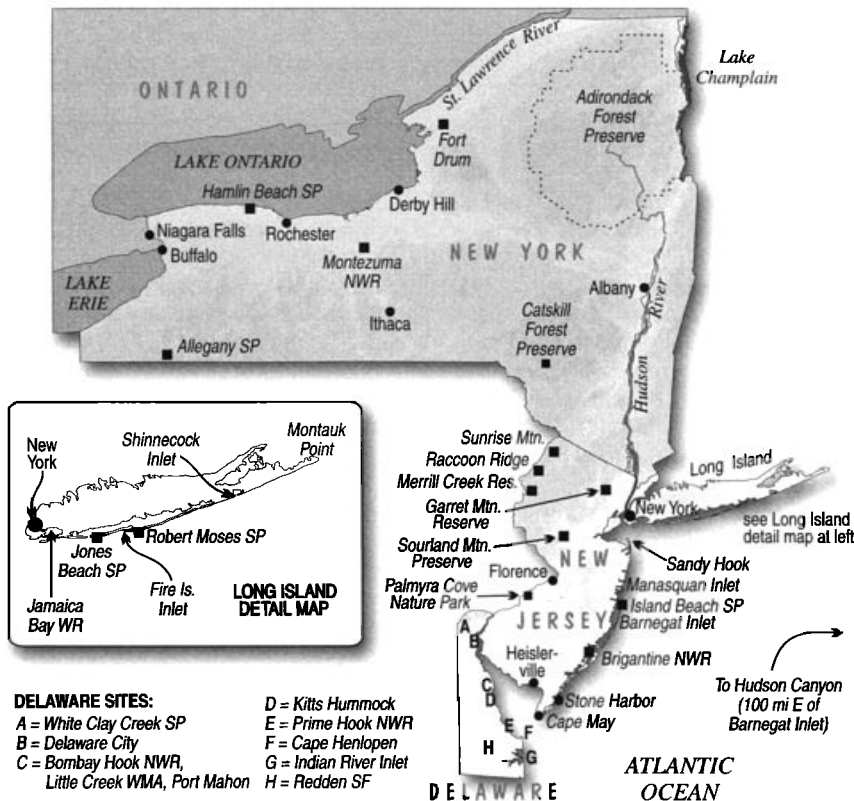


Hudson-Delaware



“Uneventful” sums up the weather conditions for this fall season, with mild conditions and relatively few weather-related events noted across the Region. August was unusually hot and dry, with record high temperatures recorded in several locations. Late in the month, rainfall began to recharge many of the drought-stricken water systems. During September and early October, the passages of several cold fronts around 16 September, 24 September, and 4 October were exceptional for numbers and variety of migrants. Average to slightly below-average temperatures remained through mid-November across the Region, and several major periods of precipitation ended any lingering drought conditions. Late November brought the first snowfall to northern areas of the Region, with significant accumulations extending through northwestern New Jersey.

This fall season brought a unique pattern of rarities. Instead of vagrants appearing singly, they came in multiples! Eared Grebes and American White Pelicans were found in record-high numbers, at least two Purple Gallinules appeared in upstate New York, and at least three Brown Pelicans were on Lake Ontario. A whopping four Sharp-tailed Sandpipers were found in the Region. Calliope Hummingbirds were found in two locations, and there were at least eight individual *Selaphorus* hummingbirds. And Cave Swallows were uncountable (more than 50!) in November. But the most interesting bird of the season was the single hybrid Hermit x Townsend’s Warbler on Long Island.

Abbreviations: Avalon (Avalon Seawatch, Cape May, NJ); Bombay Hook (Bombay Hook National Wildlife Refuge, Kent, DE); Brig. (Brigantine Unit, Forsythe National Wildlife Refuge, Atlantic, NJ); Hamlin Beach (Hamlin Beach S.P., Monroe, NY); Jamaica Bay (Jamaica Bay National Wildlife Refuge, New York City); L.I. (Long Island); Montezuma (Montezuma National Wildlife Refuge, Cayuga, NY); Montauk (Montauk Point, Suffolk, NY); N.Y.C. (New York City); R.B.A. (Rare Bird Alert).

LOONS THROUGH VULTURES

Red-throated Loons arrived unusually early, 17 Sep, at Hamlin Beach (WS) and peaked with a maximum count of 8066 at Avalon 25 Nov (KB). Only 2987 Common Loons were counted at the Cayuga Lake Loon Watch, Tompkins, NY, a 65% reduction from the 10-year average tally (BM). For the 3rd year, Eared Grebes were present at the Batavia Wastewater Treatment Plant, Genesee, NY 17 Aug—2 Nov (B. Klick, MMo); the tally of 4 there was a state high count. Singles were at Hamlin Beach 17 Oct—7 Nov (WS), Avalon 20 Oct (KB), and Jamaica Bay 7-8 Sep and 3 Nov (*vide* TB).

The lack of significant tropical storm activity limited the numbers of pelagic species reported. Eight Northern Fulmars were observed 48 km se. of Montauk 3 Oct (JP). A fishing trip off Montauk found 4 Greater

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Shearwaters and 100 Wilson's Storm-Petrels 21 Sep (OB), and a pelagic trip out of Lewes, DE reported at least one Greater Shearwater in Delaware waters 16 Nov (PG et al.). Two Audubon's Shearwaters and 12 Cory's were 19 km e. of Avalon 13 Aug (MF), while a late Sooty off Montauk was notable 12 Oct (K. & S. Feustel).

Observations of American White Pelicans were scattered through the Region, with 2 at Montezuma 4-7 Oct (B. Guthrie, m. ob.), one at Cape Henlopen, Sussex, DE 8 Oct, one at Little Creek, Kent, DE 26 Oct (AE), and a New Jersey record high count of 5 at Cape May Point, Cape May, NJ 26 Nov (RC). The 3 imm. Brown Pelicans that were first observed at Hamlin Beach 6 Jun remained on the s. shore of L. Ontario through 28 Oct (DT, AW, m. ob.). A Brown Pelican was reported by a fisherman on Cayuga L., Cayuga, NY 30 Oct. The largest concentration was of 30 at Cape Henlopen, Sussex, DE 2 Sep (FR). Unusual was a Great Cormorant on the Niagara R. 22 Nov, only the 2nd record for Buffalo, NY (AW). An imm. frigatebird, most likely a Magnificent, was observed at Cape Henlopen Hawkwatch, Sussex, DE 12 Oct (AE, R. Multhropp); this bird was clearly connected to the passage of Hurricane Kyle just offshore there.

The annual post-breeding dispersal of herons and egrets peaked near the first of Oct, with an ad. Little Blue Heron at Hamlin Beach 28 Sep and 60 Great Egrets at Montezuma 4 Oct. Reminiscent of the past was the unusually high number of Cattle Egrets (11) seen near Jamesport, Suffolk, NY 12 Nov (B. Prentice). Holdovers from the summer invasion of White Ibis in Delaware were 3 at Bombay Hook 6-7 Aug (PEL, MG, MS) and 2 at Little Creek W.M.A., Kent 10 Aug (M. Hafner). Up to 3 White-faced Ibis were at Brig. 1-3 Aug (J. Danzenbaker, m. ob.), continuing from the summer, and another was at Bombay Hook 6-7 Aug+ (FR et al.).

WATERFOWL THROUGH RAPTORS

A New York record-early Ross's Goose was found 18 Sep at Irondequoit Bay, Rochester, Monroe, NY (DT, m. ob.). Ross' Geese were also observed at Montezuma 12 Oct (MH), Bombay Hook 1 Nov (Delaware R.B.A.), Quakertown, Hunterton, NJ 10 Nov (S. Angus), Jones Beach, Nassau, NY 4 Nov (AWo), with 3 at Prime Hook, Kent, DE 29 Nov (MG). Over the past 3 years, *hutchinsii* Canada Goose, commonly referred to as Richardson's Goose, has been increasing through w. New York. Up to 25 were present at Iroquois N. W. R., Genesee-Orleans 27 Oct—20 Nov (P. Yoerg, m. ob.), 5 in East Aurora, Niagara 17-19 Nov (MM), and at least 5 at the Cornell Lab of Ornithology, Tompkins, NY 10 Nov (SK). Of great interest was an ad. Dark-bellied Brant (*Branta b. bernicla*) photographed at Indian River Inlet, Sussex, DE 17 Nov in a large flock of Atlantic or Pale-bellied Brant (*Branta b. hrota*) (BP, MG). This Eurasian vagrant has been recorded previously in the

Region only in New Jersey (*) and New York, with other North American records in Massachusetts and Virginia.

At least 6 different Eurasian Wigeon (all drakes) were reported through the Region: 2 in upstate New York, 3 on Long I., and one in New Jersey. Two Tufted Ducks were found in the Region: a juv. on Staten I., Richmond, NY 15 Oct—17 Nov (C. Nuzzi, m. ob.) and a returning female 22 Nov+ at Silver L. near Rehoboth, Sussex, DE (L. Shaw, m. ob.), for its 3rd consecutive winter. While the arrivals of Common Eider and Harlequin Duck on the Atlantic coast were normal, a Common Eider at Hamlin Beach 8 Oct was rather early, and 2 Harlequin Ducks also at Hamlin Beach 17 Oct were also somewhat early (Rochester R.B.A.).

RAILS THROUGH SHOREBIRDS

Purple Gallinule is a rare vagrant to the Region and in recent times is most often seen coastally during the fall, so 3 in upstate New York this season constituted a mini-invasion. Individual Purple Gallinules were observed and documented from Montezuma 22 Sep—12 Oct (G. Chapin, m. ob.), Ausable Point, Essex, NY 23 Sep—3 Oct (B. Krueger, C. Mitchell), and Bashakill, Sullivan, NY 17

Oct—23 Oct (J. Haas, m. ob.).

The shorebird migration was uneventful, with a few true exceptions. Unusual away from the coast was an American Avocet at Sodus Point, Wayne, NY 11 Aug (D. Daniels), and a count of 150 at Bombay Hook 20 Nov was high for so late a date (M. Bowen). Reports of Upland Sandpiper were scattered and rather low compared to those of decades past, with, e.g., 2 at the Johnson Sod Farm, Cumberland, NJ 3 Aug (M. Miles), 12 at the Genesee Airport, Genesee, NY 13 Aug (J. Kimball), one near Seaford, Sussex, DE 23 Aug (GL), and one at Westhampton, Suffolk, NY 8 Sep (TB, AG, AB). Others were at sod farms and Cape May, where regular. A Long-billed Curlew, first observed from the Avalon Seawatch 3 Oct (KB), was sporadically reported from the vicinity of North Wildwood, Cape May, NJ through the period (m. ob.); what was probably the same individual was present for one day only on Brigantine I. near Atlantic City (Andy Smith). Notable was an unusually late Hudsonian Godwit at Rhinebeck, Dutchess, NY 10 Nov (H. Thompson, C. Pooth). As Red Knot numbers plummet, inland reports now have become noteworthy, and 2 observed in Charlotte, Monroe, NY 23 Sep (KG, m. ob.) and one

SA This year's raptor migration was strong for several species, but most stations reported lackluster, low totals. The migration of 135 Golden Eagles past Franklin Mountain equaled the maximum annual count made for the 13 years the count has officially existed. The migration of Peregrine Falcons through the Region was exceptional. Cape May Point recorded 1,015 Peregrines for the season, with a single-day record high count of 298. Another highlight was the cooperative, long-staying imm. intermediate-morph Swainson's Hawk around Cape May 28 Sep—18 Oct (JG, CV, m. ob.).

For the third consecutive year, the Hawk Mountain Sanctuary and the Hawk Migration Association of North America conducted Autumn Hawk Watch (AHW), which tracks the fall migration of raptors across North and Central America (see Table 1 below). Over 100-sanctioned hawk watch sites participate in AHW, and their results can be viewed online at <<http://www.birdsource.org/ahw>>.

SPECIES	EARLY MIGRANTS	PEAK MIGRATION	TOTAL
Osprey	1 Sep (249)	15 Sep—20 Oct (3089)	3454
Bald Eagle	5 Sep (135)	20 Sep—31 Oct (345)	596
Northern Harrier	5 Sep (124)	20 Sep—10 Nov (1047)	1406
Sharp-shinned Hawk	5 Sep (503)	15 Sep—10 Nov (20,327)	22371
Cooper's Hawk	5 Sep (235)	20 Sep—5 Nov (3633)	4175
Red-shouldered Hawk	25 Sep (169)	20 Oct—10 Nov (393)	851
Broad-winged Hawk	25 Aug (39)	1 Sep—5 Oct (21,130)	21339
Golden Eagle	5 Oct (34)	25 Oct—25 Nov (141)	219
American Kestrel	15 Aug (200)	15 Sep—15 Oct (5706)	6485
Merlin	10 Sep (222)	20 Sep—15 Oct (913)	1480
Peregrine Falcon	15 Sep (40)	20 Sep—20 Oct (1069)	1160

Table 1. Migration of selected hawks through the Region as represented by Autumn Hawk Watch. The arrival date represents the ending date of a five-day period in which the majority of the watches reported the species. The peak migration range represents the dates when the maximum numbers moved through the Region. The total represents the total number of birds counted for the season. Numbers in parentheses for early migrants indicate the total number of birds counted to the onset of peak migration, and for peak migration indicate the total number of birds in that date range. Participating hawkwatches included: Cape May Point (NJ), Chestnut Ridge Hawk Watch (NY), Franklin Mountain (NY), Montclair Hawk Lookout (NJ), Mt. Peter (NY), Raccoon Ridge (NJ), Scotts Mountain (NJ), Sunrise Mountain-Stokes State Forest (NJ), and Wildcat Ridge Hawkwatch (NJ).

at Montezuma 24 Sep (Rochester R.B.A.) were the only non-coastal reports. The only Curlew Sandpiper report was at Bombay Hook 11 Aug (MG). Most ad. Baird's Sandpipers pass through the Region in early Aug, while juvs. pass through between late Aug and early Oct. Unusual was an ad. Baird's Sandpiper at Riverhead, Suffolk, NY



Quite rare in upstate New York, a Least Tern was found at Woodlawn Beach State Park 17 August 2002. Photograph by Willie D'Anna.

Oct 19 (T. Lauro). Three Ruffs were in Delaware, about par for the season.

The highlight of the fall shorebird migration was the influx of 4 Sharp-tailed Sandpipers. Delaware's 2nd and 3rd Sharp-tailed Sandpipers were both at Bombay Hook. The first was an ad. 5-6 Aug (L. Lewis, m. ob.), and the 2nd was a juv. 30 Sep—6 Oct (D. Eberly, A. Gonzon, E. Braun, m. ob.). New York's 2nd was found at Irondequoit Bay, *Monroe*, NY 10-12 Oct (D. Sherony, m. ob.), and New Jersey's first was a one-day event at Stone Harbor, *Cape May* 8 Oct (M. Fialkovich, P. Hess, PEL, m. ob.). Purple Sandpipers arrived in the Region, both inland and coastally, in late Oct. Two Purple Sandpipers on Cayuga L. 17 Nov provided only the 4th record in 100 years (T. Lenz, MM, m. ob.). Buff-breasted Sandpipers were prevalent on L.I. and w. New Jersey in Sep, with maximum counts of 7 at Riverhead, Suffolk, NY 10 Sep (JF) and 14 at Johnson Sod Farm, *Cumberland*, NJ 15 Sep (TR). Phalarope sightings were scattered, with highlights being 48 Wilson's Phalaropes at Broadkill Beach, *Sussex*, DE 5 Sep (ES), a fine count for the state. Singe Red Phalaropes were observed at Hamlin Beach 6 Oct and 14 Nov (WS, m. ob.), Sandy Pond, *Jefferson*, NY 2-4 Nov (m. ob.), and Bombay Hook 11 Nov (B. Schreitz, m. ob.).

JAEGERS THROUGH ALCIDS

Jaegers arrived unusually early at Hamlin Beach, with a Parasitic Jaeger 6 Aug, and an ad. Long-tailed Jaeger 18 Aug (WS, S. Taylor). Both Parasitic and Pomarine Jaegers were regular off of L.I. and New Jersey from Sep through early Nov, with a maximum peak of 26 Parasitic Jaegers at the Avalon Seawatch 2 Oct (KB). The only report of skua was of an unidentified bird one km off Montauk Point 14 Sep (JP).

The annual influx of tens of thousands of gulls into the Niagara R. began around 17 Nov. For Nov, 11 species of gull included the annual Little, Black-headed, California (3), Thayer's, Iceland, and Lesser Black-backed Gulls, plus Black-legged Kittiwake (WD, R. Tozer, J. Iron).

Uncommon away from the coast was a Laughing Gull in Ithaca, *Tompkins*, NY 18 Sep (KM, m. ob.). The first reports of Little Gull came from Hamlin Beach, with 3 on 5 Aug (RS, WS); the first coastally were an imm. at Montauk 26 Oct (AG) and an ad. off of Sandy Hook, *Monmouth* 10 Nov (NJ R.B.A.). A first-winter

Thayer's Gull was reported in offshore Delaware waters 16 Nov (PG et al.), the state's 2nd. Black-headed Gulls were first reported at Montauk 26 Oct (AG), with other notable reports from Indian River Inlet, DE 17 Nov (BP) and Cayuga L., NY 18 Nov (JE, MM). The only report of Sabine's Gull was in the rips off of Cape May Point 2 Sep (MF; no details). Black-legged Kittiwakes first appeared off Cape May Pt. 4 Oct (observed by m. ob. through 25 Oct), and subsequently off Montauk 26 Oct (AG), at Derby Hill, *Oswego* 5 Nov (5 birds; BP), at Dryden L., *Tompkins*, NY 16 Nov (KM), off Delaware 16 Nov (3; PG et al.).

The annual fall dispersal of Sandwich Terns was evident coastally, with the first report 26 Jul at Cape May Point (PEL), a maximum of 8 at Stone Harbor Inlet, *Cape May*, NJ 5 Sep (KR), and one at Cuspogue, *Suffolk*, NY 10 Sep (A. Baldelli).

DOVES THROUGH WOODPECKERS

The only Snowy Owl was reported from Pomfret, *Chautauqua*, NY 26 Nov (*vide* MMo). Many observers commented on the unusually low numbers of Northern Saw-whet Owls, although 34 were banded in Wethersfield, *Wyoming*, NY 5-27 Oct (D. Junkin). Common Nighthawk reports varied across the Region, with an unusually high count of 148 at Brandywine Cr., *New Castle*, DE 25 Aug (AE); the flight along the s. fork of L.I. was just half of last year's count of 578 (J. Clinton).

Increased understanding of hummingbird vagrancy in the Northeast has led to more people maintaining feeders later in the year and to an increased awareness of locations where plants remain flowering late in the season. An ad. male Ruby-throated Hummingbird remained in Cape May until 25 Dec (RC), and another Ruby-throated, this one with a damaged wing, came to a feeder in Farmingville, NY 23-27 Nov (J. Manzione, TB). On 19 Nov, observers checking the flower gardens around Battery Park, N.Y.C. found a Calliope Hummingbird (B. Cacace, TF; m. ob.). The bird remained until 24 Nov and if accepted will be the state's 3rd (the first 2 were found last year). Another made several brief appearances at a feeder in Linwood, *Atlantic*, NJ 1-5 Nov (J. Danzenbaker), a state 3rd. Mary Gustafson, the active hummingbird-bander in the mid-Atlantic states, banded an imm. male Allen's Hummingbird—Delaware's

2nd Allen's in five years—in the Woodland Beach area of *Kent*, DE 27 Nov. Rufous Hummingbirds were observed in Newark, *New Castle*, DE 28 Aug (D. Frebery), and at Lewes, *Sussex*, DE 29 Nov (B. Fintel). Finally, at least 5 *Selasphorus* (3 in the N.Y.C. area, 2 in New Jersey) were observed at feeders in Nov (N. Wagerik, TF; M. Broadwater).

FLYCATCHERS THROUGH WARBLERS

Western Kingbirds were found at Fort Tilden, N.Y.C., 17 & 29 Sep (*vide* SS), Cape May 25 Sep & 28 Nov+ (D. Hedeem, G. Davis), Riis Park, N.Y.C. on and off 5-25 Oct (2 birds; TF; m. ob.), Brig. 16 Nov (C. Jones), and Staten I., NY 17-30 Nov (*vide* SS). Ash-throated Flycatchers were found at the Two Mile Beach unit of the Cape May N.W.R. 16 Nov (RC, PEL), Jones Beach 21 Nov (JF m. ob.), Cape May's Beanery 23-28 Nov (S. Ziegler, m. ob.), and at Breezy Point, *Kings*, NY 25 Nov (B. May, D. Klauber). Say's Phoebes were at Cape May

SA While the balmy weather conditions of the late fall allowed several species of swallow to linger into late Nov—Tree and Rough-winged in particular but also a few Barns and a Bank at Cape May as late as 23 November (PEL et al.)—the swallow highlight of the year was the major influx of **Cave Swallows**. Though not an annual event everywhere in the Region by any means, Cape May has held at least one each November since the first record there in 1993, and observers there have come to look for certain patterns of weather conducive to the arrival of Cave Swallows. On 30 October, Lehman sent around an email note speculating that the forecast for one week hence could produce "a major flight" of the species to the northeastern part of the continent, should the forecast be accurate.

It was, and it did. The first Cave Swallow reports came from the hawkwatch at Cape May 7 November (PEL, m. ob.) and at Hamlin Beach 11 November (K. Fox). The Cave Swallow observed at Niagara Falls 16-21 November was a new species for that area (WD). Many scattered reports of this vagrant in downstate New York, chiefly Long I. and the New York City area, began 17 November (TF), with a maximum of 3 at Montauk 23 November (HM), and sporadic reports on Long I. through 26 November. Up to 4 Cave Swallows were observed at Sandy Hook 15-19 November (Tom Boyle et al.). A swallow roost at Cape May produced 28 Cave Swallows 23 November, but Lehman and Michael O'Brien reckon conservatively, based on study of molt and wear of flight feathers, that no fewer than 40 birds were present around Cape May 16 November—2 December. The total number present in the Region must have been well over 50, which surpasses the strongest flight on record here, from November 1999. Of great interest was the Cave Swallow found freshly dead at Island Beach S. P., NJ 29 November (George Wenzelburger). This bird, of the expected southwestern race *pelodoma*, is now in the collection at the Academy of Natural Sciences in Philadelphia (*).

21 Oct (J. Miller) and Marlboro, Monmouth, NJ 10 Nov (H. Burk) and represent New Jersey's 10th and 11th records. A **Loggerhead Shrike**, now a rarity anywhere in the Region, was found near Calverton, *Suffolk*, NY 15-17 Aug (G. Tudor, B. Cassie, m. ob.). A Northern Shrike in the Great Swamp, *Morris*, NJ 2 Nov+ was noteworthy in a non-invasion year.

The bulk of the spotted thrush migration, particularly that of Gray-cheeked and Swainson's Thrushes, appears to be more of an inland and upstate New York phenomenon than a coastal one. Most migration for these species occurred 10 Sep—15 Oct, with late birds in coastal Long I. and Cape May through 30 Oct. Several individuals in upstate New York monitor thrush migration by counting numbers of nocturnal flight calls. They found that major migration nights were 16 Sep, 24 Sep, and 3 Oct, with the majority being Swainson's Thrushes (SK, KR, C. Tessaglia-Hymes).

By contrast, warbler migration was more evident at coastal sites than inland. Major waves of warblers at Central Park occurred 17 Aug (nine species), 5 Sep (19 species), 15 Sep (21 species), 28 Sep (20 species), and 6 Oct (14 species; *vide* DA). While the n. and w. parts of the Region had scattered reports of Orange-crowned Warbler, the bulk of the reports were from more coastal locations beginning in the first week of Oct. An Audubon's Warbler was at Mecox Bay, NY 20 Nov (P. A. Buckley, JF, G. Fritz, J. Quinlan). The number of Connecticut Warblers reported was unusually high; exceptional but not unprecedentedly early were reports 26 Aug at Sapsucker Woods, *Tompkins*, NY 26 Aug (D. Lebbin) and 31 Aug at Braddock Bay, *Monroe*, NY (M. Davids, K. Dalton).

TANAGERS THROUGH FINCHES

Clay-colored Sparrows were first noted in late Sep, peaked in late Oct, and ceased by mid-

Nov, with the bulk of the reports coming from Cape May and L.I. Interesting is that Clay-colored Sparrow is very rarely observed during the fall in upstate New York, where an uncommon and irregular breeder.

This year, only 2 Clay-colored Sparrows were reported upstate: one near Ithaca, *Tompkins*, NY 5 Oct (SK) and one near Rochester 5 Nov. Inasmuch as the preponderance of fall records comes from coastal locations, the majority of upstate Clay-colored Sparrows at this season are probably not Regional breeders. Lark Sparrow observations show a similar pattern, with all reports from coastal

locations: Island Beach State Park, *Ocean*, NJ 23-26 Sep (New Jersey R.B.A.), multiple singles around Cape May 15 Aug—14 Nov (PEL, Cape May R.B.A.), and one at Jones Beach 5 Oct (AG). Lincoln's Sparrows, fairly common Adirondack breeders, were regularly reported throughout the Region from late Sep+, primarily in upstate, with later birds through mid-Nov, primarily from Cape May and Delaware; their distribution suggests that local rather than w. populations are the chief source of intra-Regional migrants.

A Le Conte's Sparrow, still thought to be a rare visitor to Delaware (though reports to the south increase), was seen 25 Oct at Bombay Hook (*vide* MG). All three subspecies of Nelson's Sharp-tailed Sparrow migrate through the Region. Coastally, it is possible to see all three, while in upstate New York, most Nelson's are believed to be of the *alterus* race, which breeds along the Hudson Bay. Reports of single birds in upstate New York came from Montezuma 6 & 10 Oct (M. Detling, M. Victoria), Cuylerville, *Monroe* 6 Oct (J. Kimball), and East Aurora, *Erie*, NY 17 Oct (L. Holmes). Top coastal count was only of 8 at Sandy Hook 9 Oct (New Jersey R.B.A.), but an Acadian bird (*subvirgatus* subspecies) was noteworthy at Riis Park, *Kings*, NY 11 Oct (*vide* TB). An ad. **Harris's Sparrow** was found in Marlboro, *Monmouth*, NJ 10-13 Nov (LL).

Though the winter 2002-2003 was not an irruption year for finches, the accumulated results of 15 years of Project Feederwatch data, a joint project of Bird Studies Canada and the Cornell Lab of Ornithology, allow us to contextualize this season's status more clearly. Wesley Hochachka of the Cornell Laboratory of Ornithology calculated an abundance index for each species based on the Nov occurrence of winter finches in the Region. This November's abundance index indeed compares poorly with previous November indices for all species. There were no observations of Pine Grosbeak

or Common Redpoll in the Region (low abundance index). Discouragingly, too, the abundance index for Evening Grosbeak was the lowest in 15 years, further confirming the dramatic decline of this bird throughout the Northeast. Pine Siskin numbers were the 3rd lowest in 15 years and Purple Finch numbers the 10th lowest. Alternatively, the abundance index for American Goldfinch was the 3rd highest.



One of at least three immature Brown Pelicans seen on Lake Ontario this summer, this bird lingered at Oswego Harbor, New York through the surprisingly late date of 23 October 2002. Photograph by Willie D'Anna.

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SA Certainly one of the most instructive sightings of the season was a hybrid **Townsend's x Hermit Warbler** at Jones Beach. On 28 Nov, Andrew Block located a warbler at Jones Beach, L.I. that was initially thought to be a juv. male Hermit Warbler. The bird was subsequently seen and photographed by many through 1 Dec. Digiscoped images sent to Dr. Sievert Rohwer at the University of Washington, an authority on the hybridization of Hermit and Townsend's Warblers, indicated that the bird was an adult female and surely a hybrid. Specifically, the lack of shaft streaks on the greater secondary coverts, the large amount of white on the tail, and the faint, narrow yellow bib are inconsistent with a pure Hermit Warbler (*vide* HM). As the zone of hybridization between Hermit and Townsend's Warblers is restricted to three rather well-defined areas in Oregon and Washington, we can identify more nearly the origin of this vagrant than we could have if it had been a pure Hermit or a Townsend's Warbler.