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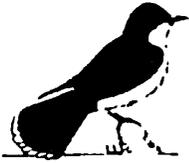
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A PROBABLE COUCH'S KINGBIRD X SCISSOR-TAILED FLYCATCHER IN LIVINGSTON CO., NEW YORK

Kevin J. McGowan

Cornell Laboratory of Ornithology,
159 Sapsucker Woods Road, Ithaca, NY 14850

Robert Spahn

716 High Tower Way, Webster, NY 14580

Abstract

A hybrid *Tyrannus* flycatcher was observed near Geneseo, Livingston Co. NY 9 Nov–2 Dec 2003. Originally identified as a Western Kingbird because of its yellow chest and white outer tail feathers, subsequent inspection of photographs revealed problems with that diagnosis. Numerous characters point to this being the first reported hybrid between Couch's Kingbird (*Tyrannus couchii*) and Scissor-tailed Flycatcher (*T. forficatus*). The new technologies of digital photography and the Internet, as well as the old technology of examining skin specimens, played key roles in identifying the hybrid.

This article documents the occurrence of a hybrid *Tyrannus* flycatcher near Geneseo, New York. It includes the timeline of key observations and the application of the many tools birders can now bring to bear in attempts to identify such birds. Discussion will pull together the various observations, research comparing skins with photos, and behavior to arrive at a conclusion relative to the probable parentage of the bird.

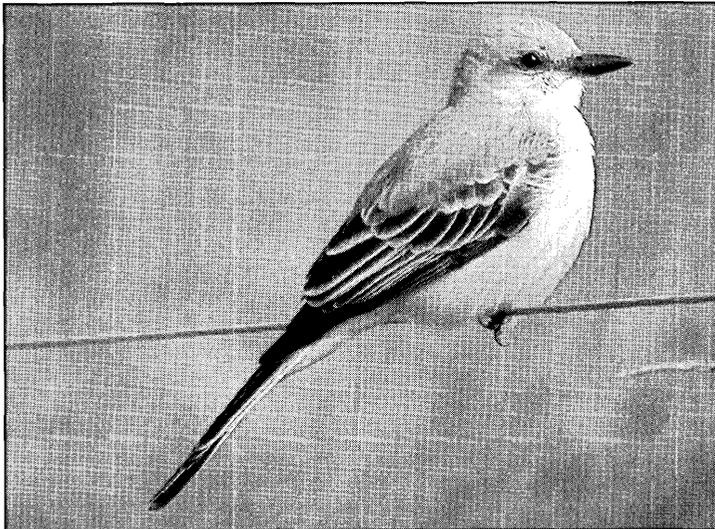


Fig. 1: Hybrid *Tyrannus* 22 Nov
© Jay and Kevin McGowan

Timeline and Tools

On 9 Nov 2003, Rochester birder Gary Chapin was finishing a familiar road loop driving north along River Road in the Town of Leicester, just north of the village of Cuylerville in Livingston County. Along that section of road the west side is lined with dense brush, mostly gray dogwood and hawthorn species, the east side is open field with scattered bushes and trees near the road and similar dense brush 100 yards or so away. Chapin noted a spot of bright yellow tucked back in the bushes – a late chat perhaps. He stopped to check it out; a yellow-bellied kingbird!! The bird eventually flew out to hawk insects and to perch on the trees and fence. It finally flew off to the southwest and disappeared. A gray head and white on the outer rectrices computed to Western Kingbird (*T. verticalis*), a rare vagrant here – the second record for Livingston County (Fox 1998) and about the 7th in *The Kingbird* reporting Region 2. Chapin put the bird and the general location on the GeneseeBirds-L listserv that day. Over the next couple of days others searched with no success, possibly in not quite the right area. As many as five Northern Mockingbirds (*Mimus polyglottos*) were aggressively chasing each other in the area. Might they have run off the kingbird? Of Region 2's past six Western Kingbird records, all but one have been flyby or one-day wonders. It seemed like this bird would follow that trend.

On 15 Nov, Chapin returned to bird the area. He found the bird again and obtained some photos. Again Chapin posted a report and refined the location as 1.3 miles south of Chandler Rd. just north of a metal shed in the pasture on the east side. Again, the bird would feed for a bit, then typically fly southwest to rest in the dense brush. Over the next two days, the bird was seen and photographed by several, including Matt Victoria and Willie D'Anna. Most observers drove up, saw the bird, perhaps shot a few digiscoped photos, and soon departed. Matt Victoria posted his photographs on his website <<http://www.fickity.net/photos.html> > on 17 Nov, the same day he watched the bird.

Enter the Internet as probably the greatest single new tool to affect the birding identification scene in recent years. The evening of 17 Nov, Jay McGowan was helping his little sister figure out the identity of various birds and went to Matt Victoria's website to look at the kingbird photographs. When they looked at the Western Kingbird page, Jay realized that the Livingston Co. bird did not look right. The bill was far too big, the chest was too pale, and the yellow extended too far up on the shoulder. He called KJM's attention to the photo, and both agreed that it was something different, perhaps a Tropical Kingbird (*T. melancholicus*) or Couch's Kingbird (*T. couchii*). The face and bill looked very much like a Tropical Kingbird they had photographed in Peru and not at all like their pictures of Western Kingbird taken in Montana and New York. They did not have time to work on the identification further that evening, but Jay posted a note to the NYSBirds-L listserve suggesting people take another look at the bird with the thought that it might not be a Western Kingbird. D'Anna posted a note on GeneseeBirds-L that evening saying he was rethinking the identification and that he agreed with Jay's assessment that the bill was more like that of Tropical Kingbird. D'Anna provided photos for posting to the website of Angus Wilson <<http://www.oceanwanderers.com/NYTyranus.html>>, who then asked for

comments from birders on the ID-Frontiers listserv. The same things jumped out to others in looking at these and other photos: the bill seemed large for Western, the yellow extended too far up on the breast, and the tail had a substantial notch in the tip and different rectrix lengths and colors.

This is a clear reminder to recall the old Rule 1 of birding - look at every bird, especially the rarities, no matter who and how many have been there before. New photographic tools present new issues. A digital camera which can be used either with its own long lens or to obtain digiscope shots through a telescope forces the observer to decide between studying the bird and taking notes to assure one's personal identification and shooting photos first to gather documentation. If the bird leaves soon and you opted for study, you may have no photo documentation. If you take photos and it flies off, you may find that the photos really are not adequate to allow a solid identification. In this case, many violated Rule 1, and maybe because of that opted to take the photos and did not question the ID on the spot. But again, yellow-bellied kingbird, gray head, and white on the outer tail feathers - what else could it be?

With the photos on the Internet, interested and attentive observers were able to see the photos and question the ID. Within hours, postings were made from all over the country, many from observers with intimate and frequent field experience with all of the yellow-bellied kingbirds. Issues with lighting and the position of the bird relative to the camera resulted in varied impressions relative to the several aspects of the bird that might have aided in identification. Most of the Internet inputs were appropriately hedged with "Based on the pictures to which I've had access..." Some immediately discounted Western, suggesting Tropical, or more likely Couch's Kingbird, but there were conflicts in attempting to fit any of these. There were also verbal inputs on the call which didn't fit Tropical Kingbird and seemed to best fit Western or possibly Couch's. Could it, as suggested by several, be just an aberrant Western? The first ID-Frontiers response, by Bruce Anderson of Winter Park, Florida, introduced the possibility of Scissor-tailed Flycatcher (*T. forficatus*) X Western Kingbird hybrid into the mix, pointing out that it was a known hybrid.

Bring on more of the new tools and the luck element in birding. Luck - the bird stayed. Many others ventured forth and watched, listened to, and photographed or video taped the bird. New images were posted. Using D'Anna's photos plus the old tools of the skins in the Cornell University Museum of Vertebrates collection, KJM was able to post illustrations comparing the primary lengths and feather shapes relative to those of specimens of each gender of each yellow-bellied kingbird <<http://birds.cornell.edu/crows/kingbirdsX.htm>> <<http://birds.cornell.edu/crows/KingGen.htm>>. Pat Kocinski posted videos that clearly showed white on the outer tail feathers. Kurt Fox posted new digital images <<http://home.eznet.net/~kfox/wny/weki/tyrannus.htm>>, which showed the extent and location of white on the rectrices, the extent of forking of the tail, variation in the lengths of the rectrices, and the underwing color. Some had incorrectly thought they had seen salmon on the underwing in the video, which may have lent more credence to the Scissor-tailed Flycatcher parentage. With KJM obtaining even more photos and posting more analysis, and David Sibley researching skins in the Museum of Vertebrate Zoology at Harvard University and the literature (more old tools), and weighing in with an analysis, the general

consensus was more and more toward a hybrid between Scissor-tailed Flycatcher and Tropical or Couch's Kingbird. The details supporting such a conclusion will be discussed below.

More technology was brought to bear. There was more speculation about the call notes and various opinions about how closely it resembled that of Western Kingbird. Jim Kimball, from Geneseo, followed up with many visits to watch and listen and brought equipment and taped the call notes. He later brought and played tapes and CD's and found that the bird did not respond to "songs" and calls of Western, Cassin's, or Tropical kingbirds or to Scissor-tailed Flycatcher, but it responded vigorously to Couch's Kingbird calls. It flew over his head and perched close by, delivering calls that were more extended, and somewhat like Couch's Kingbird. He sent a tape to the Macaulay Library of Natural Sounds at the Cornell Lab of Ornithology for analysis. Interestingly, the spectrograms of the calls do not match up with those of any of these kingbirds or Scissor-tailed Flycatcher. The spectrogram of the call note is longer and more complex than the short call notes of any of the other species considered. More analysis is needed to understand this call.

Over the next two weeks, many visited the site, some many times. A large number of new photos were obtained and shared. Photos taken over a week apart show no change in the relative lengths of the rectrices, laying to rest speculation about a possible out of sequence molt with feathers still growing in. On a wet day in late November, observers noted and posted that the bird showed a red-orange crown stripe. There was some discussion of the possible capture or collection of the bird, but it was too late. It was last seen on Tuesday, 2 Dec at about 11:00 AM. In the end, many enjoyed viewing this beautiful visitor.

Description and Identification

The bird was obviously a large *Tyrannus* kingbird, showing all the typical field marks of yellow belly, gray head, and all black bill (Figure 1). The head was medium gray with darker lores and a thin line behind the eye, in the auricular area, but only a line or point. The color seemed the same in front of and behind the eye.

The legs and feet were black. The bill was entirely black, and appeared quite large. It was sturdy, giving the impression of being longer and thicker than is typical of Western Kingbird, much more along the lines of Tropical Kingbird or just not quite that large. A hook at the end of the bill was apparent, and, together with the dusky mask, gave it a shrike-like appearance. The bird had a bit of a rounded crest peaking at the rear of the head. When the bird was observed in the rain, an orange-red crown mark was seen, appearing bright and somewhat glossy.

The lower face and throat were pale, pearly gray, nearly white. This color extended onto the chest, especially down the ventral portion. The yellow of the belly extended up the sides above the bend of the wrist (top of the wing). The chest was a somewhat washed-out yellow, but the belly and flanks were a brilliant yellow. Having just looked at trays of kingbirds in the Cornell museum before viewing the live bird, KJM believed the flanks were a Tropical/Couch's bright yellow, not the medium yellow of a Western Kingbird. This difference is not

readily apparent in many photographs. The undertail coverts were faded yellow to white.

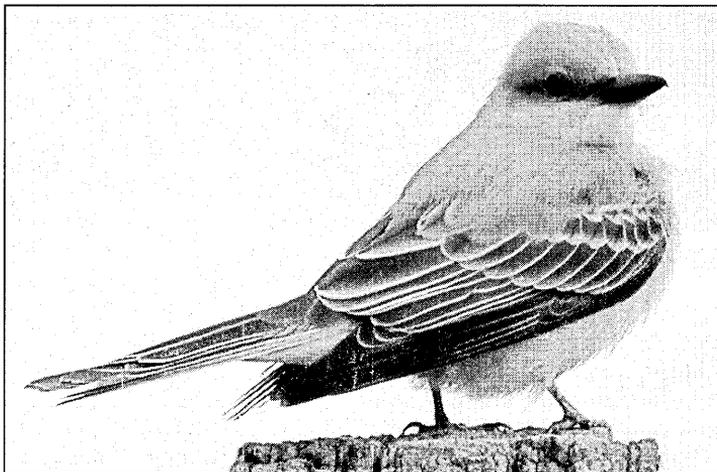


Fig. 2: Hybrid *Tyrannus* 17 Nov
Note lengths of wing feathers on the left wing
©Willie D'Anna

The back was primarily gray with an olive green wash. The yellowish olive color was obvious, but the ground color was gray. All of the upper wing coverts and secondaries were broadly edged in whitish (Figure 2). The flight feathers and greater coverts were blackish. The under wing linings were dull yellow. The undersides of the flight feathers were whitish with dusky tips.

The tail was odd. The central three pairs of tail feathers were clearly of a different generation than the outer three pairs (Figures 3, 4). The newer inner feathers were dark blackish, with white edges around the entire margin of the feather. The older outer feathers were dark, faded-looking brown. They were not edged in white, except for the outermost vane of the outermost pair. The outer web of the outermost tail feather (rectrix 6 or r6) was white along its entire length, but not at the tip (Figure 5). The base of the inner vane of r6 was white to the rachis (shaft) for just under half its length. The outer vane of r5 was white-edged along most of its length (but not near the tip), but the white did not reach the rachis. The third feather in (r4) also had white edging along the outer vane.

When the bird was perched, the tail was long and deeply forked, with the central tail feathers being much shorter than the outer ones (Figures 3, 4). Rectrix 1, the innermost one, was shortest, with r2 slightly longer. Rectrix 3 was longer still, by about the same degree as r2 was longer than r1. Rectrix 4 was substantially longer than r3, with the difference being about twice that of r3 to r2. Rectrix 5 was longer than r4 by the same amount as r4 exceeded r3. Rectrix 6 was just about the same length as r5, barely exceeding it. In flight, the curved, lyre-shape of the tail was apparent.

The lighting in various photographs made the relative shades of the wings and tail difficult to understand. In some pictures, the wingtips looked lighter than the tail, but they looked darker in most others. While viewing the bird

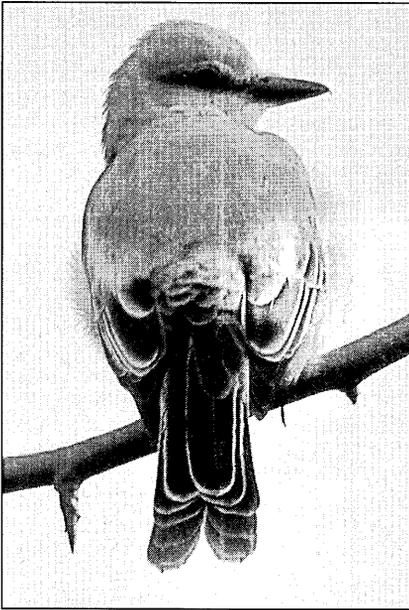


Fig. 3:
Hybrid *Tyrannus* 22 Nov
Note tail feathers of different lengths,
with the middle three sets
being darker than the outer three.
©Jay and Kevin McGowan

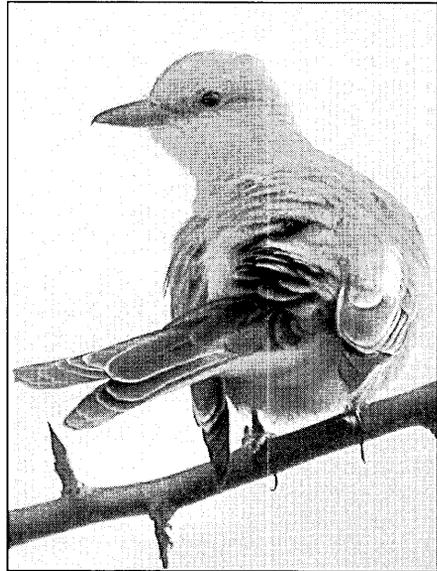


Fig. 4:
Hybrid *Tyrannus* 22 Nov
At certain angles
the deep fork was obvious.
©Jay and Kevin McGowan

in life, KJM looked specifically for this relationship and determined that the primaries and secondaries were about the same shade as the new tail feathers and were slightly darker than the older-looking tail feathers.

The bird called periodically, making a sharp, high, single-note described variously as “peep,” “wick,” or “kip,” that some thought had two quick syllables, the second slightly lower.

Why Not A Western Kingbird?

It was a gray-headed, yellow-bellied kingbird with a dark tail and white edges to the outer tail feathers. Why was it not a Western Kingbird? As recognized by many, some things just were wrong. First, the bill was too large. Bill size in Western Kingbirds does vary a bit, and some might show unusually large bills.

But, they never approach Tropical or Couch's in size, as this bird's bill appeared to do. In-hand measurements might easily have determined whether it was a Western Kingbird or not, but the photographs were only suggestive, not definitive.

Next, the chest color was not right. Western Kingbirds have a dusky gray chest and throat that contrasts slightly with the whiter chin and malar region. The chest is extensively gray, nearly the same color as the nape. Yellow extends only part way up onto the lower chest, fading into olive and then gray evenly across the chest. On the Livingston Co. bird, the yellow extended well up the sides of the chest. The chest color was pale whitish gray, as pale as the chin and malar, much paler than the nape, and extended down the center of the chest in a point.

The bird did have a dark tail with white outer edges to the outermost tail feathers. However, all of the fresh center feathers had broad whitish edges along the entire length (Figures 2-5), something that Western Kingbird never has. On a Western, the tail feathers are blackish, without pale edging. Even fresh and juvenal feathers on the Cornell specimens showed pale edges only near the tips of the tail feathers, not along the sides. In the museum drawers, the black tails of the Western Kingbirds stood out dramatically from the blackish ones of Tropical and Couch's kingbirds. It was difficult to determine if the Livingston Co. bird's tail was black or blackish. However, in all Western Kingbird specimens the wingtips were blackish and contrasted markedly with the blacker tail. This difference was enhanced by feather wear, with the wing feathers becoming much lighter while the tail feathers changed very little. In life, and in most photographs, the wing feathers of the Livingston Co. bird appeared the same color as the newer, darker central tail feathers and darker than the older feathers.

The bird also showed more white in its tail feathers than is normal for a Western Kingbird. The white outer vane of r6 was right for Western Kingbird, but photos showed the inner vane was white for nearly half its length, and that the outer vane of r5 was white for most of its length (Figure 5). Most Cornell

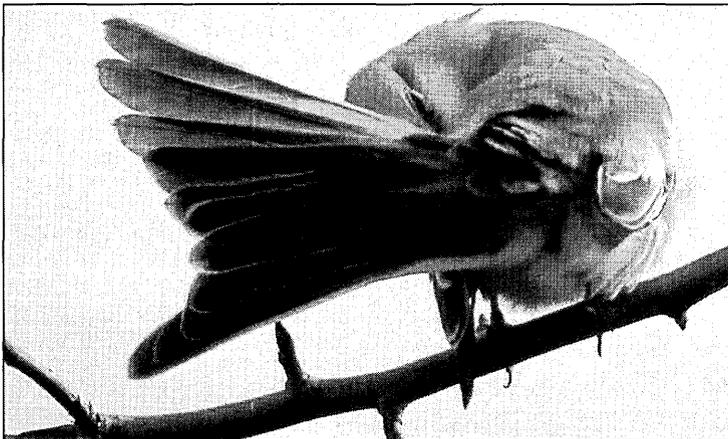


Fig. 5: Hybrid *Tyrannus* 22 Nov

Note outermost tail feather is edged white on the outside for just less than half of the inner vane.

©Jay and Kevin McGowan

specimens of Western Kingbird had white only on the outer vane of r6, but nearly one third had some on the inner vane. In these birds the white on the inner vane did not extend more than one third the length of the feather. Only a few specimens had any white on r5.

Perhaps most damaging for a Western Kingbird identification was the wing formula of the bird. Several photographs allowed the relative lengths of the individual primaries to be seen (e.g., Figure 2). In Western Kingbird, primaries 10 (the outermost), 9, 8, and 7 are much longer than 6, which is much longer than 5; 10 is long, about the same as 7-9; 5 is short, barely longer than 4. In the Livingston Co. bird, primary 10 was much shorter than p6-9, and p5 was moderately shorter (Figure 6).

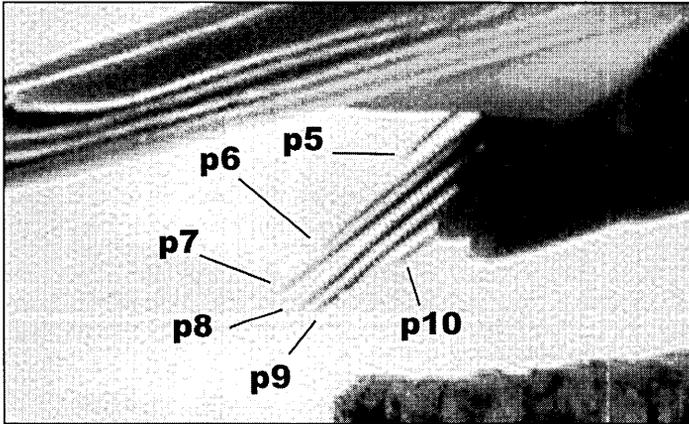


Fig. 6: Hybrid *Tyrannus* 17 Nov
Wingtip detail enlarged from Fig. 2
©Willie D'Anna

And then there was the oddly shaped tail. Again, without actual measurements, it was impossible to determine if the outer tail feathers were long, or the inner ones short. The extreme fork noticeable in life and in some photographs was attributed by some observers as molt. It was pointed out, however, that kingbird molt proceeds from the central tail feathers outward. So, if the tail was in a normal molt progression, the inner feathers should have been older and longer than the outer ones, not the other way round. Also, they should have been growing. Photographs from one week and more apart showed no change in the length of these feathers, demonstrating that they were not growing (c.f., Figure 2 and Figure 3).

Comparison With Other Kingbird Species

It was suggested that perhaps the bird was a Tropical or Couch's Kingbird rather than a Western Kingbird. Bill size and shape, white edging to central tail feathers, wing and tail color and contrast agreed rather nicely with Tropical and Couch's Kingbird. The wing formula appeared the best match to

Couch's Kingbird. And it responded only to Couch's Kingbird calls, although its own calls were quite different.

But a number of characters were wrong for Couch's or Tropical Kingbird, too. The pearly gray chest was wrong; it should have been dusky olive for either Couch's or Tropical Kingbird, contrasting with a whiter throat. The tail also was wrong. Very wrong. Tropical and Couch's kingbird tails can be rather notched, but not nearly the way this tail was. And, although the whitish edging on the central tail feathers matched Tropical and Couch's kingbird tails, the white outer vane of the outermost tail feathers did not. KJM has seen Tropical Kingbirds in Peru that showed white outer tail feathers, and he found one such Cornell specimen. It is possible that Couch's could have white outer vanes too, although none of the Cornell Couch's specimens showed any white. On the Cornell Tropical Kingbird specimen, the white extended the length of the feather edge, but penetrated only half way to the central shaft of the feather. Photographs of the Livingston Co. bird show that nearly the entire outer vane of the outer tail feather was white (only the tip was dark), and that in fact some white was present on the inner vane as well.

So, the bird showed outer tail feathers like a Western Kingbird, bill and wings like a Couch's Kingbird, a chest unlike any other species, and a unique tail. Could it be something even more exotic, like a bird from South America? Two candidate South American species exist: White-throated Kingbird (*T. albogularis*) and Snowy-throated Kingbird (*T. niveigularis*). White-throated is an austral migrant, breeding in southern South America and wintering in northern South America. Wayward individuals might be expected to turn up in North America if they got their directions mixed up, as happens with the migratory populations of Fork-tailed Flycatcher (*T. savana*) (Monroe and Barrow 1980). White-throated Kingbird has a white throat meeting a yellow chest, without olive or gray on the upper chest. Snowy-throated has a white throat and upper chest, something similar to the Livingston Co. bird. But both species have distinct dark facial masks and tails that are less forked than that of a Tropical Kingbird (Hilty and Brown 1986).

The primaries of the different *Tyrannus* species are differently shaped, with those of Western Kingbird and Scissor-tailed Flycatcher being long and thin, and Tropical and Couch's kingbird's being broader with more distinct notches on the inner vane. Western Kingbird's are notched too, but the notch is slight and elongated, and p10 is especially long and thin. Scissor-tailed Flycatcher has a more distinct notch, but the feather is long and thin like that of a Western Kingbird. These differences are most distinct on the adult males. Adult females have much less exaggerated feather shapes, with less noticeable notches. Juvenile primaries are broader and mostly lack notching, especially those of juvenile females, looking more like "normal" bird feathers. Unfortunately this character could not be used to identify the species of the Livingston Co. bird. All of its primaries, in all photos examined, showed no notching at all (Figure 7), suggesting that it was a hatch-year (HY) bird and perhaps a female.

If In Doubt, Consider Hybridization

If the bird did not fit any known kingbird species, then perhaps it was a hybrid? The overall appearance indicated that one parent would have to be one of the yellow-bellied kingbirds, and the oddly forked tail suggested Scissor-tailed Flycatcher as the other. Also agreeing with Scissor-tail was the pearly white color of the throat extending onto the upper chest. Scissor-tailed Flycatcher also shows white on the outer web of the outermost tail feathers, white up the base of the inner web, and some white at the base of the next set proximal (r5), and might explain a similar, if less marked pattern on a hybrid. The relative lengths of Scissor-tailed Flycatcher tail feathers also match the Livingston Co. bird, with r5 and r6 nearly equal and longest, r4 intermediate, and r3, r2, and r1 gradually shorter.

Hybrids of Scissor-tailed Flycatcher and Western Kingbird have been documented (Davis and Webster 1970, Tyler and Parkes 1992), and this parentage became a popular supposition on ID-Frontiers. Both previous hybrids appeared most like Scissor-tailed Flycatchers with short, but forked tails, and pale yellow bellies, roughly like the Livingston Co. bird. But, a number of characters were not explained by this pairing. With the exception of the oddly forked tail, extra white in the tail feathers, and a pale gray chest, a Scissor-tailed Flycatcher parent would not help explain any of the characters that ruled out Western Kingbird. Scissor-tailed Flycatcher has a smaller bill than Western Kingbird, not larger. The white edging on the central tail feathers was wrong, too. Scissor-tailed Flycatcher has black tail feathers, with the white edging on the central ones restricted to the tip, just like a Western Kingbird and unlike the Livingston Co. bird. Wing formula for Scissor-tailed Flycatcher also is most like that of a Western Kingbird, with the 10th primary being very long, as long as p7, p8, and p9, and much longer than p6. So, Scissor-tailed Flycatcher X Western Kingbird cannot account for all of the odd characters shown by the Livingston Co. bird. Could any other hybrid combination?

A combination of Couch's Kingbird X Scissor-tailed Flycatcher can explain all of the characters seen. The Couch's parent can account for the bright yellow belly, dark face mask, large bill, olive-gray back, dusky flight feathers with broad white edging, wing formula, and response to Couch's calls. The Scissor-tail parent could be responsible for the whitish chest, the white outer vane with dark tip of rectrix 6, the white extending onto the inner vane of r6, the white on r5, and the deeply forked tail.

Age and Sex

The shape of the outer primaries (Figure 7) indicated that the bird was not an adult male. The blunt shape of the primaries fit best with those of hatch-year (HY) female *Tyrannus* in the Cornell collection. In addition to the lack of any noticeable emargination on the outer primaries, the presence of two different generations of non-growing tail feathers supports HY status as well. Pyle (1997) indicates that the first prebasic (or post-juvinal) molt in *Tyrannus* kingbirds is partial, involving the central pair of tail feathers and often adjacent pairs too. Over half of HY individuals examined had contrasting fresh central tail feathers, while

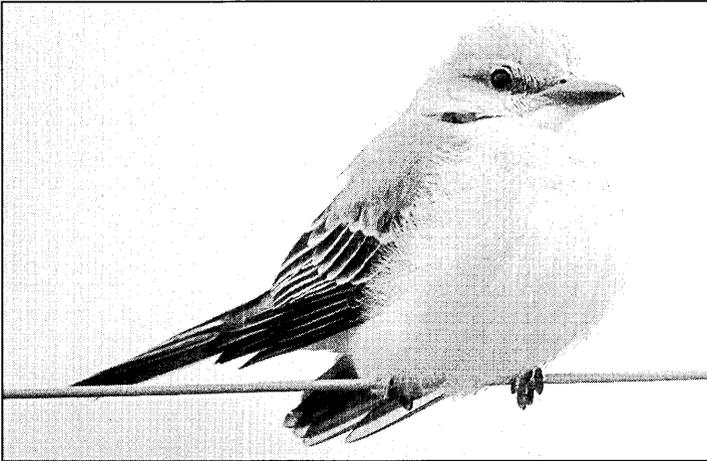


Fig. 7: Hybrid *Tyrannus* 25 Nov
Note outermost primaries of left wing are visible and
lack an obvious notch on the inner vane.
©Robert G. Spahn

those of after hatch year birds (AHY or adults) were described as having uniform tail feathers. The tail feathers themselves were blunt in shape (Figures 3, 4), however, as would be true for an AHY bird, rather than the more tapered shape of a HY bird (Pyle 1997). The presence of the red-orange crown feathers has been suggested as indicating that it is an adult, but those feathers are missing from the juvenile, not first basic plumage, and might be present in a HY bird in November. The sex was probably female, but the age remains unresolved.

Additional Observations

With so many observers spending time with this bird, other interesting observations were noted. The bird was often seen to catch insects, both on the wing and by dropping and picking them off grass or weed tops. The insects appeared to include some grasshoppers, crickets, and squash bugs. It would regularly cough up pellets of the inedible remains of its catches. Often after a catch, the bird would call. Interestingly, at times nearby Northern Mockingbirds would then call back with a pretty good rendition of the call note. It frequently hunted for 20 minutes or so, then flew away for an hour or more. Most often it flew SW into the thorn scrub thicket. Once it flew higher, then well off to the SE toward the Genesee River. When perching, it most often perched low to the ground, often within four feet or less. It utilized shrubs and fence posts and the fence wire. The bird did not interact directly with any of the other species present in the area.

Discussion

This is the first documentation of a possible hybrid between Couch's Kingbird and Scissor-tailed Flycatcher. The breeding range of the two species overlaps narrowly in southern Texas, and northern Nuevo Leon and Tamaulipas, Mexico (American Ornithologists' Union 1998). The area of overlap may have been increasing as Couch's Kingbird expanded its range northward out of the Rio Grande Valley in Texas (Brush 1999). Couch's Kingbird lives in thorn forests and brushy clearings in forest (Brush 1999), while Scissor-tailed Flycatcher prefers more open grasslands with scattered trees (Regosin 1998), but both use suburban areas with scattered trees. Couch's Kingbird is known to flock with other flycatchers, including Scissor-tailed Flycatcher (Brush 1999), in mild winters in Texas. The fact that these two species encounter each other at the edge of their ranges may be significant. Hybridization may be expected more frequently at the edge of a range where appropriate mates are harder to find.

As woven in above, for this bird to be found and identified, both luck and the proper tools needed to be in place. A prepared observer spotted the yellow, stopped to study the bird, and posted the sighting. The bird stayed, was relocated, and was digitally photographed. Photographs were promptly posted on the Internet. A prepared birder was scanning the web and acted quickly on questioning the ID. The Internet allowed the rapid sharing of images and then ideas. The bird stayed. Birders with the right tools continued to visit the site and to follow up quickly on virtually every suggestion of additional information that might help. Others researched skins and the literature. Although collection of this bird may have been the only route to a conclusive answer, with the tools available we have a plausible identification.

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HURRICANE ISABEL (September 2003) IN NEW YORK

Willie D'Anna

2257 Cayuga Drive Extension, Niagara Falls, NY 14304

Isabel and the Internet

Among upstate New York birders Hurricane Isabel was one of the most anticipated storms ever. The effects upon pelagic birds by tropical storms are rarely witnessed in inland New York. While hurricanes have long been known to trap birds and to carry them well away from the coast, few have had the strength, speed, and path direction along with the right continental weather systems to bring birds as far as upstate New York. Hurricane Fran in 1996 was the last storm to do so. Unfortunately, for both the birds and the birders, New York's records from Fran consisted mainly of dead and dying specimens of Black-capped Petrels. The well-monitored Hamlin Beach State Park on Lake Ontario did report a fly-by Black-capped Petrel as well as a Sooty Tern. Beyond that, New York's birders had relatively little to show in the way of truly pelagic species from Fran. One has to wonder about Fran – what might have been found had the popularity of the Internet been what it is today? Without question, it was the frequent, almost urgent messages on the Internet prior to landfall that alerted and excited birders to the potential of Hurricane Isabel.

The Origin and Path of Isabel

Isabel began as a tropical depression over the eastern tropical Atlantic on 6 Sep 2003. It strengthened rapidly, becoming a tropical storm later that day and a hurricane on the next. Strengthening even more as it moved slowly west-northwestward, on the 11th it became a Category 5 hurricane, the most powerful kind. It remained a Category 5 storm until the 15th. By the time it hit the coast, near Drum Point, North Carolina around noon on the 18th, Isabel had weakened but it was still a Category 2 hurricane. The storm continued inland north-northwestward, eventually losing its tropical characteristics over western Pennsylvania on the 19th. (NHC)

Isabel was an exceptionally well-forecasted hurricane. For several days prior to landfall, the storm was predicted to cross western New York. Isabel's remnants crossed Lake Erie near its east end on 19 Sep, very close to the forecasted path. In New York, the weather to the east of the storm was not that bad, prompting several birders to check the nearest lakes to their homes. At the storm's center and to the west of it, in Ontario, wind-driven rain made viewing conditions difficult. As a result, few Ontario birders checked Lake Erie and Lake Ontario on the 19th. As illustrated by the reports from Crystal Beach, Ontario however, it is a good idea to get out as soon as the storm center arrives or immediately after it passes, no matter what the weather is.

First Day

The very first pelagic birds reported in New York related to Isabel were one Bridled Tern and two Sooty Terns at Shinnecock Inlet, Long Island. around 8:30

a.m. on the 19th. Unlike inland locations, proximity to the eye of the storm is not as essential for bringing at least a few pelagic birds to coastal locations. Presumably this is because these birds will continue to fly over the ocean for long distances to get away from the storm. New York's first storm-related birds found inland, also on the 19th, were at the south end of Cayuga Lake between 2:00 and 2:30 p.m. – eight Red-necked Phalaropes and five Red Phalaropes. Hamlin Beach State Park was the site of Lake Ontario's first pelagic reports – a Sooty Tern sometime before 4:00 p.m. and a juvenile Bridled Tern at 4:00 p.m. Next were a Wilson's Storm-Petrel from Athol Springs, N.Y. on Lake Erie and a report of Black-capped Petrel, Greater Shearwater and Sooty Tern, by a single observer from Crystal Beach, Ontario on Lake Erie. At around the same time as the Lake Erie sightings, 5:00 p.m., a remarkable five Wilson's Storm-Petrels were found on Chautauqua Lake in southwestern New York.

There will always be questions about where some birds originated. Not included in the Cayuga Lake sightings of the previous paragraph was an Arctic Tern seen around the same time as the phalaropes. While this is a great rarity anywhere in New York, its occurrence on one of the Finger Lakes is truly exceptional. Arctic Terns are extremely rare in the gulf stream waters off North Carolina (unrecorded?) where Isabel passed through. It seems more likely that this bird, jaegers, and possibly the phalaropes as well were migrating overland from Hudson Bay, Canada and were knocked down by the northward tracking Isabel. The source of the two Arctic Terns reported from Hamlin Beach S.P. on the 20th was likely the same.

Some Comparisons with Hurricane Fran

The paths of Hurricane Fran in 1996 and Isabel in 2003 were very similar. The remains of Fran crossed Lake Erie on 8 Sep. As stated earlier, what was left of Isabel crossed on 19 Sep. With these dates separated by less than two weeks on a yearly calendar, one would expect the species carried by both not to be too dissimilar. The species found in Ontario and inland New York after Fran (summarized by Brinkley et al. 1997 and Curry 1996) and those found after Isabel are, indeed, substantially the same. However, there are some interesting differences in the numbers of each species and, of course, a few species found in one event were not seen during the other.

In upstate New York and Ontario, Fran was known as a Black-capped Petrel event, bringing a minimum of 26 individuals to this area. In addition, numerous phalaropes, jaegers and Laughing Gulls were found. (Brinkley et al. 1997). As mentioned, the phalaropes and the jaegers could have been overland migrants. By comparison, Isabel was much more a Wilson's Storm-Petrel event (see table). The total number of storm-petrels brought by Fran was only three or four at the eastern end of Lake Erie, all identified as Wilson's (Brinkley et al. 1997, Curry 1996). By contrast, Isabel brought three to Lake Erie, 5-7 to Lake Ontario, five to Chautauqua Lake, and two to Cayuga Lake, all but three identified as Wilson's (one Band-rumped report and two storm-petrel species reports were the others.)

Isabel brought a few more pelagic and coastal terns than Fran as well, at least inland. Fran's inland total for New York and Ontario was 5-8 Sooty Terns (Curry 1996) while Isabel brought one Royal Tern, 1-2 Bridled and 6-7 Sooty terns. Except for two Sooty Terns that were found on Lake Erie, all of Isabel's terns occurred on Lake Ontario.

Documented Sightings

Many of the sightings listed in the tables are from no more than a report over the Internet. Still, some have been well-documented. A juvenile Black Skimmer, photographed at Oswego Harbor on Lake Ontario, was one of Isabel's more interesting gifts. A storm-petrel that was videotaped and studied by numerous observers on Cayuga Lake may become New York's first record of Band-rumped, if accepted by the New York State Avian Records Committee. Some of the Black-capped Petrels and Wilson's Storm-Petrels were documented by thorough written descriptions and field sketches. A dramatic series of digiscoped images, taken by Gerard Phillips, shows a Ring-billed Gull devouring a Wilson's Storm-Petrel at Fairhaven, NY (OAS)! Clearly, the new technology in the form of the Internet and digital photography equipment is having a tremendous positive impact upon the documentation of rarities, as well as driving the excitement of birders.

Previous Records of Birds Found After Isabel

Black-capped Petrel has only been recorded twice along the coast of New York. One was a specimen from Long Island and the other a bird seen in the Hudson Canyon in the Atlantic Ocean. The previous 14 or so inland records mainly involved specimens and most of those were brought by Hurricane Fran in 1996. (Askildsen 1998a) The two reported off Fairhaven S. P. on Lake Ontario and the bird hit by a car in Syracuse were the only definite sightings from Isabel seen in New York. Two distant birds off Athol Springs, Lake Erie on 25 Sep were carefully studied at length with the observer concluding that they were probably Black-capped Petrels (M. Morgante, pers. comm.)

At times abundant in coastal waters, Wilson's Storm-Petrels have only been recorded inland on five or six previous occasions (Askildsen 1998b). There were no fewer than 13 birds from five inland locations in New York provided by Isabel. There was also a report of a Band-rumped Storm-Petrel on Cayuga Lake that could constitute a first record for the state.

Skelly (1998a) lists eight records of Bridled Tern, involving 13 birds, all from coastal waters. Most of the previous Sooty Tern records were from Hurricane David in 1979 – more than 110 in eastern New York and Long Island occurred after that storm. There are a few other coastal sightings but Moon and Moon (1998) list only three true inland records i.e. away from the coast and the lower Hudson River. The previously mentioned Sooty Tern at Hamlin Beach after Fran would be another (NYSARC 1999). There were three inland reports of Bridled Tern (the same bird?) and 4-5 of Sooty Tern in New York after Isabel, all from Lake Ontario.

Though not a true pelagic species, the coastal Royal Tern is extremely rare inland. There have been only four prior reports away from the coast and three of those were no further inland than Cocksackie on the Hudson River (Cooper 1998). One bird was brought by Isabel and seen at Derby Hill on Lake Ontario. Another coastal species, the Black Skimmer, has been recorded well inland on only four occasions (Skelly 1998b). The bird, observed on Lake Ontario after Isabel, was photographed.

Brown Pelicans have been found along the coast with increasing frequency and inland records are also on the rise though it remains very rare inland. The bird at DeRuyter Reservoir may or may not have been associated with Isabel. Laughing Gulls are rare inland visitors and are a frequent waif in Atlantic Coast hurricanes. There were only four reports of three or four birds after Isabel, far fewer than were brought inland by Fran. Red-necked Phalaropes and Red Phalaropes are regular fall migrants through the Great Lakes with occasional records from the Finger Lakes. The birds seen after Isabel on Cayuga Lake and the Great Lakes could either have been brought from the ocean by the storm or knocked down as they were migrating overland from the Arctic.

Summary

Hurricane Isabel was, perhaps, the most anticipated storm among birders that ever came to inland New York. Their interest and preparedness, in terms of knowing where to look and what species to expect, was greatly augmented by the Internet. Wilson's Storm-Petrel was the most frequent pelagic species with at least 15 reported from Lakes Erie, Ontario, Chautauqua, and Cayuga. This was unlike Hurricane Fran which took a path similar to Isabel but, instead, brought numbers of Black-capped Petrels and few storm-petrels. Still, the two storms had many similarities in terms of species composition. Though few specimens were found after Isabel, some of the great rarities seen were photographed or videotaped and others were documented by sketches and thorough written reports. There are very few prior inland records of several of the species reported.

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NEW YORK & ONTARIO SIGHTINGS FROM HURRICANE ISABEL

Black-capped Petrel	1	19 Sep	LE-Crystal Beach, Ont.	J. Lamey (per A. Adamo)
Black-capped Petrel	2	21 Sep	LO-Fairhaven S.P.	G. Phillips, K. McGann, W. Purcell
Black-capped Petrel	1	23 Sep	LE-Fort Erie, Ont.	W. D'Anna et al.
Black-capped Petrel	Specimen	27 Sep	LE-Fort Erie, Ont.	B. Holden
Black-capped Petrel	Specimen	Late Sep	Syracuse (hit by car)	per S. Kelling
Greater Shearwater	1	19 Sep	LE-Crystal Beach, Ont.	J. Lamey (per A. Adamo)
Wilson's Storm-Petrel	1	19,20 Sep	LE-Athol Springs	K. Fox, M. Hamilton et al.
Wilson's Storm-Petrel	5,2	19,20 Sep	ChL-Prendergast Point	K. Vanstrom et al.
Wilson's Storm-Petrel *	2	20,21,22 Sep	CaL-south end	W. Hutchinson, M. Dettling et al.
Wilson's Storm-Petrel	2 specimens	20 Sep	LE-Cattaraugus Creek mouth	R. Rosche
Wilson's Storm-Petrel *	3-5	21 Sep	LO-Fairhaven	G. Phillips, K. McGann, W. Purcell
Wilson's Storm-Petrel	1	22 Sep	LO-Hamilton, Ont.	Wormington, D. Salisbury (per B. Curry)
Wilson's Storm-Petrel	Specimen	27 Sep	LO-Hamilton, Ont.	Stamp, Heslop, Olmstead (per B. Curry)
Band-rumped Storm-Petrel*	1	21,22 Sep	CaL-south end	Many observers
storm-petrel species	1	22 Sep	LE-Port Bruce, Ont.	D. Martin
storm-petrel species	1	27 Sep	LE-Crescent Beach, Ont.	A. Adamo
storm-petrel species	1	??	LE-Elgin Co., Ont.	per A. Wormington
Brown Pelican *	1	19 Sep	DeRuyter Reservoir	per D. Crumb
Magnificent Frigatebird	1	2 Oct	Ocean-Fire Island	J. Gluth et al.
Red-necked Phalarope	8	19 Sep	CaL-south end	P. Hosner et al.
Red-necked Phalarope	1-2	19 Sep	LE-Buffalo	M. Morgante
Red-necked Phalarope	5	20 Sep	Batavia WWTP	J. Skelly
Red-necked Phalarope	1	20 Sep	LO-Hamlin Beach S.P.	D. Tetlow
Red-necked Phalarope	1	20 Sep	LO-Derby Hill	per M. Scilingo
Red-necked Phalarope	4	21 Sep	LO-Fairhaven S.P.	per M. Scilingo
Red Phalarope	5	19 Sep	CaL-south end	P. Hosner et al.
Red Phalarope	2	20 Sep	LO-Derby Hill	per M. Scilingo
Parasitic Jaeger	1 ad.	20 Sep	CaL-south end	C. Spagnoli, J. & K. Confer
jaeger species	1 imm.	19 Sep	CaL-Myer's Point	S. Haber
Laughing Gull	1	19 Sep	LO-Hamlin Beach S.P.	D. Tetlow J. Barry
Laughing Gull *	1 juv.	20 Sep	CaL-Myer's Point	J. Wells

Laughing Gull	1 imm.	21 Sep	LO-Hamlin Beach S.P.	W.Symonds, M.Tetlow
Laughing Gull	1	21 Sep	LO-Fairhaven S.P.	K. McGann (per S. Kelling)
Sabine's Gull	2	19 Sep	LO-Toronto	C. McLaughlan
Sabine's Gull	2	20 Sep	ChL-Prendergast Point	J. McCoy
Royal Tern	1	22 Sep	LO-Derby Hill	M. Victoria
Sandwich Tern	1	20 Sep	Ocean-Shinnecock Inlet	H. McGuinness
Sandwich Tern	3	24 Sep	Ocean-Mecox Bay	per Tom Burke
Arctic Tern	1 ad.	19 Sep	CaL-south end	M. Anderson et al.
Arctic Tern	2 ad.	20 Sep	Hamlin Beach S.P.	D. Tetlow
Least Tern	1 juv.	20 Sep	LE-Prospect Point, Ont.	B. Holden
Bridled Tern	1 sub-ad.	19 Sep	Ocean-Shinnecock Inlet	T. Lauro, P. Buckley
Bridled Tern	1 juv.	19 Sep	LO-Hamlin Beach S.P.	D. Tetlow
Bridled Tern	1 juv.	20 Sep	LO-Hamlin Beach S.P.	D.Sherony, R. Spahn
Bridled Tern	1	23 Sep	LO-Hamlin Beach S.P.	W. Symonds, J.Bounds
Sooty Tern	2 ad.	19 Sep	Ocean-Shinnecock Inlet	T. Lauro, P. Buckley
Sooty Tern	1	19 Sep	LO-Hamlin Beach S.P.	D.Tetlow, J. Barry
Sooty Tern	1	19 Sep	LE-Crystal Beach, Ont.	J. Lamey
Sooty Tern	3 ad.	21 Sep	LO-Point Breeze	D. Tetlow
Sooty Tern	1	22 Sep	LE-Point Pelee, Ont.	D. Milsom et al. (per S. Rupert)
Sooty Tern	1 juv.	23 Sep	LO-Hamlin Beach S.P.	W. Symonds, R. Spahn
Tropical tern species	1	19 Sep	Ocean-Riis Park	P. Shen et al. (per S. Kelling)
.Black Skimmer *	1	20 Sep	LO-Oswego Harbor	K. McGann, G. Phillips, W. Purcell
Cave Swallow	3	20 Sep	LO-Hamlin Beach S.P.	D. Tetlow

Photographed or videotaped; LO = Lake Ontario; LE = Lake Erie;
CaL = Cayuga Lake; ChL = Chautauqua Lake

Notes about the table:

1. Because of the boundary waters shared with New York, sightings from Lakes Erie and Ontario that occurred in the Province of Ontario are included. However, since non-coastal sightings are emphasized, the same was not done for other states along the Atlantic Ocean. Most of the reports in the table are subject to review by NYSARC or the Ontario Bird Records Committee before being accepted into the official record.
2. Since jaegers are not uncommon on the lower Great Lakes in fall and it seems likely that few would be brought in this far by the hurricane, only sightings from smaller water bodies, where they are quite rare, are included.

One That Got Away: A Possible Nesting of Western Kingbird (*Tyrannus verticalis*) in Region 1

Terry Mosher

8892 Harmon Hill Road; Fredonia, NY 14063

For every story our fishing friends have about the great fish that got away, we birders have at least one about the great bird that did the same. Field work on the New York State Breeding Bird Atlas 2000 Project yields many tales of that kind, and my latest one comes from a morning of work in Block 1370C, southeast of the village of Brocton in Chautauqua County. In this case, I hooked and landed the bird, but the nesting record toyed with my lure, teased me, and swam away.

The catch: Saturday 28 Jun 2003 was a lovely morning in our part of the state. With the car windows down, I was enjoying the sunshine, the breeze, and the smell of freshly cut hay along a dirt road separating a hayfield from a vineyard. About a hundred feet ahead of me, the road sloped down to the Brocton Reservoir. In the field to my right, territorial male Bobolinks chased each other over the timothy in a swirl of black, white, and buff, singing their syncopated, banjo-like songs. In the Atlas codes, that was *PR-T* (*Probable breeding—bird holding territory*) for Bobolink. Nearby, two Savannah Sparrows sang against each other from the tops of rolled hay bales. That was territorial singing, and another *Pr-T* went into the Atlas Field Card. On a power line above the vineyard, a pair of Eastern Kingbirds perched close together and preened: *PR-P* (*Pair in suitable nesting habitat*) for the kingbirds. The day's field work was off to a promising start, but things were about to get still better.

Cresting the hill in front of me, a large flycatcher flew slowly up the road toward the car, hovering now and then as it hawked insects over the hay. Like an Eastern Kingbird in size and shape, it had the barrel-chested, blunt-headed, big-billed look of the genus *Tyrannus*. On this bird, though, the head, nape, and breast were a lovely, pale ash-gray, contrasting sharply with bright, rich lemon-yellow on the rest of the under parts. As the bird passed within fifteen or twenty feet of the car, it was easy to see a dark, square tail. Black both above and below, the tail showed no terminal band. On each outermost rectrix, white edging was narrow but distinct. My pulse quickened as I asked myself, "Western Kingbird? Here? In late June?"

Tame and confiding, the bird soon perched on the electric wire across the road. After a quick look at *The Sibley Guide to Birds*, I stood on the road, checking off field marks through the binoculars: Gray mantle? Yes. Unbarred, brownish-gray wings? Yes. Whitish chin and malar stripe? Yes. And then the clincher: an eye line—black and distinct on the lores, grayer and more diffuse on the ear coverts—gave the bird a "masked" look at close range. I dashed to the car, dialed Dick Miga's number on the cell phone, and said something calm and collected like "Dick! Western Kingbird! How fast can you get here?" As obliging as the kingbird itself, the Federation's Vice-President was there in minutes, and at once

he confirmed the identification. For a happy quarter of an hour we stood and admired this handsome stray from the west.

The one that got away: That afternoon, things began to get more complicated. For starters, several birders tried to see the Western Kingbird without success. In fact, Dick Miga and I proved to be the last people to see it. Suddenly, I was doubly grateful that Dick had reached the site before the bird made its exit.

One of the disappointed birders, my friend and fellow Lake Erie Bird Club member Joe Gula, stopped by that afternoon with a piece of news I'd never expected. Mr. Greg Borst, who works at the Brocton Reservoir and travels the road to it nearly every day, had driven up and introduced himself as Joe waited for the bird. Roughly the following conversation took place:

Mr. Borst: Hi! What are you looking for?

Joe Gula: A Western Kingbird.

Mr. Borst: Is that the one with the yellow breast?

Joe: That's the one. Have you seen it?

Mr. Borst: Sure. It sits on the wires here all the time. That bird nested down the road near the reservoir, and my wife and I watched it on the nest.

The plot was thickening: four hundred miles east of its normal breeding range, had the Western Kingbird actually bred? If so, had it paired with an Eastern Kingbird at the reservoir? And, if the bird *had* nested, had it fledged young? These were a few of the questions I hoped to answer. Pursuing them proved exciting, frustrating, and fun.

A few days later, I arranged to meet Greg Borst and his wife Lynette at the Brocton Reservoir. It was chiefly Mrs. Borst, I learned, who had closely followed the possible kingbird nesting on the reservoir grounds, visiting the nest site several times. When I asked to see the nest, Mrs. Borst led me down a broad, sloping lawn bordered by a second-growth woods of mature Black Cherry (*Prunus serotina*), Black Locust (*Robinia pseudoacacia*), Sugar Maple (*Acer saccharum*), and a few other trees. Undergrowth bordering the lawn included tangles of Highbush Blackberry (*Rubus allegheniensis*) and shrubs of Tartarian Honeysuckle (*Lonicera tartarica*). About five feet above the ground in the forking branches of a honeysuckle shrub was the nest. But this was no kingbird's nest. Built of grasses and weed stalks worked into a thick wall of mud, it was clearly the familiar nest of an American Robin! I put the question to Mrs. Borst directly. Could the nesting bird she observed have been a robin? Graciously, she assured me it could not. Although she was not a birder, Mrs. Borst was a close and careful observer of nature. Like her husband, she had known robins well for many years, and the bird on this nest drew her attention because she had never seen one like it. It had, she emphasized, a gray head and bright yellow breast, and it was the

same bird that often perched on the wires along the reservoir road, where Dick Miga and I saw it on 28 Jun. Looking at the Western Kingbird in my *Sibley Guide to Birds*, she at once said, "That's the one."

Unaware of how unusual this nesting was, Mrs. Borst had taken no photographs and had not recorded the dates or details of her observations. To the best of her recollection, she had first seen the possible Western Kingbird on the robin's nest near the end of May. Her last observation came around 20 Jun, roughly a week before Dick Miga and I saw the bird. Early in the nesting cycle, she had seen at least three eggs in the nest. Quite different from the unmarked, "robin's-egg blue" eggs of *Turdus migratorius*, these eggs were buff-colored with splotches of brown. Later, the adult bird had fed three nestlings, which became fully feathered and grew large enough to fledge (or nearly so) as Mrs. Borst continued to visit the nest site. She had not seen the young fledge, however, nor had she observed the adult bird with fledged young. Around 20 Jun, she had simply found the nest empty and no adults or young at the nest site. About the bird's mate, she had no information. Neither she nor her husband had seen it associating with an Eastern Kingbird, or with any other species.

What a teasing, tantalizing set of second-hand data! Among my many questions about this enigmatic nesting, the first involved the bird's use of an American Robin's nest. Was this even possible? Are Western Kingbirds, like the cuckoos, ever known to use the nests of other species? In fact, they are. According to Kenn Kaufman (1996), *Tyrannus verticalis* sometimes nests "in abandoned nests of other birds." And Arthur Cleveland Bent (1963) cites one pair's use of "an old nest of Bullock's Oriole."

Still, the skeptic in me rushed in with objections, ticking off a seemingly endless series of *no's*. There were no photos of the nesting bird, the eggs, or the nestlings. No written field notes. No exact egg dates. No observation of fledging, and no fledged young seen in the nest area. No young accompanied the adult Western Kingbird when Dick Miga and I saw it on 28 Jun. No report on the nesting from experienced birders. And finally, no observation of this bird paired with an Eastern Kingbird, making the bird's mate a hypothetical matter. In short, far too many *no's*, and far too little objective evidence. End of discussion, then?

Not quite. Skepticism and objectivity aren't always identical, and I kept returning to this unanswered question: If a Western Kingbird did *not* incubate eggs and feed nestlings in the American Robin's nest, what gray-headed, yellow-breasted bird, given to using the nests of other species, did? I had no candidate to suggest. And then there was Mrs. Borst's description of the eggs, which agreed well with written descriptions of Western Kingbird eggs (Bent 1963, Harrison 1975, Terres 1980).

What do all the facts and all the questions add up to? Did a Western Kingbird nest near the Brocton Reservoir in the spring of 2003? I believe it did. Like many a brook or brown trout, though, did any acceptable *record* of this nesting get away? Sadly, I think it did. Much as I'd love to enter "Western Kingbird" with an Atlas code of *CO-NY (Confirmed breeding—nest with young)* on a Notable Species Form for Block 1370C, I can't reasonably do it. Like it or not, in an effort of amateur and professional science like the Breeding Bird Atlas 2000 Project, only traditional, agreed-upon, and objective forms of

documentation will do. Lacking photos, detailed field notes, or at least a first-hand observation by someone familiar with Western Kingbirds, there's simply no breeding record to enter. Perhaps, though, experiences like this one yield better things than records. Forced at last to say "I believe, but strictly speaking I do not know," we submit to the same mystery that has humbled students of nature—amateur and professional alike—from Gilbert White to Henry David Thoreau to Rachel Carson. We acknowledge that far more is happening out there than we can ever see, record, or fully understand. In their wake, the records that get away leave behind their share of frustration. But, like an unhooked trout, they leave humility and wonder as well. And, if humility and wonder are secondary benefits of an undertaking like the Breeding Bird Atlas 2000 Project, they may be just as important as anything else it teaches.

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THE KINGBIRD INDEX 2003 Vol. 53

Donald A. Windsor
PO Box 604, Norwich NY 13815
windsorda@adelphia.net

This presentation has been limited because of space considerations, and therefore the subject section had to be rendered superficial. The same goes for last year's index (53:29). The complete index has a great many more subject terms and should be used for any serious research. It will be placed on the Association's website (www.nybirds.org) where the years 2001, 2002, and 2003 (volumes 51, 52, and 53) are integrated into a single index. Numbers suffixed with **n** are NYSARC reports.

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NEW YORK STATE FEDERATION WATERFOWL COUNT, JANUARY 2003

Bryan L. Swift

New York State Department of Environmental Conservation
625 Broadway
Albany, NY 12233-4750

ABSTRACT

The Federation of New York State Bird Clubs' annual midwinter waterfowl count, or "Federation Waterfowl Count" (FWC), was held during Jan 11-20, 2003 with approximately 285 participants. Harsh winter weather prior to and during the count resulted in many areas being frozen over and difficult viewing conditions. A total of 320,665 birds (46 species) was observed, 28% fewer than the record high count in 2002, but still 19% above the 1973-2000 average. The top 10 species, accounting for 88% of the total, were: Canada Goose, Mallard, Greater Scaup, Redhead, Brant, Common Goldeneye, American Black Duck, Canvasback, Common Merganser, and Bufflehead. Most dabbling ducks and Canada Geese declined from 2002, whereas counts of most diving duck species increased.

INTRODUCTION

The Federation of New York State Bird Clubs has conducted an annual midwinter waterfowl count (FWC) almost every year since 1955 (Rising 1955) except for a brief hiatus in 1968-1972 (Jones 1980). Each January, participants visit lakes, rivers and shorelines throughout New York State to count waterfowl (ducks, geese and swans) and associated water birds (e.g., loons, grebes, cormorants and coots). Whenever possible, counts are conducted during a 9-day count period beginning on the second Saturday after New Year's Day, with a target date of the first Sunday in that period. (Note: this was incorrectly listed as the first Saturday after New Year's Day in last year's report.) Most counts are conducted during the first 3 days of the period, but in some cases additional time is needed to complete the counts.

WEATHER CONDITIONS

Official weather data for January 2003 were not available, but Regional compilers reported severe winter weather conditions across the state. High temperatures were at or below freezing for several weeks before the count, and temperatures were generally lower during the count. Significant snowfalls occurred in early January, and additional light snow fell during the count in some areas. Snow cover and ice persisted through the count period, and strong winds (15-30 mph) were common, making waterfowl viewing difficult. As a result of

this weather pattern, most small inland waters and some larger lakes were completely frozen. Many larger lakes, rivers, and coastal bays had significant shoreline ice that limited waterfowl use.

RESULTS

A total of 320,665 birds, comprising 46 species, was counted in 2003 (Table 1). The 2003 total was 28% below 2002 (Table 2), but 19% above the 28-year (1973-2000) average of 268,763 birds (Table 3). Less than 2% of the total count was recorded outside of the scheduled survey period.

Comparison of 2003 counts with 28-year (1973-2000) averages shows 7 of 13 major species or taxa at least 10% above average, and five species or taxa more than 10% below average (Table 3). Canada Goose (111,988) declined 47% from the record high of 211,191 in 2002, and accounted for most of the decrease in total counts between years. All major dabbling ducks, sea ducks and swans declined from 2002, whereas most diving ducks increased. Counts of most other water birds declined also, except for Double-crested Cormorant. New high counts were not established for any species, unlike 2002 when records were established for seven species. Lower counts of most dabbling ducks and geese probably reflected the extensive ice cover over most shallow waters in the state. Nonetheless, the low Snow Goose count (11) was surprising given the tremendous abundance of this species in recent years

Total waterfowl numbers in the Atlantic Flyway (Maine to Florida) were down 17% from 2002, and were 19% below the 10-year (1993-2002) average (Serie and Raftovich 2003). Flyway counts of dabbling ducks were down 16% from a year ago, diving ducks declined 24%, and sea ducks decreased 40%. Flyway counts of Snow Geese, Canada Geese and Brant were all within 10% of a year ago. Annual changes in relative abundance in New York often do not mirror flyway trends because state counts reflect distributional shifts in response to weather as well as population changes.

Highlights of Regional reports included a King Eider in Lake Ontario in Niagara County (Region 1), a single Ross's Goose at Fair Haven (Region 5), reports of Tufted Duck in three Regions, and Barrow's Goldeneye in four Regions (Table 1). Numbers of Long-tailed Ducks in Region 1 declined sharply from recent years, perhaps due to the recent outbreak of Type E botulism in that Region, which killed several thousand of this species in fall 2002. Numbers of Greater Scaup and Hooded Merganser in Region 7 were record highs for the FWC in that Region

FUTURE COUNTS

The FWC is a valuable long-term population monitoring program for waterfowl and other water birds wintering in New York State. The Department of Environmental Conservation (DEC) has discontinued aerial surveys of waterfowl wintering in New York, so they now rely on the FWC as the standard survey. It is important that member clubs and individuals maintain complete and consistent

coverage of areas surveyed in the past to ensure that results are comparable from year-to-year and over the long-term. The next count is scheduled:

2005 - January 15-23 (target date - Sunday, January 16)

Please note that the dates for 2005 were listed incorrectly last year. For more information about the FWC, visit the Federation's web site at:

< www.fnysbc.org/projwaterfowl >

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

I wish to thank all of the approximately 285 observers who participated this year, especially for enduring very cold winter weather during the 2003 count. A special thanks to the following Regional Compilers who coordinated the efforts of all those volunteers:

<u>Region</u>	<u>Compiler</u>	<u>Region</u>	<u>Compiler</u>
1	William Burch	6	Gerard C. LeTendre
2	Greg Hartenstein	7	John M. C. Peterson
3	Eric Donohue	8	Bryan Swift
4	Gail Kirch	9	Michael Usai
5	Marge Rusk	10	Ronald & Jean Bourque

Thanks also to Elizabeth Renar of DEC for helping to compile all the Regional counts for this report.

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Table 1
Regional totals for January 2003 Federation Waterfowl Count.

Species/Region	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	Total
Goose, White-	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	6	6
Snow	1	0	1	0	0	0	1	1	2	5	11
Ross's	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	1
Canada	3931	4172	21686	813	7753	463	942	17080	8929	46219	111,988
Brant	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	75	15229	15,304
Swan, Mute	3	141	3	0	3	2	4	152	148	1293	1,749
Trumpeter	0	2	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	2
Tundra	169	4	53	2	19	22	0	0	0	0	269
Wood Duck	5	5	2	0	6	0	0	0	2	23	43
Gadwall	66	59	64	0	45	14	0	0	76	789	1,113
Wigeon, Eurasian	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	4	4
American	13	4	15	0	0	0	0	0	120	1567	1,719
Am. Black Duck	224	165	1739	127	334	382	230	484	1292	7438	12,415
Mallard	7128	4570	6741	876	3711	2394	2957	1626	3302	9520	42,825
Mallard X Black	0	38	3	1	8	2	0	0	5	26	83
Blue-winged Teal	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Northern Shoveler	0	6	2	0	0	0	0	0	0	464	472
Northern Pintail	1	7	0	1	0	1	2	1	1	282	296
Green-winged Teal	0	2	0	0	3	0	0	0	0	425	430
Canvasback	10406	17	208	0	2	0	0	304	84	841	11,862
Redhead	169	1225	19077	6	97	2	1	2	1	35	20,615
Ring-necked Duck	65	13	87	0	597	5	47	1	12	588	1,415
Tufted Duck	0	1	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	1	3
Scaup, Greater	15447	478	53	0	244	241	1001	0	5415	11958	34,837

Lesser	27	359	3	0	8	0	1	1	213	2257	2,869
not to species	0	301	61	0	200	0	0	0	0	735	1,297
Eider. King	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1
Common	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	9	0	235	245
Harlequin Duck	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	8	9
Scoter. Surf	1	6	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	2416	2,424
White-winged	24	418	4	0	49	0	0	1	0	367	863
Black	0	1	0	0	2	0	1	0	0	576	580
not to species	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	2324	2,324
Long-tailed Duck	392	171	26	0	208	146	0	0	58	1032	2,033
Bufflehead	3962	342	303	0	186	408	97	1	501	3379	9,179
Goldeneve.	2357	3337	834	163	587	2617	2838	244	79	1149	14,205
Barrow's	0	0	1	0	0	2	3	0	0	2	8
Merganser.	133	6	18	7	16	2	99	225	159	1180	1,845
Common	5162	886	163	240	393	681	1406	451	654	82	10,118
Red-breasted	1630	454	5	1	108	152	5	0	244	3108	5,707
Ruddy Duck	2	0	10	0	29	0	0	0	106	4852	4,999
Loon. Red-	0	0	1	0	1	2	0	0	8	109	121
Common	1	2	9	2	4	0	2	0	3	95	118
Grebe. Pied-billed	15	2	20	1	5	0	0	0	0	47	90
Horned	4	1	0	0	8	2	25	0	8	162	210
Red-necked	0	1	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	6	8
Eared	1	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	3
Cormorant. D.-	85	5	0	0	16	0	0	0	1	202	309
Great	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	39	106	145
American Coot	141	130	1244	50	6	0	1	0	65	324	1,961
Unidentified	528	46	100	0	0	577	0	0	6	275	1,532
TOTAL OF	52,095	17,378	52,537	2,290	14,650	8,118	9,664	20,583	21,608	121,72	320,66

Table 2
Comparison of January 2002 and January 2003 counts
for selected waterfowl species.

Species	2002	2003	% Change
Snow Goose	1,069	11	-99%
Canada Goose	211,191	111,988	-47%
Brant	18,101	15,304	-15%
Mute Swan	2,010	1,749	-13%
Gadwall	2,900	1,113	-62%
American Wigeon	1,997	1,719	-14%
American Black Duck	18,225	12,415	-32%
Mallard	47,599	42,825	-10%
Canvasback	10,353	11,862	15%
Redhead	14,428	20,615	43%
Ring-necked Duck	2,234	1,415	-37%
Greater Scaup	24,466	34,837	42%
scoters (all species)	30,963	6,191	-80%
Long-tailed Duck	5,540	2,033	-63%
Bufflehead	9,046	9,179	1%
Common Goldeneye	11,921	14,205	19%
Hooded Merganser	1,633	1,845	13%
Common Merganser	8,648	10,118	17%
Red-breasted Merganser	4,616	5,707	24%
Ruddy Duck	4,135	4,999	21%
Red-throated Loon	165	121	-27%
Common Loon	628	118	-81%
Horned Grebe	561	210	-63%
Double-crested Cormorant	271	309	14%
Great Cormorant	237	145	-39%
American Coot	4,064	1,961	-52%
TOTAL of all species	447,867	320,665	-28%

Table 3.

Comparison of the January 2003 count with 1973-2000 average for all species averaging over 1,000 individuals annually.

Species	Average	2003	% Change
Canada Goose	69,459	111,988	61%
Brant	15,109	15,304	1%
American Black Duck	19,826	12,415	-37%
Mallard	32,376	42,825	32%
Canvasback	10,652	11,862	11%
Redhead	7,437	20,615	177%
scaup (both species)	50,222	39,003	-22%
scoters (all species)	12,373	6,191	-50%
Long-tailed Duck	4,386	2,033	-54%
Bufflehead	6,077	9,179	51%
Common Goldeneye	12,292	14,205	16%
Common Merganser	11,461	10,118	-12%
Red-breasted Merganser	4,282	5,707	33%
TOTAL of all species	268,763	320,665	19%



SUCCESSFULLY PROTECTING A NORTHERN HARRIER NEST ON A MOWED FIELD.

Mark Manske

61 Davison Rd., Dickinson Center, NY 12930

Daniel Coolidge

132 West Cotter Rd., Brasher Falls, NY 13613

Brad Lincoln

676 Peru St., North Lawrence, NY 12967

While conducting checks of the 130 American Kestrel nest boxes we put up in eastern St. Lawrence and western Franklin counties, we observed an adult female Northern Harrier (*Circus cyaneus*) hunting a field in the Town of Dickinson (Franklin Co.). We had seen harriers in this area in previous years, and had asked the farm owner, Keith Prosper, to please try to avoid any harrier nests during his haying operations. The next day (16 Jul) Mr. Prosper contacted us and stated that another farmer, Webby Brown, had just found a harrier nest while haying his fields.

We immediately went to speak to Mr. Brown who gave us directions to the nest and permission to protect the chicks from predators by erecting a fence around it. We found 4 chicks, 3 females and 1 male, which we estimated to be 10 to 14 days old. The sex of each bird was determined by examining the color of the eyes, a technique that Manske learned when working on Dr. Francis Hamerstrom's 25-year Northern Harrier study in central Wisconsin.

The field had been completely mowed and the hay would be baled the next day. With no cover, the chicks stood out from a distance and we were worried that they would be eaten by mammalian predators. Originally, we had planned to move the chicks by increments to the tall grass at the edge of the field but after further consideration we decided that there was not enough cover and that we would lead predators right to the chicks. We left after completely surrounding the chicks with mothballs and clumps of mown hay. The mothballs were used to cover our scent and reduce the chance that a mammalian predator would follow our trail to the nest.

Rain forced Mr. Brown to wait a day before baling his hay and the delay gave us sufficient time to create an enclosure around the chicks. We made the enclosure with six metal fence posts and 1 inch chicken wire that stretched from the ground to a height of four (4) feet.. Hay was pushed along the bottom edge of the fence and more mothballs were spread around the enclosure. On 22 Jul, we checked on the chicks and observed that their flight feathers were at least halfway grown. Food pellets could be seen in the enclosure and all the chicks appeared to have full crops. Both adults could be seen in the distance as we inspected the enclosure. Mr. Brown was baling the hay at this point and reported that he had flushed the adult female from within the enclosure. On 25 Jul, the chicks were visibly larger and prey remains were found inside and outside the enclosure. Again, the chicks appeared to have

full crops. One end of the wire fence appeared to have been pulled up, so we decided to secure the wire with tent stakes.

On 27 Jul, Lee Harper, one of the R6 Regional Editors, and his wife Laurie, accompanied Manske to the nest. They checked on the chicks and further secured the bottom of the fence to the ground with a dozen tent stakes. Both adults could be seen at various distances from us while we worked on the fence. Upon leaving, we sprinkled more mothballs around the enclosure and left three freshly killed mice within the enclosure.

Finally, on 7 Aug, one of the female chicks flushed from the enclosure and perched in a small tree 50 meters to the north. A second female flushed from outside the enclosure and joined its sibling in the tree. The male was still in the enclosure and there was no sign of the other female. We immediately took the enclosure down and left the area. The grass was now sufficiently tall enough to conceal the chicks and we estimated that the male was within a day or two from fledging.

Northern Harrier nests are often destroyed by agricultural machinery. Management guidelines recommend that farmers be encouraged to delay haying until harrier young have fledged. In this case, the farmers were aware of our interest in harriers and knew that harriers are a "Threatened" species in New York State.

Starting in 2004, Manske intends to conduct regular Northern Harrier surveys in the area and enlist other farmers to help with harrier conservation efforts. We would like to thank Keith Prosper and Webby Brown for their concern and cooperation, and for being careful not to strike the harrier chicks during their haying operations. We would also like to thank the many farmers and other landowners who have graciously permitted us to put up and monitor 130 American Kestrel boxes on their properties.



NYSARC NEWS

On 31 Dec 2003, voting member Kevin McGowan reached the end of his term and rotated off the committee. We wish to thank Kevin for his many contributions over the past five years and look forward to continuing interactions.

His successor will be Steve Kelling who has been an active birder for over 30 years, has served as Region 3 Editor for *The Kingbird*, and is currently a regional editor for *North American Birds* (Hudson-Delaware region, Fall Season.) Professionally, Steve is the Director of Information Technologies at the Cornell Laboratory of Ornithology, where he is involved in developing web-based applications that allow birders across the continent contribute observations to a growing database monitoring the birds of North America.

Steve's recruitment continues NYSARC's strong representation within the Cayuga Basin birding community and maintains our long-standing ties with the Lab of Ornithology and Cornell University.

Senior voting member Tom Burke has agreed to continue for another term. He brings to the table unparalleled knowledge of the birds and birders of New York State and we value his meticulous attention to detail.

Angus Wilson, Chairman of NYSARC

HIGHLIGHTS OF THE SEASON – FALL 2003

Andrew Guthrie
60 Gold Street
Greenwich, CT 06830
andyguthrie@earthlink.net

The Weather

Unquestionably, the weather event – and in many ways the birding event – of the season was Hurricane Isabel, which roared through western New York on 19 Sep following landfall in North Carolina the previous day. Although the center of the storm actually passed just to the west of the state, its effects were observed in every Region. The strong winds associated with the system were felt as far east as Lake Champlain in Region 7, where southeast winds gusting up to 60 mph resulted in 8-foot waves. More on Isabel's birds below.

Apart from Isabel, September was warm over much of the state, and for the most part dry, except for downstate Regions 4, 9 and 10, which would have had above average precipitation even without Isabel's contribution. Several Regions noted that winds lacked a northerly component and were unfavorable for migration. October tended toward cool and wet. November's temperatures rebounded and were unseasonably warm in many locations.

The Hurricane's Impact

While every Region noted a meteorological affect from Isabel, the story was a bit different regarding the avian impact. Southeastern Regions 4, 8 and 9 experienced mainly "light rain and high hopes", in the words of R8 editor Will Yandik. In Region 9, a Black Skimmer and Parasitic Jaeger were possibly storm-related. Coastal Region 10, despite a phalanx of observers lined along the South Shore of Long Island, produced little west of Shinnecock Inlet, where 1 Bridled Tern and 2 Sooty Terns passed by on the 19th. A possible Sandwich Tern there on the 20th preceded three Sandwich Terns further east at Mecox Bay on the 24th.

The real excitement was upstate. Prior hurricanes have shown that most storm-driven birds are found to the east of the storm's center, so anticipation was especially high in Regions 1, 2 and 3. The storm did not disappoint. Highlights from post-storm birding included Wilson's Storm-Petrels in Regions 1, 3, 5, 6 and 7; Bridled (a Regional first) and Sooty Terns in Region 2; two Black-capped Petrels, Brown Pelican, Black Skimmer and Royal Tern (a Regional first) in Region 5; Arctic Tern in Region 3; and scattered reports of Parasitic Jaeger, phalaropes, and Laughing Gull. Perhaps most exciting is a possible New York State first Band-rumped Storm-Petrel from Region 3. Thankfully, reports have been submitted to NYSARC for their review and evaluation. Isabel was especially notable for transporting Wilson's Storm-Petrels, as evidenced by records covering the breadth of the state, including three Regional firsts (R3, R5&

R7) Full coverage of Isabel is found in Willie D' Anna's excellent article Hurricane Isabel (September 2003) in New York in this issue – KB 54:14-19, plus additional details in the individual Regional reports.

Although the occurrence of a hurricane is an exciting event for birders who get the chance to see rarely-occurring species, the excitement is tempered by the awareness that these events are devastating to the birds involved. The dead storm-petrels picked up along Lake Erie and the Wilson's Storm-Petrel seen being caught and eaten by a Ring-billed Gull in Region 5 are grim examples of the fate of most of these storm-driven birds.

Waterfowl

Many Regions noted lower than usual numbers of migrating waterfowl, perhaps due to delayed or prolonged migration due to the warm weather extending into November. Loons and grebes were noted as appearing in particularly low numbers; for example, both loons and Horned Grebe declined in Region 3, the second such drop for Common Loon, and Pied-billed Grebes were unreported in Region 6. On the other hand, the latter made a good showing in Region 7, with a high count of 40 on the Chazy River. Three hundred Ring-necked Ducks was an impressive gathering at Highlands Forge Lake, albeit a small fraction of the approximately 3000 at the same location last year. Recently, Region 7 has reported the highest concentrations of Snow Goose in the state, and this fall was no different, although there were no firm estimates approaching the state record 45,000-57,000 counts of the last two falls. For the fourth consecutive year, there was an outbreak of botulism along Lake Erie and now Lake Ontario in Region 1. Fewer dead birds were found by NYSDEC surveys this year, with Red-breasted Merganser mortality sharply down. Whether this is due to decreased susceptibility or fewer birds in the area during the outbreak is unknown. A positive note from Region 10 were reports of a high number of young Brant in returning fall flocks, indicating a very successful breeding season.

While general numbers seemed to be down, unusual waterfowl appeared in many Regions. Region 1 again hosted a flock of "Richardson's" Canada Geese at Iroquois NWR; these "small race" Canadas have become annual here in fall. Birders searching for Richardson's or other small races should be cautioned that goose size is influenced by available food during fledging and there can be significant variation within a given subspecies. As with many identifications, a suite of characters – plumage as well as structural – should be used, and not all birds can be safely categorized. Another rare goose squeaked into the period in Region 1 when three Greater White-fronted Geese were found on 30 Nov. Two more Greater White-fronted Geese turned up in Region 3, which also hosted a Eurasian Wigeon at Montezuma NWR. Two separate sightings of two Tundra Swans each were the first in Region 4 in years. A scattering of unusual ducks in Region 7 was noteworthy for being away from Lake Champlain, including a number of significant county records and high counts. The waterfowl highlight in Region 8 was an unfortunate immature male King Eider that was seen alive only by the hunter who shot it. The dead specimen,

the Region's fifth record, was examined and photographs were taken and submitted to NYSARC; the event prompts a discussion from Regional editor Will Yandik on whether hunting regulations for vagrant waterfowl and other "game" birds such as rails should be updated. Four Barnacle Geese spent a few days in late October in Region 9, and another was in Region 10. As usual with such birds, their origin is an unanswerable question. Greater White-fronted Geese also appeared in Region 10, with a total of seven reports of 4+ individuals. The exact situation has become difficult to assess in recent years with the continuing presence of a few hybrid type geese, most likely between Canada Goose and some sort of domestic goose, which share some features with White-fronts and can trap the unwary. Other uncommon waterfowl in Region 10 included 2 "Richardson's" Canada Geese in Calverton, 3-4 reports of Eurasian Wigeon, and a scattering of Harlequin Ducks.

Other Waterbirds

Other than the excitement induced by Isabel, the rest of the season was for the most part uneventful. Hamlin Beach State Park in Region 2 produces some of the highest fall jaeger counts in the state, but this season was poor. A total of 21 Parasitic Jaegers was reported in Sep and 4 in Oct, and a few Pomarines were seen. At the other extreme, farther east at Region 5's Derby Hill, 17 Parasitic Jaegers passed by on 15 Oct, the best flight day since 1987. Only one non-Isabel jaeger, a Parasitic on 21 Oct, was reported in Region 1. One Pomarine, and a handful of a Parasitics were reported in Region 10. Increased focus on lake watching on Lake Champlain resulted in some unusual sightings, foremost being three separate juvenile Northern Gannets, as well as two Parasitic Jaegers and five Black-legged Kittiwakes. Region 8 also hosted a Northern Gannet, the third Regional record, at Saratoga Lake. These gannets occurred during a fall in which none was reported from Lake Erie or Lake Ontario, where inland gannets most commonly appear. A Magnificent Frigatebird provided excitement on 3 Oct at the Fire Island Hawkwatch in Region 10 – the date, two weeks after Hurricane Isabel, raises the question of what influence the storm may have had on this bird's movements.

It was a fairly mediocre season overall for gulls. Franklin's Gull, formerly annual in Region 1 and occasionally seen in Regions 2 and 5, was unreported in the state. Little Gull was sparsely reported, including normal fall strongholds Regions 1 and 2. Sabine's Gull was unreported other than the Region 1 hurricane-related bird. The only Black-headed Gulls were singles at the extreme western (Lewiston, on the Niagara River) and eastern (Mecox Bay in Suffolk County) ends of the state. White-winged gulls began trickling into the state in November. The Niagara River did host California Gull, for at least the twelfth consecutive season. The state's prime Royal Tern gathering site, Robins' Island on the North Fork of Suffolk County, Long Island, had a maximum count of 60 on 25 Sep. A decent number of pelagic species was reported early in the season in Region 10, including Cory's, Greater, Sooty, Manx and Audubon's shearwaters, most of these from offshore trips.

Hawk Migration

Early season results were disappointing in many locations, presumably due to the lack of favorable fronts and, in many places, high precipitation. Counts at the coastal Fire Island Hawkwatch were described as “dismal”, and sightings at Camp Pinnacle Hawkwatch in Region 8 were down by a third. There was no big push of Broad-winged Hawks, which in ideal conditions can result in single day counts approaching five digits. This year the highest single day count for that species listed in the Regional reports was 593 at the Mt. Peter Hawkwatch in Region 9. Things did pick up later in the season, no more so than at Franklin Mountain Hawkwatch. Long the premier location in New York for Golden Eagle migration, this year saw a record-breaking single day total on 20 Nov, when 51 Golden Eagles were counted passing the watch. Amazingly, this same total, an eastern North America single day high, was matched three days later by a hawkwatch in eastern Pennsylvania. For the season, 201 Golden Eagles were tallied at Franklin Mt. A Golden Eagle on 24 Oct at Floyd Bennett Field in Region 10 was an unusual coastal sighting. Turkey Vultures showed impressively in a couple of locations, with counts at record levels at Franklin Mountain and also an impressive 168 on 7 Nov over Central Park, NYC.

Shorebirds

Many Regions noted that the season was poor for migrant shorebirds. Scarce habitat was mentioned as a contributing factor in Regions 2 and 5. Region 1 noted an improvement over the lackluster summer season but fall was still below average. A high point was a lingering Willet at Bird Island Pier in Buffalo. Purple Sandpipers were noted inland in Regions 1, 2, 3, and 5. Sixteen Hudsonian Godwits reported from Region 2 was a high count for recent years. A Ruff at Montezuma NWR was seen by a single lucky observer, in contrast to a Western Sandpiper, occasionally reported but only rarely documented in the Region, which was seen by many there. In a poor fall for American Avocets, two spent the month of September at Mecox Bay. Massapequa Preserve in Nassau County, Region 10, is well known as a reliable location for wintering Long-billed Dowitchers, so fourteen there on 27 Nov wasn't a surprise. However, a record-late Wilson's Phalarope found with them was. Region 9 bucked the scarce habitat trend as new wetland habitat was created at the Wallkill River NWR. Shorebirds found at the new impoundment included American Golden-Plover, Whimbrel and Dunlin.

Without a doubt, the highlight shorebird was an adult Pacific Golden-Plover in fading alternate plumage, a state first record pending acceptance by NYSARC, located by sharp-eyed birders at Mecox Bay on 1 Sep. Luckily, the finders were well armed with a digital camera, and took a series of documentary photographs. Unluckily for birders following up the sighting, the plover spent only a few hours at the site before heading off for parts unknown. For a detailed article refer to: New York's First Record of Pacific Golden-Plover (*Pluvialis fulva*) Kingbird 53:307-312.

Passerine Migration

With one notable exception, there was little mention in the Regional reports of major migration events. Among the species reported in good numbers in various locations were Red-eyed Vireo, Blue Jay, swallows, Hermit and Wood thrush and Rusty Blackbird. Red-breasted Nuthatch rebounded from last year's poor showing with good numbers statewide, including an estimated 150 at Hamlin Beach on 23 Oct. Some winter finch movement was evident, with good numbers of Purple Finch and Pine Siskin reported, and Common Redpoll and Evening Grosbeak appearing before the end of the period.

The notable exception to the generally lackluster season was a major coastal migration in Region 10 on 7-8 Nov, consisting primarily of a huge push of American Robins along the entire South Shore of Long Island, and out of the state, extending down at least as far as Cape May, NJ. Estimates on the second day ranged up to 400,000-500,000 individuals moving through Riis Park to Breezy Point. With similar numbers counted in Cape May, it is likely that in excess of a million American Robins were migrating along the northeast coast. See the Region 10 report for additional details.

Rarities

Fall migration is anticipated for the chance of finding a true rarity. This year, four potential first state records were reported. Unlike last fall's highlight vagrants – Irondequoit Bay's Sharp-tailed Sandpiper and three separate Purple Gallinules, all of which were clear-cut identifications, stayed multiple days and were seen by a number of observers – none of this year's standouts was as accommodating. In addition to the previously mentioned Band-rumped Storm-Petrel and Pacific Golden-Plover, two more possible state firsts were reported. An orange-billed tern spotted on the Lake Erie shoreline on 15 Oct was thought to be an Elegant Tern, which would be a New York State first, and one of very few records for eastern North America. Identification of vagrant Elegant Terns is extremely difficult, and even well-studied and photographed cases have generated contro-versy – see, for example, discussions held on the "Frontiers of Identification" Internet listserv regarding reports in recent years from Massachusetts, Florida, England and Ireland (archives available at <http://listserv.arizona.edu/archives/birdwg01.html>). Royal Tern is the primary species of concern, but other large red, orange and yellow-billed terns should be carefully considered as well. The fourth potential state first was a White-throated Swift described from the Mt. Peter Hawkwatch in Region 9. This western species has occurred as far east as Michigan only once. It's pleasing to note that reports were sent to NYSARC in all four cases. Although the standard for acceptance for first state records is by nature high, all reports have value, even if not accepted, and add to our knowledge of the state's avifauna.

A host of lesser rarities was found throughout the state. In Region 1, Eared Grebes in Batavia were holdovers from the summer season, Nelson's Sharp-tailed Sparrows were reported for the third consecutive year, and a Brewer's Blackbird was found at a feeder with Red-winged Blackbirds. It was "quite a fall" for American White Pelicans in Region 2, with an unprecedented count of eight birds at Braddock Bay on 4-5 Oct. Cave Swallows, once regular in the northeast only at Cape May, NJ, have become more widespread. This year there were several reports at Hamlin Beach in Region 2 (only one, a report of 5 on 24 Nov, was documented) and two sightings in Region 10. Western Kingbird was also reported in these two Regions, with one at Hamlin Beach, and at least seven reported in Region 10. Cattle Egrets were again scarce, with single individuals in Regions 3, 5 and 10. A Great Cormorant appeared in Oswego Harbor for the first time in three years, and also in Columbia County, on the upper Hudson River, where they have become annual. Sandhill Cranes made a number of appearances this fall, with multiples in Regions 1, 5 and 10, and a probable sighting in Region 9. Two immature *Selasphorus* hummingbirds, now expected in small numbers annually, turned up in Region 10. As usual, separation of Rufous and Allen's was difficult. Allen's has been recorded nearby but not in New York. An individual in Georgia was thought to most likely be a subadult female Rufous, while the second bird, in Orient, was cautiously identified to genus only. Lark Sparrows made a good showing in Region 10 with seven reports. An early November *Empidonax* in Region 4 was thought to be a Yellow-bellied; any late season "empi" should be carefully scrutinized and documented since various western species have shown a propensity for turning up in the northeast in late fall. An exotic Orange Bishop was reported from Region 8; this species has been encountered annually during fall migration in recent years, most often downstate, and can cause confusion as unwary observers attempt to assign an identity based on North American field guides. Additional unusual passerines around the state included a pair of Yellow-headed Blackbirds in Region 7 and one in Region 10; single Dickcissels in Regions 7, 8, 9 and at least seven in Region 10; "Gambel's" White-crowned Sparrows in Regions 9 and 10; Ash-throated Flycatcher, Varied Thrush and Yellow-throated Warbler and Prothonotary Warbler in Region 10.

The Dreaded "H" Word

One of the difficulties occasionally encountered in birding is caused by the fact that birds don't always fit into the neat species categories that we have assigned them. One source of confusion is hybrids (the "H" word) – the young (or more distant descendants) of a successful mixed-species breeding pair. This issue is commonly encountered in waterfowl and gulls, less so in passerines. An example from New York's recent past is the probable hybrid Hermit x Townsend's Warbler found at Jones Beach in Fall 2002 (see Kingbird 53:2-4 & Kingbird 53:5-8) for a discussion of this record. This fall, a bird understandably identified at first as a Western Kingbird was found in Livingston Co. in Region 2. Several sharp-eyed birders, after seeing the bird live or looking

at photographs on the web, noticed that some features were “off” for Western Kingbird, and suggested that it could possibly be either a Tropical or Couch’s Kingbird, both of which have a history of vagrancy to the northeast. After extensive discussion and analysis, general opinion settled on Couch’s x Scissor-tailed hybrid, a combination previously unrecorded anywhere, but perhaps becoming more likely due to range expansion of the two species. For the full story and excellent photos see the lead article in this issue of *The Kingbird* “A Probable Couch’s Kingbird x Scissor-tailed Flycatcher in Livingston Co., New York” by Kevin McGowan and Bob Spahn.

Bird of the Season

With so many storm-brought vagrants, potential first state records, and a possibly unknown-to-science hybrid combination, the Bird of the Season is a tough choice. My sentiments lean initially toward the *Tyrannus* hybrid in Region 2, given the fascinating discussion that it generated, and the pursuant reminder that birding constantly presents opportunities for learning, regardless of experience level. In the end, though, I am persuaded that the BOTS should be awarded to the Mecox Bay Pacific Golden-Plover. Although the splitting of the two North American golden-plovers has led to a vast increase in awareness of main identification criteria, applying these to real life field identification is still in many ways a cutting edge exercise. The circumstances of the Mecox bird are in my mind a distillation of many of the things that are exciting about birding – the knowledge and foresight to choose a prime birding spot, the luck to be there when a major rarity appears, the careful scrutiny to notice the small differences which eliminate a more common possibility, the presence of mind to be forearmed to obtain documentary evidence, and, not least, the reminder that even in this modern age of constant communication with cell phones and e-mail, our hobby is still governed by the whim of the birds we seek. This last part is somewhat bittersweet on a personal level, since I was one of the unfortunates who was just close enough to miss the plover by an hour or so – but what fun would birding be if every bird was guaranteed?



REGION 1 – NIAGARA FRONTIER

Mike Morgante

59 Briar Hill Road, Orchard Park NY 14127

morgm@adelphia.net

September was warm, dry and sunny. The average temperature for the month was 62.8° F, which was 1.3° above normal. Monthly precipitation at Buffalo-Niagara International Airport was 3.91" (0.07" above normal), with 3" occurring during the last week of the month. There were very strong winds on 19 September following the passage of the remnants of Hurricane Isabel. October was fairly typical but slightly cooler than usual, especially during the first week. The average temperature was 48.8°, 1.9° below normal, and the monthly precipitation was 3.43", 0.24" above normal. Strong winds associated with a cold front occurred on the 21st. November was mild overall but with many warm and cold events. The average temperature was 43.1°, 2.9° above normal. The monthly precipitation was 4.09", 0.17" above normal, and 4.2" of snow was 6.8" below normal. Major weather events included a wind storm on the 13th, record high temperature on the 23rd and lake effect snowfall on the 25th.

The remnants of Hurricane Isabel were originally forecast to hit Western New York directly on 19 September after turning inland from the mid-Atlantic coast. Birders eagerly anticipated the arrival of this storm because the path was nearly the same that Hurricane Fran took in 1996, which brought many pelagic species to Lake Erie. The storm turned a bit further west than expected, but many interesting sightings still occurred.

Hurricane Isabel will be remembered for the influx of **Wilson's Storm-Petrels** to the Region. More than a century passed since this species had been recorded in the Region in 1875 and 1882. Kirk Vanstrom and Bob Sundell found a group of five on Chautauqua Lake from Prendergast Point on the 19th and two were still present the next day. Kurt Fox found and identified one near Lake Erie at Hamburg Town Park on the 19th and many birders likely saw the same bird the next day at Woodlawn Beach State Park. Two Wilson's Storm-Petrels were found dead along Lake Erie at the mouth of Cattaraugus Creek on 26 September.

Despite much searching, no other true pelagics could be found. There were many tantalizing reports, e.g., Black-capped Petrels, Greater Shearwater and Sooty Tern, from the north shore of Lake Erie in nearby Ontario, but none of these could be found or positively identified in New York waters. Other likely hurricane-related birds included a **Sabine's Gull** on Chautauqua Lake and scattered reports of Red-necked Phalaropes.

A flock of "Richardson's" Canada Geese was located for the fifth straight year in the same location at Iroquois National Wildlife Refuge. As in previous years, they tended to stay very cohesive among the thousands of other Canada Geese, which made them more visible due to their overall small size, lighter color and smaller bills. Another regular rarity is **Greater White-fronted Goose**. Sharon

Krawczyk picked out three among Canadas at a landfill in Cheektowaga on 30 November. There were very few Snow Geese and Tundra Swans reported this fall. Once again, piscivorous waterbirds along Lake Erie were affected by an outbreak of type E botulism. This was the fourth consecutive year of this occurrence on Lake Erie and it has now spread to Lake Ontario, fortunately to a lesser degree so far. NYSDEC again conducted counts of dead birds at 13 500-meter transects to document the number killed by species and to make mortality projections for the entire New York Lake Erie shoreline. A total of 138 dead birds was found during the transect surveys conducted this fall, far fewer than the 985 in 2002. NYSDEC estimated that more than 2500 birds were killed due to botulism on Lake Erie this year. This mortality estimate only accounts for birds washed up on the New York shore. The Common Loon carcass count (93) far exceeded that of other species, including: Ring-billed Gull (14), Herring Gull (9), Long-tailed Duck (8), Great Black-backed Gull (3), Red-breasted Merganser (2), Common Goldeneye (2), Double-crested Cormorant (2), unidentified gulls (2), Common Tern (1), White-winged Scoter (1), Bonaparte's Gull (1). Of note, the number of Red-breasted Merganser carcasses dropped dramatically from previous years. NYSDEC questions if that species was less susceptible this year or if fewer birds were using Lake Erie. Mortality counts from the Lake Ontario shoreline (NYSDEC Region 9, Kingbird Region 1) included: Ring-billed Gull (11), White-winged Scoter (10), Long-tailed Duck (7), Herring Gull (5), Double-crested Cormorant (2), Great-black Backed Gull (1), Mallard (1), Common Loon (1), Red-throated Loon (1), Common Goldeneye (1).

By the end of the fall season, nine Merlins were at the annual winter roosting grounds at the University of Buffalo, South Campus.

Fall shorebirding was an improvement over the summer season, but was generally considered below average. Most notable was a **Willet** found on the Bird Island Pier along the Niagara River in late November. Another Willet, or possibly the same bird, was found at this location in September. Dunlin were widely reported in November, including 230 feeding in a manured field in Somerset. Purple Sandpipers were found at Buffalo Harbor and Niagara Falls in late November.

Gulls were still building in numbers on the Niagara River in late November. In recent years, the highest numbers and diversity seem to have shifted from late November to early and mid December. **California Gull** was found once again, making 12 consecutive years for this species on the Niagara. An adult **Black-headed Gull** was found in late November along the Niagara in Lewiston.

On the late afternoon of 15 October, Bill Watson was looking for jaegers at Woodlawn Beach State Park because of the strong winds coming off Lake Erie. Much to his surprise, he found a medium sized tern roosting on the beach that he identified as an **Elegant Tern**. This Pacific Coast species has rarely been reported in the east or inland. This would be a state first if accepted by NYSARC. However, it was a single observer sighting and no photographs were taken, precluding the possibility of NYSARC adding it to the NYS Checklist.

Nonetheless, it is important to file NYSARC reports on such events, as Bill admirably did, for the archive and possible future reference. Searches the next day could not relocate the bird. As on more than one occasion, the circumstances regarding this remarkable sighting have reminded this editor to carry a small camera while birding!

Dave Junkin banded 20 Northern Saw-whet Owls between 6 October and 10 November. His efforts continue to show that there are more individuals of this species around than most birders think.

Common Nighthawks were widely reported in September and early October. The highest count, 120, was reported on the evening of 14 September in Eggertsville.

Passerine migration was mostly slow during the warm weather of early September but picked up in mid September. Nocturnal migrants were noted by several birders during the pre-dawn hours on 18 and 21 September, among other dates. Sparrows were widespread through October, with good numbers during the first two weeks of the month.

For the third consecutive year, **Nelson's Sharp-tailed Sparrows** were observed in the Region. Jim Pawlicki found one at a wet grassy swale along the University of Buffalo bike path in Amherst on 6 October. Many birders were able to see up to two individuals of this elusive species over the next few days at this convenient location. Pawlicki later found one at this same location on 1 November, the latest date for the Region. Don Harris also reported a Nelson's Sharp-tailed Sparrow at Iroquois NWR on 12 October.

Finches were reported in mostly small numbers. Pine Siskins were first reported in late October and this species was the most widespread of the "winter finches," although reports were less frequent than in an invasion year. Common Redpoll and Evening Grosbeak were first reported in late November.

The 68th annual Buffalo Ornithological Society October Count was held on the 12th and compiled by Mike Hamilton. The weather featured moderate temperatures and mostly sunny skies prior to and following passage of a midday front. The count recorded 152 species, with eight record high counts and no record low counts. Highest counts since inception in 1935 were recorded for: Mute Swan (29 – most in the Ontario sections of the count area), Surf Scoter (150 – also in Ontario), Common Merganser (262), Bald Eagle (10), Merlin (6), Lesser Black-backed Gull (2), Eastern Screech-Owl (18) and Red-bellied Woodpecker (108). Ruffed Grouse numbers (9) were very low for the second year in a row after last year's record low of eight. Hooded Warbler was recorded on the count for the first time.

Other significant sightings not previously mentioned included: **Harlequin Duck, Eared Grebe, Sandhill Crane and Brewer's Blackbird.** Special thanks go to Ken Roblee of NYSDEC for providing an update and data on the botulism outbreak. Weather information was obtained from National Weather Service monthly summaries.

CONTRIBUTORS

Robert Andrie, Doug Beattie, Gordon Bellerby, Buffalo RBA (DAB), Gary Chapin, Willie D'Anna, Len DeFrancisco, Brett Ewald, Jeannine & Kurt Fox, Don Harris, Linda Holmes, Jean Iron, Dave Junkin, Sharon Krawczyk, Eric Labato, Garner Light, Jeff McCoy, Kevin McLaughlin, Mike Morgante, Terry Mosher, Dave Neveu, Marilyn O'Connell, Susan & Tom O'Donnell, Jim Pawlicki, Vivian Pitzrick, Betsy Potter, Fran Rew, Don Roberson, Richard Rosche, Jeanne Skelly, Nick Sly, Dave Suggs, Bob Sundell, Kirk Vanstrom, William Watson, Peter Yoerg.

ABBREVIATIONS

AISP – Allegany SP CATT; BeSP – Beaver I SP ERIE; BOSOC – Buffalo Ornithological Society 12 Oct Count; BuSP – Buckhorn I SP ERIE; BWWT – Batavia Waste Water Treatment Plant GENE; ChauL – Chautauqua L CHAU; DH – Dunkirk Harbor CHAU; FMCS – Four Mile Creek SP NIAG; FNSP – Fort Niagara SP NIAG; GHSP – Golden Hill SP NIAG; GI – Goat I NIAG; INWR – Iroquois NWR GENE/ORLE; LBSP – Lakeside Beach SP ORLE; NF – Niagara Falls NIAG; NPP – Niagara Power Project on Niagara R, Lewiston NIAG; NR – Niagara Ri ERIE/NIAG; SPNS – Sinking Ponds Nature Sanctuary, E Aurora ERIE; Tift NP – Tift Nature Preserve, Buffalo ERIE; Times Beach NP – Times Beach Nature Preserve, Buffalo ERIE; TWMA – Tonawanda WMA GENE/NIAG; WoBSP – Woodlawn Beach SP ERIE; WTSP – Wilson-Tuscarora SP NIAG.

WHISTLING-DUCKS – VULTURES GREATER WHITE-FRONTED

GOOSE: 3 Cheektowaga ERIE 30 Nov (SK), rare but regular.

Snow Goose: arr BeSP 2 Oct (STO); 2 BOSOC; 5, 4 SPNS 20 Oct, 1 Nov (LH); only reports, fewer than usual.

“Richardson’s” Canada Goose (*B. c. hutchinsii*): 14 INWR 13, 18 Oct (WD!, MM!, NYSARC); 2 INWR 9 Nov (MM!); now annual at this location in fall.

Brant: arr 4 BeSP 21 Oct (DAB); max 132 Somerset NIAG 23 Oct.

Mute Swan: Olcott NIAG 28 Sep; GHSP 28 Sep; only reports.

Tundra Swan: arr BWWT 9 Nov; max 76 INWR 23 Nov (KF); only reports, fewer than usual.

Gadwall: max 34 Tift NP 19 Oct.

Am. Wigeon: max 100 INWR 5 Oct.

Am. Black Duck: max 96 BWWT 30 Nov.

Blue-winged Teal: last 9 BOSOC.

N. Shoveler: 224, 285 BWWT 13, 28 Sep; max 775 BWWT 11 Oct (KF); SPNS 27 Nov.

N. Pintail: max 80 BWWT 9 Nov.

Green-winged Teal: max 200 INWR 5 Oct; 80 Tift NP 19 Oct.

Canvasback: arr BOSOC.

Redhead: 2 NF 19 Oct; max 83 Mayville CHAU 31 Oct.

Ring-necked Duck: arr 2 BWWT 13 Sep.

Greater Scaup: BWWT 28 Sep (WW), summered; max 572 GHSP 24 Nov (KF).

Lesser Scaup: arr 4 Somerset NIAG 5 Oct; max 62 BWWT 18 Oct.

HARLEQUIN DUCK: fem GHSP 23 Nov (KF); nearly annual.

Surf Scoter: arr 3 Athol Springs ERIE 21 Oct; Yates ORLE 25 Oct; 3 Buffalo NR 15 Nov.

White-winged Scoter: arr 6 WoBSP 20

Sep (MM); 4 FNSP 21 Sep; 5 Buffalo NR 15 Nov; few reported away from L Ontario.

Black Scoter: arr 12 Somerset NIAG 23 Oct; 2 NF 30 Oct; 7 LBSP 30 Nov.

Long-tailed Duck: arr Lewiston Res NIAG 10 Oct; 5 BWWTP 9 Nov; 450 Buffalo NR 15 Nov, high count for location; 100 S Dayton CATT 29 Nov, good count for location.

Bufflehead: arr 15 BWWTP 18 Oct; 200 BWWTP 9 Nov; max 1450 Buffalo NR 15 Nov.

Com. Goldeneye: arr BWWTP 18 Oct; max 400 Buffalo NR 15 Nov.

Hooded Merganser: max 68 Times Beach NP 21 Nov.

Ruddy Duck: 260, 541 BWWTP 13, 28 Sep; max 2241 BWWTP 18 Oct (WW, MM), high count; 19, 12 S Dayton CATT 19 Oct, 29 Nov; AISP 19 Oct; NF 30 Oct; 36 Mayville CHAU 31 Oct; 835, 344 BWWTP 9, 30 Nov.

Red-throated Loon: arr 4 Somerset NIAG & Yates ORLE 25 Oct (WD); SPNS 16-17 Nov (LH); Oakfield GENE 22 Nov (KF); BWWTP 30 Nov (WW!), unusual inland; max 1082 LBSP 30 Nov (KF).

Com. Loon: arr 4 Somerset NIAG 5 Oct; max 300 Somerset NIAG & Yates ORLE 25 Oct (WD); 180 LBSP 30 Nov.

Horned Grebe: arr 5 BOSOC; Amherst ERIE 21 Oct; 30 Somerset NIAG 23 Oct; 200 DH 27 Nov; max 318 LBSP 30 Nov (KF).

Red-necked Grebe: arr Somerset NIAG 23 Oct; 5 Yates ORLE 25 Oct (WD); Somerset NIAG 9 Nov; 5 LBSP 30 Nov (KF).

EARED GREBE: 2 BWWTP 13 Sep (WW!); 3 BWWTP 18 Oct (MM!); 2, 3 BWWTP 9, 15 Nov (MM! GC); continued presence since summer.

WILSON'S STORM-PETREL: 5 ChauL 19 Sep; 2 ChauL 20 Sep (KV, WD!, JM, NYSARC); Hamburg ERIE 19 Sep (KF!); WoBSP 20 Sep (MH!, WD!, MM!); 2 dead Sheridan CHAU 26 Sep

(fide RR); only previous records were in 1875 and 1882.

Double-crested Cormorant: 992 BuSP 3 Sep; 106 Motor I 15 Sep; 705 Buffalo Harbor ERIE 8 Oct; max 2007 BOSOC; 311 DH 31 Oct; 60 Buffalo NR 15 Nov. **Am. Bittern:** TWMA 5 Oct (WD, BP); INWR 5 & 13 Oct (WD, BP); typically few reports in fall.

Great Egret: max 10 Tift NP 7 Sep; 5 BeSP 8, 12 Sep; BWWTP 15 Sep; 5 INWR 18 Oct; DH 14 Nov (TM!), late.

Green Heron: last 5 BOSOC.

Black-crowned Night-Heron: SPNS 7 & 16 Oct, unusual inland; 3 DH 28 Nov, late.

Turkey Vulture: last NF 30 Nov (TO!), late.

HAWKS – ALCIDS

Osprey: last 4 BOSOC.

Bald Eagle: Silver Creek CHAU 4 Sep; 2, 2 Westfield CHAU 8 Sep, 16 Oct; 2 Ripley CHAU 12 Sep; Sheridan CHAU 21 Sep; 5 INWR 18 Oct; max 9 AISP 19 Oct (PY).

Red-shouldered Hawk: Bush Hill SF CATT 5 Oct; 4 BOSOC; Charlotte CHAU 10 Nov; few reported in fall.

Broad-winged Hawk: Alfred ALLE 1 Sep, only report.

Rough-legged Hawk: arr Clarence ERIE 20 Oct; max 4 Gerry CHAU 15 Nov.

Merlin: 4 Buffalo ERIE 9 Sep thru (PY); up to 9 at this winter roost by end of Nov; NF 13 Sep, 27 Sep, 2 Oct; WoBSP 20 Sep; Falconer CHAU 3 Oct; Amherst ERIE 11 & 15 Oct; Somerset NIAG 23 Oct.

Peregrine Falcon: 2, 1 Buffalo ERIE 13 Sep, 8 Oct; WoBSP 20 Sep; Amherst ERIE 4 Oct; 2 NF 20 Nov.

Virginia Rail: Tift NP 3 Sep, only report.

Com. Moorhen: last 3 BWWTP 13 Sep.

Am. Coot: max 360 ChauL 23 Nov.

SANDHILL CRANE: INWR 12 Oct (DH, DR!); 2 INWR 1 Nov (GL); rare in fall.

Black-bellied Plover: WoBSP 20 Sep, 16 Oct; BWWT 18 Oct; last 2 BWWT 9 Nov.

Am. Golden-Plover: BeSP 7 Sep (EL); last BWWT 9 Nov (MM).

Semipalmated Plover: last 2 Hamburg ERIE 20 Sep.

Greater Yellowlegs: max 12 INWR 18 Oct; last 2 Grand I ERIE 16 Nov.

Lesser Yellowlegs: max 17 BWWT 13 Sep; last 3 Tift NP 6 Nov.

Solitary Sandpiper: last Tift NP 26 Sep.

WILLET: Buffalo ERIE 20 Sep (WW, PY); Buffalo ERIE 26 & 28 Nov (PY!, WW!), record late, possibly same bird as Sep.

Spotted Sandpiper: last Amherst ERIE 28 Oct (JP), late.

Sanderling: WoBSP 20 Sep, 8 Oct; 3 Buffalo ERIE 12 Oct; last 2 WTSP 9 Nov.

Semipalmated Sandpiper: last 2 BWWT 11 Oct.

Least Sandpiper: last NF 4 Oct.

White-rumped Sandpiper: WoBSP 20 Sep (JP); Times Beach NP 10 Nov (RA); only reports this year.

Baird's Sandpiper: BeSP 7 Sep (EL), only report.

Pectoral Sandpiper: max 3 BWWT 20 Sep; Tift NP 26 Sep; 2 BWWT 18 Oct; last 2 Randolph CATT 19 Oct.

Purple Sandpiper: arr 3, 2 Buffalo Harbor ERIE 26, 30 Nov; NF 30 Nov.

Dunlin: arr 11 BOSOC; 8 BWWT 18 Oct; WoBSP 23 Oct; max 230 foraging in manured field Somerset NIAG 3 Nov (BE); 38 BWWT 9 Nov; 5 Buffalo Harbor ERIE 26 Nov.

Stilt Sandpiper: Tift NP 13 Sep; 2, 1 BWWT 20, 28 Sep; only reports.

Wilson's Snipe: 2 INWR 18 Oct; 6 Randolph CATT 19 Oct; last 2 Amherst ERIE 2 Nov.

Am. Woodcock: 7 BOSOC.

Red-necked Phalarope: 2 Buffalo ERIE 19 Sep (MM); 5 BWWT 20 Sep (JS); likely hurricane related.

phalarope sp: 9 FNSP 21 Sep (MM),

probable Red-necked.

Parasitic Jaeger: FMCS 21 Sep (MM!); Athol Springs ERIE 21 Oct (RA!); only reports.

Little Gull: Lewiston NR 26 Oct, 8 Nov; NF 2 Nov; few reports.

BLACK-HEADED GULL: Lewiston NR 30 Nov (KM), annual at this location last few years.

CALIFORNIA GULL: NPP 9, 15, 29, 30 Nov (JI, WD!, NYSARC); 12th consecutive year on NR.

Thayer's Gull: several reported NPP and NF in late Nov, undocumented.

Iceland Gull: arr NPP 8 Nov; FMCS 22 Nov.

Lesser Black-backed Gull: 1, 3 NF 12, 16 Sep; max 10 NF-NPP 30 Nov.

Glaucous Gull: arr NF 30 Nov.

SABINE'S GULL: ChauL 20 Sep (JM), likely hurricane related.

Caspian Tern: last GHSP 23 Sep.

ELEGANT TERN: WoBSP 15 Oct (WW!, NYSARC), roosting on beach during high winds; NYS first if accepted by NYSARC, however, single observer sighting, no photographs taken, precluding possible addition to NYS Checklist, although NYSARC report still important..

Com. Tern: 6 WoBSP 20 Sep; 44 FNSP 21 Sep (MM); last 2 BOSOC.

Forster's Tern: WoBSP 20 Sep (MM); FNSP 21 Sep (MM); 2 Hamburg ERIE 22 Sep (FR); more fall reports than usual.

PIGEONS – WOODPECKERS

Short-eared Owl: Bennington WYOM 19 Nov (JF); migrating over L Erie Sheridan CHAU 23 Nov (NS); max 3 Porter NIAG 30 Nov (S&TO).

N. Saw-whet Owl: Bethany GENE 7 Sep (DB!), unusual location; 20 banded Wethersfield WYOM 6 Oct-10 Nov (DJ).

Com. Nighthawk: 35 Amherst 13 Sep; max 120 Eggertsville ERIE 14 Sep (DS); last 25 Hamburg ERIE 10 Oct.

Ruby-throated Hummingbird: last

Kenmore ERIE 14 Oct (DAB).

Red-headed Woodpecker: no reports, unusual.

Yellow-bellied Sapsucker: arr Williamsville ERIE 21 Sep.

FLYCATCHERS – WAXWINGS

Olive-sided Flycatcher: Ridgeway ORLE 2 Sep (WW); Wilson NIAG 13 Sep (STO); more reports than usual.

E. Wood-Pewee: FNSP 4 Oct; last BOSOC.

Yellow-bellied Flycatcher: Tift NP 7 Sep (BE), only report.

Least Flycatcher: last Bethany GENE 8 Sep.

E. Phoebe: last Lancaster ERIE 13 Nov, juv found dead.

E. Kingbird: last Tift NP 7 Sep.

N. Shrike: arr INWR 18 Oct.

Blue-headed Vireo: last 16 BOSOC.

Warbling Vireo: last WTSP 21 Sep.

Philadelphia Vireo: last Tift NP 10 Oct; 6 other reports.

Red-eyed Vireo: last WoBSP 30 Oct (RA!), late.

Com. Raven: 2 Charlotte CHAU 14 Sep; Bennington WYOM Oct; 16 BOSOC; Java WYOM 30 Oct (DJ); only reports away from ALLE, CATT.

Tree Swallow: max 1500 BWWTP 28 Sep (WW); last BOSOC.

N. Rough-winged Swallow: last 15 INWR 12 Oct.

Bank Swallow: NF 4 Oct (WD!), late.

Barn Swallow: BWWTP 28 Sep; last BWWTP 11 Oct.

Carolina Wren: well reported again this season.

House Wren: last 8 BOSOC.

Winter Wren: arr FMCSF, Buffalo ERIE 21 Sep.

Marsh Wren: last BOSOC.

Ruby-crowned Kinglet: arr NF & Tift NP 26 Sep; last Alfred ALLE 6 Nov.

Blue-gray Gnatcatcher: last Tift NP 3 Sep.

Veery: last Grand I ERIE 12 Oct.

Gray-cheeked Thrush: 3 nocturnal

flyovers Eggertsville ERIE 18 Sep; last INWR 12 Oct.

Swainson's Thrush: max 30, 40 nocturnal migrants near dawn Eggertsville ERIE 18, 21 Sep (MM); last 3 BOSOC.

Hermit Thrush: arr Times Beach NP ERIE 30 Sep.

Wood Thrush: last 9 BOSOC.

Gray Catbird: Tift NP 15 Nov, on the late side.

N. Mockingbird: Lancaster ERIE 21 Nov, unusual location.

Brown Thrasher: WTSP 21 Sep; last 3 BOSOC.

Am. Pipit: arr Olcott NIAG 14 Sep; max 40 Porter NIAG 26 Oct; last 2 BWWTP 15 Nov.

WARBLERS

Blue-winged Warbler: last Alfred ALLE 6 Sep.

Tennessee Warbler: last BuSP, Bush Hill SF CATT 5 Oct.

Orange-crowned Warbler: arr GI 26 Sep; WTSP 29 Sep; Amherst ERIE 4-9 Oct; Stockton CHAU 4 Oct; last Tonawanda ERIE 21 Oct.

Nashville Warbler: max 27 GI 26 Sep (DR); last 5 BOSOC.

N. Parula: last Tift NP 25, 28 Oct (RA!), late.

Yellow Warbler: last Bethany GENE 13 Sep.

Magnolia Warbler: max 17 GI 8 Sep (DR); last 8 BOSOC.

Cape May Warbler: last BOSOC; 5 other reports.

Black-throated Blue Warbler: last BOSOC.

Yellow-rumped Warbler: arr 2 GI 12 Sep; 2 Jamestown CHAU 1 Nov; 2 Lancaster ERIE 25 Nov.

Black-throated Green Warbler: last AISP 19 Oct.

Pine Warbler: last BOSOC.

Palm Warbler: arr SPNS 18 Sep; last 20 BOSOC.

Bay-breasted Warbler: last INWR 12 Oct.

Blackpoll Warbler: last AISP 19 Oct.

Hooded Warbler: last BOSOC.

Wilson's Warbler: last GI 27 Sep.

TANAGERS – WEAVERS

Scarlet Tanager: last BOSOC.

Am. Tree Sparrow: arr 2 Somerset NIAG 23 Oct.

Chipping Sparrow: last Lancaster ERIE 31 Oct.

Vesper Sparrow: last 10 BOSOC.

NELSON'S SHARP-TAILED

SPARROW: 1, 1, 2, 2 Amherst ERIE 6, 7, 9, 10 Oct (JP!, WD!, MM!, NYSARC, mob); INWR 12 Oct (DH); 3rd consecutive year in Reg; Amherst ERIE 1 Nov (JP!), late.

Fox Sparrow: arr 2 LBSP 28 Sep; BOSOC; max 16 Tonawanda ERIE 24 Oct (WW); last 2 Amherst ERIE 15 Nov.

Lincoln's Sparrow: Times Beach NP 30 Sep, 3 Oct; 5 BOSOC; last INWR 18 Oct.

White-throated Sparrow: arr 2 WTSP 13 Sep.

White-crowned Sparrow: arr WTSP 29 Sep; max 787 BOSOC; widespread in good numbers mid-to-late Oct.

Dark-eyed Junco: arr 2 GI & 1 Amherst ERIE 4 Oct.

Lapland Longspur: arr 14 Porter NIAG 26 Oct (WD); 2 INWR 2 Nov; max 25

Wilson NIAG 22 Nov; 4 Bethany GENE 23 Nov.

Snow Bunting: arr 3 Shadigee ORLE 23 Oct; 250 Somerset NIAG & Yates ORLE 9 Nov; max 400 GHSP & Wilson NIAG 22 Nov.

Rose-breasted Grosbeak: last 2 BOSOC.

Indigo Bunting: SPNS 18 Sep; last 5 BOSOC.

E. Meadowlark: 2 Amherst ERIE 1-2 Nov; 2 Lancaster ERIE 4 Nov; unusual in Nov.

Rusty Blackbird: arr SPNS 18 Sep.

BREWER'S BLACKBIRD: Hamburg ERIE 17 Oct (MO), at feeder with Red-winged Blackbirds; rare.

Com. Grackle: 2 Lancaster ERIE 25 Nov, late.

Baltimore Oriole: last Amity L ALLE 17 Sep (VP).

Purple Finch: arr Amherst ERIE 4 Oct; 52 BOSOC; 4 FMCS 19 Oct; very few reports.

Com. Redpoll: arr 75 LBSP 22 Nov (KF).

Pine Siskin: arr GHSP 23 Oct; Somerset NIAG 25 Oct; 6 Eggertsville ERIE 15 Nov; 2 LBSP 22 Nov; 8 Bennington WYOM 29 Nov.

Evening Grosbeak: arr Wethersfield WYOM 9 Nov; GHSP 22 Nov; only reports.



REGION 2 – GENESEE

Kevin C. Griffith

61 Grandview Lane, Rochester NY 14612
ckgrif@frontiernet.net

It was certainly a fall to remember. Anytime we receive the results of a hurricane it becomes most interesting. September for the most part was mild, with an average temperature of 62.5° F, which was 1.3° warmer than usual. Precipitation was 0.76" below normal at 2.69", with the bulk of the rain falling on the 15th, 22nd and 27th. The rest of the month was relatively dry. The passing of the remnants of Hurricane Isabel on the 19th was the meteorological highlight of the month. October started out with conditions more like November, with temperatures 5-15° below normal, but that was followed by a week of above normal temperatures. The remainder of the month was typical. The average for the month was 2.2° below normal at 48.2°. Precipitation was 0.70" below normal at 1.90". There were few days with any measurable precipitation. Thunderstorms were experienced on the 20th and 21st with the passage of a cold front. Our first snowfall of the season fell on the 2nd, although it was only a trace. November was quite mild, with an average temperature of 42.2°, 2.3° above normal. Many days had above average temperatures. There was a single cold spell from the 6th to the 10th. It was a wet November, with a total of 4.26" of precipitation. That total was 1.42" on the plus side. The most significant rainfall was on 2, 19 and 27-30 November. Water levels were quite high at these times, but no real flooding occurred.

September's highlight was Hurricane Isabel. It sent observers to the Lake Ontario shore to look for fallout birds. This resulted in some most interesting reports, including **Bridled Tern** and **Sooty Tern**. The rest of the month saw little in the way of events that would spur a good migration. October offered much the same: few frontal passages to bring good birding days. The fall migration was generally late and lackluster. This was particularly true for the waterfowl. Birding was again relatively slow in November. The highlight of the month and the season was the discovery of a *Tyrannus flycatcher* in Cuylerville by Gary Chapin. At last word, it was being tentatively identified as a Scissor-tailed Flycatcher x Couch's Kingbird hybrid. If this hypothesis is accepted, it will be the first record of such a cross.

Again this year, the lakewatch at Hamlin Beach was not staffed by a single, paid observer, but William Symonds and a number of other individuals manned the site on a fairly consistent basis. Highlights and numbers were down from recent years. Braddock Bay Bird Observatory once again operated the banding station at Kaiser-Manitou Beach. The period of 5-11 October was the most productive week of the season.

The waterfowl picture for the season was categorized as slow and late. An example of the latter was the Lesser Scaup totals outnumbering the Greater Scaup in October. This is generally true of September, but by October Greater generally

significantly outnumbers Lesser. Most Snow Goose reports came from southeastern Wayne County at the periphery of Montezuma National Wildlife Refuge. The only puddle duck that was well reported was Green-winged Teal. There were a few days with decent counts of Surf and Black scoters. The only other waterfowl on the plus side was Red-breasted Merganser. Canvasback, Redhead, Greater Scaup and White-winged Scoter all were reported in below normal numbers. Notable by their absence were both eiders and Harlequin Duck; there are often multiple reports of each of these species.

Ring-necked Pheasant continued to be scarce. Wild Turkey numbers were about average to slightly below. Summer breeding reports were not particularly encouraging and this may have carried over into the fall season. Reports were still good but not the magnitude of some recent years. There were many reports of very late broods of very small poults in late August and September.

Loons and grebes in general were fair for the season. Good numbers of Red-throated Loons were still in alternate plumage and Common Loons could be found resting on the lake in good numbers. Horned Grebe counts were fairly high this season. It was quite a fall for American White Pelican in the Region. Mike Tetlow discovered a single bird on 7 September at Braddock Bay. It was seen up through the 9th both there and later at Irondequoit Bay. It was followed by an unprecedented eight reported at Braddock Bay by Jim and Liz Barry on 4 October. They were seen again briefly on the 5th.

Not much happened in the hawk department. The usual residents were present, with Peregrine Falcon and Merlin continuing to be reported on a consistent basis. Of interest were 12 Northern Harriers observed as they came to shore at Hamlin Beach after crossing the lake on 21 September. Northern Goshawk was again reported, echoing the trend of good sightings from the hawkwatch at Braddock Bay in August. Rough-legged Hawk numbers were good late in the season.

Shorebird habitat was once again scarce. The water levels remained high, covering the mudflats at the south end of Irondequoit Bay and at Salmon Creek. Reports were primarily of flybys at Hamlin Beach or the occasional bird that landed on the beach. Ontario Beach has traditionally been a good spot, but the county's efforts to keep the beach free of algae have made that spot less desirable in recent years. One had to arrive before the machines began clearing or the day was spent looking at frequently flushed shorebirds. Dunlin was the only species reported in decent numbers. American Golden-Plovers were again scarce, with the only decent totals from Geneseo. Sixteen Hudsonian Godwits seen at Point Breeze by Dave Tetlow were a high for recent years. There was only a single report of three Purple Sandpipers. Buff-breasted Sandpiper was only reported once.

Jaeger totals were poor. A total of 21 Parasitics was reported from Hamlin Beach in September. A few Pomarine Jaegers were also reported from that location. Gull highlights were few and far between. Laughing Gull reports were up with the passage of Isabel. There were only two sightings of Little Gull and Glaucous Gull went unreported in November. Lesser Black-backed Gull

continued to be well reported. Terns, on the other hand, were an extreme highlight for the season. The first **Bridled Tern** for the Region was sighted at Hamlin Beach, with an immature seen on 19, 21 and 23 September, although records and verifications were submitted only for the latter two. The situation for **Sooty Tern** was similar, with birds seen on 19, 21 and 23 September at Hamlin Beach and Point Breeze, but reports only for an immature sighted at Hamlin Beach on the 23rd.

Common Nighthawk continued its precipitous drop. October totals were higher than September and numbers were low from traditional hotspots. Flycatchers led the way this season. A **Tyrannus hybrid** was discovered in Leicester, Livingston County by Gary Chapin on 9 November. It was seen by numerous observers and was there through the first two days of December. Many have viewed photos of the bird and the jury remains out on the actual identity. David Sibley suggested that it was a Scissor-tailed Flycatcher x Tropical/Couch's Kingbird (report to NYSARC). Normally, Western Kingbird would be our top flycatcher, but the one observed by Robert Spahn and Steve Taylor at Hamlin Beach came in a distant second.

Cave Swallows are becoming a rare but regular occurrence, unfortunately again suffering from the problem of lack of documentation. Only five at Hamlin Beach on 24 November were reported documented. Red-breasted Nuthatches invaded the Region, with an estimated 150 at Hamlin Beach on 23 October. Hermit Thrush numbers were high, with 424 banded at the Kaiser-Manitou Beach Station in October and a single day high of 107 on the 6th. An early and only report of Bohemian Waxwing came from Hamlin Beach on 23 October. The only real warbler highlight was the three Connecticut Warblers banded during the season at Kaiser-Manitou Beach. A record late Indigo Bunting was discovered in Cuylerville by Lucretia Grosshans, Diane Henderson and Shirley Shaw, a bonus from the attention generated for that area by the hybrid flycatcher. A calling Dickcissel was reported by Dave Tetlow in September and another was observed and photographed by Judy and Denis Caysinger in Parma in October. Winter finches put in a lackluster arrival, with Common Redpolls, Pine Siskins and Evening Grosbeaks reported in small numbers.

Two hundred species were reported in September and the yearly total reached 271. Both figures were below the ten-year average. October saw 174 species, bringing the year-to-date total to 274. One hundred thirty species were observed in November, with the yearly total reaching 276, which was well below the ten-year average of 288.6 by the end of the season.

CONTRIBUTORS

Jack & Joan Barlett, Jessie Barry, Jim & Liz Barry, John Bounds, Elizabeth Brooks, Carolyn Cass, Denis & Judy Caysinger, Gary Chapin, Doug Daniels, Robert Dobson, Kelly Dockery, Jon & Sandy Dombrowski, Colleen Dox-Griffith, Kurt Fox, Kenny Frisch, Jay Greenberg, Kevin Griffith, Lucretia Grosshans, Georgia & Ralph Guenther, Helen Haller, Thomas Hampson, Diane Henderson,

Barbara Herrgesell, Bernie Kester, Jim Kimball, Pat Kocinski, Tom Langen, John Lehr, Chita & Robert McKinney, Betty & Bill Powell, Bill Ruscher, Ed Scheidlower, Shirley Shaw, Dominic Sherony, Doug Smith, Robert & Susan Spahn, Jeff Spindler, Paul Spindler, David & Grace Strong, William Symonds, Steve Taylor, Dave Tetlow, Michael Tetlow, Bill Thompson, Don & Donna Traver, Ann Watson, Kinsley Whittum.

ABBREVIATIONS

BB – Braddock Bay MONR; C – near village of Cuylerville, T Leicester LIVI; CH – Ontario Beach Charlotte; CL – Crusoe L WAYN; DE – Durand-Eastman Park MONR; G – T Greece MONR; GE – Geneseo LIVI; HB – Hamlin Beach SP MONR; IB – Irondequoit Bay MONR; L – T Leicester LIVI; M – Manitou Beach area MONR; PB – Pt Breeze ORLE; S – Sodus WAYN; SA – Savannah WAYN; W – T Webster MONR.

WHISTLING-DUCKS – VULTURES

Snow Goose: arr 2 HB 14 Oct.
Brant: arr 6 HB 2 Oct; max 836 HB 4 Nov.
Tundra Swan: arr 13 HB 6 Nov.
Blue-winged Teal: last HB 24 Oct.
N. Pintail: max 395 HB 21 Sep.
Canvasback: arr 5 G 16 Oct.
Redhead: arr 3 HB 16 Oct.
Ring-necked Duck: arr G 26 Sep.
Surf Scoter: arr 2 HB 21 Sep; max 580 HB 5 Nov.
Black Scoter: arr HB 18 Sep; max 538 HB 5 Nov.
Long-tailed Duck: arr HB 18 Oct.
Bufflehead: arr 25 HB 16 Oct.
Com. Goldeneye: arr HB 18 Oct.
Red-breasted Merganser: max 10,000 HB 10 Nov.
Red-throated Loon: max 1500 HB 16 Nov.
Com. Loon: max 800 HB 19 Oct.
Horned Grebe: max 554 HB 14 Nov.
Eared Grebe: HB 5 Sep (WS).
Am. White Pelican: 1 BB 7 Sep (MT); 1 IB 8-9 Sep (mob); max 8 BB 4-5 Oct (J&LB), NYS record high count.
Double-crested Cormorant: max 480 HB 4 Nov.
Am. Bittern: last Huckleberry Swamp WAYN 18 Oct.

Least Bittern: last C 24 Sep (JK), late.
Great Egret: last HB 26 Oct.
Green Heron: last Bushnells Basin MONR 7 Oct.
Turkey Vulture: max 34 Byron 4 Oct.

HAWKS – ALCIDS

Osprey: last IB 18 Oct.
N. Harrier: max 14 HB 21 Sep.
N. Goshawk: G 20 Sep.
Rough-legged Hawk: arr HB 23 Oct.
Peregrine Falcon: G 6 Oct (KG).
Merlin: W 4 Nov.
Am. Golden-Plover: arr HB 2 Sep; max 53 GE 20 Oct; last GE 1 Nov.
Spotted Sandpiper: last HB 5 Oct.
Hudsonian Godwit: 16 PB 21 Sep (DT), high, only report.
Ruddy Turnstone: last HB 6 Oct.
Red Knot: imm BB 28-30 Sep; poor showing.
White-rumped Sandpiper: 3 SA 6 Sep; last IB 1 Nov.
Pectoral Sandpiper: last IB 1 Nov.
Purple Sandpiper: 3 IB 4 Nov, only report.
Dunlin: max 307 Hamlin 15 Sep.
Buff-breasted Sandpiper: arr HB 20 Sep.
Red-necked Phalarope: max 3 HB 21 Sep.

Pomarine Jaeger: arr PB 20 Sep (DT); HB 25 Sep (BR); early.
Parasitic Jaeger: total 21 HB Sep; max 4 HB 8 Sep; total 4 HB Oct; last HB 7 Nov.
Laughing Gull: imm HB 19 Sep (mob); imm HB 21 Sep (WS, DT).
Little Gull: max 2 ad CH 16 Sep (KG); HB 30 Nov; only reports, low.
Iceland Gull: arr HB 3 Nov.
Lesser Black-backed Gull: ad CH 4 Oct; ad IB 18 Oct; ad HB 21-27 Oct; 2 ad IB 24-28, 30 Oct; ad HB 5 Nov.
Caspian Tern: last CH 4 Oct.
Com. Tern: max 44 HB 221 Sep; last HB 19 Oct.
Forster's Tern: last CH 1 Nov.
BRIDLED TERN: imm HB 20 Sep (DS!, RS!, PK, NYSARC); imm HB 23 Sep (WS!, JBo, NYSARC).
SOOTY TERN: imm HB 23 Sep (WS!, RS!, JBo, NYSARC).

PIGEONS – WOODPECKERS

Barred Owl: max 6 WAYN 6 Sep.
Short-eared Owl: arr 2 GE 28 Oct.
Com. Nighthawk: max 30+ Genesee Valley P MONR 12 Sep; last 2 Rochester 9 Oct.
Chimney Swift: max 275 York 24 Sep (JK); last 100 IB 1 Oct, hawking insects low over the water with Tree Swallows.
Ruby-throated Hummingbird: last fem G 4 Oct (RD).
hummingbird sp.: fem Honeoye Falls 9 Oct (ES).

FLYCATCHERS – WAXWINGS

Olive-sided Flycatcher: arr SA 6 Sep, only report.
E. Wood-Pewee: last M 9 Oct.
Yellow-bellied Flycatcher: last M 29 Sep.
Willow Flycatcher: last HB 27 Sep.
E. Phoebe: last DE 1 Nov.
E. Kingbird: last Byron 6 Sep; 3 CL 6 Sep.
WESTERN KINGBIRD: HB 20 Sep (RS!, ST, NYSARC).
Tyrannus hybrid: L 9-30 Nov (GC),

documented by many.
N. Shrike: arr Brighton 18 Oct.
Red-eyed Vireo: last M 12 Oct.
Com. Raven: 1-2 Parma/G 1-8 Sep.
Tree Swallow: last 2 S 23 Nov.
Cliff Swallow: max 18 HB 3 Sep.
CAVE SWALLOW: 5 HB 24 Nov (DT, RS!, JBo, NYSARC).
Red-breasted Nuthatch: max 150 HB 23 Oct (MT).
Brown Creeper: max 33 banded M 26 Oct.
House Wren: last W 9 Nov (R&SS), record late.
Marsh Wren: 2 DE 8, 16 Nov.
Ruby-crowned Kinglet: arr M 10 Sep.
Blue-gray Gnatcatcher: last M 8 Oct.
Veery: last G 5 Oct.
Gray-cheeked Thrush: last G 13 Oct.
Swainson's Thrush: last M 12 Oct.
Hermit Thrush: max 107 banded M 6 Oct; total 424 banded M Oct.
Gray Catbird: last Avon 15 Nov.
Am. Pipit: arr 6 HB 21 Sep.
Bohemian Waxwing: HB 23 Oct (MT).

WARBLERS

Blue-winged Warbler: last M 1 Sep.
Tennessee Warbler: last M 5 Oct.
Orange-crowned Warbler: arr M 20 Sep; last C 13 Oct.
Nashville Warbler: last M 9 Oct
N. Parula: last S 19 Oct.
Yellow Warbler: last M 16 Sep.
Chestnut-sided Warbler: last G 5 Oct.
Magnolia Warbler: last M 8 Oct.
Black-throated Blue Warbler: last M 17 Oct.
Black-throated Green Warbler: last M 10 Oct.
Blackburnian Warbler: last M 12 Oct.
Palm Warbler: last M 7 Oct.
Bay-breasted Warbler: last M 7 Oct.
Blackpoll Warbler: last M 8 Oct.
Am. Redstart: last HB 13 Oct.
Ovenbird: last M 1 Oct.
Connecticut Warbler: M 4 Sep; M 20 Sep; M 5 Oct; all banded by BBBO.

Mourning Warbler: last M 5 Sep.

TANAGERS – WEAVERS

E. Towhee: last fem DE 16-30 Nov.

Am. Tree Sparrow: arr 30 C 1 Oct.

Chipping Sparrow: last G 13 Nov.

Fox Sparrow: arr M 7 Oct.

Lincoln's Sparrow: arr M 7 Sep; last M 10 Oct.

White-throated Sparrow: max 300+ Hogan Pt G 9 Oct; 300+ HB 23 Oct.

White-crowned Sparrow: arr M 26 Sep; max 150+ Hogan Pt G 9 Oct.

Lapland Longspur: arr PB 20 Sep.

Snow Bunting: arr HB 14 Sep.

INDIGO BUNTING: C 30 Nov (LG, DH, SSh, ph), record late.

Dickcissel: PB 21 Sep (DT); Parma MONR 12-14 Oct (J&DC, ph).

Com. Redpoll: arr HB 6 Nov.

Evening Grosbeak: arr 5 L 23 Nov.

REGION 3 – FINGER LAKES

Bill Ostrander

80 Westmont Avenue, Elmira NY 14905

brown_creeper@sg23.com

September and October were wetter than normal. November precipitation was normal, although the amount in the form of snow was well below normal, with a total of only 1" in Ithaca. September was 1.0°F warmer than normal. October was 1.7° cooler than normal. November was 3.8° warmer than normal. The main weather event was the passing of Hurricane Isabel, which was reduced to a tropical storm by the time it reached New York State latitudes. In the Finger Lakes Region, Isabel was more wind than rain. Nevertheless, Isabel's winds brought a memorable fallout of pelagic and other birds, notably in the Cayuga Lake Basin.

Isabel's winds passed through upstate New York on 19 September. By that afternoon, the bird excitement began. Pete Hosner posted the following chronology of sightings of likely hurricane birds from Ithaca's East Shore Park: 2:10 – 1 adult **Arctic Tern**, 7 Red-necked Phalaropes; 2:15 – 1 possible additional Arctic Tern, 5 Red Phalaropes, 8 Red-necked Phalaropes; 3:45 – 3 distant *Sterna* sp. ; 5:25 – 10-15 phalaropes (too distant and brief to identify). Meanwhile, Scott Haber spotted a jaeger flying south past Myers Point.

On 20 September, the excitement increased with the appearance of the Region's first storm-petrels. Willy Hutcheson spotted one over and on Cayuga Lake at Taughannock Falls State Park at 8:30 a.m., but was unable to identify the species. At virtually the same time, Mark Dettling observed a storm-petrel, which he could not identify, at the south end of the lake. At about 10 a.m. he observed a different one, which he was able to identify as a **Wilson's Storm-Petrel**. He suggested that his first storm-petrel might be a different species. Many observers saw the Wilson's on into the afternoon. A second Wilson's Storm-Petrel joined the first at about 2 p.m. At the same time, John Van Niel was at Montezuma NWR where he spotted a *Plegadis* ibis flying over and landing somewhere in the main

pool. He called it a Glossy Ibis, but later events put this in doubt. At 1:57 p.m., Jeff Wells found a **Laughing Gull** at Myers Point. Between 4 and 4:30 p.m., three small flocks of phalaropes passed Bill Evans at Taughannock Falls State Park. At least three of the birds were Red-necked. At 5:30 p.m., John and Karen Confer and Chris Spagnoli had great views of a **Parasitic Jaeger** at Stewart Park.

On 21 September, Bill Evans and Ken Rosenberg observed a Wilson's Storm-Petrel at the south end of Cayuga Lake before 8:15 a.m.. At 11:45 a.m., Curtis Marantz spotted what he believed to be a **Band-rumped Storm-Petrel**. Many observers studied this bird, usually from quite a distance, through 3:30 p.m. Some controversy arose regarding the identification of this bird. Some observers were confident of the Band-rumped identification and some were sure of it. Dissenters were sure that it wasn't, but it is not clear that they were observing the same bird, since one or two Wilson's Storm-Petrels were still in the vicinity.

At 7:45 a.m. on 22 September, Mark Dettling caught a glimpse of a storm-petrel at the south end of Cayuga Lake that reminded him of the reported Band-rumped from the day before. Mark Chao located a Wilson's Storm-Petrel in the same vicinity, close to East Shore Park at 8:30 a.m. Many others observed this bird, which behaved like the bird believed to be a Band-rumped the previous day. This bird, however, was showing feet extending beyond the tail, pointing to Wilson's. At 10:15 a.m., Meena Haribal joined Berna and Stan Lincoln, who had been watching what they thought to be a Band-rumped Storm-Petrel for about 15 minutes, at East Shore Park and observed the same bird, which Meena identified as Band-rumped. Bill Watson observed the same storm-petrel from 10:45 to 11:31 a.m. and identified it as a Band-rumped. Several people were on hand at noon to observe a bird that fit the Band-rumped identification. Ken Rosenberg saw both the early morning bird and the noon bird and felt that they were not the same. NYSARC will have to determine whether or not this will be New York State's first record of Band-rumped Storm-Petrel.

Several Ithaca birders participated in a Cayuga Lake "pelagic" voyage on 23 September but failed to turn up any storm-petrels. No more hurricane birds appeared until 27 September when a "Glossy" Ibis showed up at Montezuma's Benning Marsh. An unidentified young birder followed up the report that afternoon, but discovered that the bird was actually the Region's first **White-faced Ibis**. He notified his friend, Andrew VanNostrand, who in turn called his friend, Jay McGowan, who passed the report on to the listserves. Many people were then able to see this bird over the next eight days.

Waterfowl numbers were down for most species this fall, in spite of all the "good duck weather." Turbulent, turbid waters in the Region's rivers and streams were a factor. Perhaps high water levels in the wetlands also had an effect. Canada Goose and American Wigeon declined for the second straight year. Bucking the trend were Blue-winged Teal and Gadwall. Greater White-fronted Goose and Eurasian Wigeon were the season's waterfowl rarities.

Observers reported all three gallinaceous species in numbers that were basically unchanged from last year. Both loon species and Horned Grebe had

significant declines in numbers from last year. It was the second consecutive year that Common Loon numbers were down.

Great Blue Herons were apparently discouraged by the high water levels. Normally, two or three stay around to fish the shallows in downtown Elmira through the winter, but this fall none were there after 15 October. This was the second consecutive year for their numbers to decline. Ken Smith found the heron of the season, a **Cattle Egret** at Benning Marsh.

Raptor numbers are generally pretty steady in the Region. The Broad-winged Hawk migration often passes without much notice. This fall, however, several people reported them in small numbers and Ken Rosenberg observed more than 40 passing over Cass Park in Ithaca.

Wetland water levels also may have had a negative impact on rails. Sora, Common Moorhen and American Coot all decreased. It was the second consecutive year for moorhen decline. Shorebirds presented a mixed bag, with ten species declining, four increasing and 14 remaining unchanged. Lesser Yellowlegs declined for the second year in a row. There were a few notable shorebirds in addition to those delivered by the hurricane. A Purple Sandpiper, seen by many, spent a few days at the south end of Cayuga Lake in October. Only Bob Beal reported seeing the **Ruff** at Benning Marsh. Bob reported a Red Knot at May's Point in early September, but still did not have details when I contacted him much later. Western Sandpipers seem to elude birders who live in the Cayuga Lake Basin, even though visitors seem to find them. Several folks from the Basin got to see and even photograph the one at Benning Marsh on 1 October.

Ring-billed, Herring and Bonaparte's gulls all decreased this year, Ring-billed for the third consecutive year. A **Pomarine Jaeger** at Stewart Park was reported to eBird, the online database. While I have no details on this bird, it must have been scrutinized and accepted by the database's knowledgeable administrators. Single Laughing Gulls appeared in the Cayuga Lake Basin in each of the season's three months.

This is the first season that I have compiled data from the eBird database. eBird encourages its contributors to do two things that birders often do not do: count individuals and report every species seen. While one can still contribute without doing any counting or reporting every species seen, it is clear that many eBirders who used to report only highlights to listserves are now providing numbers and complete checklists to eBird. The effect on the data that I am keeping is that common, widely distributed species should initially show some increases. That seems to be the case with two woodpecker species: Red-bellied and Hairy. In fact, all species of woodpeckers increased, though the others did not achieve statistically significant increases. All swallow species did increase significantly, though this is not an eBird effect. Because large post-breeding flocks of swallows accumulate in the Region, it is more a matter of their lingering in numbers into fall and birders taking time to try to estimate numbers and report them. Some years, the reports just are not submitted, even though the birds may be present.

Blue Jay numbers increased this year thanks to several observers who made note of their migration through the Region. Perhaps in response to West Nile Virus, American Crow numbers were down more than 70% from last year. This, however, is another species with large post-breeding flocks, which may or may not be reported.

Wood Thrush numbers increased significantly for the fourth consecutive year. One might attribute this to the increasing popularity of monitoring the calls of nocturnal migrants, but three of the *Catharus* species decreased. Perhaps there has been an increase in suitable young forest in Canada to support a growth in the Wood Thrush population there.

Warbler numbers held steady for most species, but seven showed declines. There was evidence that good numbers of warblers were passing through at the same time that the Region's birders were busy learning to identify storm-petrels. Steve Kelling located a Connecticut Warbler on his property in Caroline during those days.

Several species of sparrows declined in numbers, and no sparrows increased. The sparrow of the season was a **Nelson's Sharp-tailed Sparrow** that spent a day in the marsh at the southwest corner of Cayuga Lake.

There was evidence of southward movement by winter finches. A single Common Redpoll, Pine Siskins and Evening Grosbeaks appeared before season's end. Purple Finch numbers were up, but House Finches were down again.

John and Sue Gregoire at Kestrel Haven Avian Migration Observatory enjoyed and endured their busiest banding season. They banded 5760 birds of 107 species, both records for their station. They attributed the record season to the occurrence of many blocking fronts to the south, as many low pressure systems moved from south to north. These conditions prevented many migrants from simply overflying the Region as they do in most autumns.

Overall, the number of species showing increased numbers when compared with last year's was 34. Another 74 species decreased and 136 showed no significant change. The following species list includes comparisons of observed bird populations between fall 2002 and fall 2003. A "+" at the end of the species account indicates an increase; a "-" indicates a decrease. Accounts with neither symbol indicate that the species did not demonstrate a significant change in reported numbers in 2002. Unless otherwise noted, the cited comparisons showed statistically significant changes ($\chi^2 > 3.84$; $P = 0.05$). A discussion of my methodology and its limitations can be found in the Region 3 report in the December 1999 issue of *The Kingbird*.

CONTRIBUTORS

Mike Andersen, Dierdre Anderson, Sylvia Anglin, Lynne Ballou, Eric Banford, Bob Beal, Fred Bertram, Gladys Birdsall, Lisa Blackman, David Bonter, Scott Brim, Joseph Brin, Bill Brown, Jerry Case, Mark Chao, Gary Chapin, Lois Chaplin, Dick Clements, Benjamin Clock, Bil & Marg Comstock, John Confer, Cornell Campus Club Bird Study Group, Dorothy Crumb, Nancy Cusumano,

Donna Jean Darling, Mark Dettling, Nancy Dickinson, EBird, Jesse Ellis, Michael Enble, Jody Enck, Michael Engle, Bill Evans, Dorita Fagan, Andrew Farnsworth, Steve & Susan Fast, Martha Fischer, Kurt Fox, Jim Gaffney, Ed Gates, Jeff Gerbracht, Marva Gingrich, Mary Ellen Gleason, Dan Graybeal, John & Sue Gregoire, Melissa Groo, Bob Grosek, Bob Guthrie, John Haas, Scott Haber, Meena Haribal, Julie Hart, Erin Hewett, Anne Hobbs, Wes Hochachka, Asher Hockett, Jeff Holbrook, Pete Hosner, Willy Hutcheson, Larry & Sara Jane Hymes, Carolyn Jacobs, Anne Marie Johnson, Martin Jorgenson, Steve Kelling, Geo Kloppel, Paul Larrabee, Leona Lauster, Dan Lebbin, Tim Lenz, Ellen Luce, Curtis Marantz, Bill McAneny, Elaina McCartney, Dave McCartt, David McDermitt, Jay & Kevin McGowan, Bob McGuire, Bob Meade, Matt Medler, Andrew Miller, Nari Mistry, Peter Mulvaney, Colby Neuman, Bud & Sue Norvell, Dave Nutter, Bill & Joan Ostrander, Pat & Pete Parslow, Gerard Phillips, Alicia Plotkin, Bob Powers, Mike Powers, Bard Prentiss, Marilyn Ray, Marie Read, Ben Richards, Glen Robertson, Rochester Hotline, Ken Rosenberg, Charlie Rouse, Dave Russell, Lena Samsonenko, Catherine Sandell, Carol Schmitt, Carol & Joe Slattery, Ken Smith, Chris Spagnoli, Larue St. Clair, Laura Stenzler, Sarah Fern Striffler, Chris Tessaglia-Hymes, Bob Thomas, Mary Jane Thomas, Anne Thurber, Tim Lenz, Bruce Tracey, John Trimber, John Van Niel, Andrew & Noah VanNorstrand, Matt Victoria, Bill Watson, Allison & Evan & Jeff Wells, Fred Werner, Chris White, Caissa Willmer, Ben Winger, Lisa Wood, Matt Young, Gretchen & Sara Ziegler.

ABBREVIATIONS

AuB – Aurora Bay CAYU; CU – Cornell U; DLP – Dryden L P; EID – Elmira Dam CHEM; ESP – East Shore P TOMP; HHSF – Hammond Hill State Forest TOMP; HoHo – Hog Hole TOMP; JCAP – Jacksonville Community Association P TOMP; KH – Kestrel Haven Avian Migration Observatory; MNWR – Montezuma NWR; MyPt – Myers Pt TOMP; SaMu – Savannah Mucklands SENE; SaW – Sapsucker Woods TOMP; SCNC – Spencer Crest Nature Center STEU; StP – Stewart P TOMP; TFSP – Taughanock Falls SP.

WHISTLING-DUCKS – VULTURES

GREATER WHITE-FRONTED

GOOSE: arr 2 StP 12 Nov, late; max & last 2 StP 16 Nov.

Snow Goose: arr 2 MNWR 13 Sep; max 450 SaMu 11 Nov, -.

Brant: arr 44 StP 10 Oct; max 340 StP 1 Nov, -.

Mute Swan: arr MNWR 29 Sep, late; max & last 2 Clute Memorial P SCHU 9 Nov, early.

Tundra Swan: arr 8 TFSP 23 Oct; max

320 MNWR 8 Nov, -.

Trumpeter Swan: max 2 Montezuma Wetlands Complex 9 Nov (BP), only report.

Gadwall: max 353 MNWR 18 Oct (EBird), high, +.

EURASIAN WIGEON: arr MNWR 12 Oct (GC); last MNWR 1 Nov (Jeff Gerbracht, Sam & SK).

Am. Black Duck: max 20 AuB 11 Nov, low, -.

Blue-winged Teal: max 46 MNWR 4 Sep

(EBird), high; last EID 23 Oct, early, +.
N. Shoveler: max 87 MNWR 6 Sep
(EBird), high; last 2 MNWR 22 Nov.
Ring-necked Duck: arr 2 MNWR 6 Sep;
max 500 MNWR 1 Nov, -.
Greater Scaup: arr ESP 22 Sep; max 40
ESP 7 Nov, -.
Lesser Scaup: arr StP 19 Sep; max 56
StP 25 Oct, -.
Surf Scoter: arr 6 ESP 1 Oct; max 6 StP
8 Nov; last ESP 16 Nov.
White-winged Scoter: arr 7 Cayuga L 23
Sep; max 9 ESP 6 Nov, -.
Black Scoter: arr 7 ESP 19 Oct; max 8
ESP 10 Nov; last 3 Keuka L 18 Nov.
Long-tailed Duck: arr DLP 23 Oct; max
2 TFSP 7 Nov, low, -.
Bufflehead: arr StP 17 Oct; max 40 ESP
2 Nov, -.
Com. Goldeneye: arr 2 StP 20 Oct; max
10 StP 30 Nov, -.
Hooded Merganser: max 24 StP 30 Nov,
low, -.
Red-breasted Merganser: arr MNWR
29 Sep; max 11 StP 4 Nov, -.
Wild Turkey: max 25 Dryden 10 Sep,
low.
Red-throated Loon: arr ESP 1 Nov; max
11 Dryden 14 Nov; last StP 27 Nov, -.
Com. Loon: arr ESP 19 Sep; max 1058
TFSP 7 Nov, -.
Horned Grebe: arr 2 AuB, Cayuga L 18
Oct; max 10 AuB 21 Nov, -.
Red-necked Grebe: arr StP 2 Nov, late;
last ESP 7 Nov.
WILSON'S STORM-PETREL: StP 20
Sep (MD!); max 2 StP 20 Sep (MA, PH,
ph, TL, CM); ESP 22 Sep.
BAND-RUMPED STORM-PETREL:
ESP 21 Sep (CM, PH!, mob); ESP 22 Sep
(BWa); ESP 22 Sep (KR!).
Am. Bittern: max 2 MNWR 18 Oct; last
MNWR 24 Oct (BGu), late, -.
Least Bittern: MNWR 1 Sep (FB), only
report.
Great Egret: max 27 MNWR 6 Sep; last
MNWR 22 Nov, -.
CATTLE EGRET: MNWR 29 Oct

(KS!), only report.

Green Heron: max 7 MNWR 3 Sep; last
StP 23 Nov (DA, BoMc), late.

Black-crowned Night-Heron: max 6
MNWR 10 Oct; last StP 19 Oct.

WHITE-FACED IBIS: arr MNWR 27
Sep (MGi, fide AV & JM!, mob); last
MNWR 5 Oct (A&NV, G&SZ).

HAWKS – ALCIDS

Osprey: max 2 CU 14 Oct, low; last DLP
15 Nov.

N. Goshawk: Caroline 12 Oct (SK), only
report, -.

Broad-winged Hawk: max 41 Cass P
TOMP 28 Sep; last 5 Dryden 30 Sep, +.

Rough-legged Hawk: arr Summerhill SF
CAYU 10 Sep (MY), early; max 16 KH
24 Nov (J&SGr), high.

Golden Eagle: arr Riverfront P 23 Oct;
last EID 26 Nov.

Virginia Rail: max & last 2 MNWR 5
Oct.

Sora: max 2 MNWR 20 Sep; last
MNWR 11 Oct, -.

Com. Moorhen: max 20 MNWR 7 Sep;
last MNWR 18 Oct, -.

Sandhill Crane: max & last 2 MNWR
21 Oct (LSC).

Black-bellied Plover: max 7 MNWR 2
Sep; last MNWR 12 Oct, -.

Am. Golden-Plover: max 15 MNWR 10
Sep; last MNWR 12 Oct, -.

Semipalmated Plover: max 37 MNWR 6
Sep; last 2 MNWR 18 Oct.

Killdeer: max 65 Genoa 1 Nov; last
MyPt 10 Nov, early departure, -.

Greater Yellowlegs: max 252 MNWR 1
Oct (EBird), high; last StP 10 Nov, +.

Lesser Yellowlegs: max 30 MNWR 13
Sep; last MNWR 15 Nov, -.

Solitary Sandpiper: Stevenson Rd
Pastures TOMP 23 Sep; last HoHo 18 Oct
(CBC, J&KM), late.

Spotted Sandpiper: max 4 StP 3 Sep
(St&SuF), high; last TFSP 2 Nov (MH),
late.

WHIMBREL: ESP 19 Sep (MA, JEI,

SH, PH, DL, LSa, mob), only report.
Hudsonian Godwit: arr MNWR 25 Oct, late; last MNWR 31 Oct, -.
Ruddy Turnstone: arr MyPt 5 Sep, late; max 3 MNWR 20 Sep (EBird), high; last MNWR 30 Sep (BBe), late.
Sanderling: max & last 3 StP 5 Oct.
Semipalmated Sandpiper: max 151 MNWR 13 Sep (J&KM), high; last 2 MNWR 1 Nov (EBird), +.
WESTERN SANDPIPER: MNWR 1 Oct (PH, SK, ph, MM, CSa), only report.
Least Sandpiper: max 50 MNWR 1 Oct; last The Center at Horseheads CHEM 14 Oct, -.
White-rumped Sandpiper: max 41 MNWR 24 Sep; last MNWR 25 Oct.
Baird's Sandpiper: max 4 MNWR 1 Sep; last MNWR 5 Oct.
Pectoral Sandpiper: max 207 MNWR 19 Sep; last Genoa 1 Nov, -.
PURPLE SANDPIPER: arr HoHo 17 Oct (JM, MM!, mob); last StP 19 Oct (TL).
Dunlin: max 120 MNWR 18 Oct; last 2 MNWR 23 Nov, -.
Stilt Sandpiper: max 86 MNWR 17 Sep (CSa), high; last MNWR 1 Nov, +.
Buff-breasted Sandpiper: arr MNWR 1 Sep; max 3 MNWR 20 Sep; last MNWR 1 Oct.
RUFF: MNWR 4 Oct (BBe!), only report.
Short-billed Dowitcher: max 21 MNWR 14 Sep; last 8 MNWR 28 Sep, -.
Long-billed Dowitcher: arr 5 MNWR 3 Sep; max 8 MNWR 10 Sep; last 2 MNWR 1 Nov.
Wilson's Snipe: max 13 George Rd flooded field TOMP 18 Sep; last MNWR 21 Oct, -.
Am. Woodcock: max 2 Caroline 13 Oct; last Caroline 22 Oct.
Red-necked Phalarope: max 15 StP 19 Sep (MA, JEI SH, PH, DL, LSa, mob), high; last 3 TFSP 20 Sep, +.
RED PHALAROPE: max 5 StP 19 Sep (MA, JEI, SH, PH!, DL, LSa, mob), only report.

POMARINE JAEGER: StP 2 Nov (EBird), only report.
PARASITIC JAEGER: StP 20 Sep (J&KC!, CSp), only report.
LAUGHING GULL: arr MyPt 20 Sep (JW); MNWR 10 Oct (TL!); Treman Marina SP 5 Nov (TL!).
Bonaparte's Gull: max 10 ESP 6 Nov; last Gibson Bridge STEU 30 Nov (EBird), late, -.
Lesser Black-backed Gull: arr MNWR 13 Sep; max 3 MNWR 27 Sep.
Caspian Tern: max 9 MNWR 14 Sep; last MNWR 28 Sep.
Com. Tern: max 7 ESP 19 Sep; last StP 5 Oct, +.
ARCTIC TERN: StP 19 Sep (BE!), only report.
Black Tern: max 4 MNWR 3 Sep (JM, BPr), only report.

PIGEONS – WOODPECKERS

Rock Pigeon: max 107 EID 24 Nov, low, -.
Black-billed Cuckoo: max 2 N Ithaca 25 Sep (KR), only report.
Yellow-billed Cuckoo: max & last 2 CU 25 Sep (LSa), high.
Snowy Owl: Hector 30 Nov (fide FB), only report.
Short-eared Owl: arr SaMu 5 Nov; Ledyard 9 Nov.
Com. Nighthawk: max 2 MNWR 6 Sep; last Dryden 11 Oct (MF), late.
Ruby-throated Hummingbird: max 3 Catlin 15 Sep, low; last Beam Hill TOMP 20 Sep.
Yellow-bellied Sapsucker: max 10 Beam Hill TOMP 17 Sep (JM), high.
Hairy Woodpecker: max 5 SaW 16 Sep (CCC), high, +.
Pileated Woodpecker: max 4 Brooktondale 8 Oct (LC), high.

FLYCATCHERS – WAXWINGS

E. Wood-Pewee: max 4 MNWR 4 Sep; last Dryden 7 Oct (EBird), late.
Yellow-bellied Flycatcher: arr Dryden 3 Sep, late; last Dryden 10 Sep.

Least Flycatcher: SCNC 7 Sep; last JCAP 14 Sep.
E. Phoebe: max 9 SCNC 7 Sep; last StP 2 Nov.
Great Crested Flycatcher: max 2 Ecology House TOMP 2 Sep (SH); last SaW 13 Sep.
N. Shrike: arr Summerhill 7 Nov.
Yellow-throated Vireo: HoHo 17 Sep; last StP 18 Sep.
Blue-headed Vireo: max 4 Caroline 12 Oct; last Caroline 2 Nov, -.
Warbling Vireo: max 6 CU 17 Sep (SH, TL), high; last SaW 29 Sep.
Philadelphia Vireo: max 2 Lansing 26 Sep; last StP 29 Sep.
Red-eyed Vireo: max 8 Caroline 9 Sep; last DLP 19 Oct.
Am. Crow: max 221 Brutus 15 Nov, low, -.
Fish Crow: max 18 StP 23 Nov (EBird), high, +.
Com. Raven: max 10 S Danby 2 Nov (JEL), high.
Purple Martin: max 50 MNWR 3 Sep; last MNWR 1 Oct, +.
Tree Swallow: max 20,000 MNWR 11 Oct; last MNWR 19 Oct, +.
N. Rough-winged Swallow: max 200 MNWR 1 Oct; last MNWR 19 Oct, +.
Bank Swallow: max 50 StP 3 Sep; last HoHo 3 Oct (EBird), late, +.
Cliff Swallow: max 50 StP 3 Sep (EBird), high; last Lansing 4 Nov (BT), late, +.
Barn Swallow: max 150 The Center at Horseheads CHEM 4 Sep; last MNWR 4 Oct, +.
Red-breasted Nuthatch: max 20 HHSF 12 Oct (MC), high, +.
Brown Creeper: max 6 HHSF 12 Oct (MC), high.
Carolina Wren: max 4 Seneca Falls 9 Nov (CSa), high.
House Wren: max 4 Lansing 26 Sep; last Catlin 24 Oct, +.
Winter Wren: max 8 Shindagin Hollow SF TOMP 13 Oct (StF), high, -.
Marsh Wren: max 2 MNWR 29 Sep; last

Montezuma Wetlands Complex 19 Oct, -.
Ruby-crowned Kinglet: arr SaW 14 Sep; max 21 Caroline 11 Oct; last Pine City 30 Nov, -.
Blue-gray Gnatcatcher: max 6 StP 3 Sep; last StP 16 Sep.
Veery: max 23 Caroline 11 Sep; last Caroline 12 Oct (SK), late, -.
Gray-cheeked Thrush: arr Dryden 16 Sep; max 31 N Ithaca 28 Sep; last 2 Caroline 13 Oct, -.
Swainson's Thrush: arr 28 Caroline 11 Sep; max 300 N Ithaca 21 Sep (KR), high; last 36 N Ithaca 6 Oct, -.
Hermit Thrush: max 60 N Ithaca 6 Oct (KR), high, +.
Wood Thrush: max 248 N Ithaca 28 Sep (KR), high; last CU 14 Nov (MA!), late, +.
Gray Catbird: max 20 CU 26 Sep; last JCAP 28 Nov (EBird), late.
Brown Thrasher: Niles 18 Sep; last Caroline 28 Sep.
Am. Pipit: arr MyPt 13 Sep; max 201 Genoa 1 Nov; last 7 MyPt 29 Nov.

WARBLERS

Blue-winged Warbler: max 2 SaW 3 Sep; last CU 9 Sep.
GOLDEN-WINGED WARBLER: Caroline 17 Sep (SK), only report.
Tennessee Warbler: max 2 SCNC 28 Sep; last 2 Dryden 29 Sep.
Orange-crowned Warbler: arr SaW 11 Sep; max 2 SCNC 28 Sep; last Caroline 13 Oct.
Nashville Warbler: max 6 Dryden 3 Oct; last KH 18 Oct.
N. Parula: arr CU 1 Sep (DGr), early; SaW 28 Sep; last Gleason Audubon Wildlife Sanctuary STEU 4 Oct.
Yellow Warbler: max 3 StP 15 Sep; last HoHo 17 Sep.
Chestnut-sided Warbler: max 7 CU 1 Sep; last SaW 4 Oct.
Magnolia Warbler: max 25 Dryden 10 Sep (JM), high; last 3 StP 5 Oct.
Black-throated Blue Warbler: max 2 Caroline 20 Sep; last HHSF 12 Oct, -.

Black-throated Green Warbler: max 15 Dryden 10 Sep; last Dryden 12 Oct, -.
Blackburnian Warbler: max 2 SaW 3 Sep; last StP 5 Oct (TL, CN), late, -.
Pine Warbler: MNWR 30 Sep; last HoHo 18 Oct, -.
Prairie Warbler: Caroline 12 Sep; CU 14 Sep.
Palm Warbler: arr StP 15 Sep; max 2 SCNC 27 Sep; last KH 1 Nov, -.
Bay-breasted Warbler: max 2 Caroline 21 Sep; last Dryden 28 Sep.
Blackpoll Warbler: max 3 CU 25 Sep; last Dryden 12 Oct.
Cerulean Warbler: SaW 27 Sep (EBird), only report.
Black-and-white Warbler: max 5 CU 1 Sep (DGr, MH), high; last DLP 19 Oct (J&KM), late.
Am. Redstart: max 3 CU 1 Sep; last Caroline 7 Oct (EBird), late, -.
Ovenbird: max 2 Caroline 4 Sep; last 2 Dryden 3 Oct.
N. Waterthrush: SaW 13 Sep; last SaW 26 Sep.
Louisiana Waterthrush: Ithaca 3 Sep; last Ithaca 5 Sep (FW), late.
CONNECTICUT WARBLER: Caroline 21 Sep (SK!), only report.
Com. Yellowthroat: max 20 Lansing 26 Sep; last Bundy Rd Marsh TOMP 15 Nov.
Hooded Warbler: last SaW 29 Sep.
Wilson's Warbler: max 3 CU 3 Sep; last KH 18 Oct (J&SGr, ph), late.
Canada Warbler: max 6 Dryden 11 Sep (NM), high; last Caroline 21 Sep (SK).

TANAGERS – WEAVERS

Scarlet Tanager: max 4 CU 1 Sep (JEl), high; last SaW 4 Oct.
E. Towhee: max 5 Ithaca 26 Sep, low; last Covert 30 Nov (BiMc), late.
Am. Tree Sparrow: arr 6 Lansing 23 Oct (JEl); max 30 Caroline 15 Nov, -.
Chipping Sparrow: max 20 CU 27 Sep; last Ithaca 30 Nov.
Field Sparrow: max 4 Caroline 7 Sep, low; last SCNC 8 Nov, -.
Vesper Sparrow: Dryden 12 Oct; last

Dryden 23 Oct.

Savannah Sparrow: max 10 N Ithaca 10 Oct; last StP 15 Nov, -.

NELSON'S SHARP-TAILED SPARROW: HoHo 12 Oct (DL!, mob), only report.

Fox Sparrow: arr DLP Trail 27 Sep (St&SuF), early; max 12 Dryden 2 Nov (EBird), high; last 2 Dryden 22 Nov.

Lincoln's Sparrow: arr & max 2 Canandaigua 7 Sep; last SaW 15 Nov, late.

White-throated Sparrow: max 200 Dryden 11 Oct (J&KM), high, -.

White-crowned Sparrow: arr 2 MNWR 24 Sep; max 27 SCNC 19 Oct.

Lapland Longspur: arr 2 SaMu 5 Nov; max 3 SaMu 11 Nov, -.

Snow Bunting: arr MNWR 17 Oct (SH, TL), early; max 30 Aurora 17 Oct (FB).

N. Cardinal: max 9 Covert 30 Nov, low, +.

Rose-breasted Grosbeak: max 8 Caroline 17 Sep; last Enfield 23 Nov (BGU, LL), late.

Indigo Bunting: max 4 SCNC 27 Sep; last Cornell garden plots TOMP 12 Oct, -.

DICKCISSEL: Caroline 10 Sep (SK); Enfield 23 Nov (BGU, LL).

Bobolink: max 7 Caroline 18 Sep; last StP 2 Oct (KR), late.

E. Meadowlark: max 14 Ithaca YMCA TOMP 22 Oct; last Ledyard 16 Nov.

Rusty Blackbird: arr Dryden 3 Oct; max 50 Dryden L Trail TOMP 11 Nov, -.

Com. Grackle: max 9900 EID 4 Nov; last East Ithaca Recreation Way TOMP 22 Nov, +.

Baltimore Oriole: max 2 Gleason Meadows CHEM 7 Sep (BO); last JCAP 21 Sep (EBird), late.

Com. Redpoll: Summerhill SF CAYU 7 Nov (MY), only report.

Pine Siskin: arr 2 Summerhill 8 Sep (fide MY), early; max 16 Dryden 29 Nov, +.

Evening Grosbeak: arr & max 35 Summerhill 10 Sep (MY), early, +.

House Sparrow: max 45 Brutus 15 Nov (EBird), +.

REGION 4 – SUSQUEHANNA

Andrew Mason

1039 Peck Street, Jefferson NY 12093

reg4sightings@mail.com

September ushered in a damp fall season, with over 3” of precipitation recorded at the Binghamton weather station for the first two days of the month. September ended with nearly double the normal rainfall and below average temperatures. October continued cool and wet, with a slight improvement to above averages in November.

The most significant weather event of the season was Hurricane Isabel, which made landfall in North Carolina 18 September and brought high winds and rains to the Region over the next two days. Although wind-driven accidentals were reported from central NY and the Great Lakes, none caught the eye of Region 4 observers.

In fact, it was the northwest winds following passing cold fronts, rather than Isabel and the season's other tropical storms, that brought excitement to the Region. The Franklin Mt. Hawkwatch near Oneonta had an excellent migration season, in large part due to those favorable winds, as well as nearly 1000 hours of coverage from a team of dedicated counters. Franklin Mt. set seasonal records for 11 of the 15 typically seen species, as well as for total birds, with 6546 counted (statistics cover 18 August 2003 to 1 January 2004). In addition, a first for the hawkwatch – **Black Vulture** – was spotted by Kay Crane and Larry Dake on 2 September.

An outstanding flight occurred at Franklin Mt. on 21 October, when Larry Dake, Ron Frasier and Tom Salo tallied 795 raptors, including 681 Red-tailed Hawks, 19 Golden Eagles and 8 Bald Eagles. But the most noteworthy event of the season came on 20 November, when Ron Frasier counted an astounding **51 Golden Eagles**. Despite frantic cell phone calls and e-mail messages, no other Franklin Mt. regulars were present to share this historic day. The 51 Golden Eagles stood as the largest single day count of this species in eastern North America. By coincidence or otherwise, the Allegheny Front Hawkwatch in central Pennsylvania also counted 51 Golden Eagles 3 days later!

Waterfowl also made a good showing, with several locally uncommon to rare species reported, including Tundra Swan, Northern Pintail and Long-tailed Duck. Likewise, Regional irregulars such as American Golden-Plover, Semipalmated Sandpiper and Bonaparte's Gull made appearances.

Open-country birds continue to struggle, with low or absent counts of Upland Sandpiper, grassland sparrows and Eastern Meadowlark. Even Franklin Mt.'s good count of Northern Harriers likely represented a concentration of migrants rather than increased breeding success.

Species expanding into the Region continued that trend, with Red-bellied

Woodpecker, Fish Crow, Common Raven and Carolina Wren all showing increases.

Other passerines appeared to be holding their own, with flycatchers, vireos, spotted-breasted thrushes and sparrows reported steadily, if unspectacularly. At the Vestal banding station, Gail Kirch reported excellent numbers of Red-eyed Vireos, Magnolia Warblers and Northern Cardinals, with lower counts of Cedar Waxwings, Dark-eyed Juncos and American Goldfinches, as the species accounts reflect.

Bob Donnelly described a steady movement of warblers by his house on Otsego Lake on 5 October. Mixed flocks included Yellow-rumped, Pine, Blackpoll and Connecticut. Intrigued by the Yellow-rumps flycatching from his deck railing, Bob captured several flies and offered them from his hand. One bold bird flew in to take the insects, even landing on Bob's hand.

Other reported species on the down side of the ledger included Common Nighthawk, Black-and-white Warbler and Indigo Bunting, while good numbers came in for Philadelphia Vireo and Connecticut Warbler. In addition, Rusty Blackbird made its best Regional showing in years.

Finally, the lead-ins to winter brought promise, with Northern Shrike, Red-breasted Nuthatch, Pine Siskin and Evening Grosbeak all reported in respectable numbers.

CONTRIBUTORS

Matt Albright, Cutler & Jeanette Baldwin, Christine Barnes, Dianne Benko, Lois Bingley, John Birkett, Gerianne Carillo, Eleanor Carson, Germaine Connolly, Andy Cooper, Kay Crane, Marty & Mary Ann Cuff, Larry Dake, Dolores & Eve Daniels, John Davis, Marilyn Davis, Carmine DiPronio, Bob Donnelly, Janice Downie, Margaret Ferranti, Finch Hollow Nature Center staff, Miles & Ron Frasier, Fred Fries, John Fritz, Bob Grosek, Steve Hall, Jim Hill, Dorian Huneke, Spencer Hunt (SH), Becky Gretton, Erin Hewitt, Bill Howard, Nick Kaldis, Marion Karl, Gail Kirch, Diane & Tim Krein, Sharon Krotzer, Bill Kuk, Daniel Leete, Clinton Lutz, Andy Mason, David McCartt, Evelyn & George Mead, Marji Miller, Naturalist's Club of Broome County, Earle Peterson, Marie Petuh, Nick Plavac, Don Quataert, Tom Salo, Charlie Scheim, Rose Smith, Tioga Bird Club, Tom Tasber & family, Jan Trzeciak, George Wade, Dan Watkins (DW), Donald & Joanne Weber, Jon Weeks, Michele Weeks, Anne Whitaker, Colleen Wolpert, Matt Young.

ABBREVIATIONS

Bpd – Boland Pd BROO; DorP – Dorchester P BROO; FCD – Flood Control Dam; FMHW – Franklin Mt Hawkwatch DELA; OtsL – Otsego L OTSE; UL – Upper Lisle BROO; VBS – Vestal banding station BROO.

WHISTLING-DUCKS – VULTURES

Brant: 30 OtsL 8 Oct; 250-300 FMHW 9 Oct; 50 FMHW 13 Oct; 1-5 DorP 15 Oct-24 Nov; 35 Port Crane BROO 5 Nov; good numbers.

Tundra Swan: 2 FMHW 6 Nov (RF); 2 DorP 16 Nov (MD); first reports in recent years.

Wood Duck: 29 reports BROO, CHEN; max 50+ Brick Pd CHEN 15 Sep; good count, widespread.

Am. Black Duck: 13 reports; max 7 BPd 3 Oct; low, but typical of recent years.

Blue-winged Teal: 2 BPd 9 Sep; often scarce.

N. Pintail: 2 BPd 27 Oct; Greenwood P BROO 21 Nov; often missed.

Green-winged Teal: 12 reports BROO, COURT; max 16 BPd 7 Nov, good count.

Ring-necked Duck: 4 reports; max 60 Allens L OTSE 7 Nov.

Lesser Scaup: few OtsL 16 Nov; 3 Nanticoke BROO 19 Nov; avg for recent years.

Long-tailed Duck: 2 DorP 2 Nov (M&MC); Cannonsville Res DELA 26 Nov; 2 Canadarago L OTSE 28 Nov; second year reported since 1997.

Bufflehead: 8 reports; 40 OtsL 7 Nov; large flock Burlington OTSE 29 Nov; good count.

Com. Goldeneye: TIOG Nov, only report; often missed.

Hooded Merganser: 5 reports; max 30 Clarke Pd OTSE 16 Nov.

Com. Merganser: numerous reports; max 36 Mirror L TIOG 7 Nov.

Red-breasted Merganser: DorP 10 Oct; Barker BROO 21 Nov; uncommon in Reg.

Ruddy Duck: 3 reports; max 9 Mirror L TIOG 7 Nov; fair count, often missed.

Wild Turkey: 14 reports; max 34 TIOG.

Red-throated Loon: OtsL 16 Nov (BD); Vestal BROO 20-21 Nov (DW, MP); unusual, but increasingly reported.

Com. Loon: 2 DorP 15 Oct; FMHW 16 Oct; DorP 29-30 Oct; 5 OtsL 7 Nov; typical.

Pied-billed Grebe: 10 reports, above avg.
Great Blue Heron: well reported thru; max 5 Vestal BROO 19 Oct.

Great Egret: 5 reports BROO, DELA, TIOG Sept; avg.

Green Heron: 7 reports BROO, TIOG Sept; max 3 Brick Pd TIOG 15 Sep; avg.

BLACK VULTURE: FMHW 2 Sep (KC,LD), first for the hawkwatch.

Turkey Vulture: common Sep, Oct; tot 538 FMHW, 307% above avg; max 101 FMHW 29 Sep, including 97 in one kettle.

HAWKS – ALCIDS

Osprey: tot 252 FMHW, 172% above avg; Oneonta OTSE 14 Nov, late; 12 other reports.

Bald Eagle: tot 185 FMHW, 172% above avg; 16 other reports, widespread.

N. Harrier: tot 117 FMHW, 94% above avg; 7 other reports.

Sharp-shinned Hawk: tot 645 FMHW, 62% above avg.; 19 other reports.

Cooper's Hawk: tot 149 FMHW, 157% above avg; 17 other reports.

N. Goshawk: tot 51 FMHW, 126% above avg; no other reports.

Red-shouldered Hawk: tot 67 FMHW, 21% above avg; 5 reports BROO.

Broad-winged Hawk: tot 1088 FMHW, 61% above avg; 4 other reports, low.

Red-tailed Hawk: tot 2960 FMHW, 71% above avg; 32 Sidney DELA 23 Oct; widespread elsewhere thru.

Rough-legged Hawk: tot 22 FMHW, 11% above avg; arr FMHW 14 Oct; 2 BROO Nov; 2 OTSE Nov.

Golden Eagle: tot 204 FMHW, 105% above avg; Burlington OTSE 20 Nov.

Am. Kestrel: tot 138 FMHW, 67% above avg; 14 other reports.

Merlin: tot 35 FMHW, 178% above avg; 5 reports BROO.

Peregrine Falcon: tot 30 FMHW, 204% above avg; Binghamton BROO 15 Nov; 2 Binghamton 22 Nov, likely residents.

Am. Coot: Endwell BROO 22 Oct; Hillcrest Gravel Pits BROO 24, 28 Oct.

Am. Golden-Plover: DorP 15, 17 Nov (BK, MP); Lisle BROO 15, 19, 21 Nov (BG, BH); rare, but third consecutive fall reported.

Lesser Yellowlegs: DorP 9 Sep.

Greater Yellowlegs: 8 reports BROO, TIOG; max 8 Cincinnatus L CORT 29 Oct.

Spotted Sandpiper: singles regular DorP Sept, Oct.

Semipalmated Sandpiper: 7 TIOG Sep; uncommon in Reg.

Least Sandpiper: 2 TIOG Sep.

Pectoral Sandpiper: 8 Cincinnatus L CORT 29 Oct; UL 30 Oct; uncommon.

Dunlin: DorP 29 Oct; 2 DorP 7 Nov; 2 Cincinnatus L CORT 29 Oct; uncommon.

Wilson's Snipe: 12 Cincinnatus L CORT 29 Oct.

Am. Woodcock: TIOG Sep; fair numbers OTSE Nov.

Bonaparte's Gull: 2 DorP 15 Oct; uncommon, but reported 3 of last 4 years at this location.

Herring Gull: max 28 TIOG 29 Nov.

Great Black-backed Gull: DorP 9 Nov; uncommon.

PIGEONS – WOODPECKERS

Black-billed Cuckoo: TIOG Sep; VBS 8 Sep; often missed.

E. Screech-Owl: TIOG Sep, Oct, Nov; VBS 14, 28 Sep; Vestal BROO 11 Oct; Apalachin BROO 1 Nov; Endwell BROO 27 Nov; avg, but up from recent years.

Great Horned Owl: TIOG Sep, Oct, Nov; Port Crane BROO 7 Oct, 1 Nov, 23 Nov; Vestal BROO 11 Oct; Apalachin BROO 1 Nov; avg.

Barred Owl: TIOG Oct, Nov; Vestal BROO 10 Oct; Triangle BROO 18 Oct, 1-2 Nov; good count.

Com. Nighthawk: TIOG 12 Sep (SH), only report; continued scarce.

Chimney Swift: Vestal BROO 2 Sep; BPd 2 Sep; TIOG 7 Sep.

Ruby-throated Hummingbird: 10 Sep reports; last Vestal BROO 26 Sep.

Belted Kingfisher: well reported thru.

Red-bellied Woodpecker: TIOG Sep, Oct, Nov; Port Crane BROO thru; 4 other reports.

Yellow-bellied Sapsucker: TIOG Sep, Oct; 8 other reports; last Vestal BROO 20 Oct, late.

Pileated Woodpecker: well reported thru.

FLYCATCHERS – WAXWINGS

E. Wood-Pewee: 6 reports BROO Sep; avg.

Yellow-bellied Flycatcher: VBS 28 Sep.

Empidonax sp.: IBM Lower Woods BROO 2 Nov, very late; unusual other than VBS.

“Traill’s” Flycatcher: VBS 14 Sep.

E. Phoebe: well reported Sep, Oct; max 6 UL 21 Sep; last TIOG 30 Oct.

Great Crested Flycatcher: TIOG Sep, only report; often missed.

E. Kingbird: TIOG Sep; BROO Co. Landfill 3 Sep; Glen Aubrey BROO 5 Sep.

N. Shrike: FMHW 16 Nov; Otsego OTSE 28 Nov; Middlefield OTSE 30 Nov; avg for invasion years.

Yellow-throated Vireo: TIOG Sep; UL 7 Sep; 2 Ely P BROO 9 Sep; DorP 9 Sep; good count.

Blue-headed Vireo: TIOG Sep; UL 9 Sep; VBS 10 Sep; UL 12 Sep; VBS 1 Oct; Port Crane BROO 2, 4, 5 Oct; Morris OTSE 9 Oct; BROO Co. Landfill 10 Oct; good count.

Warbling Vireo: TIOG Sep; Endwell BROO 7 Sep; Port Crane BROO 8 Sep; UL 21 Sep; good count.

Philadelphia Vireo: VBS 15, 24, 30 Sep; often missed.

Red-eyed Vireo: well-reported thru; 10 Dorchester/UL BROO 9 Sep; tot 83 VBS, highest count since 1989, when banding began at this station.

Fish Crow: Owego TIOG Sep, Oct; Hillcrest Gravel Pits BROO 28 Oct; Hinmans Corners BROO 31 Oct; Grippen P BROO 3 Nov; BPd 7, 12 Nov; continuing increase and spread.

Com. Raven: widespread and regular; max 10 FMHW 15 Nov.
Horned Lark: 45 Smith Hill Rd Lisle BROO 30 Oct; 40 same location 31 Oct (JW); 4 reports n BROO Nov; good count.
Tree Swallow: last 30 Chenango Bridge BROO.
Barn Swallow: max 50 DorP 7 Sep.
Red-breasted Nuthatch: 30 reports, increasing thru Oct-Nov.
Brown Creeper: 27 reports, good.
Carolina Wren: widely and regularly reported, particularly BROO, TIOG.
House Wren: 10 reports; last Johnson City BROO 13 Oct.
Winter Wren: only 3 reports.
Marsh Wren: BpD 1 Nov (JW); often missed.
Golden-crowned Kinglet: 20 reports 3 Oct-26 Nov; good.
Ruby-crowned Kinglet: numerous reports late Sep-early Nov, especially BROO.
Blue-gray Gnatcatcher: UL 7 Sep (JW); often missed.
E. Bluebird: well reported; max 14 Glen Aubrey BROO 24 Oct.
Veery: 3 reports BROO Sep; 1 report TIOG Sep; continued low.
Gray-checked Thrush: VBS 30 Sep, 1 Oct; often missed.
Swainson's Thrush: 6 reports VBS late Sep-early Oct, good.
Wood Thrush: 11 reports; last Triangle BROO 17 Oct.
Gray Catbird: VBS, avg numbers.
N. Mockingbird: 13 reports.
Brown Thrasher: 8 reports; fairly good for recent years.
Am. Pipit: 10 reports; max 48 Lisle BROO 5 Nov.
Cedar Waxwing: well reported; max 100 TIOG 11-16 Nov; no large flocks VBS.

WARBLERS

Blue-winged Warbler: 3 reports BROO Sep; avg for recent years.
Nashville Warbler: 6 reports; last VBS

18 Oct; avg count.
N. Parula: 2 reports, uncommon.
Yellow Warbler: 3 Port Crane BROO 8 Sep.
Chestnut-sided Warbler: 9 reports; last Cole P BROO 1 Oct, late.
Magnolia Warbler: well reported thru Sep; last VBS 12 Oct; tot 65 VBS, excellent.
Black-throated Blue Warbler: VBS 30 Sep; Greybark Ln BROO 13 Oct.
Yellow-rumped Warbler: max 50+ Otsego OTSE 5 Oct.
Black-throated Green Warbler: well reported BROO, TIOG thru early Oct; max 6 VBS 29 Sep.
Blackburnian Warbler: TIOG Sep, only report.
Pine Warbler: FMHW 2 Oct; few Otsego OTSE 5 Oct.
Prairie Warbler: Roundtop P BROO 11 Sep (DW), first fall report since 1995.
Palm Warbler: BROO, TIOG regular mid-Sep thru Oct.
"Western" Palm Warbler: VBS 13 Sep.
Blackpoll Warbler: 5 reports BROO Sep; few Otsego OTSE 5 Oct; only fair for recent years.
Black-and-white Warbler: 2 reports Sep, continued low.
Am. Redstart: 11 reports; last Port Crane BROO 4 Oct, fairly good.
Ovenbird: 13 VBS Sep.
N. Waterthrush: 4 VBS Sep.
Connecticut Warbler: UL 7 Sep (JW); VBS 21 Sep; several Otsego OTSE 5 Oct (BD); excellent Reg count.
Mourning Warbler: Cole P BROO 1 Oct, uncommon in Reg.
Com. Yellowthroat: regular thru Sep.
Wilson's Warbler: 5 VBS Sep; FMHW 10 Oct; avg.
Canada Warbler: UL 12 Sep; VBS 13 Sep; avg.

TANAGERS – WEAVERS

Scarlet Tanager: 4 reports BROO Sep; VBS 2 Oct, avg for recent years.
E. Towhee: regular Sep, Oct; last IBM

Lower Woods BROO 2 Nov.

Am. Tree Sparrow: arr 5 UL 9 Nov; widespread arrival mid-Nov.

Chipping Sparrow: common Sep, Oct; last TIOG Nov 4.

Field Sparrow: 10 reports BROO Sep, Oct.

Fox Sparrow: TIOG 29 Oct; most arr late Oct; regular FMHW thru.

Lincoln's Sparrow: Morris OTSE 8-10 Oct; 5 reports BROO mid Sep-mid Oct; good.

Swamp Sparrow: regular Finch Hollow BROO thru Oct; 7 other reports.

White-throated Sparrow: regular late Sep thru.

White-crowned Sparrow: arr Bradley Creek FCD & 5 BROO Co Landfill 8 Nov; regular thru mid Nov.

Dark-eyed Junco: regular thru; only low numbers VBS.

Snow Bunting: arr DorP 25 Oct; regular DorP thru; 20 Otsego OTSE 26 Nov.

N. Cardinal: tot 25 VBS, very high.

Rose-breasted Grosbeak: TIOG Sep, only report.

Indigo Bunting: TIOG Sep, only report.
Bobolink: TIOG Sep, only report, usually missed.

Red-winged Blackbird: max 5000+ Port Crane BROO 5 Nov.

E. Meadowlark: Glen Aubrey BROO 6-7 Oct; Castle Cr BROO 9 Oct; continued low.

Rusty Blackbird: 11 reports from 8 locations mid Oct-early Nov; excellent count for Reg.

Purple Finch: 15 reports spread thru; continuing to improve.

House Finch: well-reported; max 18 Johnson City BROO 13 Oct.

Pine Siskin: Milford OTSE 20 Nov; Binghamton BROO 25 Nov; 34 Sherburne CHEN 28 Nov; 3 Burlington OTSE 28 Nov; Triangle BROO 28-30 Nov.

Am. Goldfinch: no large flocks VBS.

Evening Grosbeak: Binghamton BROO 25 Nov; Triangle BROO 17, 18, 22 Nov; 10 Delhi DELA 26 Nov; 3 FMHW 29 Nov.

REGION 5 – ONEIDA LAKE BASIN

Bill Purcell

281 Baum Road, Hastings NY 13076
wpurcell@twcny.rr.com

For September, the average temperature was 63.2°F, 1.9° above normal, and there was 3.14" of rainfall, 1.01" less than normal. The October averages were 48.6°, 1.5° below normal, with 4.28" of rainfall, 1.08" above normal. The November temperature was 42.2°, 2.5° warmer than average, with 3.14" of precipitation, 0.63" less than normal. There was 10.5" of snow in November.

Hurricane Isabel tracked to our west on 18 September, a favorable path for storm-blown birds, but for the first two days it looked as if we might see little related to the hurricane. A **Brown Pelican** was sighted on DeRuyter Reservoir on the afternoon of 19 September, but it wasn't until the following day that most of the storm related reports began. On the morning of 20 September, a Parasitic

Jaeger and three phalaropes were seen at Derby Hill, birds that may have come in from the Atlantic or just put down in their southbound migration. In the afternoon, the Region's first live record for **Black Skimmer** was found at Oswego Harbor. On 21 September, at least two **Wilson's Storm-Petrels**, a Regional first, two **Black-capped Petrels** and a **Laughing Gull** were seen at Fair Haven. One of the storm-petrels, in seemingly weakened condition as it flew close to the observers, was captured and eaten by a Ring-billed Gull. Finally, on 22 September, an immature **Royal Tern**, another Regional first, cruised past Derby Hill. Some observers also checked Onondaga and Oneida Lakes, but nothing unusual was found.

A strong low pressure system moved through the Region on 15 October, with sustained winds of over 40 MPH, gusting to 60+, along Lake Ontario. The winds and heavy rain kept many birds from flying that day, but 17 Parasitic Jaegers moved past Derby Hill. Many of them were adults in breeding plumage and the rest seemed to be sub-adult birds. It was the best single day flight since 1983. Another strong system on 29 November produced nine Black-legged Kittiwakes, a high number of Bonaparte's Gulls and the only reports of Pomarine Jaeger and Little Gull for the season.

The waterfowl flight was spread out, with lots of reports for most species but not many daily high counts. Snow Goose was not seen in the high numbers of some recent years; it's possible that observers spend less time looking for them now. The Brant flight was once again spread out, dabbling duck numbers seemed ordinary and diving duck numbers were thought to be low. No Canvasbacks were reported. Red-throated Loon and Red-necked Grebe were reported with some frequency, usually as one or two per day, with the exception of nine Red-necked Grebes on Onondaga Lake. **Great Cormorant** returned to Oswego Harbor for the first time in three years. A Cattle Egret was seen in a Jamesville pasture but stayed only briefly.

The largest Broad-winged Hawk movement came on the strong east winds that preceded Hurricane Isabel. There were only a few Rough-legged Hawks noted by the end of November, but six Golden Eagle reports are in line with the recent increase in sightings. Merlin numbers were good and there were reports indicating that Peregrine Falcons were again in residence in Syracuse. American Coot numbers remained low at Fair Haven. Two **Sandhill Cranes** over Camillus were a surprise.

Delta Lake was drawn down only slightly this year and as a result only a few shorebirds were found there on occasional visits to the area by birders. Abundant weeds on Onondaga Lake attracted shorebirds in September, **Buff-breasted Sandpipers** again spent time at a Madison County sod farm and Purple Sandpiper was regular at Fair Haven for nearly a month. Whimbrel, Ruddy Turnstone and White-rumped Sandpiper were each reported only once and Red Knot was missed this season. Several areas often favored by Short-eared Owls were checked, but other than a single migrant none were seen until the end of November, suggesting a poor year for rodents. A late Ruby-throated Hummingbird lingered at a Syracuse

feeder into November. Some species not reported were rails (other than American Coot), Iceland Gull, Snowy Owl and Common Nighthawk.

Many observers remarked on the scarcity of passerine migrants this season and their reports bore that out. In Oneida County, Brenda Best and Matt Perry both noted good flights on 16 September; Perry noted that the fall flight was not great but that it was steady. Many warbler species went unreported, including: both "winged" warblers, Cape May, Cerulean, Northern Waterthrush and Mourning. Sparrow and icterid numbers were also low. By the end of the season, the finch flight was still less than hoped for. Common Redpolls arrived in late October and numbers stayed low through November, Pine Siskins and Evening Grosbeaks were present in low numbers only and there were no Pine Grosbeaks or crossbills.

Even with all of the Hurricane Isabel birds, the season total was only 224 species, which might be considered a little lower than average. The highlights were many, including **Brown Pelican**, Great Cormorant, **Black-capped Petrel**, **Wilson's Storm-Petrel**, Sandhill Crane, Buff-breasted Sandpiper, Laughing Gull, **Royal Tern** and **Black Skimmer**.

CONTRIBUTORS

Faith Baker, Brenda Best, Sue Boettger, Joseph Brin, Bernie Carr, Dorothy Crumb, Natalia Garcia, Bill Gruenbaum, Barbara Herrgesell, Jody Hildreth, Gene Huggins, Kevin McGann, David Nash, David Neveu, Matt Perry, Gerard Phillips, Bill Purcell, Marge Rusk, Mickey Scilingo, Chris Spagnoli, Maureen Staloff, Matt Victoria, David Wheeler, Matt Young, Ken Zoller.

ABBREVIATIONS

BRH – Bishop Rd Hawkwatch, Pulaski; Bville – Baldwinsville; CM – Clay Marsh; DH – Derby Hill; DL – Delta L; FH – Fair Haven, Little Sodus Bay and vicinity; GSC – Great Swamp Conservancy n MADI; HIWMA – Howland I WMA; LOL – L Ontario littoral; OneiL – Oneida L; OnonL – Onondaga L; SFNS – Spring Farms Nature Sanctuary, Kirkland; SHF – Sky High Sod Farms, T Sullivan; SPd – Sandy Pond; SSSP – Selkirk Shores SP; StM – St Mary's Cemetery, Dewitt; SVB – Sylvan and Verona Beach; Syr - Syracuse.

WHISTLING-DUCKS – VULTURES

Snow Goose: arr 3 Bville 23 Sep; max 130 W Winfield 5 Nov; lower than recent years.

Brant: arr 23 DH 1 Oct; max 1400 DH 18 Oct.

Tundra Swan: DL 17-18 Oct, unusual in eastern half of Reg; max 20 Constantia 13 Nov.

Wood Duck: max 40 SVB 4 Nov.

Gadwall: max 23 FH 26 Oct.

Am. Wigeon: max 135 FH 17 Oct.

Am. Black Duck: max 155 DH 2 Oct.

Blue-winged Teal: last 15 DL 27 Oct.

N. Shoveler: max 8 FH 26 Oct.

N. Pintail: max 174 DH 16 Oct.

Green-winged Teal: max 42 DL 26 Oct.

Redhead: 3 Deer Creek WMA 9 Nov; 4

FH 15 Nov; only reports.

Ring-necked Duck: max 100 Woodman Pd 15 Nov.

Greater Scaup: max 43 DH 16 Oct.

Lesser Scaup: max 11 DH 16 Oct.

Surf Scoter: max 46 DH 2 Oct.

White-winged Scoter: max 127 DH 16 Oct.

Black Scoter: max 110 DH 22 Oct; 14 OnonL 6 Nov, good away from LOL.

Long-tailed Duck: max 170 DH 14 Nov.

Bufflehead: max 25 SPd 6 Nov.

Com. Goldeneye: max 480 LOL 9 Nov.

Hooded Merganser: max 44 SPd 9 Nov.

Com. Merganser: max 300 DeRuyter Res & Bradley Brook Res 29 Nov.

Red-breasted Merganser: max 150 OneiL 26 Nov.

Ruddy Duck: max 35 Minoa 26 Oct.

Red-throated Loon: arr DH 6 Nov; max 3 Oswego 26 Nov.

Com. Loon: arr LOL 21 Sep; max 30 DH 26 Nov.

Pied-billed Grebe: max 2 per day.

Horned Grebe: max 35 FH 3 Nov.

Red-necked Grebe: SPd 20 Sep; max 9 OnonL 26 Sep; 1-2 per day LOL after 20 Oct, fairly common.

BROWN PELICAN: DeRuyter Res 19-20 Sep (John Kennedy, ph to NYSARC).

Double-crested Cormorant: max 1000 DH 16 Oct; 460 OnonL 21 Sep.

Great Cormorant: 2 Oswego 23-27 Nov (BP, mob).

Am. Bittern: 4 reports, last Van Buren 12 Oct.

Great Blue Heron: max 20 DL 26 Oct.

Great Egret: max 3 GSC 12 Sep & 3 OnonL 20 Sep.

Cattle Egret: Jamesville 5 Nov (*fide* Ben Burt).

Green Heron: max 11 OnonL 4 Sep; last Oneida 9 Oct.

BLACK-CAPPED PETREL: 2 FH 21 Sep (GP, KM, BP, NYSARC).

WILSON'S STORM-PETREL: 2-3 FH 21 Sep (GP, KM, BP, NYSARC).

Black-crowned Night-Heron: 1-2 OnonL thru Sep; 2 SPd 13 Sep.

Turkey Vulture: max 356 BRH 19 Oct.

HAWKS – ALCIDS

Osprey: max 4 BRH 8 Sep; SPd 16 Nov.

Bald Eagle: max 5 BRH 8 Sep.

N. Harrier: max 12 BRH 22 Oct; Beaver Ri 9 Nov, late in Adks.

Sharp-shinned Hawk: max 9 BRH 19 Oct.

Cooper's Hawk: max 6 BRH 19 Oct.

N. Goshawk: 5 singles thru.

Red-shouldered Hawk: 2 Widrig Rd ONEI 17 Sep; Oneida 11 Oct; BRH 19 Oct.

Broad-winged Hawk: max 271 SSSP 18 Sep; last Hastings 4 Oct.

Red-tailed Hawk: max 256 BRH 22 Oct.

Rough-legged Hawk: arr SPd 19 Oct; max 3 Mexico 30 Nov; little evidence of any concentration.

Golden Eagle: SFNS 26 Sep, early; BRH 22 Oct; Verona 25 Oct; DH 26 Oct; Hannibal 14 Nov; SFNS 25 Nov.

Am. Kestrel: max 9 BRH 8 Sep.

Merlin: 15+ reports.

Peregrine Falcon: 1-2 frequenting Syr Univ campus thru; 8 others 18 Sep-9 Oct.

Am. Coot: max 6 FH 5 Nov.

Sandhill Crane: 2 Camillus 9 Sep (MV).

Black-bellied Plover: max 6 SPd 10 Nov.

Am. Golden-Plover: max 4 SHF 7 Sep.

Semipalmated Plover: max 18 SPd 5 Sep; last 3 FH 21 Sep.

Killdeer: max 90 SHF 1 Sep.

Greater Yellowlegs: max 20 OnonL 21 Sep.

Lesser Yellowlegs: max 50 OnonL 2 Sep; 7 DL 26 Oct; last 10 DeRuyter 9 Nov.

Solitary Sandpiper: last 2 Cicero 28 Sep.

Spotted Sandpiper: max 3 OnonL 10-20 Sep; last DL 20 Oct.

Whimbrel: SPd 13 Sep.

Ruddy Turnstone: Oswego 20 Sep, only report.

Sanderling: max 50 SPd 10 Nov.

Semipalmated Sandpiper: max 35 SPd 5 Sep; last 2 DL 29 Sep.

Least Sandpiper: max 16 Cicero 8 Sep; last 5 SPd 21 Sep.
White-rumped Sandpiper: SPd 6 Nov, only report.
Baird's Sandpiper: max 6 SHF 1 Sep; last SPd 25 Sep.
Pectoral Sandpiper: max 6 OnonL 20 Sep.
Purple Sandpiper: arr FH 26 Oct; max 6 DH 13 Nov; last FH 22 Nov.
Dunlin: arr SPd 25 Sep; max 135 FH 3 Nov; other highs 60 DL 3 Nov and 75 SPd 10 Nov.
Stilt Sandpiper: OnonL 7 Sep; SPd 20 Sep.
Buff-breasted Sandpiper: 1-2 SHF thru 5 Sep; SPd 6-9 Sep.
Short-billed Dowitcher: max 7 SPd 1 Sep; max 7 OnonL 7 Sep; last 2 OnonL 20 Sep.
Red-necked Phalarope: DH 20 Sep; 4 FH 21 Sep; SPd 15 Nov.
Red Phalarope: 2 DH 20 Sep; DH 16 Oct.
Parasitic Jaeger: ad DH 20, 23 Sep; max 17 DH 15 Oct; 2 DH 16 Oct; DH 14 Nov.
Pomarine Jaeger: DH 29 Nov.
Laughing Gull: FH 21 Sep (KM).
Little Gull: DH 29 Nov, only report.
Bonaparte's Gull: max 860 DH 29 Nov.
Glaucous Gull: arr singles Oswego and DH 14 Nov.
Black-legged Kittiwake: 3 DH 14 Nov; 1 juv and 8 ad DH 29 Nov, adults very rare inland.
Caspian Tern: max 60 SPd 1 Sep; last 2 FH 1 Oct.
ROYAL TERN: DH 22 Sep (MV, NYSARC), first Reg report.
Com. Tern: max 220 SPd 1 Sep; last SPd 28 Sep.
Forster's Tern: singles SPd 5 Sep, 11 Oct.
Black Tern: max and last 7 SPd 5 Sep.
BLACK SKIMMER: imm Oswego 20 Sep (KM ph, GP, BP, NYSARC); second Reg record and first live sighting.

PIGEONS – WOODPECKERS

Black-billed Cuckoo: last SFNS 9 Oct, late.
Short-eared Owl: FH 7 Nov; 3 Verona 30 Nov.
N. Saw-whet Owl: Syr 24 Nov, dead.
Chimney Swift: max 8 Western 3 Sep.
Ruby-throated Hummingbird: max 5 SFNS 16 Sep; Syr feeder late Oct-5 Nov (Janet Allen, ph).
Red-bellied Woodpecker: Georgetown after 28 Oct, unusual at 1700'.
Yellow-bellied Sapsucker: max 3 Durhamville 11 Oct.

FLYCATCHERS – WAXWINGS

E. Wood-Pewee: max 7 SVB 7 Sep; last Amboy 12 Oct.
Yellow-bellied Flycatcher: singles SFNS 10, 16 Sep.
E. Phoebe: max 5 W Monroe 17 Sep; last Georgetown 28 Oct.
Great Crested Flycatcher: last 2 SVB 7 Sep; last Manlius 7 Sep.
E. Kingbird: max 4 Cicero 3 Sep; last 2 OnonL 7 Sep.
N. Shrike: arr Mexico 25 Oct; 6 other reports; scarce.
Yellow-throated Vireo: 3 singles; last SFNS 15 Sep.
Blue-headed Vireo: max 1-2 per day; last Georgetown 25 Oct.
Warbling Vireo: 3 Durhamville 16 Sep; last W Monroe 22 Sep.
Philadelphia Vireo: 2 SFNS 6 Sep; Durhamville 16 Sep; last SFNS 17 Sep.
Red-eyed Vireo: max 8 Hastings 11 Sep.
Blue Jay: max 200 Camillus 18 Sep.
Fish Crow: 3 OnonL 22 Sep; 3 Shop City Syr 10 Oct; Fayetteville 19 Oct, new location.
Com. Raven: max 5 Georgetown 9 Oct; Split Rock 10 Nov, outskirts of Syr.
Horned Lark: max 146 Mexico 9 Nov.
Tree Swallow: last 20 SPd 19 Oct.
N. Rough-winged Swallow: 2 SPd 14 Sep, only report.
Bank Swallow: 18 SPd 14 Sep, only

report.

Cliff Swallow: max 3 Cicero 3 Sep; last SPd 14 Sep.

Barn Swallow: max 40 SPd 14 Sep; 15 SPd 20 Sep.

Red-breasted Nuthatch: max 19 Sangerfield 11 Oct.

Brown Creeper: max 3 SPd 13 Oct.

Carolina Wren: reports from many locations, all south of Oneil.

House Wren: last SPd 13 Oct.

Winter Wren: max 6 SPd 13 Oct.

Marsh Wren: HIWMA 6 Sep; 2 CM 7 Oct.

Golden-crowned Kinglet: max 11 CM 7 Oct.

Ruby-crowned Kinglet: max 9 SPd 19 Oct; last SFNS 26 Nov.

Veery: last Verona 11 Oct, late.

Gray-cheeked Thrush: 4 reports thru 11 Oct.

Swainson's Thrush: HIWMA 6 Sep; 2 Whiskey Hollow 21 Sep.

Hermit Thrush: max 6 StM 18 Oct; last SFNS 27 Nov.

Wood Thrush: last HIWMA 6 Sep.

Gray Catbird: max 17 StM 6 Sep; last StM 18 Oct.

Brown Thrasher: max 2 Fayetteville 21 Sep; last Durhamville 17 Oct.

Am. Pipit: arr 3 SHF 2 Sep; max 300 Van Buren 19 Oct.

Bohemian Waxwing: Scriba 26 Nov, only report.

Cedar Waxwing: Oct flocks of 50+ fell to 10-20 per day Nov as food diminished.

WARBLERS

Tennessee Warbler: last SFNS 17 Sep.

Orange-crowned Warbler: Georgetown 9 Oct, only report.

Nashville Warbler: max 5 SFNS 10 Sept; last SFNS 11 Oct.

N. Parula: max 3 SFNS 10 Sep.

Yellow Warbler: 2 Durhamville 16 Sep, late.

Chestnut-sided Warbler: last Durhamville 16 Sep.

Magnolia Warbler: max 12 SFNS 16 Sep.

Black-throated Blue Warbler: last Bville 30 Sep.

Yellow-rumped Warbler: max 20 SFNS 11 Oct; very low numbers.

Black-throated Green Warbler: max 20 Durhamville 16 Sep; last Bville 6 Oct.

Blackburnian Warbler: max 3 Hastings 10 Sep; last 2 Durhamville 16 Sep.

Pine Warbler: max 4 SVB 9 Sep.

Palm Warbler: max 6 Camillus 18 Sep; last 2 SFNS 11 Oct.

Bay-breasted Warbler: last SFNS 22 Sep.

Blackpoll Warbler: max 2 per day; last Bville 7 Oct.

Black-and-white Warbler: last Durhamville 16 Sep.

Am. Redstart: last Western 8 Sep.

Ovenbird: last 2 StM 13 Sep.

Connecticut Warbler: imm SFWS 8 Sep (MP).

Com. Yellowthroat: max 10 SFNS 16 Sep; last Hastings 6 Oct.

Hooded Warbler: last SFNS 17 Sep.

Wilson's Warbler: last SFNS 22 Sep.

Canada Warbler: Western 3 Sep; SFNS 11 Sep; last 2 Durhamville 16 Sep.

TANAGERS – WEAVERS

Scarlet Tanager: max 4 Durhamville 16 Sep; last SFNS 22 Sep.

E. Towhee: max 5 CM 7 Oct; max 5 Durhamville 11 Oct; last 14 Oct.

Am. Tree Sparrow: arr 2 SFNS 2 Nov; max 72 Mexico 9 Nov.

Chipping Sparrow: max 15 Western 6 Oct; SFNS 28 Nov; Oneida Castle 30 Nov.

Field Sparrow: max 4 FH 10 Oct; max 4 Pompey 9 Nov.

Vesper Sparrow: max 5 Fabius 24 Oct.

Savannah Sparrow: max 4 Western 8 Sep; last W Winfield 24 Oct.

Fox Sparrow: arr SPd 19 Oct; max only 1-2 per day at any location thru 1 W Winfield 11 Nov.

Song Sparrow: max 45 SPd 19 Oct.
Lincoln's Sparrow: arr Camillus & SFNS 18 Sep; about 5 other reports thru last 1 SSSP 13 Oct.
Swamp Sparrow: max 6 Van Buren 4 Oct.
White-throated Sparrow: max 209 Mexico 11 Oct.
White-crowned Sparrow: arr SFNS 2 Oct; max 40 Mexico 11 Oct; last Georgetown 19 Nov.
Dark-eyed Junco: max 23 Pompey 9 Nov.
Lapland Longspur: 4 singles 12 Oct-11 Nov.
Snow Bunting: arr Fabius 24 Oct; max 200 Griffiss AFB 3 Nov & FH 11 Nov.
Rose-breasted Grosbeak: max 3 Durhamville 16 Sep; last Clinton 25 Sep.

Indigo Bunting: Williamstown 10 Nov; SFNS 23 Nov, late.
Bobolink: max and last 25 Western 3 Sep.
Rusty Blackbird: arr 3 SFNS 26 Sep; max 76 Cicero 11 Oct; 3 Durhamville 30 Nov.
Baltimore Oriole: SFNS 9 Nov, late.
Purple Finch: max 12 Durhamville 11 Oct; mostly sporadic thru.
Com. Redpoll: arr 8 Mexico 25 Oct, only small numbers thru.
Pine Siskin: arr 2 Camillus 20 Nov; max 10 Georgetown 25 Nov.
Am. Goldfinch: max 300 Van Buren 4 Oct.
Evening Grosbeak: arr SSSP 9 Nov; to 10 per day Tug Hill and southern highlands thru.

REGION 6 – ST. LAWRENCE

Lee Harper

58 Old River Road, Massena NY 13662

September was warm and dry. The first two weeks felt like an extension of summer, with warm sunny days. The arrival of Hurricane Isabel in the North Country on the 19th spelled the official end of summer weather. Some rain fell during the remainder of the month, but precipitation was light and no major storms occurred. Rainfall was, on the average, 2" below normal. The warmest areas were in the St Lawrence River Valley and the Lake Ontario Plain, which were 3°F above normal. Without any push from winds from the north, migrants drifted through in small numbers. A series of storms in the second week of October brought fall weather along with an abundance of rainfall. One day totals on 14 October resulted in 2.26" in Copenhagen, Lewis County, 1.94" in Ogdensburg, St. Lawrence County, and 1.05" in Watertown, Jefferson County. The remainder of the month had a variety of warm days as well as some days with frost. The lowest daily extreme temperature was 19° on 25 October at Massena. Average temperatures were 1.12° below normal. The total rainfall for the area was 3.2" above the normal 3", and this offset the below normal precipitation in September. November was notable for major storms, the first of which moved away rapidly and was followed by a series of low pressure systems coming from the west and northwest and creating the first of a series of lake effect snow storms

in Jefferson and Lewis counties. In between these storms, warm south winds brought the temperatures up into the 50s and 60s during the last two weeks of the month.

Highlights of the period included Wild Turkey everywhere, Hurricane Isabel waifs and good late fall numbers of mouse-eating raptors. Lowlights of the period included generally low waterfowl numbers, poor numbers of loons and grebes, very low shorebird numbers, no Snowy Owl for the second year in a row, few lingering half-hardies due to cold October and generally poor flights of migrating passerines.

CONTRIBUTORS

Marilyn Badger, Jeff Bolsinger, Richard Brouse, Carol Cady, Sheila Cerwonka, Lee Harper, Jerry & Judi LeTendre, Bob Long, Dave Prosser, Peter O'Shea, Gerry Smith.

ABBREVIATIONS

BR – Black Ri, T Carthage JEFF; Bra – T Brasher STLA; Bro – T Brownville JEFF; Can – T Canton STLA; CV – Cape Vincent JEFF; ED – El Dorado Shores Preserve, T Ellisburg JEFF; FD – Fort Drum JEFF; GR – Grasse Ri, Lou/Mas STLA; HFSP – Higley Flow SP, T Colton STLA; Hou – T Hounsfield JEFF; KC – Kelsey Creek, Watertown; KPSP-Kring Pt SP, T Alexandria JEFF; Lis – T Lisbon STLA; Lou – T Louisville STLA; Lym – T Lyme JEFF; Mas – T Massena STLA; PiPt – Pillar Pt, T Brownville JEFF; Pot – T Potsdam STLA; PRWMA – Perch Ri WMA, JEFF; Pt Pen – Pt Peninsula, T Lyme JEFF; RMSP – Robert Moses SP STLA; Rut – T Rutland JEFF; SLR – St. Lawrence Ri, T Massena STLA; TMB – Three Mile Bay, T Chaumont JEFF; Wad – T Waddington STLA; WBSP – Wescott Beach SP JEFF; WHWMA – Wilson Hill WMA, STLA; Win – T Winthrop STLA.

WHISTLING-DUCKS – VULTURES

Snow Goose: 10 Philadelphia 2 Oct; 20 Mas 12 Nov; scattered small flocks of 1-10 often with Canadas late Sep-late Oct.
Canada Goose: 1000 Lou thru; flock Pot 13 Oct; 3-500 per day L Ontario Oct-Nov.
Brant: 140 SLR 2 Nov; 60 SLR 3 Nov; numbers very low on L Ontario.
Mute Swan: 2 PtPen & Long Pt SP 23 Oct.
Tundra Swan: 30-100/day PtPen late Oct thru.
Wood Duck: Win 12 Oct; Win 22 Oct; KC 30 Oct.
Gadwall: 12 WHWMA 16 Oct; 9 GR 10 Nov; 100 ED 15 Nov.

Am. Wigeon: scattered flock of less than 15 L Ontario Oct-Nov.

Am. Black Duck: Pot 13 Oct; 8 WHWMA 16 Oct; 20-50/day PtPen Nov.

Mallard: 4 SLR 14 Sep; Pot 13 Oct; WHWMA 16 Oct; 8 GR 28 Oct; 31 GR 10 Nov; 2 GR 26 Nov; 150-300/day PtPen Oct-Nov.

Blue-winged Teal: 40 Win 6 Oct; scarce elsewhere.

Green-winged Teal: 20 Win 6 Oct; scattered 1-10/day L Ontario Oct-mid-Nov.

N. Pintail: 5-15/day L Ontario late-Sep-early Nov; scarce.

Ring-necked Duck: 24 WHWMA 16 Oct.

Greater Scaup: 3 PiPt 8 Nov; 2-3000/day BRB late Nov; increasingly rare.

White-winged Scoter: 1-4/day L Ontario Nov; very scarce.

Black Scoter: 2 ED 20 Nov, only report.

Long-tailed Duck: scattered as 5-15/day L Ontario late Nov.

Bufflehead: 53 PiPt 8 Nov; 2 GR 18 Nov; 51 CV 21 Nov.

Com. Goldeneye: 8 GR 3 Nov; 12 GR 10 Nov; 50 SLR 14 Nov; 22 CV 21 Nov; 4 GR 24 Nov.

Hooded Merganser: 3 SLR 14 Sep; flock Pot 11 Oct; 4 GR 28 Oct; 2 GR 3 Nov; Pot 21 Nov; 28 SLR 23 Nov; 30 SLR 28 Nov.

Com. Merganser: 4 Clayton 4 Oct; 2 GR 18 Oct; 2 PtPen & Long Pt SP 23 Oct; 10 Pot 26 Nov; 200+ Wad 28 Nov.

Red-breasted Merganser: CV Oct; 2 GR 23 Nov.

Gray Partridge: 8 Hardscrabble Rd near PtPen late Oct; scarce.

Ring-necked Pheasant: Piercefield 14 Sep; 2 Win 6 Oct; 2 Bra 8 Nov; 2 Mas 28 Nov.

Ruffed Grouse: Fine thru; Pot 12 Oct; 2 Bro 17 Oct; 2 Lou 19 Oct; 2 Rut 17 Oct; 4 Lou 24 Nov; 2-6/day THP thru.

Wild Turkey: 6 Lou 3 Sep; 11 Mas 29 Sep; 5-15 Fine Oct; Pot 13 Oct; 5 N of Watertown 18 Oct; 30 Lou 21 Oct; 3 KC 30 Oct; 18 PiPt 8 Nov; 22 PRWMA 12 Nov; 50+ Mas 28 Nov; flocks of 20-100 everywhere on L Ontario plain; becoming abundant.

Com. Loon: BR 17 Sep; 2 Chaumont 17 Oct & 21 Oct; 2 SLR 25 Oct; 1-5/day L Ontario Nov.

Pied-billed Grebe: none!!

Horned Grebe: 5 PtPen 20 Nov; 1-3/day L Ontario Nov; very poor.

storm-Petrel sp.: probable Wilson's off Pt Salubrious JEFF 20 Sep, the 2nd day of Hurricane Isabel; bird was flying out of the bay at a distance of 200 yards and observer (GS) not sufficiently versed in this group to be sure of positive id.

Am. White Pelican: ad near Stony Pt JEFF 19 Sep, soaring and heading southbound into roaring south gale from Hurricane Isabel.

Double-crested Cormorant: 2 SLR 14 Sep; 10 SLR 19 Oct; 8 SLR 21 Oct; 5 SLR 28 Oct; 12 Wad 22 Oct; numbers on L Ontario much reduced from fall peaks in mid 1990s, most 1-3/day to late Nov.

Great Blue Heron: GR 1 Sep; SLR 14 Sep; Fine regularly Oct; Pot 12-13 Oct; GR 18 Oct; GR 5 Nov; Mas 8 Nov; KC 9 Nov; TMB 21 Nov; cold late Nov weather pushed most of them out.

Great Egret: Win 10 Oct.

Green Heron: none.

Turkey Vulture: Lou 2 Sep; Fine 4 Sep; Mas 9 Oct; Pot 12 Oct; 3 KC 14 Oct; 6 Rt 12 18 Oct; 3 Bro 20 Oct; 10 Clayton 4 Nov; 13-50/day as migrants along L Ontario Oct; singles lingered several areas to late Nov.

HAWKS – ALCIDS

Osprey: Philadelphia 2 Oct; GR Lou 14 Nov.

Bald Eagle: total 8 singles L Ontario & SLR.

N. Harrier: Mas 29 Oct; Rut 17 Oct; 3 Bro 18 Oct; Chaumont 19 Oct; Philadelphia 25 Oct; 2 Can 17 Nov; 2 PiPt 18 Nov; CV 21 Nov; GR 24 Nov; 25 CV 18 Nov; good numbers NW JEFF Oct-Nov.

Sharp-shinned Hawk Lou 16 Oct; Watertown 17 Oct; KC 20, 25 Oct; Lou 31 Oct.

Cooper's Hawk: Can 16 Oct; Bra 15 Nov.

Northern Goshawk: Mas 20 Sep.

Red-tailed Hawk: Mas all fall; 25 Watertown to SLR 3 Oct-21 Nov; Lis 23 Nov; 15-25/day NW JEFF Nov.

Rough-legged Hawk: 4 PtPen & Long Pt SP 23 Oct; Can 23 Oct; Mas 30 Oct; PRWMA 12 Nov; 3 CV 21 Nov; 15-25/day NW JEFF by mid Nov; 40/day by end Nov.

Am. Kestrel: Lym 3 Oct; 2 Clayton 4

Oct; 2 Pot 11 Oct; Mas 25 Oct; 3-6/day NW JEFF mid-Oct thru.
Merlin: HFSP 26 Sep; FD 29 Sep.
Peregrine Falcon: Can 1 Oct.
Com. Moorhen: 3 Win 6 Oct.
Killdeer: 9 Mas 2 Sep; 3 Lou 9 Oct; last 10 Oct.
Greater Yellowlegs: 1-4/day ED & L Ontario shore Sep-Oct.
Lesser Yellowlegs: 2-10/day L Ontario Sep.
Sanderling: 10-30/day L Ontario beaches Sep-early Nov.
LAUGHING GULL: ad basic & 1st year ED 19 Sep (GS); ad basic near Coles Creek SP 23 Sep (GS, LH), flying strongly downriver.
Am. Woodcock: Mas 26 Sep; KC 20 Oct; KC 20 Oct; 8 Win 22 Oct.
Bonaparte's Gull: WHWMA 23 Nov; 100 PtPen 26 Nov, good count.
Ring-billed Gull: Pot 12 Oct; "hundreds" Mas 20 Oct; 80 Mas 15 Nov.
Herring Gull: RMSP 14 Sep.
Great Black-backed Gull: 8 RMSP 14 Sep; SLR 16 Nov; 32 PiPt 18 Nov; WHWMA 23 Nov.
Caspian Tern: Chaumont 9 Sep.
Com. Tern: 6 RMSP 14 Sep.

PIGEONS – WOODPECKERS

Mourning Dove: 12 Lou 29 Sep; 6 Mas 29 Sep; 4 Lou 6 Nov; 5 Mas 27 Nov; 54 Mas/Lou 28 Nov.
Black-billed Cuckoo: Mas 5 Sep.
E. Screech-Owl: RMSP 8 Sep; KC 25 Oct; Lou 8 Nov.
Great Horned Owl: Mas 9 Nov.
Barred Owl: Clare 1 Sep; Lou 2 Sep.
Com. Nighthawk: 25 BR 6 Sep; 6 KC 6 Sep.
Chimney Swift: 2 Mas 6 Sep.
Ruby-throated Hummingbird: Lou 3 Sep; Mas 7 Oct.
Belted Kingfisher: Pot 13 Oct; Upper and Lower Lakes WMA 23 Nov.
Red-bellied Woodpecker: KC 17 Oct-5 Nov; CV thru.

Downy Woodpecker: 4 Mas 2 Sep; Pot 12 Nov; 2 Bra 18 Nov; 33 Mas/Lou 28 Nov.
Hairy Woodpecker: 2 Mas 2 Sep; Fine 12 Oct; 2 Lou 18 Nov; 24 Lou/Mas 28 Nov.
N. Flicker: Lou 28 Sep; 35+ in one field FD 30 Sep; flock Fine Sep-Oct; Lou 31 Oct; 2 Lou 3 Nov.
Pileated Woodpecker: 2 Mas thru; Chaumont 18 Oct; WHWMA 22 Oct; Fine Nov; 2 Lou 23 Nov; RMSP 23 Nov; ULLWMA 23, 25 Nov; Bra 28 Nov; Mas 30 Nov.

FLYCATCHERS – WAXWINGS

E. Wood-Pewee: Lou 2 Sep; Clare 11 Sep; uncommon in STLA highlands.
Least Flycatcher: Lou 8 Sep.
E. Kingbird: Mas 14 Oct.
E. Phoebe: KC 28 Sep, 20, 28 Oct; Pot 11 Oct; Rut 17 Oct.
Great Crested Flycatcher: Lou 3 Sep.
N. Shrike: FD 24 Oct; singles PtPen mid-Nov.
Warbling Vireo: Chaumont 8, 9, 13 Sep.
Red-eyed Vireo: Lou 2 Sep.
Blue Jay: 12 CV 25 Sep; 30 Mas 29 Oct; 10 Lou 16 Nov; 57 Lou/ Mas 28 Nov.
Am. Crow: Fine Oct; 10 Lou 29 Oct; 28 Lou 25 Oct; 22 Mas 28 Nov.
Com. Raven: 2 Mas 28 Nov; 1-5/day THP thru; singles & prs PtPen & Stony Pt Nov; becoming regular on L Ontario plain.
Horned Lark: Hou 22 Oct; 13 CV 8 Nov; 150 CV 26 Nov.
Tree Swallow: 2 RMSP 14 Sep; 1300 CV 7 Oct; 30-50/day PtPen to 20 Nov.
Black-capped Chickadee: 45 Mas 29 Sep; 50 Lou 22 Oct; 30 Bra 11 Nov; Pot 12 Nov; 23 Mas 25 Nov; 30 Lou 26 Nov; 45 Lou 28 Nov; 20 Bra 30 Nov.
Red-breasted Nuthatch: 2 Bra thru; Pot 12 Nov; 2-6/day L Ontario Sep, migrants.
White-breasted Nuthatch: 10 Lou 29 Sep; 8 WHWMA 22 Oct; 4 Bra 8 Nov; Pot 12 Nov; 52 Lou Mas 28 Nov.

Brown Creeper: 2 Lou 25 Sep; CV Oct; Mas 22 Oct; Mas 24 Nov; 2 Bra 8 Nov.
House Wren: 2 KC 20 Oct.
Winter Wren: 3 Mas 3 Oct.
Sedge Wren: singing FD 29 Sep (JB), late for recent years.
Golden-crowned Kinglet: 12 Lou 2 Oct; 20 Lou 5 Oct.
Ruby-crowned Kinglet: 4 Lou 2 Oct; Lou 5 Oct; CV Oct.
E. Bluebird: 3 Bra 15 Oct; 6 CV 18 Nov.
Veery: Mas 1 Sep.
Hermit Thrush: Lou 5 Oct; KC 20 Oct.
Wood Thrush: 2 Mas 1 Sep; 3 Mas 26 Sep; Mas 6 Oct; last 7 Oct.
Am. Robin: 20 Mas 18 Sep; 60 WHWMA 22 Oct; 10 Lou 29 Oct; 2 Lou 20 Nov.
Gray Catbird: 4 Mas 6 Sep; 3 Lou 25 Sep; KC 10, 19 Oct.
N. Mockingbird: Bro 5 Sep; Mas 5 Oct.
Am. Pipit: 34 Bro 21 Oct.
Cedar Waxwing: 12 Lou 6 Sep; 60 KC 20 Oct; 14 Lou 25 Oct; Pot 26 Nov; 8 Lou 28 Nov.

WARBLERS

Orange-crowned Warbler: KC 3 Nov.
Nashville Warbler: Lou 5 Sep; 2 Lou 2 Oct.
Yellow Warbler: Lou 5 Sep.
Magnolia Warbler: Lou 3 Oct.
Black-throated Blue Warbler: Mas 5 Sep.
Yellow-rumped Warbler: 4 Lou 2, 3 Oct; 6 Bro 17 Oct; 14 Mas 22 Oct.
Black-throated Green Warbler: Lou 2 Oct.
Blackburnian Warbler: Lou 18 Oct.
Pine Warbler: Lou 17 Sep.
Blackpoll Warbler: 2 Lou 18 Oct.
Black-and-white Warbler: Lou 1 Sep; Lou 5, 8 Oct; Pot 10 Oct.
Ovenbird: Lou 5 Sep.
Canada Warbler: 5 Lou 2 Oct.

TANAGERS – WEAVERS

Scarlet Tanager: Lou 3 Oct.
Am. Tree Sparrow: 2 Mas 31 Oct; 10

Lou 28 Nov; 2-5/day NW JEFF Nov; very scarce.

Chipping Sparrow: 30+ Mas 6-7 Sep; 2 KC 26 Oct.

Vesper Sparrow: Lou 4 Sep.

Fox Sparrow: Mas 29 Sep; KC 22-23 Oct; 2 KC 27 Oct; Bra 8 Nov.

Song Sparrow: 10 Lou 6 Sep; 5 Lou 29 Sep; 12 Mas 30 Sep; 24 Lou 6 Oct; 12 Lou 8 Oct; Pot 10 Oct; last Lou 23 Oct.

Swamp Sparrow: Mas 6 Oct.

White-throated Sparrow: 8 Lou 3 Sep; CV Oct; 14 Mas 2 Oct; Mas 16 Oct; Lou 23 Oct; Watertown 26 Oct.

White-crowned Sparrow: CV Oct.

Dark-eyed Junco: 15 Lou 22 Oct; Watertown 26 Oct; Pot 16 Nov; Lou 25 Nov; 42 Lou/Mas 28 Nov; Lou 30 Nov.

Snow Bunting: 9 Lou 22 Oct; 2 Piercefield 5 Nov; 5 Clare 5 Nov; 4 Clifton 9 Nov; 6 PRWMA 12 Nov.

N. Cardinal: 6 Mas thru; 49 Lou/Mas 28 Nov.

Rose-breasted Grosbeak: Lou 4 Sep.

Red-winged Blackbird: 6 Lou 26 Sep.

Rusty Blackbird: 10 Lou 11 Oct; 27 KC 20 Oct.

Com. Grackle: 6 Lou 3 Sep; 7 KC 28 Oct; Lou 12 Nov; KC 17 Nov.

Brown-headed Cowbird: 2 Lou 14 Oct; 153 Rut 17 Oct; 50 PtPen 26 Nov.

Baltimore Oriole: Lou 2 Sep.

Purple Finch: 2 Lou 6 Sep; 8 Lou/Mas 28 Nov.

House Finch: 4 Lou 6 Sep; 8 Lou 31 Oct; 3 Mas 25 Nov; Pot 27 Nov; 16 Lou/Mas 28 Nov.

Com. Redpoll: arr 5 PtPen 26 Nov.

Pine Siskin: 15 WHWMA 23 Nov; 60 Upper & Lower LakesWMA 23 Nov.

Am. Goldfinch: common Fine Sep; 6 Lou 17 Oct; 3 Lou 19, 29 Oct; 30 KC 8 Nov; 22 KC 10 Nov; 8 Bra 12 Nov; 50 Mas 25 Nov; 34 Lou/Mas 28 Nov.

Evening Grosbeak: 3 Bra 8 Nov; 2 Morristown 22 Nov; 8 Lou 28 Nov; 3 Sep-Oct Barnes Corners LEWI are probable local breeders (GS).

REGION 7 – ADIRONDACK-CHAMPLAIN

John M.C. Peterson

477 County Route 8, Elizabethtown NY 12932

Much of early September was sunny and lovely, with Plattsburgh experiencing a high of 83°F on the 15th. The remnants of Hurricane Isabel arrived on 19 September, with winds to 35 mph (plus SE gusts to 60 mph) and waves to 8 ft. on Lake Champlain. There were a few downed trees, a hundred people lost power, the Whiteface Mt. Memorial Highway was closed and there were several periods of intense rain during evening hours. The rest of the month was warm, with all-day rain on the 28th. Although 4 October saw a 51° high at Plattsburgh, there was snow at higher elevations that day. November saw more rain and snow, with over 1" of rain between 2-4 November and a 14" snowfall at Inlet on the 14th. Elizabethtown had only a dusting on the same day, although the higher elevations of the Jay Range were white.

As usual, most of the considerable variety in waterfowl and shorebirds came from the Champlain shore of eastern Clinton and Essex counties. This fall, however, the two western counties also made a few notable contributions. Hamilton County had an American Wigeon at Mud Lake, Surf Scoters on Lake Abanakee, a flock of Black Scoters on Long Lake, two Long-tailed Ducks and a Ruddy Duck on Abanakee and four not-so-Solitary Sandpipers along Mud Lake. Meanwhile, Franklin County had 30 Brant grazing in the Tupper Lake municipal park, a Lesser Scaup on Raquette Pond, late Red-breasted Mergansers at Lake Colby, a flock of 70 Killdeer in the Tupper Lake park in November and a **Red-necked Phalarope** swimming in the middle of Middle Saranac Lake. Sometimes life is good.

Once again, we owe a considerable debt to the dedicated lakewatchers in Vermont – Dave Hoag, Ted Murin and friends – for spotting pelagic birds in NYS waters of Lake Champlain. This year's highlights, detailed in the species accounts, included a **Wilson's Storm-Petrel** in the wake of Hurricane Isabel, three juvenile **Northern Gannets**, two juvenile **Parasitic Jaegers** and an adult and four juvenile (1st winter) **Black-legged Kittiwakes**. Perhaps next fall, observers might attempt similar efforts from Cumberland Head and Split Rock Point, communicating with the Grand Isle and Thompson's Point, Vermont, lakewatches on the opposite shores via sport radios.

Other rarities included a male **Dickcissel** among House Sparrows along Napper Road south of Westport and a pair of **Yellow-headed Blackbirds** at Point au Fer. Note also the six reports of leucistic birds; seek and ye shall find. The total of 172 species reported broke the 1999 fall record, and is a considerable improvement over last year's 152 species. With the Fall Departure report now discontinued, the possibility also exists that observers failed to mention encounters with some common birds, especially passerines. We urge birders to continue to submit the Spring Arrival report. In closing, we also ask that Atlas

2000 volunteers mark 15 September on their 2004 calendars as the final deadline for submission of all Annual Summary, Casual Observation and Notable Species forms. The project coordinator and your regional coordinator thank you in advance for your cooperation!

CONTRIBUTORS

Susan Baker, Barbara Brosnan, John Chamberlain, Joan Collins, Gregg Dashnau, Charlcie Delehanty, Alan Dickinson, Thomas Dudones, Elizabeth Fitts, Donna Fletcher, Robert Gillis, David Gusakov, Robert Hagar, Judy & Roger Heintz, David Hoag, Audrey Hyson, Suzy Johnson, Nancy Kohlbecker, Bill Krueger, William Labes, Linda LaPan, Julie Lattrell, Dorothy & Richard Lavallee, Gary Lee, William Lenhart, Dan Lindner, Theodore D. Mack, Mark Manske, Larry Master, Brian McAllister, Charles Mitchell, Michael & Wanda Moccio, Theodore G. Murin, Nancy Olsen, James Osborn, Noah Perlut, Gilles Perreault, John & Susan Peterson, James H. Pugsley, Peter Riley, Dana Rohleder, Scott Schwenk, Don Shustock, Sally Smith, Allan Strong, John & Patricia Thaxton, Don & Donna Traver, Peter & Polly White, Uta Wister.

ABBREVIATIONS

AP – Ausable Pt WMA; BB – Bloomingdale Bog; CH – Cumberland Head; CP – Crown Pt; CR – Chazy Ri; FB – Ferd’s Bog; LL – Long L; NP – Noblewood Pk; PtF – Point au Fer; PtR – Point au Roche SP; SB – Sabattis Bog; SRP – Split Rock Pt; TL – Tupper L; WB – Whallons Bay; WM – Wickham Marsh.

WHISTLING-DUCKS – VULTURES

Snow Goose: thousands CR-Rouses Pt 5-16 Nov (JP,UW); tens of thousands headed s. Wadhams 22 Nov (SS).

Canada Goose: leucistic goose Ausable Chasm 14 Oct (DR), dirty white with black bill, slightly whiter cheek patch; “Richardson’s” race PtR 1 Nov (SJ, BK).

Brant: arr 3-4 AP 26-27 Oct (BK, DR); 30 TL mun pk 2-7 Nov (CD), feeding on grass; Peru 17 Nov (EF), late CLIN.

Gadwall: drake Peru 4-7 Oct (EF).

Am. Wigeon: Mud L 9 Sep (GD), 2nd HAMI record.

Mallard: leucistic hen Mirror L 5 Nov (LL).

Blue-winged Teal: 3 Raquette Ri, TL 25 Oct (CD), only report.

Green-winged Teal: 15 L Alice 2 Oct

(NO), only report.

Ring-necked Duck: arr 4 WM 27 Oct (DR); 2 L Abanakee 7 Nov (M&WM); max 300 Highlands Forge L 27 Nov (DR), but see Fall 2002 numbers on same small lake.

Greater Scaup: 1100+ off WM 27 Oct-5 Nov (JP,DR).

Lesser Scaup: Raquette Pd 30 Aug-11 Oct (CD), always near shore.

Surf Scoter: 2 1st winter L Abanakee 7 Nov (M&WM), first HAMI report since Eaton!

White-winged Scoter: hen Westport 8 Nov (SO), a good find.

Black Scoter: 15-18 LL 24-25 Oct (BB, JC), record max HAMI.

scoter sp.: 12 Mirror L 3 Nov (LM)

Long-tailed Duck: 2 drakes, 1 hen PtR 1

Nov (SJ,BC); 2 juv L Abanakee 7 Nov (M&WM); max 7 Plattsburgh 15-22 Nov (J&RH, BK); a fine showing.

Red-breasted Merganser: 2 L Colby 23 Nov (CD, TD, RH), late inland.

Ruddy Duck: Mud L 9 Sep (GD), 1st HAMI record.

pheasant sp.: completely white-plumaged bird with red face Auger L woodlot Oct (*vide* JH), albino/leucistic Ring-necked?

Pied-billed Grebe: max 40 CR 13 Oct (AD), a remarkable number there.

Horned Grebe: arr 4 CH 26 Oct (NO).

Red-necked Grebe: arr 1-2 AP 24-28 Oct (BK, CK, DR), also WM & Plattsburgh to 16 Nov.

WILSON'S STORM-PETREL: headed n/w toward Four Bros ~10:15 am 21 Sep (TM), sighted off Charlotte Town Beach, VT, after passage of Hurricane Isabel, 1st Reg 7 & ESSE record.

N. GANNET: juv n. of SRP 6 Nov (DG, DL, TM) heading e. 6:50 am before continuing southbound; juv n. of SRP 22 Nov (RL, TM, JO) heading s. past lighthouse 8:30 am; juv flying s. in both CLIN & VT waters off CH 2:20 pm Nov 24 (DH), 1st CLIN record; outstanding!

Great Egret: AP 22 Sep (CM), fairly late.

HAWKS – ALCIDS

Bald Eagle: widely reported from AP, LL, L Placid, Raquette L, TL, WM.

Red-shouldered Hawk: CP 6 Nov (BM), only report.

Rough-legged Hawk: arr CH 24 Oct (BK).

Golden Eagle: ad CP 6 Nov (BM), always a good find.

Am. Kestrel: AP 21 Sep (DR), catching dragonflies.

Merlin: Essex 20 Sep (J&PT); AP 21 Sep (DR), catching dragonflies; CH 10 Oct (BK).

Peregrine Falcon: AP 21 Sep (DR), not catching dragonflies; female NP 17 Oct (J&PT), flushing "peeps" and chasing Buffleheads & Bonaparte's Gulls.

Am. Coot: 2 Plattsburgh 3 Nov (BK, CM), a good find.

Black-bellied Plover: 2 AP 24 Oct (BK, CM); last AP 6 Nov (BK).

Am. Golden-Plover: AP 11 Sep (J&RH); 4 CR 13 Sep (BK, CM).

plover sp.: many large plovers CR 13 Oct (AD).

Semipalmated Plover: 3 NP 7 Sep (J&PT); 2 CR 10 Sep (BK, CM); AP 11 Sep (J&RH); 2 Kings Bay 1 Oct (BK); a good showing.

Killdeer: max 70 TL 2 Nov (CD), a dozen still there 6 Nov.

Greater Yellowlegs: Essex field 20 Sep (J&PT); 7 AP 26 Oct (DR); last AP 4 Nov (BK).

Lesser Yellowlegs: NP 7 Sep (J&PT); AP 11 Sep (J&RH); max 28 CR 13 Sep (SJ, BK).

Solitary Sandpiper: 4 Mud L 10 Sep (GD), record max HAMI.

Spotted Sandpiper: Cedar L 11 Sep (GD), late HAMI.

Ruddy Turnstone: AP 26 Oct (DR), only report.

Red Knot: NP 5 Sep (P&PW), late ESSE, all prior county records 27-31 Aug.

Semipalmated Sandpiper: NP 7 Sep (J&PT); CR 10 Sep (BK, CM); only reports.

Least Sandpiper: NP 7 Sep (J&PT); 6 CR 10 Sep (BK, CM); only reports.

White-rumped Sandpiper: 2 Gilbert Cr marina 16 Nov (BK), late CLIN.

Baird's Sandpiper: AP 1 Sep (J&RH), another good find.

Pectoral Sandpiper: max 4 CR 13 Sep (SJ, BK).

Dunlin: 3 CR 2 Oct (BK); max & last 10 PtR 1 Nov (BK, CM).

Long-billed Dowitcher: juv CR 10 Sep (BK, CM), seen & heard.

Am. Woodcock: several L Placid 5 Nov (LM), fairly late.

RED-NECKED PHALAROPE: basic plumage Middle Saranac L 17 Sep (NK, SM, JHP), swimming in middle of lake,

close approach by canoe, 3rd FRAN & 11th Reg record.

PARASITIC JAEGER: dark-phase juv CH 4 Sep (DH), harrying a Ring-billed Gull, later seen e. of Treadwell Bay, 1st CLIN record; juv s. of Four Bros 11 Sep (RL, TM, JO), also chasing gulls.

Little Gull: ad CH 19 Oct (BK), a good bird.

Bonaparte's Gull: 3 Raquette L 4 Sep (D&DT), late HAMI; max 200 NP 7 Sep; 30 NP 17 Oct (J&PT); 15 WM 27 Oct (DR).

BLACK-LEGGED KITTIWAKE: 5 SRP 22 Oct (D&RL, SS, DS, AS), ad & 4 1st winter, 3rd Reg & ESSE records and an outstanding number here.

Com. Tern: 10 NP 5 Sep (P&PW); 2 NP 7 Sep (J&PT), where there were numerous Aug sightings, including 2 ads with a begging juv, and just 5 mi. ssw Four Bros, but where the annual census is no longer conducted by High Peaks Audubon.

Black Tern: 4-5 NP 5 Sep (P&PW), always a good find.

PIGEONS – WOODPECKERS

E. Screech-Owl: 2 Little Ausable R 13 Sep (DR), gray & red phases.

Snowy Owl: Plattsburgh 24 Nov (DF), found emaciated in Wal-Mart parking lot, taken to Chazy rehabilitator but died 25 Nov.

N. Saw-whet Owl: 2 n. FRAN Nov (MM), struck & killed by motor vehicles.

Com. Nighthawk: 2 Fish Cr FRAN 2 Sep (CD), hawking insects.

Downy Woodpecker: family 4000' Mt Marcy 2 Sep; excavating hole Weston Mt 31 Oct (J&PT).

Black-backed Woodpecker: Connery Pd, FB, Wakely Mt, usual haunts.

FLYCATCHERS – WAXWINGS

Olive-sided Flycatcher: PtF 17 Sep (BK, CM), late CLIN.

N. Shrike: arr Inlet 14 Nov (GL); Webb Royce Swamp 27 Nov (DR).

Philadelphia Vireo: NP 20 Sep (J&PT), only report.

Red-eyed Vireo: CH 7 Oct (CM), late CLIN.

Gray Jay: FB, Pillsbury Mt, Raquette L, SB, usual haunts.

Blue Jay: 10 AP 21 Sep (DR), flycatching small moths.

Am. Crow: leucistic (white wings) L Placid to Sep (AH).

Tree Swallow: 3 over Marcy Field, Keene 2 Nov (J&PT), "No peachy rump patch to make them Cave Swallows." Previous ESSE departure date 17 Oct 1979.

Boreal Chickadee: BB, Blue Mt, FB, Hanging Spear Falls, LL, Pillsbury Mt, Slide, Yard Mt, usual haunts.

Tufted Titmouse: max 4 Plattsburgh 6 Oct (BK, CM).

Carolina Wren: CH 24-29 Sep (NO), only report.

Bicknell's Thrush: 6 Blue Mt 17 Sep (JC); last Wakely Mt 10 Oct (GD).

Am. Pipit: arr CR 13 Sep (SJ, BK); Peru 20 Sep (EF); 5 Connery Pd 6 Oct (WL); Inlet 13 Oct (GL), 5th HAMI record; max 60 Marcy Field, Keene 2 Nov (J&PT), with many Am. Robins.

WARBLERS

Black-throated Blue Warbler: Rand Hill 6 Nov (J&RH), record late Reg & CLIN.

Yellow-rumped Warbler: Keene 2 Nov (J&PT), fairly late at higher elevation.

Palm Warbler: last CH 8 Oct (BK, CM).

Blackpoll Warbler: Rand Hill 18 Oct (J&RH), record late Reg & CLIN.

TANAGERS – WEAVERS

Am. Tree Sparrow: arr 6 Keene 2 Nov (J&PT).

Chipping Sparrow: Elizabethtown 3 Nov (JP); L Abanakee 7 Nov (M&WM), late.

Field Sparrow: TL 3 Nov (CD); L Abanakee 7 Nov (M&WM); Keeseville 8 Nov (JL), late.

Vesper Sparrow: 5 TL 4 Nov (CD), late.

Fox Sparrow: arr at 2900' on Weston Mt 31 Oct (J&PT); max 10 TL 4 Nov (CD);

Ray Brook 6 Nov (LL).

White-crowned Sparrow: arr TL 4 Oct-6 Nov (CD); Keene 5 Oct (J&PT); Inlet 13 Oct (GL); Westport 17 Oct (J&PT); L Abanakee 7 Nov (M&WM); a good showing.

Snow Bunting: arr 22 TL 4 Nov (CD) & 7 Paul Smiths same day (BM); max 140 L Abanakee 7 Dec (M&WM).

DICKCISSEL: male Napper Rd Westport 8 Nov (SO), with House Sparrows, 5th ESSE & 6th Reg record.

Red-winged Blackbird: leucistic male PtF 12 Oct (BK, CM), usual black body and red epaulet outlined in yellow, but crown, face & chin white with a few black splotches and a reddish wash around the dark bill and eyes, rear crown black with a few white spots, two irregular white bars flecked with black on nape.

YELLOW-HEADED BLACKBIRD: pr PtF 18 Sep (GP), 2nd CLIN record.

Rusty Blackbird: 4 L Abanakee 3 Oct (MM), only report.

Baltimore Oriole: Saranac L feeder mid-Nov (*fide* CD), late.

Pine Grosbeak: arr 5 overhead Nun-da-ga-o Ridge 31 Oct (J&PT), promising.

Purple Finch: only reports Paul Smiths & TL.

Pine Siskin: few L Placid early fall (LM); 6 WB 8 Nov (SO); max 25 TL 24 Nov (CD).

Am. Goldfinch: many late Oct-Nov; max 50-100 L Placid (LM); leucistic goldfinch Paul Smiths 13-14 Nov (BM), mostly white with yellow blush on head & neck, black primaries & rectrices.

Evening Grosbeak: max 30 Inlet 16 Nov (GL); other reports from FB, Keeseville, LL, TL.

REGION 8 – HUDSON-MOHAWK

Will Yandik

269 Schneider Road, Hudson NY 12534

wyandik@hotmail.com

Fall 2003 was generally mild and wet. According to Albany International Airport, September averaged 2.4°F above normal, with precipitation occurring on nearly half the month's days. October was similarly wet and slightly cooler. November's precipitation was less than 1" above average, with a few strong storms and high winds. The first frost occurred in early October, and water bodies remained open through the period.

The greatest weather news of the season was the loosened energy of Hurricane Isabel, a downgraded tropical storm that scattered windblown terns and petrels from Baltimore to Buffalo. Unfortunately, the storm brought little more than light rain and high hopes to this Region. Despite many birders who stationed themselves along the Hudson and Mohawk rivers to glimpse a few ocean-seeking terns, nothing unusual entered our records. A few weeks after the storm, however, Bill Lee did discover a pelagic species, a **Northern Gannet**, at Saratoga Lake, Saratoga County. This sighting is only the third gannet for the Region.

Incredibly, the other two both occurred at Saratoga Lake (an immature bird spotted in 1994 and a specimen collected in 1880).

Besides the gannet, the greatest news of the season was the discovery of a **King Eider** on the Hudson River, the fifth record for Region 8. The bad news is that we learned of its existence only after a duck hunter shot it. Rich Guthrie examined the specimen, photographed it and submitted a brief report to The New York State Avian Records Committee.

King Eiders, and other vagrant waterfowl, are not specifically protected from licensed hunters in New York (see Volume 6, Section 2.30, N.Y. Code of Rules and Regulations, Migratory Game Birds). The rationale, apparently, is that rare ducks such as King Eiders do not require explicit protection in New York because they do not commonly occur here. The ethical birder might question this leniency, and a growing number of birders also question liberal allowances granted for other uncommon species such as scoters, redheads, canvasbacks and teal, despite the fact that these species have stable populations elsewhere in the country and in the state. Various sources of data, including Christmas Bird Counts and January waterfowl counts, show that these species never occur in large numbers in Region 8, yet generous hunting allowances persist.

When reviewing state bag limits for wild ducks, one also notices long-standing allowances for many rails and shorebirds. At a time when motivated atlasers find very few Virginia Rails, Soras, snipe, moorhens and coot in the Hudson and Mohawk valleys, one questions current bag limits. Any individual hunter, for example, can legally shoot up to 16 Virginia Rails each season. Despite the fact that rails are famously secretive and may very well be underrepresented despite New York State Breeding Bird Atlas efforts, I seriously doubt that many habitats in our area support populations even remotely large enough to survive this kind of harvesting. If, as some have suggested, only a very small minority of hunters are interested in hunting "rails, gallinules, and snipe" in New York, perhaps it is only more fitting to remove these birds from the state's list of game species.

Great Cormorants, an upper Hudson River sighting that was once considered as rare as a King Eider, now appear annually on our Region's rivers. Almost undetected here before 1987, they've been spotted every year since, occasionally lingering to be tallied on Christmas Counts. A mid-November adult was seen this year at Germantown, Columbia County.

Bob Kirker, who compiles the Camp Pinnacle Hawk Watch data each fall, reported hawk sightings are down by more than a third this year. This fall's observers discovered half the number of Broad-winged Hawks that they saw last year, as well as fewer sightings of Sharp-shinned Hawk, Northern Goshawk and American Kestrel. Northern Harrier, Cooper's Hawk and Red-shouldered Hawk, however, all posted modest increases despite many days with poor viewing conditions. Two reports of Golden Eagle, in addition to two other sightings outside the official hawk watch, were lucky glimpses of a species that only trickles through our Region.

Other than an escaped **Orange Bishop** that appeared for several days at Vischer Ferry Nature Preserve in Saratoga County, the only unusual passerine of the season was a **Dickcissel**, a “very fat” hatching-year male banded by Bob Yunick in Montgomery County.

A total of 178 species was observed this fall, exactly the number reported last fall.

CONTRIBUTORS

Alan Devoe Bird Club monthly sighting reports, Bill Cook, Mark Fitzsimmons, Jane Graves, Rich Guthrie, Hudson-Mohawk Bird Club’s Birdline of Eastern New York, Bob Kirker, Bill Lee, Andrew Mason, Gail & Rich Nord, Barbara Putnam, Alison Van Keuren, Carol & Owen Whitby, Will Yandik, Robert Yunick.

ABBREVIATIONS

AMS – T Amsterdam MONT; AUS – T Austerlitz COLU; CAT – T Catskill GREE; CLA – T Claverack COLU; CPHW – Camp Pinnacle Hawk Watch ALBA; EGR – T E Greenbush RENS; FtE – T Ft. Edward WASH; HR – Hudson Ri; HP – Hannacroix Preserve ALBA; GAN – T Gansevoort SARA; GER – T Germantown COLU; JL - Jenny L SARA; LIV – T Livingston COLU; MR – Mohawk Ri; NBA – T New Baltimore GREE; NL – Nassau L RENS; SL – Saratoga L SARA; SP – Stanton Pd ALBA; TR – Tomhannock Res RENS; VF – Vischer Ferry Nature and Historic Preserve SARA.

WHISTLING-DUCKS – VULTURES

Snow Goose: 72 Bells Pd LIV 2 Nov, 3 blue morph; 30 NBA 8 Nov; 9 GER 11 Nov; 1100 Glen MONT 17 Nov; max 1500 Glen MONT 26 Nov; 1000 Troy RENS 26 Nov.
Canada Goose: flocks of 1000-2000 at many ponds and riverbanks Oct-Nov.
Brant: 150 Saratoga Springs 7 Oct; 25 NBA 9 Oct; Chatham COLU 1 Nov; Coeymans 18 Nov.
Wood Duck: max 100 Black Creek Marsh ALBA 20 Sep.
Gadwall: 4 SP 16 Oct; CLA 26 Oct.
Am. Wigeon: 15 VF 15 Nov; max 100 SP 26 Nov; MONT 30 Nov.
Am. Black Duck: max 50 GER 11 Nov; scarce on MR.
Mallard: max 100 SL 25 Oct.
Blue-winged Teal: VF 6-12 Sep.
N. Shoveler: 3 SP 16 Oct; 5 Canal Rd MR 1 Nov.

N. Pintail: 4 Mile Pt GREE 9 Nov; 3 NL 12 Nov; max 12 SP 26 Nov.

Green-winged Teal: max 5 VF 15 Nov.

Ring-necked Duck: 2 VF 1 Nov; 4 TR 1 Nov; 2 Bells Pd LIV 3 Nov; 8 L Taghkanic COLU 18 Nov.

Greater Scaup: male SL 9 Oct; 3 NL 9 Nov; LIV 14 Nov.

Lesser Scaup: 3 NL 1 Nov; 10 Copake L COLU 29 Nov.

KING EIDER: shot by hunter Germantown Flats COLU 10 Nov, specimen ph, NYSARC (RG).

Surf Scoter: fem MR SCHE 1 Oct (mob); 3 imm SL 9 Oct.

White-winged Scoter: max 10 SL 9 Oct.

Black Scoter: max 5 SL 9 Oct.

Long-tailed Duck: 2 Bells Pd LIV 5 Nov, fem NL 23 Nov; VF 26 Nov.

Bufflehead: max 21 NL 2 Nov.

Com. Goldeneye: max 18 TR 10 Nov.

Hooded Merganser: max 25 TR 10 Nov.

Com. Merganser: max 200+ NL 15 Nov.
Red-breasted Merganser: Four Mile Pt GREE 9 Nov.
Ruddy Duck: max 20 NBA 9 Nov.
Ring-necked Pheasant: s. RENS 16-17 Oct; 2 Ancram COLU 9 Nov.
Ruffed Grouse: max 6 Partridge Run ALBA 9 Sep.
N. Bobwhite: Kinderhook COLU 23 Sep, presumed introduced or escaped; NYS Thruway MONT 26 Sep.
Red-throated Loon: NL 15 Nov, only report.
Com. Loon: 3 Great Sacandaga L FULT 4 Sep; 2 SL 9-25 Oct; HR COLU 9 Nov; 3 TR 11 Nov; Alcove Res ALBA 18 Nov.
Pied-billed Grebe: VF 9 Sep-1 Nov; Collins L SCHE 12 Oct; TR 3 Nov.
Red-necked Grebe: Synder Pd Copake COLU 1 Oct, only report.
NORTHERN GANNET: SL 9 Oct (BL), 3rd Reg report.
Double-crested Cormorant: last GER 29 Nov.
Great Cormorant: HR at GER 11 Nov.
Am. Bittern: 2 Kayaderosseras Ave SARA 21 Sep.
Great Egret: Stockport COLU 9 Nov; FtE 22 Nov, late.
Snowy Egret: Chatham 13 Oct, only report.
Green Heron: Feller Rd LIV 6 Sep; GER 25 Sep.
Black-crowned Night-Heron: imm Ooms Pd Chatham COLU 1 Sep, nonbreeding dispersal; Ballston L Boat Launch SARA 13 Sep.
Turkey Vulture: 30 roosting Coeymans ALBA 26 Sep; last LIV 13 Nov.

HAWKS – ALCIDS

Osprey: Geoffroy's Pd COLU 1 Sep; NBA 26-28 Sep; last Stockport Creek COLU 6 Nov; total 30 CPHW 4 Sep-23 Nov.
Bald Eagle: numbers consistent with previous fall; total 14 CPHW 4 Sep-23 Nov.
N. Harrier: 2 CLA 1 Sep; arr Coxsackie

Flats GREE 5 Oct; max 6 FtE 23 Nov; total 32 CPHW 4 Sep-23 Nov.
Sharp-shinned Hawk: total 157 CPHW 4 Sep-23 Nov, low count.
Cooper's Hawk: total 35 CPHW 4 Sep-23 Nov.
N. Goshawk: Schenectady SCHE 6 Oct; Green I ALBA 30 Oct; 2 New Salem ALBA 7 Nov; Helderbergs ALBA 10-20 Nov; total 7 CPHW 4 Sep-23 Nov.
Red-shouldered Hawk: New Salem ALBA 7 Nov; total 7 CPHW 4 Sep-23 Nov.
Broad-winged Hawk: total 537 CPHW 4 Sep-23 Nov.
Red-tailed Hawk: total 384 CPHW 4 Sep-23 Nov.
Rough-legged Hawk: arr LIV 4 Nov; Coxsackie Flats GREE 9 Nov; Glens Falls WASH 15 Nov; GAN 20 Nov; dk phase Northumberland SARA 21 Nov; total 2 CPHW 4 Sep-23 Nov.
Golden Eagle: imm Stuyvesant COLU 24 Oct; imm Helderbergs ALBA 7 Nov; total 2 CPHW 4 Sep-23 Nov.
Merlin: Collins L SCHE 12 Oct; VF 18 Oct; total 4 CPHW 4 Sep-23 Nov.
Peregrine Falcon: Peebles I ALBA 18 Sep; 2 AMS 22 Sep; Green I ALBA 23 Sep; Schodack I RENS 17 Nov; FtE 23 Nov.
Am. Coot: Copake L COLU 29 Nov, only report.
Killdeer: last LIV 19 Oct.
Greater Yellowlegs: GAN 7 Nov; Best-Luther Rd EGR 7 Nov.
Lesser Yellowlegs: TR 25 Oct, only report.
Spotted Sandpiper: last Mayfield FULT 26 Sep.
Least Sandpiper: 25 Geoffroy's Pd CLA 29 Oct.
Pectoral Sandpiper: Lock 7 SCHE 4 Sep.
Wilson's Snipe: 2 AMS 17 Oct; 6 Geoffroy's Pd CLA 29 Oct.
Am. Woodcock: last Colonie ALBA 6 Sep.

Com. Tern: NBA 28 Sep, only report (RG).

PIGEONS – WOODPECKERS

Black-billed Cuckoo: last Partridge Run ALBA 7 Sep.

Yellow-billed Cuckoo: Old Chatham COLU thru 27 Oct.

Com. Nighthawk: max 35 Slingerlands ALBA 7 Sep.

Chimney Swift: last AUS 8 Oct.

Ruby-throated Hummingbird: 128 banded JL Sep thru, 57 recaptures (RY); last GER 20 Sep.

Red-headed Woodpecker: imm AUS 23 Nov, only report.

Yellow-bellied Sapsucker: not observed at lower elevations (below 1000') until 15 Oct.

Hairy Woodpecker: max 4 HP 26 Nov.

N. Flicker: intergrade (red tail, red and yellow mixed in primaries) banded JL 20 Nov (RY).

FLYCATCHERS – WAXWINGS

E. Wood-Pewee: last CLA 1 Sep.

Alder Flycatcher: last CLA 1 Sep.

E. Phoebe: last LIV 2 Nov.

Great Crested Flycatcher: last CLA 1 Sep.

E. Kingbird: last Taghkanic COLU 26 Sep.

N. Shrike: Elka P GREE 9-12 Nov; FtE 23 Nov; Glen MONT 26 Nov.

Yellow-throated Vireo: CLA 1 Sep; NBA 3 Sep; LIV 4 Oct.

Blue-headed Vireo: last GAN 18 Oct.

Warbling Vireo: last VF 1 Oct.

Philadelphia Vireo: Peebles I ALBA 18 Sep; VF 5 Oct.

Red-eyed Vireo: last VF 5 Oct.

Fish Crow: Cocksackie GREE 19 Sep.

Horned Lark: Helderbergs ALBA 3 Nov.

Tree Swallow: last LIV 31 Oct.

Barn Swallow: last Stockport Creek COLU 20 Sep.

House Wren: last LIV 2 Nov.

Marsh Wren: 3 Black Creek Marsh

ALBA 2 Oct.

Ruby-crowned Kinglet: 5 CPHW 8 Oct; NBA 16 Oct; 2 AMS 17 Oct; Kinderhook COLU 21 Oct; Taghkanic COLU 18 Nov.

Blue-gray Gnatcatcher: last AUS 4 Sep.

Hermit Thrush: AUS 25 Oct; CPHW 30 Oct; 2 VF 11 Nov; HP 25 Nov.

Gray Catbird: max 11 AMS 30 Sep; last LIV 10 Nov.

Am. Pipit: Moreau SARA 10 Oct; 15 Collins L SCHE 15 Oct; 10 AMS 16 Oct; 50 Northumberland SARA 20 Oct.

Cedar Waxwing: max 350 L Taghkanic SP COLU 2 Nov.

WARBLERS

Blue-winged Warbler: last EGR 18 Sep.
Tennessee Warbler: 2 EGR 1 Sep, only report.

Nashville Warbler: 2 CLA 1 Sep; RENS 18 Sep; NBA 28 Sep; AMS 30 Sep; CPHW 8 Oct.

N. Parula: CAT 15 Sep, only report.

Magnolia Warbler: 3 CLA 1 Sep; CAT 15 Sep; CPHW 8 Oct.

Black-throated Blue Warbler: CAT 15 Sep; AMS 7 Oct; CPHW 8 Oct.

Yellow-rumped Warbler: max 25 LIV 30 Sep; 10 CPHW 8 Oct.

Black-throated Green Warbler: last CPHW 8 Oct.

Blackburnian Warbler: last LIV 15 Oct.

Pine Warbler: AUS 9-10 Oct; 2 EGR 10 Oct.

Prairie Warbler: last CLA 1 Sep.

Palm Warbler: Ghent COLU 28 Sep; AMS 30 Sep; EGR 10-11 Oct.

Bay-breasted Warbler: CAT 15 Sep; AUS 2 Oct; only reports.

Blackpoll Warbler: last LIV 4 Oct.

Black-and-white Warbler: last VF 5 Oct.

Am. Redstart: last CAT 15 Sep.

Ovenbird: 2 JL 6 Sep; departed early.

N. Waterthrush: Green I ALBA 30 Oct, late.

Com. Yellowthroat: last EGR 10 Oct.

Wilson's Warbler: NBA 10 Sep, only report.

TANAGERS – WEAVERS

Scarlet Tanager: last Ghent COLU 28 Sep.

E. Towhee: last LIV 2 Nov.

Am. Tree Sparrow: arr in flocks of 10-30 by 15 Oct; max 84 FtE 9 Nov.

Chipping Sparrow: last AUS 13 Nov.

Field Sparrow: last NBA 16 Oct.

Savannah Sparrow: AMS 31 Oct, late migrant.

Fox Sparrow: AMS 17 Oct; VF 1 Nov; 2 Ghent COLU 9 Nov.

Song Sparrow: max 63 banded AMS 11 Oct (RY).

Lincoln's Sparrow: max 18 banded AMS 7 Oct (RY); EGR 10 Oct; NBA 15 Oct; GAN 17 Oct.

Swamp Sparrow: max 8 banded AMS 7 Oct (RY).

White-throated Sparrow: commonly seen at elevations below 1000' by 1 Oct.

White-crowned Sparrow: max 26 banded AMS 17 Oct (RY); most abundant migration during 3rd week of Oct.

Dark-eyed Junco: commonly seen at elevations below 1000' by 10 Oct.

Snow Bunting: 15 Coxsackie Flats

GREE 9 Nov; 2 Germantown COLU 11 Nov; 15 Florida MONT 26 Nov.

Rose-breasted Grosbeak: last AUS 1 Oct.

Indigo Bunting: last LIV 2 Nov.

DICKCISSEL: AMS 11 Oct (RY), banded.

Red-winged Blackbird: 300 GAN 27 Oct.

E. Meadowlark: max 7 FtE 23 Nov.

Rusty Blackbird: NBA 18 Oct; 3-80 mixed with large icterid flocks thru.

Com. Grackle: largest migratory flocks of 1000+ observed 5-25 Nov.

Purple Finch: 211 banded JL, 62 recaptures, Sep, high count (RY).

Com. Redpoll: 3 Helderbergs ALBA 25 Nov.

Pine Siskin: GAN 21 Nov; Helderbergs ALBA 25 Nov; HP ALBA 26 Nov; no flocks reported.

Evening Grosbeak: 3 JL 1-13 Sep; 3 AUS 13 Nov; 8 Jefferson SCHO 21 Nov; 4 GAN 23 Nov; HP 23 Nov.

EXOTICS

Orange Bishop: ad VF 29 Oct.

REGION 9 – HUDSON-DELAWARE

Michael Bochnik

86 Empire Street, Yonkers NY 10704

BochnikM@cs.com

September was very wet with normal temperatures. Rock Hill in Sullivan County recorded 10.15" of rain. Average rainfall for this location is 4.6". Other areas of the Region were 2.0" to 2.5" above normal. Winds for the month frequently had a rare easterly component. Winds were generally northeast from 8-10 September and southeast from 14-19 September, followed by Hurricane Isabel racing from Virginia to the Canadian border west of our area. All this played a role in Broad-winged Hawk migration, with very low numbers seen through the Region. Most migrated far west of us. The only storm related birds were an immature Black Skimmer on 19 September off Rye and an immature Parasitic Jaeger on 20 September seen off Edith G. Read Wildlife Sanctuary by three people. October started out cold for the first week, with temperatures reaching the

freezing point in Poughkeepsie on the 6th. This was followed by highs in the 70sF from 8-13 October. It all averaged out and the month was normal for both temperature and precipitation.

November was wetter than normal in the northern half of the Region, but drier than normal in White Plains. The third day in November saw record highs in the upper 70s. Temperatures dipped into the low 20s and teens from 8-11 November. Sullivan County had 1" of snow on 11 and 12 November. The last half of the month was warm and the month ended up 3-4° warmer than normal.

The most notable sighting of the season was that of a possible, if accepted by NYSARC, first state record of **White-throated Swift**. Judy Cinquina and Bill Elrick reported what they believe was this western vagrant at the Mt. Peter Hawk Watch on 7 November. At 12:45 p.m., Judy saw the bird northwest of the hawkwatch and described a Chimney Swift shaped bird that when banking revealed a white rump. The swift soared and meandered its way right over the platform. She further described it as larger than a Chimney Swift, with the white of its throat continuing up onto the sides of its neck and down into its lower chest where it formed a vee. She noticed a buffy area through the eye and buffy edge to its forehead; otherwise its face was white. Its wings, back and tail were dark. At least one report was submitted to NYSARC. As with all possible first state records, which undergo a bit more scrutiny, I implore any of the lucky few who saw the bird to submit your own report, no matter how well you saw the bird.

Four Barnacle Geese were found on 27 October in a huge flock Canada Geese at Domin Farms near the town of Pleasant Valley. The next day Chet Vincent observed them on Traver Pond in the afternoon. The birds were seen for the next few days and photographed. They were last seen 10 November at Baird Park. As always, their origin is unknown. Most often they are considered escapes.

A Tundra Swan was discovered in Croton Bay, Westchester County on 22 November. It was seen by me, as well as Andrew Block and Sandra Marraffino. The bird was seen the next day as well.

Scott Graber discovered a Red-throated Loon on White Lake in Sullivan County on 21 November; this was Sullivan's third documented record. Another Red-throated Loon was observed a month earlier in Dutchess County.

Carol Weiss and Hugh Martin found a pair of Peregrine Falcons having an altercation with the local Common Ravens at Hook Mountain on 22 September. They noticed that the female peregrine was wearing a radio antenna. Thanks to some research by e-mails and the Internet, a researcher in Virginia responded. The bird was being tracked by satellite and a map indicated the bird was just north of Nyack on the Hudson that day. This bird was a wanderer; she was tracked from Virginia to West Virginia to Pennsylvania to New York.

Joe O'Connell had a probable **Sandhill Crane** fly over the hawkwatch at the Lenoir Nature Preserve in Yonkers on 8 November. The bird was seen at about a 0.25 mile distance, flying in a southerly direction down the Hudson River.

Renee Davis and John Haas discovered a Buff-breasted Sandpiper at Pine

Island Turf Nursery, Orange County on 7 September. Also noted were six American Golden-Plovers, over 40 Killdeer, six Pectoral Sandpipers and a Short-billed Dowitcher. The Buff-breasted Sandpipers increased to four on 17 September.

Steven Kahl, Acting Refuge Manager, reported that the restored wetlands of the Liberty Marsh Restoration Project at Wallkill River National Wildlife Refuge are providing habitat for many wetland bird species. Two Whimbrel were spotted on 8 September. The birds were using the new impoundment on the north side of Oil City Road, adjacent to the Wallkill River.

Dot Fluery, Barbara Butler and Binnie Chase found a Forster's Tern while sailing off Dennings Point on 22 September. The last Dutchess County sighting was back in October 1987. A high count of 120 Forster's Terns were at Edith G. Read Wildlife Sanctuary 28 September.

A smattering of winter species just made it into the fall season, with John Haas finding Lesser Black-backed Gull, Glaucous Gull and Iceland Gull at the Sullivan County Landfill on 29 November.

Steve Walter found an "Ipswich" Sparrow well inland in northern Westchester County at Ward Pound Ridge Reservation on 2 November. It was associating with a more typical Savannah Sparrow, affording a nice comparison. He was able to capture both in a photograph as well.

Marge Gorton and Renee Davis found two flocks of Evening Grosbeaks in Claryville and Fir Brook, Sullivan County, on 30 November.

Other notable species included: Sedge Wren, Clay-colored Sparrow, Gambel's race of White-crowned Sparrow and Dickcissel.

CONTRIBUTORS

Gail Benson, Andrew Block, Michael Bochnik, Arlene Borko, Tom Burke, Barbara Butler, Bill Case, Binnie Chase, Drew Ciganik, Judy Cinquina, Kris Conklin, Renee Davis, Jayne Dean, David Diaz, Mike Dolan, Peter Dorosh, Bill Elrick, Carol Fredericks, Valerie Freer, Dick Gershon, Marge Gorton, Scott Graber, Andy Guthrie, John Haas, Dick Hirschman, Kevin Holcomb, Steven Kahl, John Kenny, Mary Key, Sandra Marraffino, Hugh Martin, Andy Mason, Allan & Barbara Michelin, Ellen & Joe O'Connell, Alan & Jan Peterson, Pat Pollock, Carena Pooth, Charlie Roberto, Al Sargeant, Ruth Shursky, Kristin Smith, Ed Spaeth, Selden Spencer, Evelyn Stevenson, Herb Thompson, Chet Vincent, Carol Weiss, Alan & Della Wells, Ken Witkowski.

ABBREVIATIONS

CPP – Croton Pt P; EGR – Edith G. Read Wildlife Sanctuary; LNP – Lenoir Nature Preserve; MC – Marshlands Conservancy; PP – Piermont Pier; RNC – Rye Nature Center; RTWBC – Ralph T. Waterman Bird Club; SGNWR – Shawangunk Grasslands NWR; WRNWR – Wallkill River NWR.

WHISTLING-DUCKS – VULTURES

Snow Goose: arr Napanoch 28 Sep; blue morph DUTC 4-10 Nov; max 900

Wappingers Creek 22 Nov.

Brant: max 598 LNP Hawk Watch 8 Nov.

BARNACLE GOOSE: 4 Pleasant Valley 27 Oct-10 Nov (CV, BCa, AP, ph), unknown origin.

Tundra Swan: Croton Bay 21-22 Nov (AB, MB, SM, E&JO).

Wood Duck: 1645 Bashakill 7 Oct.

Am. Black Duck: 50 WRNWR 3 Nov.

Mallard: 450 WRNWR 3 Nov.

N. Pintail: 30 WRNWR 16-21 Oct; 60 WRNWR 1 Nov.

Green-winged Teal: 20 Liberty Marsh Restoration Project WRNWR 22 Sep; 220 WRNWR 1 Nov.

Ring-necked Duck: 100 Abel's Pond 7 Oct; 120 Pine Plains 15 Nov; 200 Abel's Pond Nov thru.

Surf Scoter: 10 EGR 5 Nov.

White-winged Scoter: 10 EGR 17 Oct; LNP 23 Nov.

Black Scoter: 3 EGR 5 Nov.

Long-tailed Duck: PP 17 Nov (MD).

Red-breasted Merganser: 3 Vandenberg Cove 9 Oct (CV).

Ruddy Duck: 35 Sylvan L 7 Oct.

N. Bobwhite: Youngsville 3 Oct.

Red-throated Loon: Millbrook 18-25 Oct (A&JP); White L SULL 21 Nov (SG).

N. Gannet: arr EGR 6 Nov; 5 by end of Nov.

Great Cormorant: arr 25 Oct.

Am. Bittern: Bashakill 22 Sep; WRNWR 16 Oct -30 Nov.

Little Blue Heron: EGR 20 Sep.

Green Heron: WRNWR 16 Oct.

Black Vulture: 18 SGNWR 26 Oct.

HAWKS – ALCIDS

Osprey: max 29 Hook Mt 24 Sep; Hook Mt 2 Nov, late; Mt Peter 14 Nov, very late.

Bald Eagle: 4 LNP 6 Sep; 4 Hook Mt 5, 9, 25, 30 Sep, 5 Oct; 6 LNP 5 Oct.

N. Harrier: 13 Hook Mt 25 Sep, 8 Oct;

9-11 WRNWR 27 Oct thru.

Sharp-shinned Hawk: max 196 Hook Mt 25 Oct; 80 Mt Peter 25 Oct.

Cooper's Hawk: 25 LNP 11 Oct; 13 Hook Mt 14 Oct.

N. Goshawk: Hook Mt 13 Oct; Mt Peter 16 Oct, 7, 8 Nov; LNP 18, 25 Oct, 8 Nov; 2 Hook Mt 30 Oct.

Red-shouldered Hawk: generally very low at hawkwatches; 4 Hook Mt 11 Oct; 26 LNP 2 Nov; 20 LNP 22 Nov.

Broad-winged Hawk: 593 Mt Peter 24 Sep; 137 Hook Mt 21 Oct; last LNP 13 Oct; Hook Mt season total only 592; season total at Mt Peter 2110.

Red-tailed Hawk: 13 Hook Mt 18 Oct; 122 Mt Peter 24 Oct; albino Rosendale 8 Nov; 404 Mt Peter 8 Nov; 114 LNP 22 Nov.

Rough-legged Hawk: dark phase WRNWR 18 Oct thru; LNP 20 Oct; WRNWR 21 Oct; Sullivan Hawk Watch 25 Oct; Stony Kill 25 Oct; Mt Peter 14 Nov.

Golden Eagle: 4 LNP 8 Nov; Hook Mt 13, 30, 31 Oct; Mt Peter 26, 28 Oct, 3 Nov; 8 Stissing Mt 30 Oct.

Am. Kestrel: 22 Hook Mt 8 Oct.

Merlin: 6 Hook Mt 16 Sep; 4 Hook Mt 31 Oct; CPP 22 Nov.

Peregrine Falcon: 5 Hook Mt 8 Oct; m & f Hook Mt 2 Sep (CW, HM), f with transmitter part of a satellite-tracking project, *intro*.

Virginia Rail: 4 Tallman Mt SP 1 Sep.

Sora: 3 Tallman Mt SP 1 Sep; imm MC 16 Oct.

SANDHILL CRANE: LNP 8Nov, probable ID at 0.25 mi, *intro*.

Am. Golden-Plover: 6 Pine Island 7 Sep; WRNWR 21-26 Oct.

Killdeer: 40 Pine Island 7 Sep.

Am. Oystercatcher: last 3 EGR 10 Nov.

Greater Yellowlegs: PP 22 Nov.

Spotted Sandpiper: Wurtsboro 22 Sep.

Whimbrel: 2 WRNWR 8 Sep (SK, KH).

Red Knot: EGR 28 Sep (TB).

Pectoral Sandpiper: 6 Pine Island 7 Sep.

Purple Sandpiper: PP 7 Nov.
Dunlin: 1-3 WRNWR 16-26 Oct; 10-14 WRNWR 1-16 Nov.
Buff-breasted Sandpiper: Pine Island 7 Sep (JH, RD); 4 Pine Island 17 Sep (JC).
Short-billed Dowitcher: Pine Island 7 Sep (JH, RD).
Parasitic Jaeger: imm EGR 20 Sep (TB, GB, AG).
Bonaparte's Gull: WRNWR 2 Nov (SK).
Iceland Gull: SULL Landfill 29 Nov (JH).
Lesser Black-backed Gull: SULL Landfill 29-30 Nov (JH).
Glaucous Gull: SULL Landfill 29 Nov (JH).
Caspian Tern: 2 Tallman Marsh 1 Sep (DC); PP 2 Sep (CW).
Com. Tern: PP 2 Sep (CW).
Forster's Tern: Dennings Pt 22 Sep (BB, BCh); 120 EGR 28 Sep; 77 EGR 22 Oct; last EGR 20 Nov.
Black Skimmer: imm Rye 19 Sep (TB).

PIGEONS – WOODPECKERS

Short-eared Owl: arr SGNWR 26 Oct; 3-6 WRNWR 1-30 Nov.
Com. Nighthawk: 98 Bashakill 6 Sep; 60 MC 24 Sep.
WHITE-THROATED SWIFT: Mt Peter 7 Nov (JC, BE, NYSARC), would be first State record if accepted by NYSARC, *intro*.
Ruby-throated Hummingbird: 5 Mt Peter 5 Sep.

FLYCATCHERS – WAXWINGS

Olive-sided Flycatcher: MC 7-8 Sep.
Yellow-bellied Flycatcher: MC 14 Sep.
Philadelphia Vireo: Bashakill 9, 11 Sep; MC 10 Sep; 3 Buttercup East Sanctuary 17 Sep; Pawling 1 Oct.
Horned Lark: 75 Pine Island 21 Nov; 60 Greig's farm, Red Hook 9 Nov.
Bank Swallow: 50 Bashakill 4 Sep.
Cliff Swallow: 50 Bashakill 4 Sep; MC 1 Oct.
Barn Swallow: 150 Bashakill 4 Sep.

Red-breasted Nuthatch: first migrant 9 Sep; quite common in Nov.
Sedge Wren: MC 10 Oct (TB).
Gray-cheeked Thrush: Bashakill 5 Oct (JH).
Am. Robin: max 500 at roost T LaGrange 7 Nov.
Am. Pipit: arr 11 Oct; 20-100 WRNWR 16 Oct thru; flock CPP 20 Oct; 2 SGNWR 26 Oct; 30 Millbrook 31 Oct; 10 PP 2, 7 Nov; 35 Buttercup West 15 Nov; 12 CPP 2, 22 Nov.
Cedar Waxwing: 50 (one partial albino) Poughkeepsie thru Oct (MK); 60 Poughkeepsie 12 Oct.

WARBLERS

Orange-crowned Warbler: EGR 6 Nov; MC 21 Nov.
Black-throated Blue Warbler: SGNWR 26 Oct.
Blackpoll Warbler: CPP 20 Oct.
Connecticut Warbler: Buttercup West 27 Sep (CF, RTWBC).
Mourning Warbler: MC 1-5 Sep.
Yellow-breasted Chat: MC 29 Sep, 2 Oct (TB).

TANAGERS – WEAVERS

Am. Tree Sparrow: arr 8 Nov.
Clay-colored Sparrow: EGR 17 Oct (TB).
Vesper Sparrow: 2 Pound Ridge 12 Oct; LNP 12 Oct; 2 CP 13 Oct; Yorktown Heights 13 Oct; 2 CPP 24 Oct; 2 WRNWR 18 Oct-3 Nov.
Savannah Sparrow: 30 WRNWR 16 Oct; 40 WRNWR 3 Nov.
"Ipswich" Savannah Sparrow: Ward Pound Ridge Reservation 2 Nov (SW).
Nelson's Sharp-tailed Sparrow: arr MC 7 Oct; 5 MC 13 Oct; last MC 11 Nov.
Fox Sparrow: arr 24 Oct.
Song Sparrow: 100 WRNWR 3 Nov.
Lincoln's Sparrow: CPP 7, 13 Sep; 2 EGR 17 Oct; WRNWR 21 Oct; LNP 25 Oct; 2 WRNWR 25 Oct.
Swamp Sparrow: 75 WRNWR 3 Nov.

White-crowned Sparrow: arr 2 CP 13 Oct; 30 WRNWR 16 Oct; many reports 17-18 Oct; 10 WRNWR 25 Oct; Gambel's race EGR 26-27 Oct(TB); 40 WRNWR 3 Nov.

Snow Bunting: Sams Pt, Shawangunk Ridge 23 Oct; 2 Millbrook 26 Oct; 1-2 WRNWR 3, 16 Nov; 8 PP 7 Nov; 15 PP 17 Nov; Neversink Res 30 Nov; Claryville 30 Nov.

Indigo Bunting: WRNWR 16 Nov (SK).

Dickcissel: EGR 9 Sep, 27 Oct (TB); MC 1 Oct (TB).

Bobolink: 40 CPP 7 Sep.

Rusty Blackbird: 10 MC 24 Oct; 2

Harlem Valley Rail Trail 9 Nov; 2 T LaGrange 15 Nov.

blackbirds sp: 22,035 LNP Hawk Watch 15 Nov; 19,317 LNP Hawk Watch 16 Nov; mainly Red-winged Blackbirds plus Common Grackle.

Baltimore Oriole: 30 Bashakill 4 Sep.

Purple Finch: 177 MC 24 Oct (TB); 32 Mt Peter 31 Oct (JC).

Pine Siskin: 3 Horseshoe L thru Sep; MC 24 Oct; 6 WRNWR 3 Nov; Fishkill 8 Nov; 20 LNP 21 Nov.

Evening Grosbeak: 12 Claryville 30 Nov (RD, MG); 35 Fir Brook 30 Nov (RD, MG).

10 – MARINE

Seymour Schiff

603 Mead Terrace, South Hempstead NY 11550.

syschiff@optonline.net

Alvin Wollin

4 Meadow Lane, Rockville Centre NY 11570

The temperature for September was average, for October slightly cool and for November fairly warm. The precipitation for the three months was, respectively, extremely wet, very wet and average. All in all, it was uneventful except for the wet September. Even hurricanes spared the immediate Region, although Isabel brought some interesting birds to upstate areas and a few to us.

As for the migration, the winds were not conducive to migrants along the barrier beaches for much of the season, and the hawk flight was a major disappointment. However, a major change in weather pattern occurred in early November when winds shifted to the northwest and brought a monstrous movement of birds. Certainly, this resulted in the most spectacular birding event of this or any recent fall. It was not the rarities or hurricane driven fallouts, but the incredible mass movement along the barrier beaches from Montauk, LI, to Cape May, NJ, of a single, very common species.

Starting on the morning of 7 November, **American Robins** in groups of 30-90 continuously passed the West End at Jones Beach at an intermediate height, high in the air and very high (binoculars required). There were often flocks at all heights simultaneously. The robin flight numbered in the thousands during the morning period when your editors viewed them. Howie Fischer reported that on

7 and 8 November, 10,000+ robins were observed flying over Blue Heron Park on the south shore of Staten Island at dusk. Tom Fiore estimated there were tens of thousands of robins in Central Park on the 7th. The hawk flight there was most unusual and included 2 **Black Vultures**, 168 **Turkey Vultures**, Bald Eagle, Northern Goshawk, 21 Red-shouldered Hawks and 34 Red-tailed Hawks. On the following morning, 8 November, the flight at Jones Beach intensified with robins covering the sky in a spectacular display. The same was true elsewhere. The robin flocks included large numbers of Cedar Waxwings, Red-winged Blackbirds and Common Grackles. Mixed in were smaller numbers of Rusty Blackbirds, Purple Finches, Pine Siskins and American Goldfinches.

This **American Robin** flight of 7-8 November was reported from eastern Long Island to Staten Island and at Cape May, NJ. Independently, the robin count on the second day, 8 November, was estimated as: more than **250,000** at Jones Beach by Tom Burke, *et al*, but probably considerably higher; **400,000-500,000** at Riis Park, Fort Tilden and Breezy Point in Queens by Angus Wilson; and **500,000** at Cape May, NJ, by Paul Lehman. These are all experienced and cautious birders, so we do not believe numbers were overstated. Considering the timing (all were birding in the morning) and the physical separation of observers, it is not too much of a stretch to say that well over 1,000,000 robins, if not more, were on the move in the eastern US.

On 3 October, six birders (Steve D'Amato, John Gluth, Bob Kurtz, Ken Thompson, others) manning the Fire Island Hawkwatch at Robert Moses State Park were pleasantly surprised when a female **Magnificent Frigatebird** soared into view. John Gluth reported the bird with a description and Steve D'Amato responded to our inquiry with a description and photos. While the Fire Island Hawkwatch produced this spectacular bird, the raptor results there were dismal, with significant decreases for the smaller raptors.

Looking to some other interesting finds, on 29 September, John and Gerta Fritz found a Black Rail during an exceedingly high tide in a Quogue salt marsh; on 8 September, Jennifer Wilson-Pines reported that Herb Mills, museum director at the Sands Point Preserve, Port Washington, found a **Sandhill Crane** in the paddock area of the preserve; then, on 24 November, two additional adult Sandhill Cranes were spotted off Rodman's Neck at Pelham Bay Park in the Bronx.

Moving on to the shorebirds, on 1 September, Andrew Baldelli, Jim Ash and Hugh McGuinness found a **Pacific Golden-Plover** on the large mud flat at the Mecox Bay inlet. The bird was closely observed, clearly described and photographed. This species will be an addition to the NYS Checklist pending approval by NYSARC. There are less than half a dozen prior East Coast records. [*The Kingbird*, Vol. 53, No. 4, pp. 307-312].

On 5 September, two American Avocets showed up on the flats at Mecox. They remained until 3 October. Thanksgiving Day didn't bring a turkey, but instead a very late Wilson's Phalarope. It was found by Seth Ausubel at the Massapequa Preserve along with "at least 10 Wilson's Snipe, 14 Long-billed Dowitchers, a Lesser Yellowlegs (rare after October), two Dunlins and lots of Greater

Yellowlegs.” This date, 27 November, for the phalarope is the latest on record. There is a specimen from Fishers Island dated 20 November and there are sight records to 9 November.

The following sightings may have been a result of Hurricane Isabel, the first of the season to hit the East Coast. It roared into North Carolina on 18 September and then followed a northern path taking it well inland. There were few downstate reports of birds associated with this system although upstate New York experienced some exciting birding. Downstate, on the morning of 19 September, watching off Shinnecock Inlet, Tony Lauro and P. A. Buckley reported two adult **Sooty Terns** and one sub-adult **Bridled Tern** that briefly entered the inlet before continuing east. On 20 September, Hugh McGuinness saw from shore a possible Sandwich Tern flying south of Shinnecock inlet well out to sea. This may also have been hurricane related. On 24 September, Steve Biasetti found three **Sandwich Terns** on the flat at Mecox.

On 6 November, a *Selasphorus* hummingbird was found at a feeder on the front porch in Orient by Ruth Oliva, the homeowner. The bird was extensively studied and was determined to be a HY (hatching year) female, most likely a **Rufous Hummingbird**. It was still present into December. A second *Selasphorus* hummingbird was discovered at a private residence in Georgica, East Hampton, on 23 November and was also still present into December.

On 23 November, Phil Brown, *et al*, found an **Ash-throated Flycatcher** on Staten Island at the landfill along the service road adjacent to the mall on Richmond Avenue. He was able to shoot a roll of film on the following day. The photos were submitted as part of his NYSARC report.

On 9 November, the winds moved to the southwest after the massive robin flight of the previous day. The wind shift brought a **Cave Swallow** to Jones Beach West End. Found by Matt Bayer and Al Wollin, it was seen only the one day by a small group. Another was reported at McKay’s Pond in Calverton on 15 November. Other Cave Swallows were reported from upstate NY and from RI to Cape May, NJ.

There were three reports of Sedge Wrens from 14-23 October, none satisfactorily seen, so with caution as to ID voiced by the observers. The possibility is included here to alert birders to look for this rare and elusive species.

On 24 November, Brian McPhillips and Jerry Kamlet found a **Varied Thrush**, “most likely an immature female,” in the Wildflower Meadow of Central Park. It remained only the one day.

On 21 September, Marty Sohmer found a **Yellow-throated Warbler** in Prospect Park. This bird is rare in our Region in the fall, with only a handful of prior records. An elusive Prothonotary Warbler was found at Jones Beach fishing piers by John Fritz on 21 September and was seen sporadically until the 30th, an extended stay.

Alice Bisk reported a **Yellow-headed Blackbird** at Orient Point SP on 23 September. One had been seen there 21-22 August.

CONTRIBUTORS

Jim Ash, Seth Ausubel, Andy Baldelli (AB), Matt Bayer, Bobby Berlingeri, Steven Biasetti (Sbi), Orhan Birol, Alice Bisk (ABI), Andrew Block, Shane Blodgett (SBI), Ardith Bondi, Phillip A. Brown, Jean & Ron Bourque, P. A. Buckley (PAB), Thomas W. Burke, Ben Cacace, James Clinton Sr., John J. Collins, Steve D'Amato, Peter Dorosh, Dale Dyer, Ron Ellard, Michael Farina, Ken Feustel, Tom Fiore, Howie Fischer, Gerta & John J. Fritz, Dave Gardner, Paul H. Gillen, Joe Giunta, John Gluth, Isaac Grant, Andrew Guthrie, Joel Horman, Rob Jett, Gerry Kamlet, David W. Klauber, Arthur H. Kopelman, Robert J. Kurtz, Ed Lam (EL), Anthony J. Lauro, Emanuel Levine (EML), Patricia Lindsay, Christopher Lyons, Robert McGrath, Hugh McGuinness, Brian McPhillips, Jack Meyer, Lauren Miller, Herb Mills, Shai Mitra, Chris & Lauren Nuzzi, Ruth Oliva, Al Ott, Drew Panko, R. Pasquier, Jack Passie, Pat Pollock, Beverly Prentice, Joan Quinlan, Glenn Quinn, Herbert H. Roth, Eric Salzman, Starr Saphir (SSA), Seymour Schiff, Peter Shen, Marty Sohmer, Lloyd Spitalnik, Birgit & Rex Stanford, Ken Thompson, Guy Tudor, Steve Walter, Christina Wilkinson, Alex Wilson (AlW), Angus Wilson (AnW), Cindy Wodinsky, Alvin Wollin (AW).

ABBREVIATIONS

APP – Alley Pd P; CB – Cedar Beach; CLP – Clove Lake P, SI; CP – Central P; DP – Democrat Pt; DR – Dune Rd, Southampton; FI – Fire I; FIHW – Fire I Hawkwatch; FBF – Floyd Bennett Field; FP – Forest P; FTT – Fort Tilden, QUEE; HP – Hook Pond, Southampton; JBCH – Jones Beach; JBWE – Jones Beach West End; JBWR – Jamaica Bay Wildlife Refuge; MEB – Mecox Bay; MKP – McKay's Pond, Calverton; ML – Marratooka L; MP – Montauk Pt; MPR – Massapequa Preserve; NYRBA – New York Rare Bird Alert; PB – Pike's Beach, Westhampton; PBP – Pelham Bay P; PL – Pt Lookout side Jones Inlet; PP – Prospect P; RMSP – Robert Moses SP; RP – Riis P; SHIN – Shinnecock Inlet; SI – Staten Island; VCP – Van Cortlandt P BRON; ZB – Zachs Bay.

WHISTLING-DUCKS – VULTURES

Greater White-fronted Goose: JBWE in flock of 20 Canada Geese passing over 1 Nov; Greenland race MKP 9, 15, 22 Nov; ad ML 15, 24 Nov; behind Harbe's farm stand, Laurel 16 Nov.

Canada "Richardson's" Goose: 2 MKP 23 Nov (TWB).

Brant: informal survey found approx 50% imm this year as against 10% in 2002, indicating a substantial increase in breeding success (AnW).

BARNACLE GOOSE: in a flock of 84

Canada Geese Calverton 11 Nov (JC); MKP 22 Nov; provenance of birds unknown.

Tundra Swan: 3 RP 5 Oct; Long Pd, Sag Harbor 18 Nov; 2 HP 22 Nov; JBWR 10-22 Nov.

Eurasian Wigeon: JBWR East Pond 27 Sep-31 Oct; ML 18 Oct thru; 2 ML 27 Oct.

King Eider: JBWR female continued.

Harlequin Duck: Orient Pt 22 Nov thru; 2 PL 27 Nov thru; Southold Town P 22 Nov; MP 29 Nov.

Red-necked Grebe: arr 3 off Tiana Beach Nov 12 (MH).
Cory's Shearwater: RMSP 14 Sep; JBWE 14 Sep; 25 miles se of MP 20 Sep.
Greater Shearwater: 25 miles se of MP 20 Sep; 70 miles se of SHIN 24 Sep; MP Oct 28.
Sooty Shearwater: 25 miles se of MP 20 Sep.
Manx Shearwater: off Tobay 19 Sep; dead specimen RMSP 21 Sep; 4 at 30-50 miles s of SHIN 22 Sep.
Audubon's Shearwater: Hudson Canyon 22 Sep; 70 miles se of SHIN 25 Sep.
Wilson's Storm-Petrel: RP 19 Sep; 25 at 25 miles se of MP 20 Sep; 30-50 miles s of SHIN 22 Sep; 70 miles se of SHIN 24 Sep; others.
MAGNIFICENT FRIGATEBIRD: FIHW 3 Oct (JG, SD'A, RK, KT, others).
Cattle Egret: JBWR to early Sep.
BLACK VULTURE: 2 CP 7 Nov (TF); 2 Inwood 7 Nov, may be the same birds.
Turkey Vulture: 168 CP 7 Nov (TF), high for a most improbable location; numerous others there and throughout Reg thru.

HAWKS – ALCIDS

Osprey: late migrants or lingering birds: CP 7 Nov; Mecox 20 Nov; HP 26 Nov.
Bald Eagle: ~ 2 dozen during migration CP; Eastern LI for much of the season; others.
Red-shouldered Hawk: 21 CP 7 Nov; 16 CP 21 Nov (TF).
Broad-winged Hawk: 100+ CP 2 Oct; last 6 Oct.
Red-tailed Hawk: 34 CP 7 Nov; 67 CP 21 Nov.
Rough-legged Hawk: JBCH 12 Oct; FTT 8 Nov; CB 11 Nov; Gilgo 15 Nov; Meadowbrook Pkwy mid-Oct thru.
Golden Eagle: FBF 24 Oct (NYRBA).
BLACK RAIL: Quogue 3 Oct (G&JF).
Com. Moorhen: East Quogue in a creek off Shinnecock Bay 10 Sep (OB).
SANDHILL CRANE: Sands Pt

Preserve, Port Washington 8 Sep (HM); 2 PBP 24 Nov (NYRBA).
PACIFIC GOLDEN-PLOVER: mudflats MEB 1 Sep (AB, JA, HMG), an addition to NYS Checklist pending approval by NYSARC; less than half a dozen prior east coast records; *intro*.
Am. Oystercatcher: 80 JBWE mid Nov.
Am. Avocet: 2 MEB 5 Sep-3 Oct.
Spotted Sandpiper: CP to 8 Nov (TF).
Whimbrel: to late Sep.
Hudsonian Godwit: JBWR to 11 Nov; others.
Marbled Godwit: Little Pike's, Westhampton Dunes Sep 5; JBWR 8-9 Oct.
Baird's Sandpiper: MEB 1 Sep; 2 JBWR 2-10 Sep; 4 Cutchogue sod farms 30 Sep.
Buff-breasted Sandpiper: 6 Riverhead sod farms 6 Sep; 7 on 7 Sep; 3 on 8 Sep; 1 on 15-22 Sep; 2 on 2 Oct; others.
Long-billed Dowitcher: 14 MPR 27 Nov, some thru.
Wilson's Phalarope: JBWR 1-14 Sep; CM 6-7; JBWR 8 Oct; MPR 27 Nov (SA), State record late date.
Red-necked Phalarope: Breezy Pt QUEE 1 Oct; 6-7 FTT 4 Oct.
Pomarine Jaeger: 25 miles se of MP 20 Sep.
Parasitic Jaeger: MP 13, 28 Oct; 2 at 60 miles out in Hudson Channel 25 Oct; 2 MP 2 Nov.
Little Gull: MP Oct 28.
Black-headed Gull: sub-ad Mecox 23 Nov.
Black-legged Kittiwake: off Tobay 19 Sep; pelagic trip to about 60 miles out in the Hudson Channel 25 Oct; 2 MP 4, 29 Nov.
Caspian Tern: Great Kills P SI 13 Sep; 3 MEB 18 Sep; FI 22 Sep; 6 MEB 20 Sep, 2 to 3 Oct; 4 FTT 4 Oct; 2 JBWE 5 Oct.
Royal Tern: 27 gathered at usual spot n end of Robins 1 7 Sep; 60 on 25 Sep; 35 on 1-2 Oct; others.
Sandwich Tern: SHIN 20 Sep (HMG); 3

MEB 24 Sep (Sbi).

Com. Tern: Orient Pt Nov 15 (GT).

Forster's Tern: 400 JBWE 28 Sep;
Wolfes Pd SI 8 Nov; JBWR 8 Nov;
Breezy Pt 22 Nov; Montauk Harbor 23
Nov.

BRIDLED TERN: sub-ad SHIN 19 Sept
(AL, PAB).

SOOTY TERN: 2 ad SHIN 19 Sept (AL,
PAB).

Black Skimmer: 600 JBWE 28 Sep.

Razorbill: 3 MP 29 Nov.

PIGEONS – WOODPECKERS

Black-billed Cuckoo: Hither Hills 15
Oct; CP 16 Oct.

Yellow-billed Cuckoo: last Morton NWR
9 Nov.

Short-eared Owl: sev apparent migrants.

N. Saw-whet Owl: a few.

Ruby-throated Hummingbird: CP to 17
Oct.

RUFOUS HUMMINGBIRD: HY
female Orient 3 Nov thru (RO *et al*);
although not absolutely conclusive, we
received a very persuasive written
argument in favor of this identification
(PAB); this report requires NYSARC
approval.

Selasphorus sp.: Georgica, East Hampton
23 Nov thru.

Red-headed Woodpecker: imm CP 3
OCT.

FLYCATCHERS – WAXWINGS

Olive-sided Flycatcher: to early Oct.

E. Phoebe: to 20 Nov.

ASH-THROATED FLYCATCHER: SI
landfill 23-24 Nov (PB, *et al*, ph,
NYSARC).

Great Crested Flycatcher: CP to 7 Oct.

Western Kingbird: JBWE 11 Oct; FTT
23 Oct; JBWR 19, 23 Oct; Theodore
Roosevelt County P 25 Oct; Accabonac
10-27 Nov; Grumman Fence near Line
Rd 15 Nov; JBWE 16-17 Nov.

Yellow-throated Vireo: CP to 4 Oct.

Blue-headed Vireo: CP to 29 Nov.

Warbling Vireo: last CP 7 Oct.

Philadelphia Vireo: last CP 8 Oct.

Red-eyed Vireo: CP thru 24 Oct; PP 8
Nov.

CAVE SWALLOW: JBWE 9 Nov (MB,
AW); McKay's Pd Calverton 15 Nov
(AB).

Blue-gray Gnatcatcher: CP 16 Nov
(TF).

Wood Thrush: CP to 7 Nov.

American Robin: massive migration
throughout Reg; thousands JBWE 7 Nov
(AW, SS); tens of thousands CP 7 Nov
(TF); 10,000 + flying over Blue Heron P
on s shore SI at dusk 7-8 Nov (HF);
250,000+ JBWE 8 Nov (TB *et al*);
400,000-500,000 RP, FTT & Breezy Pt
QUEE 8 Nov (AgW), some may be the
same birds as JBWE; these numbers
exceed by ten-fold any prior max; *intro*.

VARIED THRUSH: CP 24 Nov (BMP,
JK).

WARBLERS

Golden-winged Warbler: CP 5 Sep; PP 7
Sep; CP 21 Sep.

"Brewster's" Warbler: CP 1-2 Sep; ZB 6
Oct (SA), very late.

Tennessee Warbler: CP 28 Oct.

Nashville Warbler: CP 21 Nov; Orient Pt
22 Nov.

N. Parula: CP 16 Nov.

Yellow Warbler: CP 8 Oct.

Chestnut-sided Warbler: CP 11 Oct.

Magnolia Warbler: CP 24 Oct.

Cape May Warbler: CP 28 Oct.

Black-throated Blue Warbler: m
Bridgehampton 30 Nov.

Black-throated Green Warbler: CP 20
Nov.

Blackburnian Warbler: CP 17 Oct.

Yellow-throated Warbler: PP 21 Sep
(MS), rare coastal in fall.

Pine Warbler: last CP 16 Nov.

Prairie Warbler: CP 17 Oct.

Bay-breasted Warbler: CP 7 Oct.

Blackpoll Warbler: CP 2 Nov.

Black-and-white Warbler: CP 12 Nov.

Am. Redstart: CP 28 Oct.
Prothonotary Warbler: JBCH fishing piers 21-30 Sep (JF).
Worm-eating Warbler: CP 1-10 Sep; hit a Hither Hills window 15 Sep; PP 13 Sep; APP 21 Sep.
Ovenbird: CP 22 Nov.
N. Waterthrush: CP 30 Oct.
Connecticut Warbler: CP 22-23 Sep.
Hooded Warbler: CP most of Sep-1 Oct; Blue Heron P SI 5 Oct; east end Gilgo Beach 6 Oct; PP 7 Oct.
Wilson's Warbler: CP to 8 Oct.
Canada Warbler: CO 1-5 Oct.
Yellow-breasted Chat: CP 1 Sep; East Quogue 5-6 Sep; vest-pocket park 45th-46th St between Sixth & Fifth Ave, Manhattan 9 Sep; RMSP 13 Sep; PP 14, 20 Sep; CP 21-22 Sep; 3 miles s of SHIN Sep 22 Sep; CP 24 Sep; East Quogue 26 Sept; FP 27 Sep.

TANAGERS – WEAVERS

Summer Tanager: CP 16 Sep.
Scarlet Tanager: CP 24 Oct.
Clay-colored Sparrow: widespread mid Sep-late Oct.
Lark Sparrow: APP 4 Sep; JBWE 3-6, 14-17 Sep; Smith Pt P 21 Sep; MP 22 Sep; RP 29 Sep; Sands Pt 3 Oct; FTT 23,

26 Oct.
Nelson's Sharp-tailed Sparrow: 2 DR 12 Oct; RP 18-19, 23 Oct; East Quogue 23 Oct; Big Egg Marsh JBWR 25 OCT; CP 1 Nov; East Quogue 2 Nov.
Saltmarsh Sharp-tailed Sparrow: MNSA thru; 2 Dune Road 11 Oct; Big Egg Marsh JBWR 1 Nov; DR 12 Oct.
White-crowned Sparrow: "Gambel's" race Theodore Roosevelt County P 2 Nov.
Lapland Longspur: FBF 19 Oct; JBWE 8-16 Nov; FTT 16 Nov; PL 16 Nov; 2 VCP 20-21 Nov; Breezy Pt 22 Nov.
Rose-breasted Grosbeak: PP to 8 Nov.
Blue Grosbeak: JBCH 13 Sep; FIHW 22 Sep; JBWE 24 Sep; CP 1 Oct; PP 4 Oct; CB Marina 17 Oct.
Dickcissel: Captree SP 6 Sep; 2 East Quogue 24 Sep; RMSP 3 Oct; FBF 5 Oct; JBWE 6-7, 24 Oct; Marine P KING 7 Oct; others to late Nov.
YELLOW-HEADED BLACKBIRD: Orient Pt SP 23 Sep (ABI); one was seen at this feeder 21-22 Aug.
Baltimore Oriole: last CP 20 Nov.
Red Crossbill: 3 JBWE 15 Nov.
Com. Redpoll: JBWE 22 Nov.
Pine Siskin: CP 26 Nov thru.
Evening Grosbeak: CP 20 Sep.



STANDARD ABBREVIATIONS

Regional rarities appear in BOLD; county names are shortened to their first four letters and appear in UPPER CASE letters; months are shortened to their first three letters. In species accounts: number of individuals omitted implies that one individual was reported; ! - details seen by Regional Editor; ad - adult; Alt - Alternate plumage; Am. - American; arr - arrival or first of season; BBS - Breeding Bird Survey; BOTS - bird of the season; CBC - Christmas Bird Count; CO - confirmed nesting; Com. - Common; E. - Eastern; FL - fledgling; FY -adult feeding young; I - Island; imm - immature; intro - see introduction to report; juv - juvenile; L - Lake; max - maximum; mob - multiple observers; N. - Northern; NYSDEC - New York State Department of Environmental Conservation; NWR - National Wildlife Refuge; NYSARC - report to New York State Avian Records Committee; P -park; Pd- Pond; ph - photographed; Pt -Point; Res - Reservoir;Ri - River; SP - State Park; spm - specimen; subad -subadult; T - Town of; thru - throughout period; Twn - township; W. - Western; WMA - Wildlife Management Area; y - young.

REPORTING REGIONS

Regional boundaries coincide with county lines, except at:

Region 1-Region 2 in Orleans, Genesee and Wyoming Counties:

the boundary is NY Route 98 from Pt. Breeze to Batavia;
NY Route 63 from Batavia to Pavilion, and NY Route 19
from Pavilion to the Allegany County line.

Region 2-Region 3 in Ontario County:

the boundary is Mud Creek to NY Route 64, NY Route 64
from Bristol Center to S. Bristol Springs, and Route 21
from S. Bristol Springs to the Yates County line.

Region 3-Region 5 in Cayuga County:

the boundary is NY Route 31.

REPORTING DEADLINES

Winter Season: December, January, February

Deadline is 7 March

Spring Season: March, April, May

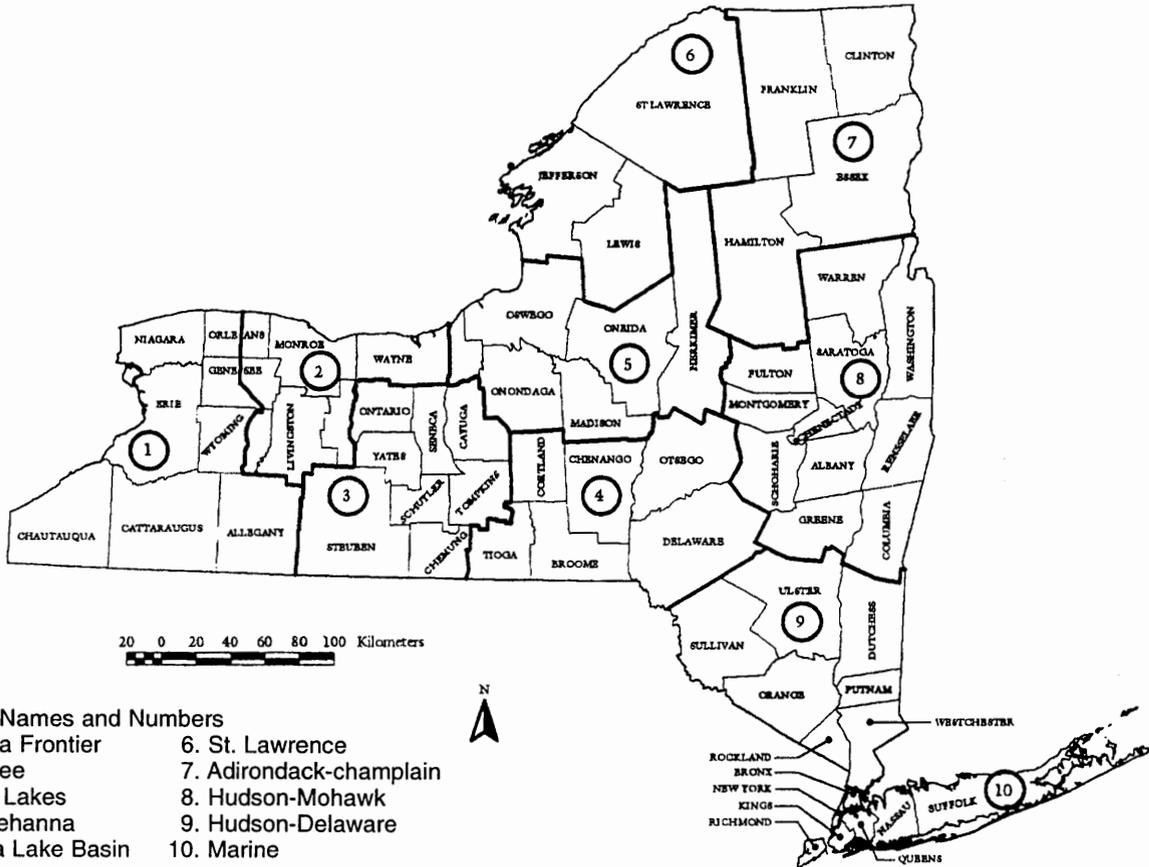
Deadline is 7 June

Summer Season: June, July, August

Deadline is 7 September

Fall Season: September, October, November

Deadline is 7 December



Editor of *THE KINGBIRD*

Emanuel Levine, 585 Mead Terrace, South Hempstead, NY 11550

Editor of *NEW YORK BIRDERS*

Tim Baird, 242 E. State St., Salamanca, NY 14779

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Jeanne Skelly, Secretary for NYSARC
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Publications:

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Waterfowl Count:

Bryan L. Swift
NYSDEC Bureau of Wildlife
625 Broadway, Albany, NY 12233-4754

Web Site:

Carena Pooth
22 Brothers Rd., Poughquag, NY 12570
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55 Old Camby Rd., Verbank, NY 12585

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