

REGION 4—SUSQUEHANNA

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September 2018 was warmer and wetter than normal. In fact, September was the seventh warmest since 1950 and the third wettest. October was about average regarding temperature and was a little wetter than average. November was about 5.7° cooler than average and was the second wettest and third snowiest November.

The true puzzle of this year's fall migration was in the large increase in Golden Eagles counted at the Franklin Mountain Hawk Watch (FMHW) especially in the second half of October. Andy Mason reported that 250 were counted from the 16th to the 31st of October. On 25 October 128 Golden Eagles were counted, setting a single day record for eastern North America. The usual peak of migration is two weeks later. The cause of this movement is unknown. Andy reports that the summer and fall weather in Quebec, the home of most of the Golden Eagles, was very dry, so perhaps prey was scarce. In any event the total count of Golden Eagles was 323, which was only surpassed by Allegheny Front Hawk Watch in Pennsylvania which had 386 in 2015. [See article p. 27.]

Other species showing increased numbers above the long-term average were: Turkey Vulture, Broad-winged Hawk, American Kestrel, Merlin, and Peregrine Falcon. Red-tailed Hawk numbers did increase from the last season's low numbers. Also fifteen Black Vulture were counted this fall vs. six last season and just two in all the years previous to that. In total, 5,172 raptors were counted, which is slightly above average for the FMHW. Thanks to Andy Mason for summarizing all the above information regarding the hawk watch.

In Tioga County Adam Troyer was also counting migratory birds which flew over his farm. On 13 September he counted 774 Broad-winged Hawks and 12 Ospreys. To quote Adam: "What a day—I saw the first Broadwing around noon. After that they started coming in kettles with the largest having 68 birds." He also saw 65 Common Loons on 11 November and 30 Brant on 14 October.

A Greater White-fronted Goose was spotted at Dorchester Park in Broome County by Jon Weeks on 3 October. Many birders were able to see and photograph this bird, as it remained at the park for about two weeks. It was in the company of a great many Canada Geese. This is the second fall in a row that one was found at Dorchester Park. Another discovery at Dorchester Park was of a Sabine's Gull, again by Jon Weeks on 25 September, which he photographed. This is a first eBird record for Broome County, though there are some records of this species seen on Cayuga Lake, which has a similar latitude.

In Chenango County in the Town of Plymouth three adult Sandhill Cranes were photographed in hay fields in September. In November a flock of eleven

Sandhills was spotted migrating over Binghamton University. Two Cattle Egrets were seen and photographed in the Region in late October and early November.

Regarding shorebirds, many observed a White-rumped Sandpiper in mid-September in Dorchester Park. Another White-rumped was also spotted in a farm pond near Deposit in October. American Golden-Plovers were found in a few different locations in Chenango County, also in mid-September. A Baird's Sandpiper was well photographed in Bainbridge on 12 September. In another uncommon sighting for the Region, a Ruddy Turnstone was seen and photographed on 14 September at Glimmerglass State Park.

There were many reports of Evening Grosbeaks in late October and through November, mostly at feeders throughout the Region. Pine Siskins were also widely reported. There were just a few scattered reports of Red Crossbills and Common Redpolls. So far this does appear to be an irruption year for Evening Grosbeaks and Pine Siskins.

A Yellow-Breasted Chat was discovered on 22 September at the Unadilla boat launch in Delaware County. A flock of a dozen Rusty Blackbirds was reported from the Michigan Hollow Lake in Tioga County on 30 October, which was a maximum count for this declining species.

Warbler diversity was down a bit this season, with 27 species recorded. Last year the number of species seen was 29, but for the three preceding years, the total number of species was 27.

In summary, 216 species vs. 214 last year were reported, with some interesting rarities for the Region. I also want to acknowledge and thank Bill Ostrander, who sorted eBird data to identify arrivals, last dates, and high counts.

CONTRIBUTORS

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ABBREVIATIONS

AqPk – Aquaterra P, BROO; **BoPd** – Boland Pd, BROO; **BUNP** – Binghamton University Nature Preserve, BROO; **CanL** – Canadarago L, OTSE; **CannR** – Cannonsville Res, DELA; **ChenL** – Chenango L, CHEN; **DorP** – Dorchester P, BROO; **FMHW** – Franklin Mt Hawkwatch, DELA; **LHNC** – Lime Hollow Nature Center, CORT; **MHL** – Michigan Hollow L, TIOG; **OtsL** – Otsego L, OTSE; **PepR** – Pepacton Res, OTSE; **SkaL** – Skaneateles L, CORT; **SusR** – Susquehanna R, BROO; **TomakRd** – Tomak Rd, TIOG; **UL** – Upper Lisle, BROO.

WATERFOWL – HUMMINGBIRDS

Snow Goose: max 150 Johnson City BROO 18 Nov; 150 Binghamton Airport BROO 19 Nov; 150 MHL 20 Nov.

Greater White-fronted Goose (R4): DorP 3-25 Oct (JW, ph, mob).

Brant: max 111 FMHW 21 Oct; 30 TomakRd 14 Nov (AT).

Tundra Swan: max 2 MHL 13 Nov (ph).

Surf Scoter: max 2 gravel pits Whitney Point BROO 20 Nov.

White-winged Scoter: arr Bloody Pd CORT 5 Nov; last gravel pits Cortland CORT 30 Nov.

Black Scoter: Chenango L CHEN Nov 5-15.

Long-tailed Duck: max 18 PepR 4 Nov.

Com. Goldeneye: max 24 SkaL 20 Nov.

Red-breasted Merganser: max 24 DorP 16 Oct.

Ruddy Duck: max 18 Plymouth Res CHEN 28 Oct.

Pied-billed Grebe: max 4 DorP 11 Nov.

Horned Grebe: max 8 DorP 1 Nov.

Red-necked Grebe: max 2 PepR 4 Nov.

Yellow-billed Cuckoo: 5 scattered rep most from Sep and early Oct.

Black-billed Cuckoo: Stoller Hill Rd OTSE 2 Sep, only rep.

Com. Nighthawk: max 41 SusR 15 Sep; most reports from SusR.

Chimney Swift: max 350 SusR 8 Sep.

Ruby-throated Hummingbird: last DELA 23 Sep; Stoller Hill Rd OTSE 23 Sep.

RAILS – LARIDS

Virginia Rail: MHL 6 Sep; Sherburne Railroad Marsh CHEN 9 Sep.

Sora: BoPd 30 Sep, only report.

Com. Gallinule: max and last 3 Sherburne Railroad Marsh CHEN 12 Sep.

Am. Coot: max 14 OtsL 19 Nov.

Sandhill Crane: max 11 BUNP 15 Nov, flyover; 3 Balf Rd CHEN 3-24 Sep.

Am. Golden-Plover: T Smyrna CHEN 12-17 Sep; Kilroy Rd CHEN 13-15 Sep.

Ruddy Turnstone: Glimmerglass SP OTSE 14 Sep, ph.

Baird's Sandpiper: Ireland Rd CHEN 12 Sep, ph.

White-rumped Sandpiper: DorP 14-15 Sep (JW, MD, mob, ph); Deposit DELA 20 Oct (LV).

Pectoral Sandpiper: max 14 BoPd 19 Oct.

SABINE'S GULL (R4): DorP 25 Sep (JW, ph).

Bonaparte's Gull: max 17 DorP 20 Oct.

Greater Black-backed Gull: max 4 Cortland Gravel Pit CORT 26 Nov.

Caspian Tern: 2 DorP 8 Sep; Glimmerglass SP OTSE 7 Sep.

Com. Tern: max 4 DorP 18 Sep; Kilroy Rd CHEN 11 Sep.

Forster's Tern: 4 PepR 8 Sep, only rep.

LOONS – PARROTS

Red-throated Loon: 2 CannR 23 Oct; DorP 26 Oct-20 Nov; Millbrook Town P CHEN 15 Nov, ph.

Com. Loon: max 65 TomakRd 11 Nov, flyover (AT); 17 MHL 30 Oct.

Am. Bittern: Carantouan Greenway TIOG 28 Sep; MHL 7 Oct.

Great Egret: max 7 Marshall Andrews P CHEN 8 Sep; last MHL 20 Oct.

Cattle Egret: Goodrich Rd TIOG 27-31 Oct, (DG, ph, mob); T Laurens OTSE 7 Nov.

NOTE: FMHW totals cover 26 Aug to 30 Dec; averages reflect 2001-2017 data, intro.

Black Vulture: total 15 FMHW, last year 6, slow increase.

Turkey Vulture: total 832 FMHW, 87% above avg.
Osprey: total 83 FMHW, 27% below avg; 12 TomakRd 13 Sep (AT).
Golden Eagle: total 323 FMHW, 85% above avg; max 128 FMHW 25 Oct, E. North America high single day count, *intro*. [Also see write-up on p. 27.]
N. Harrier: total 48 FMHW, 23% below avg.
Sharp-shinned Hawk: total 418 FMHW, 17% below avg.
Cooper's Hawk: total 64 FMHW, 31% below avg.
N. Goshawk: total 15 FMHW, 23% below avg.
Bald Eagle: total 166 FMHW, 1% below avg; many other rep; very widespread.
Red-shouldered Hawk: total 42 FMHW, 17% below avg.
Broad-winged Hawk: total 1749 FMHW, 19% above avg; 774 TomakRD 13 Sep (AT).
Red-tailed Hawk: total 1147 FMHW, 37% below avg; many other rep.
Rough-legged Hawk: total 2 FMHW, 73% below avg.
Snowy Owl: Vestal BROO 25 Oct, flyover.
Am. Kestrel: total 156 FMHW, 65% above avg; 9 TomakRD 12 Oct.
Merlin: total 53 FMHW, 102% above avg.
Peregrine Falcon: total 28 FMHW, 75% above avg; many rep from Binghamton BROO of resident downtown pair.

FLYCATCHERS – SNOW BUNTING

Olive-sided Flycatcher: Barden Rd TIOG 6 Sep; Downs ville DELA 9 Sep; Kilroy Rd CHEN 11 Sep; MHL 28-29 Sep.
Yellow-bellied Flycatcher: T Union BROO 11 Sep; Downs ville DELA 15 Sep.
N. Shrike: 5 scattered rep, all in Nov.

Horned Lark: max 65 Covered Bridge Rd DELA 17 Nov.
Winter Wren: max 5 LHNC 2 Oct.
Marsh Wren: max 4 MHL 12 Oct; TomakRd 24 Sep.
Blue-gray Gnatcatcher: Downs ville DELA 2 Sep, only rep.
Veery: last Johnson City BROO (NFC) 20 Sep.
Gray-cheeked Thrush: last Johnson City BROO (NFC) 5 Oct.
Swainson's Thrush: last BUNP 18 Oct.
Evening Grosbeak: max 72 Homer CORT 18 Nov; many scattered rep at feeders in Nov.
Com. Redpoll: max 3 Balsam Swamp SF CHEN 28 Oct; TomakRd 25 & 30 Oct.
Red Crossbill: max 2 SkaL 20 Nov; DorP 18 Nov.
Pine Siskin: max 34 T Spencer TIOG 20 Nov; 97 other scattered reports most at feeders.
Lapland Longspur: 2 Laurel Bank Rd DELA 17 Nov; North Rd CHEN 10 Nov.
Snow Bunting: max 25 Whitney Point 28 Nov; 17 other rep in Nov.

NEW WORLD SPARROWS-CARDINALIDS

Am. Tree Sparrow: max 6 TIOG 10 Nov.
Lincoln's Sparrow: arr 2 Beaver Meadow SF CHEN 9 Sep; last TomakRD 5 Nov.
Vesper Sparrow: max 6 River Rd Downs ville DELA 28 Oct; Fairfield Rd TIOG 21 Oct.
Yellow-breasted Chat: Unadilla Boat Launch DELA 22 Sep.
Rusty Blackbird: max 12 MHL 30 Oct.
Tennessee Warbler: max 6 LHNC 28 Sep.
Mourning Warbler: TomakRd 3 Sep.
Hooded Warbler: Beaver Meadow SF CHEN 9 Sep, MHL 21 Sep.

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