

REGION 8—HUDSON-MOHAWK

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September 2018 was warmer and wetter than normal. At Albany, the temperature was 5.3°F above average, with a rainfall surplus of 2.32". There were no significant cold air intrusions, and the lowest temperature was only 43° on 30 September. October ended up very close to the long-term averages, at +1.0° and +0.09" above normal. After a mild opening week November turned cold and wet and stayed that way. Albany was 2.7° colder than normal with 5.59" of precipitation, 2.30" more than normal. 10.4" of snow fell in small batches during the second half of the month. Thanksgiving Day was remarkably cold with a high of only 19°. Local water bodies stayed mostly ice-free thanks to a final week above freezing.

Greater White-fronted Goose was reported three times, with a single bird near Schaghticoke on 22 October, then again on 15 November. A week later another report was received from Hedges Lake near Greenwich. It is possible this was a single individual moving around that area with Canada Geese. Brant moved through the area primarily on 13-17 October this fall, a very narrow window that is typical for the species returning to the wintering grounds. Only a few reports of Redhead were received, and Canvasback was absent, a common occurrence. The same could be said about scoters, with only White-winged Scoter in any numbers. Horned and Red-necked Grebe reports seemed less than normal as well. Dabbling ducks were found in typical locations and numbers for the most part.

Yellow-billed Cuckoo was observed in several spots through October, with a very late bird seen on 10 November along the Hudson River in Columbia County.

Shorebird movement continued into October, with Dunlin seen in a few locations. Stacy Robinson observed 13 White-rumped Sandpipers at Bob & Betty Cummings Memorial Park, which is located along southern Lake Champlain near Putnam, Washington County on 22 October. A very late White-rumped Sandpiper was found at Galway Lake on 13 November. Pectoral Sandpiper numbers were average, but both species of yellowlegs were observed in reduced numbers.

Rich Guthrie had a single Common Tern along River Rd. in Greene County on 18 September. Stacy Robinson found a **Cattle Egret** resting mid-river in the Hudson at Stillwater on 24 October. There were a couple of sightings of Black-crowned Night-Heron in the first half of September. Three were seen along the Champlain Canal corridor in northern Washington County. The other sighting was an adult and a juvenile at Carter's Pond WMA.

Migrating Broad-winged Hawks put on a show throughout September. The Helderberg Hawk Watch at the overlook in John Boyd Thacher SP had good numbers all month, with a maximum of 204 Broad-winged Hawks seen on 19 September. Northern Saw-whet Owl banding continued again this fall at Albany Pine Bush Preserve. The largest number banded in a single night for the season was 12 on 30 October.

Unquestionably the bird of the season was a **SCISSOR-TAILED FLYCATCHER** found by Larry Alden on 8 October, feeding in and around a weedy field in New Scotland, Albany County. From Larry's eBird report: "Large flycatcher about the size and shape of a mockingbird with noticeably longer tail perched on electric line by 646 Krumkill Road. Tail was not as long as adult male, so it was likely a female or juvenile. Light grayish throat and breast with buffy flanks. Black wings...Darker gray mask on light gray head. I believe this bird may have been at this location for at least a week, as I remember driving by some day last week and noting a bird with a long tail and thinking, "That's a pretty long tail for a mockingbird," but driving on without circling back to figure out what it was. Today was different. In my haste to get word out, the bird disappeared while I was typing on my phone and I didn't even get to see it fly!" At least 80 birders from around the state and a few from out-of-state made the trek to see this rarity. It was also an excellent "teachable moment" for the many residents and passersby who stopped to inquire about the assembled crowd pointing optics into a farm field like so many paparazzi. The bird lingered until 18 October, and was not observed thereafter.

A widespread irruption of Evening Grosbeaks into the Northeast began in mid-October. Many observers were delighted to once again see these gregarious birds at their feeders. Numbers increased through the end of November.

On the morning of 5 October, I arrived at the Albany Pine Bush Discovery Center to observe bird banding. Warbler activity was winding down for the season, and the influx of sparrows had begun. As I headed up the path towards the station, I watched a sparrow pop up onto a split rail fence. It was facing me, some fifty feet away. It had distinctive ochre from the throat that streaked into the clean white breast and underparts. There were a few fine dark streaks on the flanks. The face seemed to be ochre as well, with a thin line behind the eye. After a minute, it hopped to the ground and disappeared into the bluestem grass in the parking lot. I knew right away that it was a species I hadn't seen before. After perusing various field guides, the best fit was **LECONTE'S SPARROW**, which I had never anticipated seeing in the Region. The only other candidate was Nelson's Sparrow, but it would have been even more orange-faced and

more heavily streaked and unlikely in this very dry habitat. This was the first reported observation of the species in the Region in recent years. A search for the bird on the following day was unsuccessful.

220 species were reported during the period.

CONTRIBUTORS

Larry Alden, Will Aubrey, Ramona Bearor, Susan Beaudoin, Katie Bird, Mike Birmingham, Matt Brunelle, Nancy Castillo, Gary Chapin, Glen & Malinda Chapman, Steve Chorvas, Jeremy Collison, Bill Cook, Andrea Denton, Alan Devoe Bird Club recent sightings, Amanda Dillon, Pete Doherty, Craig Driggs, Bruce Dudek, Alan Dupuis, Lindsey Duval, Larry Federman, Peter Feinberg, Debra Ferguson, Mark Fitzsimmons, Brianna Gary, Bernie & Chris Grossman, Rich Guthrie, Larry & Barbara Hall, David Harrison, Ron Harrower, John Hershey, HMBirds Yahoo Group, John Kent, Nancy Kern, Bill Lee, Naomi Lloyd, Tristan Lowery, Larry Main, Alan Mapes, Leigh McBride, Thom McClenahan, Mike McGraw, Steve Mesick, Joyce Miller, Frank Mitchell, Frank Murphy, Jenny Murtaugh, Ellen Pemrick, Will Raup, Gregg Recer, Neal Reilly, Stacy Robinson, John Roosenberg, Jeanette Roundy, Lydia Schereen, Tom Schmidt, Kathy Schneider, Zach Schwartz-Weinstein, Marian Sole, George Steele, Scott Stoner, Craig Thompson, Alison Van Keuren, Phil Whitney, Tom & Colleen Williams, Donna Wright, Will Yandik, Robert Yunick.

ABBREVIATIONS

APBP – Albany Pine Bush Preserve, ALBA; **AR** – Alcove Res, ALBA; **BCM** – Black Creek Marsh, ALBA; **BCR** – Basic Creek Res, ALBA; **BMB** – Bog Meadow Brook Nature Trail, SARA; **CCGP** – Cossackie Creek Grasslands Preserve, GREE; **CF** – Cohoes Flats, ALBA; **CL** – Collins L, SCHE; **CRM** – Cline Rd. Marsh, FULT; **FR** – Five Rivers EEC, ALBA; **FtEG** – Ft. Edward Grasslands, WASH; **FV** – Franklinton Vlaie, SCHO; **HP** – Huyck Preserve, ALBA; **OCA** – Ooms Conservation Area, COLU; **PRWMA** – Partridge Run WMA, ALBA; **SNHP** – Saratoga National Historical P, SARA; **TR** – Tomhannock Res, RENN; **VFNHP** – Vischer Ferry Nature & Historic Preserve, SARA; **WMP** – Wilson M. Powell Wildlife Sanctuary, COLU.

WATERFOWL - HUMMINGBIRDS

Snow Goose: max 8000 L George WASH 22 Nov.

Brant: max 300 Four Mile Pt GREE 16 Oct.

Mute Swan: max 7 BCR 19 Oct- 11 Nov.

Wood Duck: max 60 VFNHP 17 Sep.

Blue-winged Teal: max 9 VFNHP 3 Oct.

N. Shoveler: max 10 Stanton Pd ALBA 5 Nov.

Gadwall: max 40 Stanton Pd ALBA 3 Nov.

Am. Wigeon: max 152 Stanton Pd ALBA 23 Oct.

Mallard: max 375 Niskayuna SCHE 29 Nov.

Am. Black Duck: max 64 Petersburg RENS 30 Nov.

N. Pintail: max 26 Stanton Pd ALBA 3 Nov.

Green-winged Teal: max 75 VFNHP 28 Oct.

Redhead: max 3 BCR 7 Nov.

Ring-necked Duck: max 690 Loughberry L SARA 9 Nov.
Greater Scaup: max 10 Loughberry L SARA 17 Nov.
Lesser Scaup: max 140 Saratoga L SARA 28 Nov.
Surf Scoter: BCR 4 Nov, only report.
White-winged Scoter: max 10 Saratoga L SARA 15 Nov.
Black Scoter: max 35 Bob & Betty Cummings Mem P WASH 28 Oct.
Long-tailed Duck: max 127 AR 3 Nov.
Bufflehead: max 120 Saratoga L SARA 28 Oct.
Com. Goldeneye: max 750 Saratoga L SARA 28 Oct.
Hooded Merganser: max 225 Saratoga L SARA 15 Nov.
Com. Merganser: max 700 TR 27 Nov; Round L SARA 28 Nov.
Red-breasted Merganser: max 9 Bob & Betty Cummings Mem P WASH 14 Oct.
Ruddy Duck: max 497 BCR 4 Nov.
Ruffed Grouse: max 8 Prattsville GREE 30 Sep.
Wild Turkey: max 25 T Root MONT 20 Sep.
Pied-billed Grebe: max 6 Cossayuna L WASH 4 Nov
Horned Grebe: max 3 T Hauge WARR 24 Nov.
Red-necked Grebe: max 3 Snyder L RENS 30 Oct; T Hauge WARR 18-20 Nov; Saratoga L SARA 20 Nov.
Rock Pigeon: max 500 FtEG 15 Nov.
Mourning Dove: max 110 Wrights Loop SARA 7 Nov.
Yellow-billed Cuckoo: last Lewis A. Swyer Preserve COLU 10 Nov.
Black-billed Cuckoo: last Overmountain Cons Area COLU 29 Sep.
Com. Nighthawk: max 26 Edinburg SARA 2 Sep; last 2 Sleepy Hollow L GREE 29 Sep.
Chimney Swift: last 6 RamsHorn-Livingston Sanc GREE 9 Oct.
Ruby-throated Hummingbird: last Rexford SARA 9 Oct.

RAILS - LARIDS

Virginia Rail: last CRM 3 Oct.
Com. Gallinule: max 4 Carters Pd WMA WASH 15 Sep; last VFNHP 28 Sep.
Am. Coot: max 4 Saratoga L SARA 8 Nov; last 2 Stanton Pd ALBA 21 Nov.
Black-bellied Plover: Blockhouse P SARA 2 Oct; Bob & Betty Cummings Mem P WASH 6 Nov.

Semipalmated Plover: max 16 Bob & Betty Cummings Mem P WASH 7 Oct; last Bob & Betty Cummings Mem P WASH 30 Oct.
Killdeer: max 58 CCGP 1 Sep; last S Albany Airport ALBA 4 Nov.
Sanderling: nr CCGP 7 Sep.
Dunlin: max, last 23 BCR 28 Oct.
Least Sandpiper: max 7 Scotia SCHE 19 Sep; last Schaghticoke RENS 21 Oct.
White-rumped Sandpiper: max 13 Bob & Betty Cummings Mem P WASH 22 Oct; last Galway L SARA 13 Nov.
Pectoral Sandpiper: max 4 Clemons WASH 7 Oct; Malta SARA 16 Oct; last BCR 28 Oct.
Semipalmated Sandpiper: max, last 14 Bob & Betty Cummings Mem P WASH 22 Oct.
Am. Woodcock: last Guilderland ALBA 7 Nov.
Wilson's Snipe: last 3 Copake L COLU 8 Nov.
Spotted Sandpiper: last 2 Ft Edward WASH 21 Oct.
Solitary Sandpiper: last 4 TR 26 Sep.
Lesser Yellowlegs: last 2 Clemons WASH 7 Oct.
Greater Yellowlegs: last 2 BCR 28 Oct.
Bonaparte's Gull: 2 Copake L COLU 19-20 Oct.
Caspian Tern: Wright's Ferry Launch WASH 16 Sep.
Com. Tern: Athens GREE 16 Sep.

LOONS - PARROTS

Red-throated Loon: Saratoga L SARA 28 Oct; Schoharie Crossing SHS MONT 17 Nov.
Com. Loon: max 18 Bolton WARR 23 Oct.
Least Bittern: BMB 1 Sep, only report.
Great Blue Heron: max 18 Champlain Canal Lock 2 SARA 12 Sep.
Great Egret: max 15 Vosburgh Swamp WMA GREE 1 Sep; last 2 Schaghticoke RENS 25 Oct.
Little Blue Heron: Champlain Canal Lock 2 SARA 2-9 Sep.
Cattle Egret: Blockhouse P SARA 24 Oct (SR), *intro*.
Green Heron: max 7 Clemons WASH 1 Sep; last FR 29 Oct.
Black-crowned Night-Heron: 3 Clemons WASH 1 Sep; 2 Carters Pd WMA WASH 15 Sep.
Black Vulture: max 47 Copake COLU 24 Nov.
Turkey Vulture: max 73 Cobleskill SCHO 16 Oct.
Osprey: last Six Mile Waterworks P ALBA 14 Nov.

Golden Eagle: Elka P GREE 4 Nov; Pittstown RENS 11 Nov; Summit SCHO 11 Nov; FR 23 Nov.

N. Harrier: max 3 Helderberg Hawkwatch ALBA 13 Sep; Overmountain Cons Area COLU 22 Sep; TR 4 Nov; Livingston COLU 29 Nov.

N. Goshawk: 10 reports of singles.

Bald Eagle: max 15 Helderberg Hawkwatch ALBA 22 Sep.

Red-shouldered Hawk: max 3 Overmountain Cons Area COLU 22 Sep.

Broad-winged Hawk: max 204 Helderberg Hawkwatch ALBA 19 Sep.

Rough-legged Hawk: arr Fultonville MONT 29 Oct.

E. Screech-Owl: max 3 Guilderland ALBA 2 Oct.

Great Horned Owl: max 2 Guilderland ALBA 20 Oct; Hoosick RENS 11 Nov; E. Greenbush RENS 17 Nov; Feura Bush ALBA 18 Nov.

Barred Owl: max 4 Cambridge WASH 1 Sep.

N. Saw-whet Owl: max 12 APBP 30 Oct, bird banding ops.

Belted Kingfisher: max 4 BCR 16 Sep.

Yellow-bellied Sapsucker: max 6 Cambridge WASH 1 Sep.

Red-bellied Woodpecker: max 9 Vosburgh Swamp WMA GREE 1 Sep.

Pileated Woodpecker: max 6 Overmountain Cons Area COLU 15 Sep.

N. Flicker: max 18 Overmountain Cons Area 23 Sep.

Am. Kestrel: max 7 Helderberg Hawkwatch ALBA 19 Sep.

Merlin: max 3 CF 1 Sep.

Peregrine Falcon: max 3 Helderberg Hawkwatch ALBA 27 Sep; APBP 1 Oct; Corning riverfront P ALBA 7 Nov.

FLYCATCHERS – SNOW BUNTING

Great Crested Flycatcher: last Selkirk ALBA 13 Sep.

E. Kingbird: last Grafton RENS 15 Sep.

SCISSOR-TAILED FLYCATCHER: New Scotland ALBA 8-18 Oct (LA) mob, NYSARC, *intro*.

Olive-sided Flycatcher: Overmountain Cons Area COLU 3 Sep; APBP 7-17 Sep; Colonie ALBA 7 Sep; FR 8 Sep; Four Mile Pt Preserve GREE 9 Sep; Saratoga Spa SP SARA 12-13 Sep.

E. Wood-pewee: last Clifton Pk SARA 7 Oct.

Yellow-bellied Flycatcher: last Saratoga Spa SP SARA 18 Sep.

“Trail’s” Flycatcher: last APBP 10 Sep.

Least Flycatcher: max 6 Buckingham Pd ALBA 9 Sep; last Wilton Wildlife Preserve SARA 18 Oct, late.

E. Phoebe: max 16 Overmountain Cons Area COLU 16 Sep.

N. Shrike: BCM 12 Nov; Hague WARR 20 Nov; Kingsbury WASH 24 Nov.

Yellow-throated Vireo: last Overmountain Cons Area COLU 17 Sep.

Blue-headed Vireo: max 8 APBP 5 Oct; last APBP 24 Oct.

Philadelphia Vireo: last APBP 12 Oct.

Warbling Vireo: last Overmountain Cons Area COLU 29 Sep

Red-eyed Vireo: last APBP 12 Oct.

Blue Jay: max 120 Nutton Hooke COLU 29 Sep.

Fish Crow: max 85 CCGP 10 Oct.

Com. Raven: max 9 Helderberg Hawkwatch ALBA 13 Sep.

Horned Lark: max 200 Kinderhook COLU 15 Nov; Northumberland SARA 19 Nov; Overmountain Cons Area COLU 24 Nov.

N. Rough-winged Swallow: last 10 CF 8 Oct.

Tree Swallow: max 1060 New Baltimore GREE 18 Sep.

Bank Swallow: last VFNHP 12 Sep.

Cliff Swallow: last W Cocksackie GREE 1 Sep.

Barn Swallow: last Blockhouse P SARA 2 Oct.

Red-breasted Nuthatch: max 14 APBP 6 Oct.

Brown Creeper: max 4 Bolton WARR 29 Sep.

House Wren: last Overmountain Cons Area COLU; Ann Lee Pd ALBA 13 Oct.

Winter Wren: max 2 Fox Preserve ALBA 4 Oct; Overmountain Cons Area COLU 8 Oct; RamsHorn-Livingston Sanc GREE 27 Nov.

Marsh Wren: max 5 RamsHorn-Livingston Sanc GREE 23 Sep.

Carolina Wren: max 6 Henry Hudson P ALBA 8 Oct; RamsHorn-Livingston Sanc GREE 9 Oct.

Blue-gray Gnatcatcher: last Coveville SARA 5 Oct.

Golden-crowned Kinglet: max 15 Corning Riverfront P ALBA 22 Oct.

Ruby-crowned Kinglet: arr Selkirk ALBA 7 Sep.

E. Bluebird: max 25 Overmountain Cons Area COLU 30 Sep; Round L Preserve SARA 4 Oct.

Veery: last Kingsbury WASH 8 Oct.

Swainson’s Thrush: last Malta SARA 27 Oct.

Hermit Thrush: max 4 Malta Tech P SARA 12 Oct; Indian Kill NP SCHE 23 Oct.

Wood Thrush: last Palenville GREE 9 Oct.

Gray Catbird: max 36 FR 15 Sep.

Brown Thrasher: last Clermont SP COLU 14 Oct.
N. Mockingbird: max 9 Cocksackie GREE 1 Sep.
Bohemian Waxwing: 7 Hague WARR 20 Nov.
Cedar Waxwing: max 210 Galway SARA 5 Nov.
Am. Pipit: max 43 Copake COLU 2 Nov.
Evening Grosbeak: max 92 Summit SCHO 29 Nov, irruption year.
Pine Grosbeak: Hague WARR 20 Nov.
Purple Finch: max 20 Catskill GREE 16 Oct
Com. Redpoll: arr Moreau SARA 28 Oct; max 7 Bob & Betty Cummings Mem P WASH 18 Nov.
Red Crossbill: max 10 Rensselaerville SF ALBA 4 Nov.
White-winged Crossbill: 7 nr Pleasant L FULT 5 Nov.
Pine Siskin: max 50 New Baltimore GREE 7 Nov.
Lapland Longspur: arr Catskill GREE 18 Nov.
Snow Bunting: arr Bob & Betty Cummings Mem P WASH 25 Oct.

NEW WORLD SPARROWS – CARDINALIDS

E. Towhee: max 10 Garnsey P SARA 19 Sep.
Am. Tree Sparrow: arr BMB 18 Oct; max 24 Niskayuna SCHE 30 Nov.
Chipping Sparrow: max 32 Prattsville GREE 29 Sep.
Field Sparrow: max 20 Overmountain Cons Area COLU 30 Sep.
Vesper Sparrow: max 8 Cocksackie GREE 21 Oct.
Savannah Sparrow: max 40 Overmountain Cons AREA 23 Sep.
LECONTE'S SPARROW: APBP 5 Oct (TW), pending review NYSARC, *intro*.
Fox Sparrow: arr VFNHP 18 Oct; BMB 18 Oct.
Song Sparrow: max 75 Glenville SCHE 21 Oct.
Lincoln's Sparrow: arr Garnsey P SARA 19 Sep.
Swamp Sparrow: max 14 Coveville SARA 27 Sep.
White-throated Sparrow: max 100 Glenville SCHE 21 Oct.
White-crowned Sparrow: arr Johnsbury WARR 27 Sep; max 16 Putnam WASH 7 Oct; Fultonville MONT 24 Oct.
Dark-eyed Junco: max 85 Ft Miller WASH 22 Nov.

Bobolink: max 32 Vosburgh Swamp WMA GREE 1 Sep; last Livingston COLU 14 Sep.
E. Meadowlark: Oppenheim FULT 5 Sep; CCGP 10 Oct.
Baltimore Oriole: last 3 Hudson Crossing P SARA 3 Sep.
Red-winged Blackbird: max 1700 Wrights Loop SARA 7 Nov.
Brown-headed Cowbird: max 500 Copake COLU 7 Nov; Fultonville MONT 20 Nov.
Rusty Blackbird: arr BMB 28 Sep; max 40 BMB 10 Nov.
Com. Grackle: max 600 White Creek WASH 27 Oct.
Ovenbird: last RamsHorn-Livingston Sanc GREE 9 Oct.
N. Waterthrush: last RamsHorn-Livingston Sanc GREE 23 Sep.
Blue-winged Warbler: last Jackson WASH 2 Sep.
Black-and-white Warbler: last Fultonville MONT 10 Oct.
Tennessee Warbler: last Petersburg RENS 21 Oct, late.
Orange-crowned Warbler: max 3 Bob & Betty Cummings Mem P WASH 14 Oct.
Nashville Warbler: last Overmountain Cons Area COLU 13 Oct.
Mourning Warbler: last Livingston COLU 2 Oct.
Com. Yellowthroat: max 20 Palenville GREE 14 Sep.
Am. Redstart: max 9 Buckingham Pd ALBA 9 Sep.
Cape May Warbler: last Bob & Betty Cummings Mem P WASH 6 Oct.
N. Parula: last Woodlawn Preserve SCHE; Bob & Betty Cummings Mem P WASH; Hague WARR 7 Oct.
Magnolia Warbler: last New Scotland ALBA 14 Oct.
Bay-breasted Warbler: last Saratoga Spa SP SARA 6 Oct.
Blackburnian Warbler: last Overmountain Cons Area COLU 23 Sep.
Yellow Warbler: last Fultonville MONT 24 Sep.
Chestnut-sided Warbler: last Hillsdale COLU 2 Oct.
Blackpoll Warbler: last Copake COLU 30 Oct.
Black-throated Blue Warbler: last Bob & Betty Cummings Mem P WASH 14 Oct.
Palm Warbler: last 2 Overmountain Cons Area COLU 25 Oct.

Pine Warbler: last 2 New Forge SF COLU 11 Oct.
Yellow-rumped Warbler: max 40 Hillsdale COLU 17 Oct.
Prairie Warbler: last Bob & Betty Cummings Mem P WASH 30 Sep.
Black-throated Green Warbler: last Glenville SCHE 21 Oct.

Canada Warbler: last Summit SCHO 19 Sep.
Wilson’s Warbler: last Fultonville MONT 24 Sep.
Scarlet Tanager: last FR 3 Oct.
Rose-breasted Grosbeak: last Elka P GREE 10 Oct.
Indigo Bunting: last Saratoga Spa SP SARA 7 Oct.

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