

REGION 8—HUDSON-MOHAWK

Will Yandik

269 Schneider Road, Hudson NY 12534

wyandik@hotmail.com

Fall 2012 was slightly warmer than average and slightly wet. September had seasonal temperatures and ended 2.4" wetter than average. October ended 3.6° F warmer than average with average precipitation. On 28-29 October the remains of Hurricane *Sandy* reached the Region bringing some rain and moderately strong gusts of wind. A killing frost occurred on 13 October followed by a widespread warming trend that continued until the end of the month. November ended with seasonal temperatures and average rainfall. The Region remained snow and ice free throughout the season.

Three sightings of **Greater White-fronted Goose** in our Region is unusual. Seasonally average numbers of Snow Geese and Brant passed through the Region. Overall waterfowl numbers were down, likely due to still turbid conditions in rivers and streams following a wet summer and the lack of cold weather to push northern ducks down onto the Hudson and Mohawk Rivers. An unusually large number of all three scoters tarried in our Region, delayed between their breeding grounds and customary marine winter haunts.

Did Hurricane *Sandy* blow in any birds to the Region? Many birders went out to look, but the general consensus is "no." A Black-crowned Night-Heron in Hudson the day after may have blown up, however, others were reported in the Region this season, and it may have already been local.

Every Region would be lucky to have a troupe of Tim O'Connors, the kind of birder who goes out week after week, kicking brush, investigating marshes, looking, recording, and reporting. It is due to Tim's efforts that in the small freshwater tidal marshes near Hudson we finally received some fall reports of Least Bittern, Virginia Rail, Sora, and Marsh Wren, which are often reported in spring, but completely ignored after Labor Day. Tim recorded the record late date for Least Bittern for the Region, 19 November. Birding for rarities can be a tough go in our Region; most weeks you're out there counting chickadees and crows. When unusual species crop up in Region 8, it is often because they were earned with an order of magnitude more walks than those required by our luckier Regional neighbors who have larger geographic features to attract and trap birds. Region 8 is the true "flyover" country of our State, and hats off to the birders who keep searching for the unusual and unexpected. Rare birds are everywhere, of course, but here, without large bodies of water, urban traps, or large mountains, they are but needles in rolling hills of haystacks, unnoticed as they slip away.

Our Region experienced its second year of an American Pipit invasion. They often move through each fall, tarry in winter rye fields and corn stubble in small numbers, and vanish. This season they were found in greater numbers, in nearly every county in the Region, and for long stretches of time from

September into mid-winter where they were reported on many Christmas Counts.

Speaking of rarities, fall is the best time to get one in Region 8, and sharp eyes at a residence in Athens, Greene County, alerted the birding community to a **Western Tanager** that appeared for a few days at their feeder. Two other uncommon passerines this season include **Connecticut Warbler** and **Clay-colored Sparrow**.

Among finches, after several decent years for crossbills, they were scarce this year. This absence on the checklist has been more than balanced by several other irruptive finches. Pine Siskins were widely reported, and sightings in late November of Common Redpolls indicate an irruption year. Pine Grosbeaks were noted at three locations, and after years of scarcity, Evening Grosbeaks have left the foothills of the Adirondacks and the Berkshires and were spotted at feeders at many low elevation locations in the Hudson and Mohawk Valleys.

CONTRIBUTORS

Alan Devoe Bird Club monthly sighting reports, Larry Alden, Dave Baim, Hope Batchellor, Mona Bearor, Steve Chorvas, Gerry Colborn, Bill Cook, Tim Dormady, Corey Finger, John Finley, Dave Gibson, Elizabeth Grace, Jane Graves, Richard Guthrie, David Harrison, Ron Harrower, John Hershey, Hudson-Mohawk Bird Club's Birdline of Eastern New York, Nancy Kern, Eric Kranz, Bill Lee, Alan Mapes, Dave Martin, Andrew Mason, Roger Miller, Mike Morgante, Frank Murphy, Gail & Rich Nord, Paul Novak, Tim O'Conner, Mike Peterson, John Piwowarski, Neil Powell, Bill Purcell, Barb Putnam, Bob Ramonowski, Will Raup, Steph Restuccia, Joan Suriano, Bill & Marion Ulmer, Alison Van Keuren, Marlene Vidibor, Brad Walker, Carol & Owen Whitby, Phil Whitney, T. Lloyd Williams, Chris Winters, Allan & Phyllis Wirth, Chad Witko, John Workman, Will Yandik, Robert Yunick.

ABBREVIATIONS

COH – T Cohoes, ALBA; COX – T Cocksackie, GREE: FtE – T Fort Edwards, WASH; HR – Hudson R; TR – Tomhannock Res, RENS; VF – Vischer's Ferry, SARA.

WHISTLING-DUCKS – VULTURES

GREATER WHITE-FRONTED GOOSE

(R8): Myosotis L ALBA 8 Oct; Ft Miller WASH 13-15 Nov; HR Hudson COLU 15 Nov.

Snow Goose: arr COH 30 Sep; max 150 Livingston COLU 24 Oct.

Brant: max 330 HR Clermont COLU 13 Oct.

Gadwall: max 6 VF 22 Nov.

N. Shoveler: Stanton Pd ALBA 22 Sep.

N. Pintail: max 2 Stanton Pd ALBA 22 Sep.

Surf Scoter: max 2 Lock 7 SCHE 27 Oct.

White-winged Scoter: max 44 TR 31 Oct.

Black Scoter: max 145 TR 31 Oct, high number for R8.

Long-tailed Duck: 2 Catskill GREE 22 Oct; TR 30 Oct; Nassau L RENS 1 Nov; Loughberry L SARA 11 Nov; Myosotis L ALBA 13 Nov.

Red-breasted Merganser: max 5 Saratoga L SARA 5 Nov.

Ruddy Duck: last HR Castleton RENS 25 Nov.

Ring-necked Pheasant: Chatham COLU 14 Oct.

Ruffed Grouse: Glenville SCHE 26 Oct; Providence SARA 30 Oct; Charlton SARA 4 Nov; Coeymans ALBA 22 Nov.
Red-throated Loon: TR 1-11 Nov.
Com. Loon: max 12 TR 1 Nov.
Horned Grebe: max 6 Saratoga L SARA 4 Nov.
Red-necked Grebe: 2 Clifton Park SARA 8 Oct; Collins L SCHE 19 Oct; Loughberry L SARA 21 Oct; Saratoga L SARA 26 Oct; TR 1 Nov.
Double-crested Cormorant: last Lock 7 SCHE 21 Nov.
Least Bittern: Greenport COLU 19 Nov (TO), record late date R8.
Great Egret: last COH 26 Oct.
Snowy Egret: TR 9-20 Sep.
Green Heron: last Lock 7 SCHE 24 Sep.
Black-crowned Night-Heron: Hudson COLU 29 Sep; COH 4 Oct; Livingston COLU 30 Oct.
Black Vulture: 2 Helderbergs ALBA 3 Sep; Voorheesville ALBA 17 Sep; max 3 Hudson COLU 22 Sep; Bethlehem ALBA 5 Oct.

HAWKS – ALCIDS

Osprey: last Wager Pd RENS 3 Nov.
N. Harrier: max 6 COX grasslands 7 Oct.
N. Goshawk: Partridge Run ALBA 28 Oct.
Red-shouldered Hawk: Coeymans ALBA 2 Sep; Saratoga SARA 2 Sep; Thatcher Park ALBA 17 Oct; Partridge Run ALBA 28 Oct.
Rough-legged Hawk: arr Saratoga Cemetery SARA 25 Oct.
Virginia Rail: last Hudson COLU 28 Sep.
Sora: last Hudson COLU 28 Sep.
Com. Gallinule: Rensselaerville ALBA 13 Oct (TLW).
Am. Coot: TR 11 Oct; Rensselaerville ALBA 27 Oct; 4 Collins L SCHE 30 Oct; 4 Saratoga L SARA 25 Nov.
Am. Golden-Plover: 2 COH 17 Sep.
Greater Yellowlegs: max 26 TR 31 Oct.
Lesser Yellowlegs: last TR 11 Oct.
Pectoral Sandpiper: max 3 Charlton SARA 20 Oct.
Dunlin: COH 3 Nov.
Lesser Black-backed Gull: New Baltimore GREE 2 Sep; COX boat launch 11 Oct.
Caspian Tern: Cohoes ALBA 30 Sep.
Com. Tern: 5 4-mile Pt GREE 9 Sep.

PIGEONS - PARROTS

Yellow-billed Cuckoo: last Saratoga SARA 23 Sep.
Black-billed Cuckoo: last Austerlitz COLU 16 Sep.
Long-eared Owl: 2 Rensselaerville ALBA 17 Nov.

Short-eared Owl: 6 MONT grasslands 17 Nov; 5 Ft Edward WASH 25 Nov.
N. Saw-whet Owl: Berne ALBA 30 Nov.
Com. Nighthawk: last Black Creek Marsh ALBA 17 Sep.
E. Whip-poor-will: Hillsdale COLU 3 Sep; Queensbury WARR 23 Sep.
Ruby-throated Hummingbird: last New Baltimore GREE 27 Sep.
Merlin: Meadowdale ALBA 3 Sep; 2 Albany 23 Sep; Stuyvesant COLU 5 Oct; COX grasslands 17 Oct; Collins L SCHE 19 Oct.

FLYCATCHERS - WAXWINGS

Olive-sided Flycatcher: max 2 Partridge Run ALBA 7 Sep; Clermont COLU 15 Sep.
Yellow-bellied Flycatcher: max 2 VF 23 Sep.
Least Flycatcher: last Albany 28 Sep.
N. Shrike: arr Rensselaerville ALBA 27 Oct.
Blue-headed Vireo: last Five Rivers ALBA 7 Oct.
Philadelphia Vireo: last COH 13 Sep.
Marsh Wren: last Hudson COLU 28 Sep.
Veery: last Bethlehem ALBA 4 Oct.
Grey-cheeked Thrush: Florida MONT 27 Sep, banded (RY); Hyuck Preserve ALBA 29 Sep; Albany 24 Oct.
Swainson's Thrush: last Albany 28 Sep.
Am. Pipit: max 120 Green Acres Farm Livingston COLU 13 Oct, numerous and widespread mid-Sep thru Nov.

LONGSPURS - WARBLERS

Snow Bunting: arr Glenville SCHE 6 Nov.
N. Waterthrush: last VF 23 Sep.
Black-and-white Warbler: last Albany 28 Sep.
Tennessee Warbler: last Albany 27 Oct.
Orange-crowned Warbler: Wright's Loop SARA 5 Oct; Five Rivers ALBA 9 Oct.
CONNECTICUT WARBLER (R8): VF 15 Sep (JH).
Mourning Warbler: last Florida MONT 12 Sep.
Com. Yellowthroat: last Rensselaerville ALBA 27 Oct.
Cape May Warbler: last VF 23 Sep.
N. Parula: last Five Rivers ALBA 7 Oct.
Bay-breasted Warbler: Albany 10 Sep; Albany 1 Oct.
Blackburnian Warbler: last Austerlitz COLU 30 Sep.
Blackpoll Warbler: last Five Rivers ALBA 7 Oct.
Black-throated Green Warbler: last Livingston COLU 22 Oct.
Canada Warbler: VF 3 Sep; W Charlton SARA 8 Sep.

Wilson's Warbler: Albany 9 Sep; VF 23 Sep;
Albany 1 Oct.

TOWHEES - WEAVERS

Am. Tree Sparrow: arr Papscanee I RENS 25
Oct.

CLAY-COLORED SPARROW (R8):
Rensselaerville ALBA 27 Oct (TLW).

Vesper Sparrow: Florida MONT 26 Oct; 2
Rensselaerville ALBA 27 Oct; Troy landfill
RENS 19 Nov.

Lincoln's Sparrow: last Florida MONT 2 Nov.

WESTERN TANAGER: Athens GREE 29
Nov-2 Dec (mob).

E. Meadowlark: max 8 COX grasslands 30 Oct.

Rusty Blackbird: max 40 Papscanee I RENS 9
Nov.

Baltimore Oriole: last Stanton Pd ALBA 1 Nov.

Pine Grosbeak: 2 Partridge Run ALBA 7 Nov;
2 Swyer Preserve Stuyvesant COLU 25 Nov; 6
Queensbury WARR 27 Nov.

Red Crossbill: Brunswick RENS 22 Nov.

Com. Redpoll: arr Colonie ALBA 26 Oct,
numerous reports in Nov.

Pine Siskin: max 50 Poestenkill RENS 10 Oct.

Evening Grosbeak: W Sand Lake RENS 2 Oct;
New Baltimore GREE 22 Oct; 8 Providence
SARA 20 Oct; max 24 Austerlitz COLU 5 Nov,
modest irruption in Nov-winter.