

REGION 4—SUSQUEHANNA

William Kuk

26 Esther Avenue, Binghamton, NY 13903
ckennykuk@stny.rr.com

September 2014 was slightly warmer and drier than normal. October was about average precipitation-wise and two and one-half degrees warmer than average, while November was three degrees cooler than the norm and somewhat drier than average. However, at the end of November, there was a significant snowstorm that dropped nine inches but was preceded by a couple of days of unseasonably high temperatures.

Given the mild October weather, one would not have expected waterfowl to be coming through early, but a flock of Snow Geese and seven Brant were spotted in flight on 11 October from a vantage point in Chenango County. Black, Surf, and White-winged Scoters were seen at various reservoirs in the Region in October and November with an impressive 65 Black Scoters seen on Pepacton Reservoir on 2 November. This is a good variety and number of sea ducks for an inland location. Ruddy Ducks also made a good appearance, with 35 seen in Dorchester Park. Lance Verderame spotted twelve Long-tailed Ducks on Cannonsville Reservoir, which is a high number for our area.

Along with the annual reappearance of Great Egrets in the Region, a **Cattle Egret** was spotted and photographed in Dorchester Park by Glenn Wilson on 7 October. Black-crowned Night-Herons were also seen and photographed in Dorchester Park and the nearby Upper Lisle area of Broome County in late September and mid November, respectively.

Moving on to raptors, Andy Mason reports that numbers from the Franklin Mountain hawk watch were somewhat down this year. The total count was 4,981 raptors, which was 6% below the 13-year average of 5,298. However Broad-winged Hawks were 29% above their 13-year averages, and on 17 September, 427 Broad-wings were counted, which was the high daily total for the season. The high count for last year was 916 also on 17 September. The total number of Bald Eagles at 174 was 12% above average. Osprey recorded at 53 was a slight improvement over last year's record low of 49. Northern Harriers, Red-tailed Hawks, Sharp-shinned Hawks, and Cooper's Hawks were all down significantly from their 13-year averages. Golden Eagles were also down from their average, but up from last year with 147 tallied. On both 2 November and 1 December 14 Golden Eagles were sighted. One aspect of the decline noted

above is that the observation hours in 2014 were 22% below the 13-year average.

Regarding shorebirds, a Baird's Sandpiper appeared at Dorchester Park on 18 September and was photographed by George Chiu. In Cortland County an American Golden-Plover was seen by Chris Wood at West River Road, which borders the Tioughnioga River. A Lesser Black-backed Gull was seen at a gravel pit in Cortland County on 16 October. There were also numerous sightings of Bonaparte's Gulls in the Region, which contrasts with last fall's lone sighting.

Continuing the trend of declining Common Nighthawk numbers, there were only three reports from the entire Region which were from the Binghamton area in early September, and one from Chenango County. Last fall we had no reports of Chimney Swifts in the Region, but this year we had a report of 100 on 7 September in Binghamton going to roost, as well as a few other reports of flocks of Chimney Swifts.

There was a **Rufous Hummingbird** coming to a feeder in Smyrna (Chenango County) from 25 September to 1 October, which was well-documented with photos and then was banded. It was determined to be a hatch year female. The last Ruby-throated Hummingbird departed on 27 September.

Lapland Longspurs were found in good numbers, six!, by Marshal Iliff in Spencer on 20 November (well, in fields near Spencer). A flock of 25 Snow Buntings was seen in Glimmerglass State Park on 22 November.

Warbler diversity continued to be good, with 27 species recorded. Last year's total was 28. Several observers were able to see an Orange-crowned Warbler at the Lime Hollow Nature Center. There were also two sightings of Canada Warblers in the Region.

There was one report of a Vesper Sparrow on 4 October found near West State Road in Cortland County. On 25 October, American Tree Sparrows made their first appearance of the season at Upper Lisle Park. A flock of 27 Rusty Blackbirds was reported from the pleasingly named Song Lake in Cortland County, and there were fifteen other scattered reports of this declining species.

There were 30 or so reports of Pine Siskins, which reflect the biannual appearance of this species. There were also a couple of sightings of Evening Grosbeaks. However, no Common Redpolls were reported.

In summary, 200 species were reported with some interesting rarities for the Region. I also want to acknowledge and thank Dave Wheeler for the use of his software SwanSwanHummingbird which is used to sort eBird data and to identify arrivals, last dates, and high counts.

CONTRIBUTORS

Diane Allison, Catherine Barron, Marty Borko, Ted Buhl, George Chiu, Anne Clark, Andy Cooper, Larry Dake, Robert Dewing, Delaware-Otsego Audubon Soc., Nick & Ailsa Donnelly, Renee DePrato, Jessica Ewing, Elizabeth Frascatore, Fred Fries, Louise Gomez, Lisa Gorn, Bob Grajewski, Derek Green,

Becky Gretton, Bob Grosek, Barbara Hall, Larry Hall, Linda Hall, Steve Hall, Jim Hoteling, Marshall Iliff, Michael Jordan, Sara Kinch, Hugh Kingery, Gail Kirch, Al Kresock, Bill Kuk, Victor Lamoureaux, Tim Lenz, Art Levy, Sarah Lewis, Andrea Lodovico, Evan Mann, Andy Mason, JoAnne Mattucci, David McCartt, Garret MacDonald, Naturalists' Club of Broome County, Dave Nicosia, Ralph Niederlander, NY eBird, Sandy Olshefski, Ruth Pedersen, Leslie Preston, Bill Purcell, Tom Salo, Julian Shepherd, Rose Smith, Tioga Bird Club, Jan Trzeciak, Lance Verderame, Linda Vicke, Brad Walker, Jason Wanaselja, Dan Watkins, Jon Weeks, Glenn Wilson, Colleen Wolpert, Chris Wood, Rich Youket, Robert Yunick.

ABBREVIATIONS

AqPk – Aquaterra P, BROO; CanL – Canadarago L, OTSE; CannR – Cannonsville Res, DELA; DorP – Dorchester P, BROO; FMHW – Franklin Mt. Hawkwatch, DELA; LHNC – Lime Hollow Nature Center, CORT; MHL – Michigan Hollow L, TIOG; OtsL – Otsego L, OTSE; UL – Upper Lisle, BROO; WRRd – West River Rd, Marathon, CORT.

WHISTLING-DUCKS – VULTURES

Snow Goose: max 165 Reservoir Hill Rd CHEN 11 Oct.
Brant: 7 Reservoir Hill Rd CHEN 11 Oct.
Cackling Goose: DorP 9-19 Nov, mob.
Tundra Swan: max 10 Follet Hill Rd CHEN 9 Nov.
Surf Scoter: Plymouth Res CHEN 23 Oct; 2 CannR 2 Nov.
White-winged Scoter: Balsam Swamp SF CHEN 26 Oct; 3 other rep.
Black Scoter: max 65 Pepacton Res DELA 2 Nov.
Long-tailed Duck: max 12 CannR 2 Nov.
Ruddy Duck: max 35 DorP 6 Nov, good numbers.
Red-throated Loon: OtsL 29 Nov, only rep.
Com. Loon: max 49 Blinn Rd TIOG 30 Oct, flyover.
Red-necked Grebe: Pepacton Res DELA 19 Oct; 2 CanL 29 Oct; DorP 16 Nov.
Am. Bittern: MHL 19 Oct, only rep.
Great Egret: 30+ reports, most in Sep.
CATTLE EGRET (R4): DorP 7 Oct (GW), uncommon, photos.
Black-Crowned Night-Heron: WRRd 23 Sep; DorP 30 Sep; UL 11 Nov.
Turkey Vulture: total 600 FMHW, 50% above avg.

HAWKS – LARIDS

FMHW totals cover 19 Aug to 1 Jan; averages reflect 2001-2013 data.

Osprey: total 53 FMHW, 60% below avg.
Bald Eagle: total 174 FMHW, 12% above avg; many other rep; very widespread.
N. Harrier: total 39 FMHW, 45% below avg.
Sharp-shinned Hawk: total 413 FMHW, 26% below avg.
Cooper's Hawk: total 51 FMHW, 53% below avg.
N. Goshawk: total 4 FMHW, 83% below avg.
Red-shouldered Hawk: total 29 FMHW, 51% below avg.
Broad-winged Hawk: total 1842 FMHW, 29% above avg.
Red-tailed Hawk: total 1525 FMHW, 23% below avg; many other rep.
Rough-legged Hawk: total 1 FMHW, 89% below avg; a few scattered reports from the Region in late Nov.
Golden Eagle: total 147 FMHW, 15% below avg.
Virginia Rail: Spencer L TIOG 23 Sep; Daisy Hollow Rd CORT 27 Sep.
Sora: Ott Rd CHEN 14 Sep; Daisy Hollow Rd CORT 27 Sep; MHL 30 Sep.
Com. Gallinule: MHL 23-30 Sep.
Am. Golden-Plover: WRRd 23 Sep.
Baird's Sandpiper: DorP 18 Sep, photo.
Bonaparte's Gull: max 6 Pepacton Res DELA 1 Nov; 17 rep.
Lesser Black-backed Gull: CORT (Gravel Pit) 16 Oct.

PIGEONS – PARROTS

N. Saw-whet Owl: Gee Brook SF CORT 11 OCT, responded to tape.

Com. Nighthawk: 2 rep BROO; 1 rep CHEN; all rep early Sep.

Chimney Swift: max 100 flying into a tower by the railroad station Binghamton BROO 7 Sep, roosting.

Ruby-throated Hummingbird: last River Rd DELA 27 Sep.

RUFIOUS HUMMINGBIRD: Smyrna CHEN 25 Sep to 1 Oct, feeder, photos, banded, HY fem.

Am. Kestrel: total 61 FMHW, 42% below avg.

Merlin: total 22 FMHW, 13% below avg; 10 other rep.

Peregrine Falcon: total 11 FMHW, 33% below avg; many rep from Binghamton BROO of resident downtown pair.

FLYCATCHERS – WAXWINGS

N. Shrike: arr UL 25 Oct.

Horned Lark: max 55 Spencer TIOG 20 Nov.

Brown Creeper: 76 rep; widespread, interesting species.

Gray-cheeked Thrush: max night flight 16 Rt 392 CORT 27 Sep (MI).

Swainson's Thrush: max night flight 34 Rt 392 CORT 27 Sep (MI).

Am. Pipit: max 150 DorP 5 Nov.

LONGSPURS – WARBLERS

Lapland Longspur: max 6 Spencer TIOG 20 Nov; UL 9 Nov.

Snow Bunting: max 25 Glimmerglass SP OTSE 22 Nov.

Orange-crowned Warbler: LHNC 4-12 Oct (mob).

Canada Warbler: 2 AqPk 14 Sep; Long Pond SF CHEN 14 Sep.

TOWHEES - WEAVERS

Am. Tree Sparrow: arr 3 UL 25 Oct.

Vesper Sparrow: West State Rd CORT 4 Oct.

Nelson's Sparrow: MHL 19 Oct.

Rusty Blackbird: max 27 Song L CORT 5 Nov; 15 other rep with small numbers.

Pine Siskin: max 34 Perkins Pond SF CHEN 23 OCT; 34 Bridge St Downsville DELA 1 NOV; 30+ rep, large increase from last year.

Evening Grosbeak: DELA 3 Nov; Harpursville CHEN 9 Nov, flyover.

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