

# Hudson-Delaware



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The fall 2006 was marked by the passage of Tropical Depression *Ernesto* in early September (see the Special Inter-regional Report, this issue) and an inundation of migrant passerines, particularly robins, sparrows, and, spectacularly, Hermit Thrushes, in late October and November. August was hot, especially the early part, September had near-average temperatures and rainfall (aside from *Ernesto*), October was wet and cool, and November was especially mild. A storm in late October dropped unseasonably heavy snow in the Buffalo area and drove many seabirds eastward across Lake Erie, producing a number of interesting records in western New York. A cold front that moved through the Region 2 November was followed by a massive incursion of passerines to the coast. Interestingly, this inundation, incorporating the same mix of species as last year's incursion at the same time of year, occurred in the absence of the "fallout" weather conditions of last fall.

**Abbreviations:** Amherst S.P. (Amherst, Erie, NY); Avalon (Avalon Seawatch, Avalon, Cape May, NJ); Batavia (Batavia W.T.P., Genesee, NY); Braddock Bay (Braddock Bay B.O., Rochester, NY); Brigantine (Forsyth N.W.R., Atlantic, NJ); Bombay Hook (Bombay Hook N.W.R., Kent, DE); Captree (Captree S.P., Suffolk, NY); Chazy (Chazy R. mouth, Clinton, NY); Democrat Pt. (Fire Island Inlet, s. shore of Long I., NY); Derby Hill (Derby Hill Hawkwatch, Oswego, NY); Hamburg (Hamburg Hawkwatch, near Buffalo, NY); Hamlin Beach (Hamlin Beach S.P., near Rochester, NY); Iroquois (Iroquois N.W.R., Genesee/Orleans, NY); Jamaica Bay (Jamaica Bay Wildlife Refuge, Gateway N.P., New York City); Jones Beach (Jones Beach S.P., s. shore of Long I., NY); Moriches (Moriches Bay/Inlet, Suffolk, Long I., NY); Little Creek (Little Creek

W.M.A., Kent, DE); Mannington (Mannington Marsh, Salem, NJ); Montauk (Montauk Pt., Suffolk, NY); Montezuma (Montezuma N.W.R., Seneca, NY); Palmyra Cove (Burlington, NJ); Pike's Beach (Moriches Bay, Suffolk, NY); Prime Hook (Prime Hook N.W.R., Sussex, DE); Riis (Jacob Riis Park, Queens, New York City); Ripley (Ripley Hawkwatch, Chautauqua, NY); R.M.S.P. (Robert Moses S.P. Fire I., Suffolk, NY); Sagaponack (Sagaponack Pond, Bridgehampton, Long I., NY); Sandy Hook (Sandy Hook Unit/Gateway National Recreation Area, Monmouth, NJ); S.C.M.M. (S. Cape May Meadows, Cape May, NJ); Shinnecock (Shinnecock Bay/Inlet, Suffolk, NY); Ted Harvey (Ted Harvey Conservation Area/Logan Lane Tract, Kent, DE); Tonawanda (Tonawanda W.M.A., Genesee/Niagara, NY).

## WATERFOWL THROUGH PELICANS

Three Fulvous Whistling-Ducks seen flying overhead and calling at night at Cape May 6 Oct (E. Obercian et al.) closely follow 3 seen this past spring at J.B.W.R. A total of 8 Greater White-fronted Geese Regionwide, including 4 at Somerset, Niagara, NY 28 Oct (WD'A, JP),



With closer scrutiny of goose assemblages by birders in recent years, Cackling Goose is proving to be an uncommon, regular migrant through the Hudson-Delaware Region. This bird at Hamlin Beach, New York 30 October 2006 appeared to be of the expected nominate subspecies as did two others here. Photograph by Dominic Sherony.

was somewhat below recent totals. Four of 7 Ross's Geese this fall were in Delaware, and a Regional total of 11 Cackling Geese included 4 at Batavia 21-23 Oct (JP). High single-day totals of migrating ducks included 1077 Northern Pintails at Derby Hill 24 Sep (BPu) and 1000+ Green-winged Teal at Avalon 22 Oct. A transitional male Cinnamon Teal was found 29 Sep at Ted Harvey (BGP), where it remained until 3 Oct (FR); there are about 10 records for the Region, and the frequency of reports appears to be increasing.

Diving ducks and especially sea ducks showed mostly downward trends this fall, although the milder autumn weather perhaps

influences distribution at this season. Top counts of Ring-necked Ducks were 700 in Drayton, Cattaraugus, NY 11 Nov (DN, WW) and 350 on Hoopes Res., New Castle, DE 25 Nov (APE). Away from the coast, single Harlequin Ducks were seen at Derby Hill 17 Nov (KM) and at Dunkirk Harbor, Erie, NY 24 Nov (DN), consistent with recent reports. Similarly, 106 Common Eiders were at Barnegat Inlet (SK), and 800 were at Montauk 25 Nov (HM). King Eiders have declined noticeably over the past 30 years or so: the total at Avalon this fall was just one, compared to a 14-year mean of 6 and maximum of 21 (in 1997). One of the few reported this fall was an ad. male at Montauk 25 Nov (HM). Four hundred Common Mergansers at Nassau Lakes, Rensselaer, NY 15 Nov and 100 at Dayton, Niagara, NY 31 Oct (DN) were largish totals. Barrow's Goldeneyes seem to be slowly increasing in the Region: single males at Tomhannock Res., Rensselaer, NY 9-25 Nov (B. Grosman, RG) and at Noblewood Park, Essex, NY among 5000 Commons 13 Nov (L. & P. Osenbaugh) were first local records. Scoter totals at Avalon were all below average this year, and a count of 1800 Blacks off Geor-

gica Pond, Suffolk, Long I., NY was the only concentration worthy of mention.

A Pacific Loon on Cayuga L. at Aurora, NY 19 Nov (J. Gerbracht, T. Lenz, C. Wood) was a local rarity the only one reported this fall, and a Red-throated Loon at Tomhannock Res., Rensselaer, NY 19 Nov (WY) was most unusual at that inland locality. Five Eared Grebes this fall included 3 at Batavia and 2 at Atlantic City, Atlantic, NJ, both traditional loca-

tions. A Western Grebe was well described at Port Kent on L. Champlain, Essex, NY 29-30 Oct (D. Rohleder) for a first county record. Two Northern Fulmars came ashore on Long I.: at R.M.S.P. 18 Oct (SSM) and at Jamaica Bay 9 Nov (oiled bird; ABL); these may reflect increased abundance in offshore waters. Two boat trips reached Hudson Canyon this fall, one on 20 Sep from New Jersey (AD'O et al.) and one 28 Sep from New York (SSI et al.). Both recorded Greater, Audubon's, and Manx Shearwaters, and the latter trip had 6 Cory's Shearwaters as well. A Manx Shearwater at Derby Hill 23 Oct (BPu, D. Wheeler) constituted the 3rd record for the e. Great Lakes;



This young Razorbill was a great rarity on the Niagara River at Fort Niagara, New York 19 November 2006. Photograph by Dominic Sheroni.

both previous records come from Ontario waters (2001, 2006). A White-faced Storm-Petrel was found at Wilmington Canyon 25 Aug (FR, PG et al.). A Northern Gannet was seen on L. Erie at Hamburg 29 Oct (MZ), a first Oct record for that locality. A Great Cormorant at Cumberland Head on L. Champlain, Clinton, NY 6 Sep (BK, CM) furnished the 3rd local record. Double-crested Cormorants passing Avalon this fall totaled 195,000, down from a peak of 241,000 in 1996 but above the 14-year average of 186,000. The continent-wide increase of this species seems to have leveled off in recent years. At least 15 American White Pelicans were seen this fall; these included what may well have been the same flock of 10 seen at the Navesink R., Monmouth, NJ 18 Nov, at Shark River Inlet 19-20 Nov (BB, T. Loveland), and at Cape May 20 Nov (B. & D. Graupner); 4 were at Orient Pt., Long I., NY 31 Oct (M. Farina). Larger flocks of Brown Pelicans included 50+ at Island Beach, NJ 6 Sep (S. Weiss) and 21 at Cape May 25 Aug (S. Rodan). An unidentified frigatebird was seen at Cape May 28-29 Oct (R. Loes, B. Glaser).

## HERONS THROUGH RAPTORS

One hundred Great Egrets were at Tonawonda 4 Aug (WW), and 3 Snowy Egrets were found n. to Tifft and Times Beach Nature Park, near Buffalo, Erie, NY 6-19 Sep (JP, WW, RSA) and Chazy 1 Sep (BK). One hundred Cattle Egrets at Featherbed Lane, Salem, NJ 26 Aug certainly came from the nesting colony at Pea Patch I., DE; the species is now distinctly uncommon elsewhere in the Region. An imm. White Ibis was at Brigantine 27 Aug. A subad. Mississippi Kite lingered at Cape May 30 Sep-9 Oct (m.ob.), and another was seen at Seaford, New Castle, DE 1 Oct (AEH). About 15 Northern Goshawks were found away from hawkwatches, in accord with the moderate to low numbers of migrants counted at those stations. Four or 5 Swainson's Hawks were seen, all at or near Cape May: one imm. 30 Oct (SB, LM), one at Turkey Pt. 4 Nov (MG), a dark imm. seen sev-

eral times 14-19 Nov (CJV, KL), and a light ad. 19 Nov (CJV). The peak daily total of migrant Golden Eagles was 16 at Raccoon Ridge, Warren, NJ 3 Nov.

## RAILS THROUGH ALCIDS

Sightings of both Black and Yellow Rails are on the increase in the Northeast, and there seem to be too many reported from traditional birding sites to attribute the increase to increased search effort. Black Rails this fall were seen at Bombay Hook 5 Aug, at S.C.M.M. 13-16 Aug (CJV), and at the Cape May Hawkwatch 4-9 Nov (A. Chodan). More remarkable was a Black Rail flushed by a mowing machine at Ellicottville, Cattaraugus, NY 10 Sep (FV) for the first record from that region since 1933. A Yellow Rail was seen as it was struck by a car at Lynbrook, Long I., NY 2 Nov (\*Matt Bayer). An imm. Purple Gallinule was picked up dead in West Belmar, Monmouth, NJ 18 Nov (M. McCort). Six or 7 Sandhill Cranes were at the Savannah Mucklands, Tyre, Seneca, NY 11 Nov (Shawn Billerman, Ernie Lewis, Nick Sly), and singles were seen from Cape May (m.ob.) n. to Staten I., NY 2 Oct (RRV).

Six hundred Black-bellied Plovers at Tuckerton 18 Sep (SB, LM) was the highest count reported. Higher counts of American Oystercatchers were 100 at Southampton, Long I., NY 1 Oct (K. Glasser), 500 at Stone Harbor, Cape May, NJ 8 Oct (B. Hixon), and 170 at Tuckerton, Ocean, NJ 10 Oct (SK). Oystercatchers are declining on the East Coast overall, so birders viewing aggregations such as these are requested to report totals and check



This Hammond's Flycatcher at Rye, New York 19-28 (here 19) November 2006 shows the almond-shaped eye ring, contrast between green back and gray head, and a relatively long primary extension typical of the species. Photograph by Gail Benson.

for color-banded birds (<<http://www.ncsu.edu/project/grsmgis/AMOY/Banding.htm>>). Two Black-necked Stilts at the Cape May Hawkwatch 3 Sep (C. Havard) were the only ones reported n. of Delaware. Four hundred

American Avocets at Bombay Hook in Aug was an average count, but 8 at Cape May 3 Aug (T. Parsons), 4 at Featherbed Lane, Salem, NJ 26 Aug (C. & E. Crunkleton), and 4 at Brigantine 7 Oct (PB) were somewhat more than expected. A single avocet at Hamburg 12 Oct (F. Rew, RSA) was substantially far north. Post-breeding aggregations of Upland Sandpipers included 10+ at Genesee Airfield, Livingston, NY 5 Aug (J. Kimball) and 9 at Johnson's Sod Farm, Salem, NJ 1 Aug (Steve Glynn). A Willet at Dunkirk Harbor, Chautauqua, NY 3 Sep (JP) was unusual for that locality. High counts of Western Willets at the coast included 50+ at Brigantine 19-20 Aug and 65 at Stone Harbor 23 Sep (PS, CS). Hudsonian Godwits were widespread this fall: 22 were at Montezuma 29 Aug (M. Andersen, T. Lenz, B. McGuire); 13 alighted at Sandy Hook 2 Sep (L. Frazza, M. Rikowski; during rains from Tropical Depression Ernesto); "several dozen" were in Ballston, Saratoga, NY 15 Sep, 8 of which were electrocuted after flying in to power lines (reported on local radio; \*Will Yandik); 3 were at Spruce Run Res., Hunterdon, NJ 19 Sep (S. Galick et al.); and 17 flew by Derby Hill 24 Sep (BPu, David Wheeler). Others included singles in Dayton, Cattaraugus, NY 11 Nov (DN et al.) and at Hamlin Beach 26 Aug (DT) and 4 on Long I. in Sep (m.ob.). Unusually large concentrations of Marbled Godwits were 7 at Shinnecock 3 Sep and 25 at Stone Harbor, Cape May, NJ 4 Nov (SK). One thousand Lesser Yellowlegs put down at S.C.M.M. 28 Aug (PDu, CJV); these appeared well before Ernesto and seemed unrelated to any weather event. A Regional total

of about 24 Baird's Sandpipers did not include any groups of more than 3 birds but did include 2 ads. at Cape May 29 Jul-4 Aug (almost all Baird's on the East Coast in fall are juvs.). Twenty-seven White-rumped Sandpipers at Sandy Hook after Ernesto 3 Sep (TBo, SB, LM) was an all-time high count for that area. The maximum count of Western Sandpipers for the Region was 100+ at Brigantine 9 Sep (PB). Stilt Sandpipers were found in substantial numbers; 55 were at Amherst S.P., Erie, NY 14 Aug (JP, WW), 118 at S.C.M.M. 28 Aug (CJV), and 114 at Bombay Hook 29 Sep (DLS). A Regional total of about 70 Buff-breasted Sandpipers was a bit low for recent years and included a maximum of 31 at Johnson Sod Farms, Salem, NJ 13 Sep (DM). Single Red Phalaropes were at Cape Henlopen 7 Oct (FR, M. Sarver) and at Hanover, Chautauqua, NY



This Gray Kingbird at Sandy Hook, New Jersey 23 September 2006 nicely fits the pattern of autumn vagrants on the East Coast but was a tad earlier than most found in the Northeast. Photograph by Linda Mack.

19 Nov (DN).

Pomarine Jaegers dominated aggregations of jaegers both during *Ernesto* at the coast and on the Great Lakes in Oct. In addition to dozens of *Ernesto* birds at Cape May 1-2 Sep (see the Special Interregional Report, this issue), 3 Pomarines, 2 Parasitics, and 10-12 unidentified jaegers were off Hamburg 29 Oct (JP, PY et al.). Two imm. Long-tailed Jaegers (one a dark morph) were seen at Hamlin Beach 5-6 Sep (WSy, RSp). The Avalon total count of 12,907 Laughing Gulls was below the long-term mean of 17,564, yet substantial concentrations were found along the coast n. to Long I., NY. Four thousand were at Mon-



Northern Wheatears were widespread in eastern North America in fall 2006; this bird in Batavia, New York lingered 21-23 (here 21) October 2006. Photograph by Dominic Sheryn.

tauk 29 Oct (HM, CG), and 1000+ were feeding over schooling baitfish at Staten I., NY 4 Oct (RRV). A single Franklin's Gull was at Niagara 29 Oct (WD'A, BP). Eight Little Gulls were among 20,000 Bonaparte's Gulls at Niagara 29 Oct, the latter a remarkably high concentration so early in the fall (WD'A, BP) and clearly influenced by stormy conditions. Three California Gulls were in the Niagara region 13-18 Nov (WW, WD'A et al.). It was a near-record year for Sabine's Gulls: 14 were reported, both coastally and inland. Three of these occurred 3 Sep after *Ernesto*, while the rest were scattered 25 Aug-12 Nov from the coast (including a Delaware's 4th, a juv. offshore 25 Aug [PG et al.]) n. to Niagara and

Derby Hill. Larger-than-average numbers of kittiwakes this fall included 7 at Hamburg 29 Oct (PY), 2 at Niagara 18-19 Nov (WD'A, BP), and 6 at Derby Hill 29 Oct (BPu). Two hundred Forster's Terns were at Mecox Bay, Long I. 20 Aug (HM, CG), and 400 were at Manasquan Inlet, NJ 30 Oct (BR). Juv. Arctic Terns were found at Moriches in early Aug (SSM) and at Mecox 8 Aug (AB). Some 60 Black Terns were counted at Montauk 23 Sep (AJL). Two Razorbills on the Great Lakes were big news and consistent with recent population increase in the Bay of Fundy: one was at Fort Niagara 19 Nov (WD'A et al.), and another was at Derby Hill 21 Oct (M. Harvey).

### DOVES THROUGH WOODPECKERS

Seven Eurasian Collared-Doves were found in New Jersey 11 Aug-25 Oct; 5 of these were at Cape May and the others at Marlton, Burlington 2-18 Sep (T. Wilson) and Newark, Essex 12 Oct (C. Holzapfel). White-winged Doves were at Cape May 12 Sep (CJV), Wildwood, Cape May 25-26 Sep (M. Shippiani), Ocean City, Cape May 15 Oct (D. Parlee), and at Cape May 6 Nov (D. Czaplak). Both cuckoos were reported in above-average abundance, and both were noted late into the fall. Fifteen Yellow-billed were at White Clay S.P., New Castle, DE 6 Sep (DLS), and a late Black-billed was at Sandy Hook 11 Nov (K. Watson). Jim Clinton has been counting migrating Common Nighthawks over the Wading R. on Long I. for five years, and the 109 he tallied this fall was the lowest so far. Northern Saw-whet Owls were scarce; 40 were banded at Allegheny S.P., Cattaraugus, NY 1 Oct-24 Nov (Tom LeBlanc), and 15 were banded at Wethersfield, Wyoming, NY 1-31 Oct (David Junkin). Twenty-two Short-eared Owls were at their traditional wintering area at Porter, Niagara, NY 6 Nov (D. Sharon), and 8 were at Jake's Landing, Cape May, NJ (B. Johnson, PS, CS). Five others were reported in upstate New York.

### FLYCATCHERS THROUGH WAXWINGS

A Hammond's Flycatcher at the Marshlands Conservancy in Rye, Westchester, NY 19-28 Nov (TWB, GB, JA, K. Lewis) was clearly photographed and videotaped, a 2nd state record. Fifty Eastern Phoebees were at Cape

May 4 Nov (PEL), 40 were at Caumsett S.P., Long I. 5 Nov (JGI), and 30+ were at Staten I. 27 Oct (RRV). A Say's Phoebe at R.M.S.P. 24-25 Sep (SSM, PL et al.) furnished about an 18th state record. There was only one Ash-throated Flycatcher reported, at Cape May 25 Oct (W. Murphy). A Sulphur-bellied/Streaked Flycatcher at Cape May 13 Oct (†G. L. Armistead, B. Brown et al.) furnished a first record of the genus *Myiodynastes* for New Jersey and is one of about four for the Atlantic coast; this individual is believed to have been a Sulphur-bellied. A Gray Kingbird was at Sandy Hook 23 Sep (SB, LM et al.) for the 2nd in New Jersey in as many years. Single Western Kingbirds were at Cape May 9 Sep (S. Ziegler), Montauk 14 Oct (JGI), and at the New York Botanical Garden 25 Nov (W. Matsuhito, J. van Dort et al.). A Scissor-tailed Flycatcher was near Bombay Hook 7-19 Aug (Z. Lohmar, m.ob.). Seventy-five or more Red-eyed Vireos at Sandy Hook 22 Sep (TBo) represented a substantial total away from Cape May. About 17 Northern Shrikes Regionwide included one at Westville, Franklin, NY 28 Sep for the earliest state record (Hollis White). A Fish Crow in Essex, NY 29 Oct was a 5th record for that region (JT, PT).

Four hundred Purple Martins at the Franklin Parker Preserve, Burlington, NJ and 200 Northern Rough-winged Swallows at Niagara 29 Oct (WD'A, BP) were substantial concentrations. Cave Swallows appeared in small numbers compared to recent falls; there were 17 Regionwide, with concentrations of 6+ at Cape May 18-21 Nov (PEL et al.) and 7 at Braddock Bay 29 Nov (DT et al.). An unidentified pale-rumped swallow at Niagara 17-18 Nov (S. MacKenzie, JP) may well have been this species. Among the Braddock Bay Cave Swallows was a Violet-green Swallow (DT), potentially a first state record if documented. A Blue-gray Gnatcatcher was late at Orient Point, Long I., NY 19 Nov (JO), and another was even later at Middletown, Monmouth, NJ 28 Nov (NK). Three Sedge Wrens at Bombay Hook 5 Aug and one at Jake's Landing, Cape May, NJ 21 Aug may have bred locally, but singles at Allendale, Bergen, NJ 3-5 Oct, Garret Mt., NJ 24 Oct, Manahawkin,

**SA** Hummingbirds continue their invasion of the Northeast. This autumn season, there were 10 Rufous Hummingbirds (and one Rufous/Allen's), including one bird as far n. as Petersburg, Rensselaer, NY. Most were noted after mid-Oct, but one was in Aug and one in Sep. A Black-chinned Hummingbird was identified at Vernon, Sussex, NJ 31 Oct-1 Nov (F. Weber, G. Campbell, J. Zamos) for a 4th state record. In addition, 12 Ruby-throateds were reported later than 15 Oct. *Selasphorus* hummingbirds were unrecorded in New Jersey before 1990, and as recently as 1999, there were only 11 records of the genus, five of them identifiably Rufous. As of 2006, seven species of hummingbirds have occurred in New Jersey, and Rufous/Allen's are expected each fall.

**SA** A surge of Connecticut Warblers appeared in New Jersey and the New York City area 7-12 Sep, when a minimum of 35 birds was reported. This total included daily tallies of 5 at Cape May 7-8 Sep (SK, CJV), 4 at Staten I., NY 8 Sep (RRV), 5 at Sandy Hook 9-10 Sep (RF, JW), and 4 at Union Beach, Monmouth, NJ 10 Sep (TBo). The seasonal total for the entire Region was 55-60 birds. Levine (in *Bull's Birds of New York State*, 1998) discusses the species' decline since the 1970s: "Virtually all occurrences today are single individuals, with very rarely two to four being seen in a single area." Walsh et al. (in *Birds of New Jersey*, 1999) list daily maxima from Cape May of 13 and 8 birds, but Cape May normally records much larger totals of almost all migrant passerines than any other location within our Region. This surge was not related to a weather event such as a stalled front, rain, or fog. The peak numbers occurred during clear weather with light northerly or northwesterly, ideal conditions for migration. Numerous banding studies show that the majority of migrant passerines captured at the Atlantic coast are juvs. (e.g., Baird, J. et al. 1959. Operation Recovery; report on mist-netting along the Atlantic Coast in 1958. *Bird-Banding* 30: 143-171). It therefore seems reasonable to infer that the large number of birds reported reflects elevated reproduction within the breeding range.

NJ 12-18 Nov (T. Bailey), and Democrat Pt., NY 1 Oct (G. Quinn, ROP) were certainly migrants. A major fallout of kinglets in late Oct and early Nov included 750 Golden-crowned at R.M.S.P. 22 Oct (m.ob.), 1000 Golden-crowned at Sandy Hook 22 Oct (SB, LM), and 200 Ruby-crowned at Caumsett S.P., Long I., NY 5 Nov (JGL). Hundreds of both kinglets were found at Cape May 3-4 Nov (m.ob.).

Three Northern Wheatears were recorded as part of a major irruption to e. North America this fall: at Bridgewater, Somerset, NJ 31 Aug (J. Klizas); at Batavia 21-23 Oct (MM, m.ob.); and at South Huntington, Long I., NY 26 Oct (S. Savage). On 16 Sep, 30 Gray-cheeked and 16 Swainson's Thrushes were heard migrating over Orchard Park, Erie, NY (MM); 55 Gray-cheekeds were banded at Manitou, Monroe, NY during Sep, with a peak of 24 on 26 Sep (B.B.B.O.), and many migrants of both species were heard over Cape May 5-6 Oct (MO'B). Spectacular were the record-breaking totals of Hermit Thrushes seen in early Nov: on 3 Nov, 1000+ were estimated at both Cape May and Sandy Hook (PEL, SB, PB, m.ob.), and 422 were individually counted hopping on the lawns at R.M.S.P. (SSM). An enormous total of 15,820 Cedar Waxwings was counted passing by Hamlin Beach 26 Aug (DT) and an additional 7860 the next day.

## WARBLERS

It seems worth keeping a running total of Golden-winged Warblers reported in fall, given their substantial decline in recent years; this season's total of 14 included 3 at Cape May 3-8 Sep, 3 on Long I., and 3 in the New York City parks 5 Sep-4 Oct. Two Lawrence's Warblers included a male at Tonawonda 31 Aug (JP) and one in Central Park, New York City 13-15 Aug (M. Freeman et al.). Six Brewster's Warblers were reported 8 Aug-11 Sep. A "Calaveras Warbler" (the *ridgwayi* subspecies

of Nashville Warbler) was identified at Lido Beach, Nassau, NY 18 Nov (TWB, GB, JA). A Yellow Warbler at Fort Tilden, Queens, NY 3 Nov-Dec (SBI) was very late. Yellow-rumped



This Nashville Warbler at Lido Beach, Long Island, New York 18 November 2006 showed several features that suggested it may have been of the western subspecies *ridgwayi*: the contrast between the extensively gray back and the bright yellow rump and the bird's frequent tail-flicking were the most convincing characters that suggested "Calaveras Warbler." Photograph by Gail Benson.

Warblers reached totals of 50,000 at Cape May 2 Nov (m.ob.) and 10,000 at R.M.S.P. 21 Oct (SSM). A Black-throated Gray Warbler was seen briefly at Oakland, Bergen, NJ, 25 Sep (J. Amesbury et al.). The only Cerulean Warbler was one at Howland Island W.M.A., Cayuga, NY 9 Sep (BPu). Yellow-throated Warblers were seen at Jamaica Bay 13 Sep (KF) and Ausable Pt., Clinton, NY 15-16 Nov (B. Mcallister, J. Stein), and a Prothonotary Warbler was at Montauk 10 Sep (HM, BKa).

## TANAGERS THROUGH FINCHES

Summer Tanagers n. of Cape May included one at Montauk 22 Sep (VB, P. Rosen) and an exceptionally late bird at Wilson, Niagara, NY 13-21 Nov (BP, WD'A, m.ob.). An American Tree Sparrow at Amherst S.P. 26 Sep was very early and represented the first Sep record for

that area (RS). About 40 Clay-colored Sparrows were reported, virtually all of them at or near the coast. Higher counts of Vesper Sparrows were 4 at Tewksbury, Hunterdon, NJ 2 Nov and 7 at Cape May 4 Nov (RC). About 16 Lark Sparrows were found, a rather low number, though 5 on Long I., NY was considered better than average, at least for recent years. Henslow's Sparrows were found in Central Park 31 Oct (LS, m.ob.; the first there since 1952) and at Sandy Hook 18 Nov (TBo). One or 2 Le Conte's Sparrows were at Sandy Hook 16-18 & 22 Oct (TBo, SB et al.); and another was at Bashakill, Sullivan, NY 22 Oct (JH et al.). A Nelson's Sharp-tailed Sparrow (subspecies unknown) at Van Buren, Onondaga, NY (J. Brin) provided a first record for the Oneida Lake Basin. Inundations of migrant sparrows in coastal areas occurred 22 Oct and 3 Nov, both days with dropping temperatures and

light northerly or northwesterly winds. On the latter date, 35,000 sparrows were estimated at Cape May, including White-throated, Swamp, Song, Dark-eyed Junco, Chipping, and Field in approximate order of abundance (PEL, m.ob.). Some individual species estimates were 5000 White-throateds at Higbee (CJV), 3000 at R.M.S.P. (SSM), and 3000 at Sandy Hook, plus 5000 Swamp Sparrows at Sandy Hook (TBo). On 22 Oct, 3000 juncos were at Sandy Hook (TBo), 2000 were at Montauk (VB), and 1000 were at R.M.S.P. (SSM). Unlike the situation last year, these massive numbers occurred during ideal conditions for migration, and the birds were not forced down by fog or rain. Harris's Sparrows appeared at Fort Tilden, Long I., NY 7 Oct (E. Taylor), at Sandy Hook the next day

(SB, PB), and at Goshen, Cape May 26 Nov (PS, CS). Two ad. Gambel's White-crowned Sparrows were found: one at the Fresh Kills Dump on Staten I., NY 17 Oct (RRV, TB et al.), the other at R.M.S.P. 22 Oct (SSM). About 15 Blue Grosbeaks were found in coastal New York 16 Sep-29 Oct. A green Painted Bunting was found at Watermill, Long I., NY 15 Oct (HM). A pair of Dickcissels successfully nested at Cape May this summer, and 2 of their young were seen 1-3 Aug (PEL); otherwise about 36 migrants were seen Regionwide.

## BLACKBIRDS AND OTHER FINCHES

Three hundred Bobolinks were at Bombay Hook 1 Sep (FR), and 400 were at Cape May 5 Sep (CJV). Five Yellow-headed Blackbirds were reported: an imm. male at Cape May 25 Aug (KL, JL), 2 at Brigantine 9 Sep (KJ), one

at Sharptown, Salem, NJ 23 Oct (SK), and one at Woodstown, Salem, NJ 23 Oct (SK). Purple Finches were remarkably scarce (reports of fewer than 15 from the entire Region), and crossbills were restricted to the Adirondack and Oneida Lake Basin areas. Small flocks of both Red and White-winged Crossbills in the Adirondacks in Oct–Nov suggested the beginnings of an incursion, but most stayed n. later in the winter (JMCP). Evening Grosbeaks were few and far between, but one was seen s. to Marlton, Burlington, NJ 21 Oct (*vide* PD).

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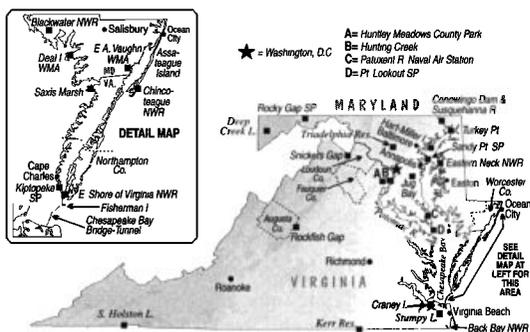
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## Middle Atlantic



### Todd M. Day

Aside from the early September passage of Tropical Storm (technically, Tropical Depression) *Ernesto*, the autumn had mild but mostly “average” weather in each month, with few spikes or drops in temperature that would be considered unseasonable, aside from a warm November, and no truly rip-roaring fronts other than a coastal

low 22 November. It is perhaps surprising, then, that some of the highest counts of Baltimore Oriole, Barn Swallow, Eastern Kingbird, Hudsonian Godwit, Sharp-shinned Hawk, and White-throated Sparrow (among others) for recent years were made in coastal areas and the District of Columbia this season. *Ernesto* provided excitement in the form of two potentially new Virginia birds (though both have been reported on multiple occasions in the past)—Bulwer’s Petrel and Brown Noddy—while Maryland added Inca Dove and possibly two rather cryptic taxa: Cape Verde Shearwater and Southwestern Willow Flycatcher.

**Abbreviations:** Back Bay (Back Bay N.W.R., Virginia Beach, VA); Bay (Chesapeake Bay); C.B.B.T. (Chesapeake Bay Bridge-Tunnel, Northampton, VA); Chinc. (Chincoteague N.W.R., Accomack, VA); CraneY (CraneY I.,

Portsmouth, VA); D.C. (District of Columbia); Forman’s Branch (Forman’s Branch B.O., formerly listed as Chino Farms, *Queen Anne’s*, MD); Hart (Hart Miller I., *Baltimore*, MD); Kipt. (Kiptopeke S.P., *Northampton*, VA); P.P.G. Ponds (P.P.G. Industries Ponds, North Branch, *Allegany*, MD).

### WATERFOWL THROUGH GREBS

Kent’s Great Oak Pond continues to be one of Maryland’s best venues for notable waterfowl, especially geese. A Greater White-fronted Goose was reported there 30 Sep and 1 Oct (RFR, WGE), and as many as 4 Ross’s Geese were present 12–30 Oct (WGE, NLM). Two Ross’s Goose × Snow Goose hybrids were there 12 & 30 Oct (WGE, NLM), and Cackling Geese of the nominate subspecies were regularly reported 30 Sep–4 Nov, with 6 among 1200 Canada Geese 30 Sep (RFR, WGE). A Barnacle Goose was reported there 30 Sep, about two weeks earlier than one in 2005 (RFR, WGE); an escapee Egyptian