from last year.

Black-throated Blue Warbler: last AqPk 28 Sep; 10 rep.

Palm Warbler: last BUNP 21 Oct; max 15 PrRd 29 Sep; good count.

Pine Warbler: last ALL 4 Oct; 12 rep.

Yellow-rumped Warbler: max 300 PrRd 29 Sep (DW); 15 Moyer Rd OTSE 29 Sep; last Endicott BROO 3 Nov; high count.

Prairie Warbler: last Oneonta OTSE15 Sep; 4 rep.

Black-throated Green Warbler: last DELA 11 Oct; max 7 Moyer Rd OTSE 24 Sep; 56 rep.

Canada Warbler: AqPk 9 Sep, only rep.

Wilson's Warbler: last ALL 3 Oct; 9 rep.

TOWHEES - WEAVERS

E. Towhee: last Vestal BROO 30 Oct.

Am. Tree Sparrow: arr 3 BROO 3 Nov.

Chipping Sparrow: last BROO 28 Nov; many rep thru Oct.

Field Sparrow: last Endicott BROO 27 Oct; OSTSE 27 Oct; 22 rep.

Vesper Sparrow: TrAir 28 Oct, uncommon.

Savannah Sparrow: last TrAir 28 Oct; 10 rep.

NELSON'S SPARROW: TrAir 2-4 Oct mob (BG).

Fox Sparrow: arr DELA 11 Oct; 33 rep, good count.

Lincoln's Sparrow: arr BROO 4 Sep; 13 rep.

Swamp Sparrow: max 25 WNR 29 Sep (NYSOA field trip).

White-throated Sparrow: 150+ rep, abundant.

White-crowned Sparrow: 50+ rep; arr WNR 29 Sep; last CHEN 30 Nov ph.

Dark-eyed Junco: 200+ rep; max 45 ALL 24 Oct; widespread, good count.

Scarlet Tanager: 13 rep; last DELA 3 Oct; good count.

Rose-breasted Grosbeak: 22 rep; last DELA 3 Oct.

Indigo Bunting: last BROO 30 Sep.

Bobolink: UL 30 Sep, only rep.

Red-winged Blackbird: max 500 WNR 4 Oct; last 12 SKAL 24 Nov.

E. Meadowlark: 10 rep; max 12 TrAir 3 Oct; last 9 Keibel Rd BROO 14 Oct; good count.

YELLOW-HEADED BLACKBIRD: Miford OTSE 30 Nov, feeder, ph, uncommon.

Rusty Blackbird: max 9 Moyer Rd OTSE 15 Oct; 8 FMHW 4 Nov; 5 other rep with small numbers.

Com. Grackle: max 1000 Vestal BROO 4 Sep ph, lawn invasion.

Brown Headed Cowbird: max 4 BROO 30 Oct feeder; 5 rep in Oct & Nov, mostly at feeders.

Purple Finch: max 13 Vestal BROO 4 Oct; 70+ rep.

Red Crossbill: Shackham Rd CORT 13 Nov, only rep.

White-winged Crossbill: max 30 Otego OTSE 5-9 Nov; E. Pharsalia CHEN 10 Nov; 2 FMHW 4 Nov; 2 BROO 8 Nov.

Com. Redpoll: max 80 Tubbs Hill Rd TIOG 23 Nov; arr 2 AqPk 9 Oct; 4 rep.

Pine Siskin: max 77 JC 5 Oct; 66 rep across Reg Oct to early Nov; many feeder rep with 10+.

EVENING GROSBEAK: arr Kirkwood BROO 23 Sep; 28 BROO Vestal 30 Oct; 50 Beckwith Rd CHEN 10 Nov; 25 SKAL 24 Nov; 25 Hamden DELA 4 Nov; 9 Tubbs Hill Rd TIOGA 21 Oct; 21 reports, high counts at feeders.