

REGION 4—SUSQUEHANNA

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September 2021 was slightly warmer and somewhat wetter than normal. October was about 6° F warmer than average regarding temperature and much wetter than average. In fact, October was the third warmest since 1951 which is when the current period of record-keeping started. November was slightly cooler and drier than normal.

This year's Golden Eagle total of 120 for the fall migration at Franklin Mountain was somewhat lower than the long-term average with the highest counts coming in late November and early December. The maximum count was on 3 December with 22 Golden Eagles being tallied. Raptor species with above average numbers were Turkey Vulture, Bald Eagle, Broad-winged Hawk, American Kestrel, and Peregrine Falcon. The total Broad-winged Hawk count was 2,338, which is 45% above average. Just like last year the Bald Eagle count again set a record for Franklin Mountain with a total of 258 for the season. However, Red-tailed Hawk numbers continue to be low with a 48% decrease from the average. This is, of course, very puzzling since Red-tailed Hawks seem relatively common. In his summary of the hawk watch Andy Mason reports, "Red-tailed Hawk numbers continue to be low. This does not appear to be a conservation concern. These adaptable raptors look to be wintering further north resulting in lower migration." In total, 5,439 raptors were counted, which is above the average for the FMHW. If you need more statistics regarding raptors, you can refer to the species list following the narrative and to the chart showing maximums and first arrival dates.

In Tioga County Adam Troyer was also counting migratory birds that flew over his farm and vicinity. On 16 September he counted 6,680 Broad-winged Hawks, and another 3,214 on 19 September. Yes, that totals to roughly 10,000 Broad-wings! He also saw large numbers of Brant, Common Loons, and Northern Pintails in October and November. His family's farm is called Birdsong Meadows Farm for good reason with a couple more reasons to come later in the narrative.

Black, Surf, and White-winged Scoters were all reported in the Region in October and November. The Whitney Point Reservoir in Broome County had good numbers (for our area) of Long-tailed Ducks, Red-breasted Mergansers, and Ruddy Ducks. These were seen from Keibel Road which runs along the reservoir.

In Chenango County, small flocks of Sandhill Cranes were seen and photographed in a few different locations feeding in the marshy areas and farmlands. It may be that these birds may have been family groups which had bred in the county.

Regarding shorebirds, two juvenile Baird's Sandpipers were found and photographed by Chris Wood at Cornell Lane in Cortland County. They were later

refound foraging in a manure pit, and stayed in the area a few days. The same area also hosted three American Golden-Plovers in early October. Cornell Lane is one of the roads near the Cornell Teaching Dairy Barn, which seems to be favored by many species of shorebirds and other species as well. In Chenango County Mike DeWispelaere found a **Long-billed Dowitcher** which was well photographed and documented by himself and others. This was a rarity for the county and Region.

A **Yellow Rail** was seen by Adam Troyer on 8 October on his farm in Tioga County, and this bird was seen and photographed by others. He originally flushed the bird while mowing on a back field. Later he organized the 30+ birders that had arrived to see the rail to do transects of the field and this, combined with mowing, flushed the bird. Then on 12 October on a nearby farm Micah Kaufman also saw a Yellow Rail while chopping alfalfa. He then called others including Adam and Derek Green to see the rail. No one knows if this was the same bird or not. They are rarely seen on migration, and observers said that the bird seemed to vanish even in the mowed field. These were truly amazing and rare sightings.

A **Swallow-tailed Kite** was observed and photographed by Holly Grant on 12 September swooping over fields near Marathon in Cortland County. This was the first record in eBird for our Region. Another Swallow-tailed Kite was also being seen in Yates County at about the same time so it is not clear why there was this duplication of kites in upstate New York.

Another rare sighting in the Region was of a **Western Kingbird**. This bird was observed and photographed in a field by Cherry Valley Road in Broome County on 21 October. This was Broome's first eBird record for this species, and only the third eBird record for our Region.

Warbler diversity was about average this season, with 29 species recorded. In the last two years the number of species seen was 28. The highlight was Connecticut Warblers seen in five different locations in the Region in September. Also a Golden-winged Warbler was seen at Birdsong Meadows Farm on 6 September.

In summary, 221 species vs. 226 last year, were reported, with some interesting rarities for the Region. The number of observations in eBird was 38,040 which was 77% of last season's total. I also want to acknowledge and thank Bill Ostrander, who sorted eBird data to identify arrivals, last dates, and high counts.

It seems to me that the Yellow Rail sighting certainly deserves 'bird of the season'.

CONTRIBUTORS

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FRANKLIN MOUNTAIN HAWKWATCH TOTALS

Species	Arrival	Max	Max Date	Total
Black Vulture	11/10	2	11/10	2
Turkey Vulture	10/1	87	10/10	808
Osprey	8/31	6	9/16	71
Golden Eagle	10/18	22	12/3	120
No. Harrier	8/31	4	10/7	43
Sharp-shinned Hawk	8/31	86	10/8	475
Cooper’s Hawk	9/10	15	10/7	85
No. Goshawk	11/20	1	11/21	2
Bald Eagle	8/28	22	9/16	258
Red-shouldered Hawk	9/7	7	11/23	48
Broad-winged Hawk	8/28	376	9/18	2338
Swainson’s Hawk				0
Red-tailed Hawk	8/29	115	10/27	874
Rough-legged Hawk				0
Am. Kestrel	8/31	13	10/8	126
Merlin	9/2	3	9/28	27
Peregrine Falcon	9/5	2	10/6	18
Unidentified				54
Total incl unidentified				5349

ABBREVIATIONS

AqPk – Aqua Terra P, BROO; **BMF** – Birdsong Meadows Farm, TIOG; **Bpd** – Boland Pd, BROO; **BUNP** – Binghamton University Nature Pres, BROO; **CannR** – Cannonsville Res, DELA; **CG** – Carantouan Greenway, T Barton, TIOG; **CornellLa** – Cornell Lane, T Harford, CORT; **DorP** – Dorchester P, Whitney Pt, BROO; **FMHW** – Franklin Mt. Hawkwatch, DELA; **KiebelRd** – Keibel Rd, BROO; **LHNC** – Lime Hollow Nature Center, T Cortlandville, CORT; **MHL** – Michigan Hollow L, TIOG; **NMSF**– New Michigan SF, CHEN; **OtsL** – Otsego L, OTSE; **SHM** – Sherburne Railroad Grade Marsh,

CHEN; **StPd** – Stupke Pd, T Cortlandville, CORT; **SusRB** – Susquehanna Ri, Greater Binghamton, BROO; **ULCP** – Upper Lisle CP, T Triangle, BROO; **WHP** – William Hill P, Johnson City, BROO.

Snow Goose: max 75 Bainbridge OTSE 25 Nov.

Brant: max 200 BMF 18 Oct; 60 Cortland Gravel Pits CORT 18 Oct.

Cackling Goose: max 4 StPd 6 Nov.

Trumpeter Swan: BPD thru.

Tundra Swan: max 5 MHL 21 Nov.

Northern Pintail: max 100 BMF 22 Nov, flyover.

Surf Scoter: max 3 Cortland Gravel Pits CORT 12-18 Oct, mob.

White-winged Scoter: max 6 Chenango L CHEN 10 Nov, ph.

Black Scoter: max 2 Balsam Pd CHEN 4 Nov.

Long-tailed Duck: max 3 KeibelRd 10 Nov.

Common Goldeneye: 30 Glimmerglass SP OTSE 25 Nov.

Red-breasted Merganser: max 10 KeibelRd 19 Oct.

Ruddy Duck: max 16 KeibelRd 20 Oct.

Pied-billed Grebe: max 3 KeibelRd 14 Nov.

Horned Grebe: max 2 KeibelRd 19 Nov.

Yellow-billed Cuckoo: 8 scattered reports of singles in Sep and early Oct.

Black-billed Cuckoo: 2 Milford OTSE 13 Sep, only report.

Common Nighthawk: max 25 WHP 2 Sep; 10 WHP 5 Sep; 8 Covered Bridge Rd DELA 10 Sep; most sightings along rivers or bodies of water.

Chimney Swift: last 25 Glimmerglass SP OTSE 17 Sep.

Ruby-throated Hummingbird: last 2 T Bovina DELA 25 Sep.

Virginia Rail: max 2 BPD 18 Sep.

Sora: ULCP 19 Sep; Brick Pd TIOG 25 Sep-5 Oct; only reports.

Common Gallinule: max 3 Brick Pd TIOG 28 Sep; max 3 SHM 29 Sep.

American Coot: max 20 OtsL 11 & 14 Nov.

YELLOW RAIL: BMF 8 Oct, ph, mob, (ATro); Barden Rd TIOG 12 Oct, mob, (MK).

Sandhill Crane: max 5 Balf Rd CHEN 30 Oct, ph; 4 SHM 4 Oct, ph; 3 Round Pd Pharsalia SF

CHEN 19 Oct, ph; 3 Wm Law Rd BROO 24 Nov, flyover.

Black-bellied Plover: BMF 22 Oct, NFC.

American Golden-Plover: max 3 CornellLa 5 Oct.

Dunlin: max 3 SHM 24 Sep, ph.

Baird's Sandpiper: 2 CornellLa 2 Sep, ph.

Pectoral Sandpiper: max 2 SHM 26 Sep.

Long-billed Dowitcher: SHM 28 Sep-2 Oct.

Lesser Yellowlegs: max 5 DorP 24 Sep, ph; 5 SHM 26 Sep.

Greater Yellowlegs: max 5 SHM 12 Sep.

Bonaparte's Gull: max 21 DorP 21 Nov, ph.

Laughing Gull: max 2 DorP 2-15 Sep.

Lesser Black-backed Gull: 2 Cortland CORT 19 Oct, ph, only report.

Great Black-backed Gull: Goodale L CORT 4 Nov; Cortland Gravel Pits CORT 23 Nov.

Caspian Tern: 2 ULCP 10 Sep, only report.

Red-throated Loon: 2 Pepacton Res DELA 17 Oct.

Common Loon: max 210 BMF 18 Nov; 61 T Scott CORT 27 Nov; both reports are of flyovers.

Great Egret: max 4 SHM 13 Sep.

Cattle Egret: 7 Berkshire TIOG 30 Oct, only report.

NOTE: FMHW totals cover 28 August to 3 Jan; averages reflect 2001 to 2020 data, intro.

Black Vulture: total 2 FMHW.

Turkey Vulture: total 808 FMHW, 63% above avg.

Osprey: total 71 FMHW, 33% below avg; 9 Blodgett Rd TIOG 16 Sep.

SWALLOW-TAILED KITE : Marathon CORT 12 Sep, ph, (HG).

Golden Eagle: total 120 FMHW, 34% below avg; 2 BMF 23 Nov.

Northern Harrier: total 43 FMHW, 28% below avg.

Sharp-shinned Hawk: total 475 FMHW, 2% below avg.

Cooper's Hawk: total 85 FMHW, 3% below avg.

Northern Goshawk: total 2 FMHW, 89% below avg.

Bald Eagle: total 258 FMHW, 49% above avg; many other rep; very widespread.

Red-shouldered Hawk: total 48 FMHW, 2% below avg; BMF 23 Nov.

Broad-winged Hawk: total 2338 FMHW, 45% above avg; 6680 Blodgett Rd TIOG 16 Sep (ATro); 3214 Blodgett Rd TIOG 19 Sep (ATro).

Red-tailed Hawk: total 874 FMHW, 48% below avg; many other rep.

Rough-legged Hawk: total 0 FMHW; arr Oxford CHEN 27 Oct, ph.

Northern Saw-whet Owl: LHNC 1 Nov; BMF 23 Nov, seen.

American Kestrel: total 126 FMHW, 32% above avg.

Merlin: total 27 FMHW, 1% below avg.

Peregrine Falcon: total 18 FMHW, 9% above avg; plus rep from Binghamton BROO of resident downtown pair.

WESTERN KINGBIRD: Cherry Valley Rd BROO 21 Oct ,ph, (GW).

Olive-sided Flycatcher: MHL 5 Sep; BMF 12 Sep; T Scott CORT 15 Sep.

Yellow-bellied Flycatcher: ULCP 16 Sep, ph; 10 other scattered reports.

Northern Shrike: Hoag-Childes Rd CHEN 12 Nov; Cherry Valley OTSE 15 Nov, ph; BMF 20 Nov.

Horned Lark: max 40 Edwards Hill Rd BROO 29 Nov.

Purple Martin: Lockheed Martin Pd TIOG 5 Sep; T Coventry CHEN 7 Sep, ph.

Ruby-crowned Kinglet: max 100 ULCP 11 Oct, abundant all over.

Golden-crowned Kinglet: max 30 KeibelRd 25 Oct.

Winter Wren: max 3 Griggs Gulf SF CORT 1 Oct; 3 NMSF 21 Nov.

Marsh Wren: last SHM 7 Nov.

Veery: last MHL 19 Sep.

Gray-checked Thrush: max 2 CornellLa (NFC) 5 Oct; 2 Oxford CHEN (NFC) 19 Sep.

Swainson's Thrush: max 800 BMF (NFC) 19 Sep (ATro).

American Pipit: max 40 T Hamden DELA 14 Nov.

Evening Grosbeak: Van Alstine Rd OTSE 7 Nov, ph; only report.

Red Crossbill: max 11 NMSF 21 Nov, audio recordings; 7 E. Meredith DELA 29 Oct; 4 Bear Swamp SF OTSE 11 Nov, audio recordings; only reports.

Pine Siskin: max 12 NMSF 21 Nov; 6 other scattered reports.

Lapland Longspur: CornellLa 21 Oct; Edwards Hill Rd BROO 29-30 Nov.

Snow Bunting: max 25 Arnold Rd BROO 22 Nov; 5 other scattered reports in late Oct & Nov.

Grasshopper Sparrow: CornellLa 2 Oct; BMF 14 Oct.

American Tree Sparrow: max 5 Roach Rd CHEN 17 Nov; 5 BPd 21 Nov.

Vesper Sparrow: max 3 Kilroy Rd CHEN 27 Oct.

Nelson's Sparrow: CornellLa 2-6 Oct; SHM 2 Oct.

Lincoln's Sparrow: arr SHM 13 Sep; last 2 Bridge St Downsville DELA 23 Oct.

Rusty Blackbird: max 40 Silver Wolf Farm T Hartwick OTSE 4 Nov; 10 MHL 10 Nov; last CG 30 Nov.

Golden-winged Warbler: BMF 6 Sep (ATro).

Tennessee Warbler: max 8 LHNC 26 Sep.

Orange-crowned Warbler: 6 reports in BROO, CORT, and CHEN in Sep and early Oct.

Connecticut Warbler: 2 MHL 16 Sep, ph; BMF 6 Sep; KeibelRd Sep 18, ph; Brick Pd Owego TIOG 25 Sep; T Cortlandville CORT Sep 18-25.

Mourning Warbler: 2 BMF 8 & 23 Sep; Chlorinator Rd OTSE 6 Sep, ph; only reports.

Hooded Warbler: max 2 West River Rd CORT 2 Sep.

Cape May Warbler: max 7 StPd 5 Sep.

Dickcissel: CornellLa 2-3 Oct, "several buzzy flatulent calls", (CW).

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