

REGION 8—HUDSON-MOHAWK

Will Yandik

269 Schneider Road, Hudson NY 12534

wyandik@hotmail.com

Fall 2014 was largely warm and dry. September ended 1.3° above average and dry, with 2.41 fewer inches of rain than average. October ended very warm, 4.3° above average, with some degree of light precipitation on half the month's days. Light frosts occurred on the 10th and 31st at Albany Airport. November cooled slightly below average and 0.5 fewer inches of rain fell than average. Green vegetation persisted in patches until a hard killing frost of 26° occurred at Albany, along with similar temperatures Region-wide, on Nov. 13.

Waterfowl were relatively well represented this fall, with a Greater White-fronted Goose in Stuyvesant, Columbia County, on 20 November and three Cackling Geese in Ancram, Columbia County, on 6 November. A high count of 1200 Ring-necked Ducks on Loughberry Lake, Saratoga County, is unusual for our Region. All three scoters were recorded, as were higher-than-average numbers of Red-necked Grebe and Red-throated Loon.

Despite a dry late summer and early fall that exposed marginal mudflats, the shorebird migration was unremarkable in terms of species diversity or numbers. Regional birders tallied a few more Pectoral Sandpiper sightings than average with no rarities noticed. Iceland Gull and Lesser Black-backed Gull made appearances at the usual haunts a few weeks early this season.

Bill Cook reported an anecdote of a Hillsdale resident, Luke Young, who came into his office with a voice recording of an owl, a Short-eared Owl, that he managed to record on his cell phone after it was too dark to snap a photo. The bird lingered for a few weeks in an area previously unknown to support this species.

The season was awash in American Pipit sightings. Casual birders who scanned corn stubble and freshly planted rye fields found them easily. This is the third fall season in which we have experienced higher-than-average reports of what is typically an unnoticed or challenging-to-find species during migration. Perhaps their numbers reflect good breeding conditions on their summer grounds. What is interesting is that they remain virtually unreported in the Region in the spring. Do they use a different route to migrate north? Are birders too busy looking up at warblers and neotropical migrants at that time of year to bother kicking around farm fields?

The bird of the season is a stunning male **Painted Bunting** found by Jenny Murtaugh, a wildlife technician for the NYS DEC Wildlife Diversity Unit, and Janice Lengvarsky at a feeder in a suburban yard in Rotterdam, Albany County. For two days in late November, the bird would appear roughly once an hour to feed for fifteen minutes, with shorter follow up visits in the late afternoon. The bird was photographed and a NYSARC report has been submitted.

CONTRIBUTORS

Steve Abrahamsen, 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, Elizabeth Grace, Jane Graves, Richard Guthrie, David Harrison, Ron Harrower, John Hershey, Drew Hopkins, Hudson-Mohawk Bird Club's Birdline of Eastern New York, Nancy Kern, Eric Kranz, Bill Lee, Janice Lengvarsky, Alan Mapes, Dave Martin, Andrew Mason, Roger Miller, Mike Morgante, Frank Murphy, Jenny Murtaugh, Gail & Rich Nord, Paul Novak, Tim O'Conner, Mike Peterson, John Piwowarski, Neil Powell, Bill Purcell, Barb Putnam, Will Raup, Susan Sheck, Bill & Marion Ulmer, Alison Van Keuren, Scott Varney, Marlene Vidibor, Carol & Owen Whitby, Phil Whitney, T. Lloyd Williams, Chris Winters, Allan & Phyllis Wirth, Will Yandik, Robert Yunick.

WHISTLING-DUCKS - VULTURES GREATER WHITE-FRONTED GOOSE

(R8): Stuyvesant COLU 20 Nov (NK).

Snow Goose: Tomhannock RENS 25 Oct; Livingston COLU 30 Oct; max 4 Saratoga L SARA 22 Nov; 240 Pine Bush ALBA 28 Nov.

Cackling Goose: 3 Ancram COLU 6 Nov (DH).

Brant: max 100 Five Rivers ALBA 22 Oct.

Gadwall: 8 Stanton Pond ALBA 20 Oct.

Am. Wigeon: max 90 Basic Creek ALBA 19 Oct.

Ring-necked Duck: max 1200 Loughberry L SARA 15 Nov, high count.

N. Shoveler: max 6 Stanton Pd ALBA 26 Oct.

N. Pintail: max 45 Stanton Pd ALBA 25 Oct.

Canvasback: 4 Saratoga L SARA 8 Nov.

Redhead: 4 Saratoga L SARA 26 Nov.

Surf Scoter: 13 Saratoga L SARA 23 Sep-8 Oct; Bog Meadow SARA 31 Oct; 25 Alcove Reservoir ALBA 1 Nov; max 55 Wrights Loop SARA 1 Nov.

White-winged Scoter: Austerlitz COLU 24 Oct; 6 Alcove Reservoir ALBA 1 Nov; 22 Saratoga Lake SARA 1 Nov; Sacandaga L FULT 28 Nov.

Black Scoter: Nassau L RENS 22 Oct; 2 Corning Preserve ALBA 27 Oct.

Long-tailed Duck: max 4 Nassau L RENS 23 Oct.

Com. Goldeneye: max 100 Tomhannock Res RENS 16 Nov.

Red-breasted Merganser: 5 Saratoga L SARA 7 Oct, Ft Miller WASH 2 Nov.

Ruddy Duck: Tomhannock RENS 9 Oct.

Red-throated Loon: Saratoga L SARA 17 Oct; L George WARR 31 Oct; Sacandaga Lake FULT 4 Nov.

Pied-billed Grebe: last Ann Lee Pd ALBA 9 Nov.

Horned Grebe: max 4 Saratoga L SARA 28 Oct.

Red-necked Grebe: Queensbury 16 Oct; Saratoga L SARA 16 Oct-2 Nov; max 3 L George WARR 28 Oct; max 8 Saratoga Lake SARA 8 Nov; Tomhannock Res RENS 11-15 Nov.

Double-crested Cormorant: last Crescent ALBA 20 Nov.

Am. Bittern: 2 Thurman WARR 12 Sep.

Least Bittern: VF 14 Sep; Kiskatom GREE 11 Oct.

Great Egret: last Tomhannock RENS 9 Oct.

Snowy Egret: Hillsdale COLU 19 Oct (SS).

Black-crowned Night-heron: Livingston COLU 2 Sep, 2 VF 10 Sep.

Black Vulture: max 20 Five Rivers ALBA 8 Oct.

HAWKS – LARIDS

Osprey: last Galway L SARA 4 Nov.

N. Goshawk: Schodack Island SP RENS 12 Sep; Helderberg Hawkwatch ALBA 17 Sep; Austerlitz COLU 6 Oct; Galway L SARA 4 Nov; E Greenbush RENS 11 Nov.

Red-shouldered Hawk: Austerlitz COLU 22 Oct; Five Rivers 22 Oct; Five Rivers ALBA 30 Oct; Four-mile Pt GREE 14 Nov.

Am. Coot: max 5 Galway SARA 19 Oct; Basic Creek ALBA 30 Oct; 2 Tomhannock RENS 30 Oct, Collins Lake SCHE 4 Nov.

Killdeer: last Copake COLU 2 Nov.

Greater Yellowlegs: Cherry Plain SCHO 4 Oct, Fort Miller WASH 4 Oct.

Lesser Yellowlegs: max 12 Neiber Swamp Livingston COLU 8 Sep.

Pectoral Sandpiper: Cohoes Flats ALBA 2 Oct; 6 Tomhannock RENS 4 Oct; 5 Saratoga Sod Farm SARA 7 Oct; 3 Stanton Pd ALBA 13 Oct; 5 Stanton Pond 20 Oct; Basic Creek ALBA 20 Oct.

Wilson's Snipe: Five Rivers ALBA 9 Oct; Stillwater SARA 20 Nov.

Bonaparte's Gull: Cohoes ALBA 29 Oct; Cossackie GREE 28 Nov.

Iceland Gull: 2 Crescent ALBA 28-9 Nov.

Lesser Black-backed Gull: Crescent Power Plant ALBA 4-8 Nov.

PIGEONS - PARROTS

Black-billed Cuckoo: Five Rivers ALBA 14 Sep.

Snowy Owl: Chatham COLU 29 Nov; Ft. Edward WASH 30 Nov.

Short-eared Owl: Hillsdale COLU 22-30 Sep, new location; Ft Edward WASH 26 Oct-23 Nov.

Com. Nighthawk: last 2 ALBA 10 Sep.

E. Whip-poor-will: Hillsdale COLU 10 Sep, only report.

FLYCATCHERS - WAXWINGS

Olive-sided Flycatcher: Greenport COLU 1 Sep.

Yellow-bellied Flycatcher: Pine Bush ALBA 14 Sep; Ghent COLU 6 Sep.

Least Flycatcher: last Hyuck P ALBA 6 Sep.

E. Phoebe: last Austerlitz COLU 22 Nov.

Philadelphia Vireo: last VF 15 Sep.

Tree Swallow: last Tomhannock RENS 6 Oct.

Swainson's Thrush: last Loudenville ALBA 19 Oct.

Gray Catbird: last Schenectady SCHE 29 Nov.

Am. Pipit: 12 Papscanee RENS 3 Oct; Tomhannock RENS 4 Oct; 20 Schodack Rens 4 Oct; 5 Charlton SARA 12 Oct; 9 Galway SARA 12 Oct; 5 Huyck Preserve ALBA 13

Oct; 45 Cohoes Flats ALBA 13 Oct; Stanton Pond ALBA 20 Oct; 80 Papscanee RENS 23 Oct; 40 Livingston COLU 24 Oct-thru; 80 Coeymans ALBA 27 Oct, numerous reports.

LONGSPURS - WARBLERS

Lapland Longspur: Ft Edwards WASH 27 Nov.

Snow Bunting: arr Tomhannock Res RENS 30 Oct.

Black-and-white Warbler: last W Sand Lake RENS 11 Oct.

Orange-crowned Warbler: Albany 11 Oct; Fort Edward WASH 12 Oct; Albany 21 Oct.

Cape May Warbler: last Albany 3 Nov.

Canada Warbler: last Thurman WARR 12 Sep.

Wilson's Warbler: last Five Rivers ALBA 14 Sep.

TOWHEES - WEAVERS

Vesper's Sparrow: Collins L SCHE 13 Oct; 3 Livingston COLU 15 Oct; 3 Cossackie GREE 24 Oct; Fort Edward WASH 26 Oct; 2 Livingston COLU 30 Oct.

Lincoln's Sparrow: Livingston COLU 15 Oct; last Papscanee RENS 23 Oct.

Rose-breasted Grosbeak: last S Glens Falls WARR 10 Nov, late.

PAINTED BUNTING: Rotterdam ALBA 26-8 Nov, ph (JM, JL).

Rusty Blackbird: 3 Tomhannock RENS 4 Oct; VF 10 Oct; 25 Fort Edward WASH 11 Oct; 9 Bog Meadow SARA 12-31 Oct; Fort Edward WASH 20-22 Oct; 6 other reports.

Baltimore Oriole: last Normanskill ALBA 23 Nov, late.

Pine Siskin: Charlton SARA 12 Oct; 2 Galway SARA 12 Oct; 3 Coeymans ALBA 25 Oct; Fort Edward WASH 26 Oct; South Glens Falls WARR 4 Nov; 2 Sacandaga Lake FULT 4 Nov; Providence SARA 19 Nov.

Evening Grosbeak: max 5 Providence SARA 28 Oct; Wilton SARA 4 Nov; Austerlitz COLU 7 Nov.

===