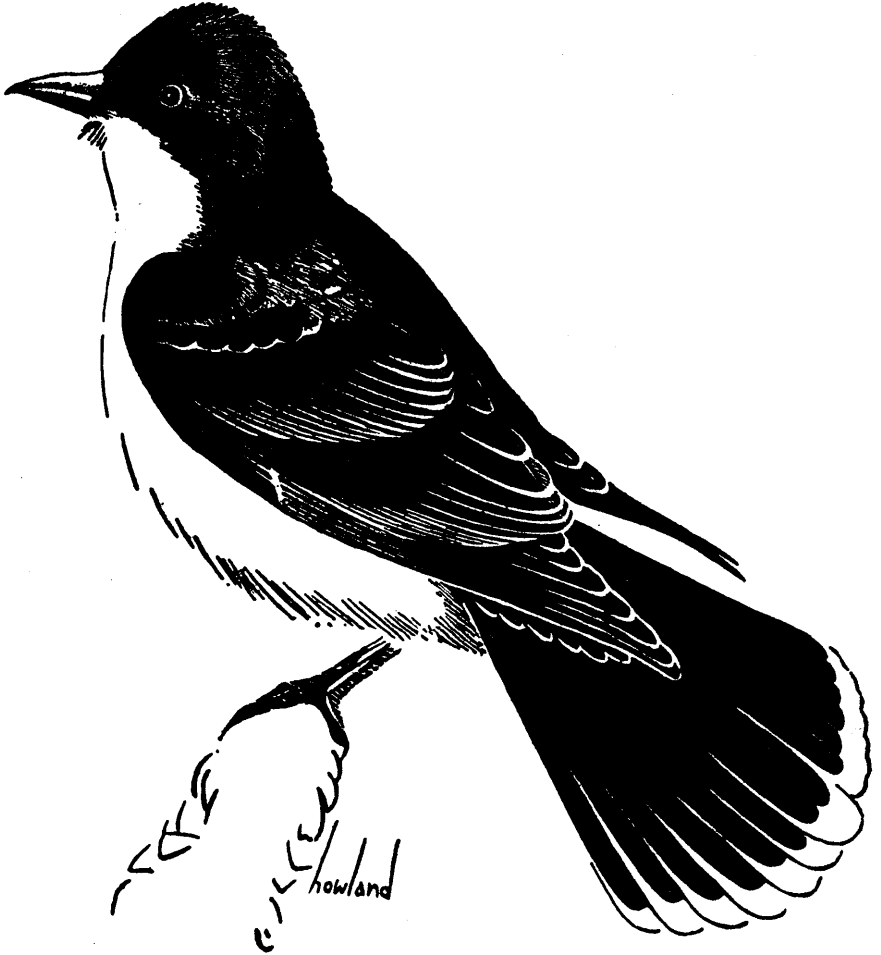


The **KINGBIRD**



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The KINGBIRD

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THE PRESIDENT SPEAKS

(Ed. Note: Before Paul Kellogg left for Africa he prepared an interesting and informative message for the Federation. I am taking the liberty of holding that paper for the next issue and printing instead a letter he sent from Africa where he was visiting the group there recording bird songs for the Cornell Laboratory of Ornithology. Dr. Kellogg is in charge of that expedition.)

1956 East African Expedition
Nairobi, Kenya
6 April 1956

Dear Gerry,

I wish I could tell all members of the Federation, indeed all bird lovers, what a wonderful place Kenya is.

First I was impressed with the variety of species and the numbers of individuals even around the City of Nairobi. Not only are many of the species very colorful but many of them have unusually beautiful songs. One relative of our thrushes, Heuglin's Robin-Chat, may, I believe, be judged to be one of the world's finest songsters, but there is much to be learned about the song of even this fine singer. We have at least 25 minutes of recorded song from three individuals but I'm sure we have only begun to appreciate the bird's ability to vary and improvise.

Most impressive were the Flamingos. In the Bahamas I have seen a thousand birds in one flock. Here I first saw an estimated 20,000 Lesser Flamingos. I could hardly believe it, but then on Lake Rudolf, in Ferguson's Gulf, I estimated a flock to have 30,000 birds and then another 40,000. The larger flock was beginning to nest and the birds did not move far away as we walked among the nests. Already the mouths of the local Turkana tribesmen were beginning to water for what they knew would be a rich harvest and change of diet. We are assured that no egg in this huge colony would hatch, unless by accident, for the Turkana are very hungry and have very sharp eyes. Even though the Flamingo has been declared to be "Royal Game", the Turkana don't understand and continue to eat every egg they can find. Somewhere there must be a nesting ground which is inviolate. It is rumored that it is on an island to the south in the middle of an impenetrable swampy lake which is alive with hungry crocodiles—and believe me, the natives have great respect for the lowly croc.

This letter is getting longer than I intended but there seems to be no end to the wonders of bird life here in an area which seems hardly larger than New York State. Within a range of a few hundred miles you have steaming jungles at sea level, towering mountains up to 19,000 feet which are perpetually snow-capped even on the equator, upland plateaus of 5 to 8,000 feet which remind you of central New York in June, and deserts as dry and hot as almost any in the world. The roads are good but the remote ones are likely to be very dusty and during the rainy season there are likely to be delays of a few hours to several days while the streams subside. However stream-sides are good places to see birds, so we've enjoyed every minute of our safari.

I do hope that everything is going well with *The Kingbird* and with plans for the Westchester meeting. I expect to be in Ithaca after April 15.

With best wishes, I am,

Cordially yours,
Paul

THE IPSWICH SPARROW ON THE NORTHEASTERN SEABOARD — PART II

JOHN J. ELLIOTT

With an insular nesting habitat of limited extent such as the Ipswich Sparrow has on Sable Island considerable interest and speculation is aroused as to the prospective future of its flora and fauna in warring against wind and waves. Furthermore wide correspondence to collect information for Part I of this article (1955, *Kingbird* IV (4):91-6) many individuals showed an interest in Sable Island as to location, size and general characteristics which are described here. Only brief mention will be made of its history, as good accounts were written by Jonathan Dwight, Jr. (1895), and Harold St. John (1921) and there is a good bibliography of Sable Island's past in the latter. Bibliography and summary of Part I will also be included in Part 2.

Geographical Features

Situated at intervals on the Continental Shelf, east-northeast of Cape Cod, Massachusetts, are a series of shoals and banks of considerable size. Progressing northeastward from the cape they are Cultivator and Georges Shoals and Brown's, LeHave, Emerald and Sable Island Banks. Shallowest of these is a long, narrow submerged bar on Georges Shoal. For several miles it is only two and one-quarter to three fathoms below the surface. A similar, slightly deeper, submerged bar with a whistle bouy exists on Cultivator Shoal. Emerald and LeHave Banks, quite in contrast to the shoals, have soundings averaging about 45 and 48 fathoms respectively. Sable Island Bank, the shallowest, averages about 20.5 fathoms.

On the eastern half of Sable Island Bank lies unique Sable Island, "Graveyard of the Atlantic," the only land between Cape Cod and Newfoundland. Between the major banks occur depths of over 100 fathoms. Some 30 miles to the south-southeast of Sable Island the shelf drops away into the deep Atlantic, with a sounding of 1,303 fathoms! These measurements were taken from map 0949, Cap Cod to Cape Breton including Sable Island, Hydrographic Office, Washington, D. C., December, 1944.)

This gives some conception of the irregularities of the ocean floor on the Continental Shelf and of the difficulties confronting a shifting, sandy island moving eastward in the storm-tossed North Atlantic. Dwight (1895) states that Sable Island is possibly the remains of the sand continent which was of remote glacial origin, or was heaped up by ocean currents. At any rate, it is gradually shrinking in size as well as receding with the subsidence of the Continental Shelf. Its predicted fate is that in time it will disappear—the last of many tracts believed to have occurred in this region. Submergence of the others have isolated the Ipswich Sparrow to this, its present insular and only nesting grounds.

To this island, simetimes fog-bound for weeks at a time, Ipswich Sparrows must travel from the mainland each spring, although an estimated one-fifth winter on the island. Residents there say returning numbers increase over the wintering population in late April and May.

Physical Features

Sable Island (sable means sand in French) is about 24.5 miles long with

a maximum width of about one mile. It is gradually washing away on the west end and building up more slowly on the east. Its east end is about 100 miles off Nova Scotia, east-southeast from Halifax. From shipboard it appears as a long, sandy cliff facing the ocean and tapering down on the ends. Its western tip is low, flat sand and eastward for about two miles supports a few windrows or sand dunes, with shaggy crests of beach grass (*Ammophila*). This broadens a mile further east into an attractive, peaty interior, protected from the ocean and containing five or six fresh water ponds, well vegetated around the borders. Near this area, about four miles from the west end, on higher, grassy slopes are the west lighthouse, main station and radio station. A mile further east is the weather station. For some nine miles this portion of the island is narrowed by Wallace Lake. About 100 years ago it had an inlet from the ocean, but shortly afterward became completely rimmed with an outer beach as it is today. About 1913 Wallace Lake was divided by a broad, sandy flat. East of Wallace Lake the substantial "backbone" of the island extends about six miles to the east lighthouse. It is in this stretch that Sable Island reaches its maximum width, and the well vegetated tracts are known as the "old land." It is here also that the island attains its maximum height of about 80 feet. From the east light-house the island tapers gradually into a curved projection of bare sand jutting out into the ocean for four or five miles like a long serpentine tail.

With permission of the Canadian Board of Transport, "to study the nesting ground of the Ipswich Sparrow, "I sailed to this island, July 29, 1948, on the supply ship "Lady Laurier" out of Halifax, N. S., returning August 2.

Bird And Mammal Associates

Associates of the Ipswich Sparrow found on the 1948 trip were varied and abundant. Upon arrival I was surprised to hear the harsh chirping of House Sparrows around the barn of the Main Station, although literature stated as late as 1946 that the Ipswich Sparrow was the only nesting land bird on the island. I found out later from old residents that the House Sparrow was there at least since 1930. Other associates were large colonies of Arctic Terns; Semipalmated Plovers found nesting around the numerous ponds; a Red-breasted Merganser with young seen on a lilly pond; Least Sandpipers which hovered and called plaintively above the well-vegetated dune slopes; their spindly young hiding below in the grass; small flocks of migrant sandpipers—Dowitchers, Sanderlings and one White-rumped—which pattered around the muddy pond edges. A Barn Swallow was seen on a telephone wire at the weather station. It reportedly had been around since June, but was not known to breed. While riding along the shores of Wallace Lake I watched a night heron fly up in the fog past the high sand cliffs. On the beach I found a dead Leach's Petrel. A mile off-shore a Parasitic Jaeger was seen as Arctic Terns chased it from feeding grounds in the lee of the anchored supply ship. Herring and Great Black-backed Gulls nested on the stretch of beach which divides Wallace Lake into two parts. Wild horses have been present for several centuries, with an estimated population in 1948 of 200 to 300. Another important mammal is the Gray or Oceans Seal, occasionally seen swimming off-shore or disporting themselves in groups on some isolated beach.

Weather

Sable Island, like Newfoundland, is noted for its fogs which are common

in June and July and throughout parts of earlier spring. On my 1948 visit it was foggy two days out of five. Summers are cool and winters are moderate compared to the Canadian interior. In late winter, and especially in March, windstorms carry large amounts of flying sand and almost prohibit traveling abroad in the daytime, but towards evening the wind usually subsides. A member of the lifesaving crew remarked that after such a day, a walk on the beach would, at times, reveal four or five Ipswich Sparrows feeding along the tidal drift.

Nesting

The only known nesting range of the Ipswich Sparrow extends down the interior of Sable Island from about a mile west of the radio station to the east lighthouse, a distance of about 17 miles.

Dwight examined nine or ten nests as he traveled into the heavily vegetated juniper tracts (*Juniperus horizontalis*) on the eastern half, as well as into the turtly areas heavily covered with the low shrubbery of blueberry (*Vaccinium pennsylvanicum*), crowberry (*Empetrum nigrum*) and bayberry (*Myrica*) of the western half of treeless Sable Island. He remarks that the nests were very well concealed, especially deeply-hidden ones in the juniper. He writes: "No matter where situated, each nest is placed in a cup-shaped hollow about four inches in diameter and fully two inches in depth, scratched in the sand by the birds." Nests are compactly woven with two distinct parts, an outer shell of coarse material disposed on the rim and an inner cup finely woven. The excavation is filled in at the sides and around the margin with coarser material. Of six nests he gives the average inside diameter as 58.33 millimeters, outside diameter 114.5, the inside depth as 45.5, outside depth 72.

W. E. Saunders (1902 a, b) arrived on Sable Island earlier in spring than Dwight and found nests readily by locating the excavation which showed black soil as the nest was started. He discovered about 30 sites. Nests were described as larger than those of the Savannah Sparrow. In 1948 I found the Ipswich Sparrows still in a state of breeding agitation around the terraced, horse-trodden paths and well vegetated dune slopes near the half-dozen small ponds about three or four miles from the west end. The terrain here was attractively dotted with pink wild roses facing upward barely two or three inches out of the sand. Flowering meadow rue (*Thalictrum*) stood the tallest of all vegetation thereabouts (some two feet) and the attractive little yellow-flowered silver-weed (*Potentilla anseria*) was blossoming in damp places. Stunted blueberry and bayberry barely a foot high border the higher terraces and crowberry grows profusely in strung-out tracts. The area was favorable for nesting and it was still frequented on August 1 by agitated birds. At the abandoned Lifesaving Station No. 3, east of Wallace Lake and near the east lighthouse, Ipswich Sparrow juvenile groups, apparently past parental attention, were observed, but nesting activity was undoubtedly through for the year except on the west end.

Eggs

Dwight writes that the eggs "average a little larger than the eggs of a Savannah from which they are otherwise indistinguishable, and they resemble the eggs of several other sparrows." He described the ground color as bluish or grayish white often so washed with brown as to appear olive

brown, splashed or sprinkled with different shades of amber and van dyke brown as well as with purplish and grayish brown markings. He further describes the eggs as usually ovate, but in one case long and slender. Average size: length 21.6 mm., width 15.5 mm. He states that according to the Sable Island residents four eggs were the usual clutch, but sometimes five are laid. Saunders (1920a) says that four out of seven clutches contained five eggs. The egg-laying season fluctuates, sometimes clutches are well advanced in late May as described by Saunders (1902a,b), whereas Dwight found his first nest containing three eggs on June 2. Neither found any young.

Young

Juveniles were distinguishable from the gray adults. Brown as the Savannah Sparrow above, they were pale yellow buff below, paler on the chin and abdomen. These trim juveniles in late July, early August, somewhat suggested the buffy brightness on the sides of the head of the Sharp-tailed Sparrow (*Ammodramus caudacuta caudacuta*). Evidence of two broods is shown by the discovery of a fledgling on July 31 near the weather station on the 1948 visit. This buffy juvenile was barely able to flutter along the path, being out of the nest perhaps a day or two. Presuming that the Ipswich Sparrow has a similar incubating and fledging period as the Savannah Sparrow, and on the basis of a 14 day fledging period and two days out of the nest, this would make the 1948 Sable Island fledgling's hatching date about July 15 and the egg laid early in the month.

Other evidence of second broods into very early August was the observation of an adult carrying food, preoccupied birds about the ponds and juveniles seen abroad, still being cared for and calling to be fed.

Molts

The young of the year were brown and trimmer in late July than the molting and raggedy adults. These young would soon go into their post-juvenile molt which would make them almost indistinguishable from the adults by the time they appeared on the mainland. Dwight (1900) states that the postnuptial molt, which is complete, is acquired in August, an assumption derived from the examination of the birds sent to him. Feather growth may actually come in August, but numerous individuals in late July, 1948, were raggedy and tailless. Among these, some had considerable diminishment of feathers about the face. In others the superciliary line was mostly gray with a few very small patches of yellow still showing. One or two individuals were practically bald on the crown; these suggested pugnacious males which may have fought during the courtship period as described by Dwight (1895).

Voice

In 1948 I heard no singing other than on the west end where nesting was in evidence. On July 31 singing was heard in mid-afternoon and continued irregularly until after dark. Although that day broke clear and sunshine continued all morning, fog swept in covering landmarks at 2:30 p.m. and remained into the night. As dusk came on singing increased until four or five could be heard from various directions. The muffled hoof beats of wild horses as under darkness they approached the dwellings, the continual distant

roar of heavy surf along the south shore, and the rhythmic musical and hyla-like piping of Arctic Terns in a nearby colony, all served as a subdued chorus which made singing Ipswich Sparrows the principal performers and this the only place on earth where such a combination could be heard.

Singing was resumed in mid morning, August 1, a day of bright sunshine. One individual usually started and then the chorus would be in progress; later it would dwindle down and stop. Birds sang from weed stalks, poles, or the stays of the radio tower. The song is very similar to that of the Savannah Sparrow, but is slightly more musical and lower. Richard H. Pough (1946) writes that the song ends "with a sound like the Common Tern's tee-aar." This is the ending which Dwight says usually swings out with a vim, and it was noticeable in 1948 in some, but not all, of the singing July and August birds. Besides the musical "tsip" heard in winter, a thicker "tsick" or "tsuck" is used repeatedly by adults on the nesting grounds and also given by the young when calling for food after leaving the nest. I have heard this note used on two occasions away from Sable Island by November birds, although the musical "tsip" is the only note mentioned by writers as used on the mainland. Inquiry reveals only three records of off-island singing: two from Long Island and one from Massachusetts. All three were heard in April.

Enemies

On Sable Island there have been many recognized enemies of the Ipswich Sparrow. Like all insular species this bird is subjected to the introductions of man, but because of its good flight ability and its migration off the island during the severe wintry period it has survived. Historians record the introduction of many pests. Dwight (1895) reviews these, stating that around 1880 cats were turned loose to exterminate rabbits which were depleting the island's vegetation. Soon afterward the cats succumbed to winter hardships. In 1889 seven cats were brought from Halifax and 30 more in 1890. In 1891, with surviving cats still eating rabbits, seven red foxes were brought over and in a single season made an end of both. Dwight accused foxes of being very destructive, as well as killing terns on their nests and sucking duck eggs. He remarks: "That the Ipswich Sparrow has been on the bill-of-fare of all these rats and cats and foxes . . . we can hardly doubt—will it be spared their fate?" Saunders (1902a) reported finding the intervening time from 1894 auspicious for the Ipswich Sparrow and considered them much more abundant than Dwight represented them in his visit. He reported the extermination of foxes, presumably, with the cats, largely responsible for the increase of the sparrows.

Apparently there were few enemies of the Ipswich Sparrow on Sable Island in 1948, as evinced by their abundance. Inquiry revealed that there were only two or three cats—household pets—and no foxes at that time. Some unidentified predator, however, was on the Arctic Tern's nesting ground near the west end of the island. Six adults and about a dozen full-grown young were found dead on the sand with several bitten-off wings. Rats had come ashore from a recent shipwreck. These were being reduced in numbers according to Captain Solawan (Superintendent of the island) and there seemed to be no other natural enemies affecting the Ipswich Sparrows' productivity. The elements are perhaps as great an enemy as such pest invasions. Saunders (1902a) relates that during winter weather Ipswich Sparrows were

sometimes picked up exhausted and chilled and were then sheltered and fed until a better season arrived. After the winter of 1947-48, described as severe, Arthur MacDonald, a crewman at the main station on Sable Island, told me he found here and there on upper edges of abrupt dunes fully a dozen dead Ipswich Sparrows. These were in several groups lying in and about the matted grass roots torn away by wind erosion and apparently had died of winter hardships.

Sable Island is composed of white quartz sand. In 1948 I saw a fair abundance of spiders and crawling beetles, but winged insects were rather scarce. On this sandy island weather influences its sterility. History discloses that due to an unusually severe series of sand storms in 1825 many of the hundreds of wild horses died of starvation. Such conditions naturally influence the Ipswich Sparrow population.

Summer Behavior

Ipswich Sparrows were not found at any time on the beach during the 1948 visit. One followed along the crest of the dunes as I walked along the ocean edge; it uttered the musical "tsip", the recognized winter note. In midsummer they are very tame and on July 31, 12 to 15, in response to my squeaking, flew up out of the grass and alighted on poles or on the lone telephone wire stretching down the length of the island. On the nesting ground curious birds keep 25 to 30 feet distant; if one moves in their direction they increase this to about 50 feet. Off the nesting ground and on telephone lines an approach can be made to about 20 feet.

In calm summer, feeding birds need not fear being whisked away by a gale from the crest of a dune. They show a complete abandonment of the winter crouch or low, huddled creep employed on the mainland. Upright, they hop about on the sand, only occasionally resorting to running. Hopping on our eastern seaboard of the mainland declines rapidly as autumn advances. With winter comes running and even walking. Writers allude to this in comparing the Savannah Sparrow, which hops and runs, to the Ipswich Sparrow's running and walking. An example of summer behavior comes from my notes, as follows: "One bird flew out on the clean white sand, hopped several feet, picked at a seeding silver-weed blossom, eating the center, and again hopped through a patch of sedges; then flew away. A moment later it flew out again, hopped 20 feet, once breaking into a run of two feet and then resorted again to hopping." On the east end of Sable Island a bird without a tail hopped for several minutes on the sand, flapping its wings together rapidly and frequently. It was not seen running to any extent, the hopping steps averaging about five inches.

Status

A perusal of "Enemies" tends to show that there are years of population variations in the Ipswich Sparrow on Sable Island. Introduction of predators, invasions of rats from shipwrecks, and sterility from series of wind storms, indicate that these cycles of scarcity and abundance are due to other causes than the gradual shrinking of Sable Island.

Concerning the latter, if Sable Island is shrinking, so are our barrier beaches. Great stretches from Coney Island through the Rockaways and Long Beach and intermittently to Shinnecock and the Hamptons on Long

Island's south shore are built upon, as are areas down the coast from Cape Cod, on both sides of Long Island Sound, in New Jersey, and to a lesser degree southward.

Travels abroad on Sable Island in 1948 and careful examination of the wide correspondence from numerous observers on the mainland since are encouraging, however, and indicate that there are sufficient areas of island and barrier beaches remaining to provide for this big gray sparrow for many years to come.

It is the concensus of opinion down the coast that the Ipswich Sparrow is maintaining its usual numbers. By far the greatest number ever listed on any National Audubon Society Christmas Bird Count was in 1949 with 38 recorded. Also in 1949-50 the writer observed over 30 during the winter with five seen on two occasions.

As to Sable Island's prospects, one thing appears certain and that is its disappearance in the somewhat distant future. St. John (1921) after discussing its physical history states: "In any case the island is . . . wasting away. Three hundred years from now Sable Island, in all probability, will have vanished and then there will be no lighthouse to warn the mariner . . . The study of its fauna and flora will then be ancient history, only to be pursued by consulting the few specimens in the large museums and herbaria." At any rate we can still agree with Dwight who wrote 60 years ago, that this island's fate is for future generations to ponder and its conclusion: "not likely in our day or generation."

Summary

Part 1 gives a resume of the early history of the Ipswich Sparrow from the time it was collected at Ipswich, Mass., and its subsequent discovery on Sable Island until its present acceptance as a regularly wintering species down the Atlantic seaboard. Fall and Winter studies, through a wire correspondence, are discussed, disclosing that this bird occurs casually in winter in Nova Scotia, uncommonly in Maine and regularly from Long Island southward. Its southern penetration (with several reports) brings it to Cumberland Island, extreme southern Georgia. It is found only in spring in New Brunswick, Canada, although present both in spring and fall in Nova Scotia. Winter data from Nova Scotia, Maine, New Jersey and the Carolinas are given, along with actions and behavior in mild weather as well as during intervals of flood, snow and ice storm. Migration occurs off-shore as on Block Island and a three way route traverses the length of Long Island: along the south shore and on both sides of Long Island Sound. It was revealed that Spring dates may range as late as April 14 for the southernmost range (Cumberland Island, Ga.), April 8 for South Carolina, April 26 for Long Island and May 7 for Kent Island, New Brunswick. Evidence points to a rapid northern movement in Spring, as compared to a more leisurely fall flight with the greatest number of birds in November. Goodly numbers have been recorded in recent years, especially in 1949 and 1950.

In Part 2 geographical locations of shoals and banks on the Continental Shelf showing irregularities on the ocean floor are described, as are Sable Island's physical features down its 24.5 mile length. Only Spring behavior of the Ipswich Sparrow and nesting studies at that season have come from Sable Island in the past. The writer's 1948 midsummer trip allows treatment

of the latter stages of nesting behavior, descriptions of molding adults and juvenile birds, the singing of late-nesting birds as well as Summer behavior. Descriptions of nest and nest discovery by Dwight and Saunders are given as well as the color and dimensions of eggs. The present status of Sable Island and the Ipswich Sparrow is discussed.

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ACTIVITY IN SAPSUCKER WOODS

ARTHUR A. ALLEN

Director, Laboratory of Ornithology, Cornell University

There is an interesting woodland of about 130 acres some two miles as the Crow flies northeast of the Cornell Campus that we call Sapsucker Woods. It was christened in 1909 when the author, Louis Fuertes, Francis Harper and James Gutsell discovered that the Yellow-bellied Sapsucker nested there, together with Canada Warblers and Northern Water-Thrushes. This gave it the distinction of being somewhat Canadian and different from the Campus and adjacent woodlands. We found Ruffed Grouse there that Sunday morning and Pileated Woodpeckers and Red-shouldered Hawks and Horned Owls and many other unusual birds that made us want to return.

Through the ensuing years we returned many times, as have successive generations of Cornell students, and we have always found it rewarding. The Arthur Lanes, now the caretakers, moved in and tamed the Chickadees and the woodland gradually became a mecca for bird classes. Graduate students in ornithology selected research problems on the birds nesting there. Paul Kellogg and Albert Brand studied Grouse; Sewall Pettingill, Woodcock; J. Southgate Y. Hoyt, Pileated Woodpecker; Heinz Meng, Cooper's Hawk; Robert Stein, Alder Flycatcher; while Oliver Owen worked out the bird ecology of the area.

In 1954, Lyman K. Stuart interested his family in giving the woods to Cornell University as a memorial to his father and his uncle, Charles H. and Kenneth E. Stuart, who also had been much interested in nature. The Walter C. Heasleys added twenty acres of their woodland to round out the Stuart gift and make the sanctuary a complete unit. The Stuarts also financed three miles of chain link fencing to surround it and provided an endowment for maintaining it. In addition, Stuart, through the Arcadia Foundation is providing funds for a field headquarters and research building for the Cornell Laboratory of Ornithology.

In accepting the gifts from the Stuart family, the Cornell trustees not only set aside the area in perpetuity as a bird sanctuary, but they also set up the Laboratory of Ornithology as a separate department in the university. For forty years the Laboratory had existed as a non-administrative unit attached first to the Department of Entomology, more recently to the Department of Zoology and finally to the Department of Conservation. In its new role, the Laboratory of Ornithology is not attached to any college or department but has two directors, Professors Arthur Allen and Paul Kellogg, who are also members of an advisory council responsible directly to the president of the university. The laboratory will not supplant any of the ornithological teaching or research in other departments, but will supplement their work with additional facilities as well as carry on its own projects, for which it has gained an enviable reputation through the years. It will provide a scientific, educational, and cultural center for the study of living birds.

The activities of the Laboratory are not limited to the local birds. This past Winter, for example, the Donald McChesneys and the James Passes of Syracuse are financing an expedition to Kenya to obtain films and recordings of African birds and their songs for the Cornell Laboratory of Ornithol-

ogy and its Library of Natural Sounds. The Lawrence Grinnells have just returned from a similar trip under the auspices of the laboratory, and Professors Allan and Kellogg will continue their expeditions to various parts of the World.

The Laboratory of Ornithology is designed to be self-supporting and the trustees have established the "Cornell Trust for Ornithology" which may receive tax-free gifts for general maintenance or for specific ornithological purposes. A number of such benefactions have already been received and, in addition all royalties from the Cornell Bird Records have been turned over to this trust by Professors Allen and Kellogg.

In addition to the fence surrounding Sapsucker Woods, many improvements are planned or have already been initiated to make the area attractive to as great a variety of birds as possible as well as to visitors. At the north end, for example, where the building will be placed, about ten acres of water have been impounded to form a partially wooded pond, and already Wood Ducks, Blacks, Mallards, and Pied-billed Grebes have moved in and Herons, Bitterns, and Rails are looking it over. About four miles of trails have been constructed which will serve for fire protection as well as for making the area more accessible for classes and more desirable for those birds that prefer the "edges" so created.

A fireproof, ranch-type building, 170 feet long by 50 feet wide has been designed with a connecting observation room 25 feet by 50 feet at the edge of the pond. This room will have picture windows overlooking the water on the west and the bird feeders on the southern woodland side. The plans provide for offices, laboratories and an aviary for studies in bird behavior as well as for a sound room, dark room, library and reading room. A seven-ton memorial boulder has been placed among ferns and hemlocks near the gateway to the woods. Here also there will be a small open-air classroom facing the bird feeders.

There is considerable open land north of the pond which belongs to the university and about twenty acres of this has been enclosed within the fence to make a home for the Bobolinks, Meadowlarks, Henslow's Sparrows and other field birds. A part of it may be planted to groups of desirable trees that will make the area more attractive to certain birds not at present represented in the list of eighty-odd nesting species. At one corner of the large pond, for example, we plan a thicket of balsam and spruce for Magnolia and Blackburnian Warblers. Within the woods, near one of the trails, a depression 75 by 25 feet has been bull-dozed where it is hoped to start a sphagnum bog and perhaps bring in Nashville Warblers, which do not nest there at present, as well as pitcher plants, sundews, and orchids.

Members of the Federation of New York State Bird Clubs will always be welcome at Sapsucker Woods and it is hoped by the directors that many of the readers of *The Kingbird* will include the refuge in their bird watching tours. Sapsucker Woods Road, formerly Townline Road, runs through the woods. It is the next north-south road east of Warren Road which leads to the Mohawk Airport and which is well marked.

Ithaca, New York

A SUMMARY OF THE 55th CHRISTMAS BIRD COUNT IN NEW YORK STATE

GEORGE E. L. LIPPERT

This paper summarizes the Christmas Bird Counts in New York State conducted from December 24, 1954 to January 2, 1955 as part of the nationwide count sponsored by the National Audubon Society (See 1955 Audubon Field Notes 9 (2):84-97). This is the first paper in what is hoped will be a regular series. It is the purpose of this project to make this record available annually. Each year it will indicate the number and kinds of birds found in New York State in mid-winter; as a continuing record it may show fluctuations in populations in the state. (Ed. Note: Present plans call for subsequent summaries to appear in the July issue each year.)

In this report Long Island counts are considered separately because of the difference in populations and species occurrence. For each species two figures are given, first the number of counts on which it was reported, second the total number of birds seen. An uncommon record is indicated by small figures in either category.

New York ornithologists are invited to contact the author if they have comments about or suggestions for this project.

LONG ISLAND — Temperature on the eight counts varied from 25° to 51°F. 187 individuals cooperated, varying from one to 44 observers per count. 655 hours were spent in the field, 116 in cars, 520 afoot, 13 on boats, 6 on bicycles. 1529 miles were traveled, 981 by car, 470 afoot, 66 by boat, 12 by bicycle. Total species: 154; total birds 193,678.

Common Loon 9, 119; Red-throated Loon 8, 58; Red-necked Grebe 3, 7; Horned Grebe 8, 1296; Pied-billed Grebe 7, 216; Gannet 7, 246; European Cormorant 3, 33; Double-crested Cormorant 2, 2; Great Blue Heron 7, 196; Black-crowned Night Heron 7, 163; American Bittern 5, 14; Mute Swan 7, 298; Canada Goose 6, 882; Brant 4, 5321; Mallard 7, 1784; Black Duck 9, 16660; Garwall 2, 77; European Widgeon 2, 2; American Widgeon 6, 1398; Pintail 6, 634; European Teal 1, 1; Green-winged Teal 5, 349; Shoveller 2, 40; Redhead 5, 21; Ring-necked Duck 5, 209; Canvasback 5, 3978; Greater Scaup Duck 9, 47646; Lesser Scaup Duck 5, 143; American Goldeneye 8, 1251; Bufflehead 7, 786; Old-squaw 9, 837; Harlequin Duck 1, 2; Common Eider 1, 2; King Eider 1, 2; White-winged Scoter 7, 6840; Surf Scoter 4, 1129; American Scoter 4, 152; Ruddy Duck 6, 248; Hooded Merganser 5, 176; American Merganser 6, 543; Red-breasted Merganser 9, 1917; Goshawk 1, 1 (ed.: no details); Sharp-shinned Hawk 5, 8; Cooper's Hawk 2, 4; Red-tailed Hawk 3, 8; Red-shouldered Hawk 3, 6; Rough-legged Hawk 1, 1; Marsh Hawk 7, 64; Peregrine Falcon 2, 2; Sparrow Hawk 7, 97; Ruffed Grouse 1, 1; Bobwhite 3, 36; Ring-necked Pheasant 5, 91; Clapper Rail 5, 48; Virginia Rail 1, 6; Sora 1, 1; Florida Gallinule 4, 7; American Coot 8, 787; Piping Plover 1, 2; Ringed Plover 1, 2; Killdeer 4, 159; Black-bellied Plover 4, 101; Woodcock 1, 1; Wilson's Snipe 5, 16; Greater Yellow-legs 2, 4; Purple Sandpiper 4, 119; Red-backed Sandpiper 5, 813; Sanderling 6, 551; Glaucous Gull 2, 2; Iceland Gull 1, 1; Great Black-backed Gull 9, 2815; Herring Gull 9, 43536; Ring-billed Gull 9, 1967; Black-headed Gull 1, 1; Laughing Gull 3, 8; Bonaparte's Gull 7, 1794; Black-legged Kittiwake 1, 1; Black Skimmer 1, 4; Dovekie 1, 1.

Mourning Dove 7, 314; Barn Owl 1, 2; Screech Owl 3, 17; Horned Owl 2, 2; Snowy Owl 2, 5; Long-eared Owl 2, 3; Short-eared Owl 3, 17; Belted Kingfisher 7, 26; Yellow-shafted Flicker 8, 81; Hairy Woodpecker 7, 40; Downy Woodpecker 8, 167; Western Kingbird 1, 1; Eastern Phoebe 1, 1 (ed.: no details); Horned Lark 5, 586; Tree Swallow 1, 7; Blue Jay 8, 531; American Crow 8, 2407; Fish Crow 5, 23; Black-capped Chickadee 8, 1094; Brown-capped Chickadee 2, 4; White-breasted Nuthatch 7, 198; Red-breasted Nuthatch 7, 131; Brown Creeper 5, 17; Winter Wren 6, 14; Carolina Wren 6, 24; Long-billed Marsh Wren 6, 22; Short-billed Marsh

Wren 1, 1; Mockingbird 1, 1; Catbird 4, 14; Brown Thrasher 3, 7; American Robin 7, 202; Hermit Thrush 5, 10; Eastern Bluebird 1, 63; Golden-crowned Kinglet 6, 48; Ruby-crowned Kinglet 1, 1; American Pipit 2, 23; Cedar Waxwing 3, 37; Gray Shrike 2, 5; Loggerhead Shrike 4, 7; Common Starling 8, 18840; Myrtle Warbler 8, 3342; Pine Warbler 1, 2; Palm Warbler 1, 1; House Sparrow 8, 5084; Eastern Meadowlark 8, 317; Red-winged Blackbird 7, 760; Rusty Blackbird 5, 33; Purple Grackle 3, 41; Brown-headed Cowbird 7, 959; Cardinal 5, 37; Purple Finch 7, 45; Goldfinch 7, 330; Common Redpoll 2, 18; Pine Siskin 8, 327; House Finch 3, 49; Red Crossbill 3, 120; White-winged Crossbill 3, 198; Eastern Towhee 4, 13; Ipswich Sparrow 3, 8; Savannah Sparrow 7, 400; Sharp-tailed Sparrow 6, 20; Seaside Sparrow 3, 11; Vesper Sparrow 1, 2; Slate-colored Junco 7, 1990; Oregon Junco 1, 1; Tree Sparrow 8, 1683; Chipping Sparrow 1, 2; Field Sparrow 7, 199; White-crowned Sparrow 1, 1; White-throated Sparrow 8, 2182; Fox Sparrow 7, 59; Swamp Sparrow 8, 96; Song Sparrow 8, 1428; Lapland Longspur 3, 12; Snow Bunting 5, 171.

MAINLAND NEW YORK — Temperature on the thirty-one counts varied from 6° to 50°F. 669 individuals cooperated, varying from one to 75 observers per count. 1355 hours were spent in the field, 823 afoot, 532 in cars, 11 on boats. 7079 miles were traveled, 1324 afoot, 5755 by car, 70 by boat. Total species: 152; total birds 332,475.

Common Loon 4, 24; Red-throated Loon 3, 12; Red-necked Grebe 1, 4; Horned Grebe 11, 459; Pied-billed Grebe 12, 60; European Cormorant 2, 23; Double-crested Cormorant 2, 6; Great Blue Heron 9, 100; Black-crowned Night Heron 5, 115; American Bittern 2, 4; Mute Swan 4, 55; Whistling Swan 1, 1; Canada Goose 4, 336; Snow Goose 1, 1; Blue Goose 1, 4; Mallard 16, 2023; Black Duck 21, 8723; Gadwall 3, 7; European Widgeon 2, 4; American Widgeon 6, 178; Pintail 6, 40; Green-winged Teal 3, 26; Shoveller 1, 2; Wood Duck 3, 6; Redhead 9, 2149; Ring-necked Duck 8, 173; Canvasback 13, 16235; Greater Scaup Duck 14, 21828; Lesser Scaup Duck 8, 707; American Golden-eye 19, 3816; Bufflehead 9, 633; Old-squaw 8, 1083; White-winged Scoter 7, 440; Surf Scoter 3, 37; American Scoter 4, 11; Ruddy Duck 3, 397; Hooded Merganser 11, 134; American Merganser 19, 3018; Red-breasted Merganser 11, 1239; Turkey Vulture 1, 3 (ed.: no details); Sharp-shinned Hawk 8, 15; Cooper's Hawk 15, 22; Red-tailed Hawk 17, 106; Red-shouldered Hawk 6, 42; Rough-legged Hawk 6, 16; Bald Eagle 7, 12; Marsh Hawk 9, 22; Osprey 1, 1 (Ed.: no details); Peregrine Falcon 3, 3; Pigeon Hawk 1, 1; Sparrow Hawk 22, 226; Ruffled Grouse 20, 77; Ring-necked Pheasant 23, 871; Clapper Rail 3, 7; Virginia Rail 2, 5; American Coot 13, 323; Killdeer 4, 152; Wilson's Snipe 2, 6; Lesser Yellow-legs 1, 1; Purple Sandpiper 2, 166; Sanderling 1, 47; Glaucous Gull 1, 9; Iceland Gull 3, 10; Great Black-backed Gull 14, 497; Herring Gull 24, 57433; Ring-billed Gull 18, 3387; Laughing Gull 4, 17; Black-headed Gull 1, 3; Bonaparte's Gull 5, 4500; Little Gull 1, 2.

Mourning Dove 15, 460; Barn Owl 2, 2; Screech Owl 13, 44; Horned Owl 9, 22; Snowy Owl 2, 4; Barred Owl 7, 12; Long-eared Owl 5, 7; Short-eared Owl 3, 7; Saw-whet Owl 1, 1; Belted Kingfisher 21, 64; Yellow-shafted Flicker 13, 54; Pileated Woodpecker 13, 35; Red-bellied Woodpecker 2, 4 (ed.: no details); Red-headed Woodpecker 1, 2; Yellow-bellied Sapsucker 3, 4; Hairy Woodpecker 29, 413; Downy Woodpecker 30, 906; Eastern Phoebe 1, 1; Horned Lark 6, 107; Blue Jay 31, 2120; American Crow 28, 11370; Fish Crow 3, 28; Black-capped Chickadee 30, 5442; Brown-capped Chickadee 6, 6; Tufted Titmouse 9, 182; White-breasted Nuthatch 31, 979; Red-breasted Nuthatch 20, 145; Brown Creeper 24, 104; Winter Wren 8, 16; Carolina Wren 8, 12; Long-billed Marsh Wren 3, 6; Mockingbird 2, 2; Catbird 3, 6; Brown Thrasher 3, 3; American Robin 15, 108; Hermit Thrush 7, 13; Olive-backed Thrush 2, 2; Eastern Bluebird 7, 166; Golden-crowned Kinglet 15, 148; Ruby-crowned Kinglet 3, 7; American Pipit 1, 2; Cedar Waxwing 9, 342; Gray Shrike 14, 47; Loggerhead Shrike 1, 1; Common Starling 31, 145453; Myrtle Warbler 7, 431; Palm Warbler 1, 2; Common Yellow-throat 1, 1; Yellow-breasted Chat 1, 1; House Sparrow 31, 14023; Eastern Meadowlark 8, 88; Red-winged Blackbird 11, 667; Baltimore Oriole 1, 1 (ed.: no details); Rusty Blackbird 6, 15; Purple Grackle 6, 66; Brown-headed Cowbird 11, 559; Cardinal 23, 443; Dickcissel 1, 1; Evening Grosbeak 14, 436; Purple Finch 7, 167; House Finch 1, 50; Pine Grosbeak 18, 502; Common Redpoll 11, 337; Pine Siskin 13, 801; American Goldfinch 22, 1086; Red Crossbill 2, 16; White-winged Crossbill 4, 31; Eastern Towhee 5, 13; Savannah Sparrow 4, 67; Sharp-tailed Sparrow 1, 2; Seaside Sparrow 1, 2; Vesper Sparrow 3, 6; Slate-colored Junco 29, 2892; Tree Sparrow 31, 4815; Chipping Sparrow 2, 9; Field Sparrow 7, 199; White-throated Sparrow 13, 895; Fox Sparrow

5, 29; Swamp Sparrow 10, 65; Song Sparrow 26, 948; Lapland Longspur 5, 22; Snow Bunting 12, 1833.

Totals for entire state: 178 species; 526,153 individuals.

R. D. No. 1, Brown Road, Albion, New York

CLUB NEWS

SASSAFRAS BIRD CLUB

The Sassafras Bird Club like many others in the state has long realized the need for furthering conservation practices. On a limited budget, however, it has been necessary to weigh the matter of how best to serve this fine cause. The club decided several years ago to sponsor a two week scholarship to the Audubon Camp in Maine. The only requirement the club made was that each student share his knowledge and experience by serving as leader of Nature Activities at a local boy scout, girl scout, 4-H or day camp for one season. These organizations have rotated assignment of an able student as the project has continued on an annual basis.

The staff of the Audubon Camp has been pleased with the type of scholarship student sent and welcomes word that another is to come this summer.

As years pass former students have spoken often of the broadening experience gained and the fine friendships formed while at camp. It is impossible to recount the many advantages of such an experience, but if nature study is continued as a vocation or an avocation, surely a sound basic understanding of ecology places a person in a fine position in this field. One of the students remarked that all through his life he would cherish memories and enjoy the out-of-doors the more for his better understanding of how to help preserve it.

Sassafras Bird Club members point with pride to this fulfillment of community responsibility and they urge other clubs to try out this idea.

REGIONAL REPORTS

HIGHLIGHTS DECEMBER 1955 THROUGH MARCH 1956

This was, as one regional editor put it very well, a rough winter. December was cold in some regions, extremely cold in others. Those in western and southern New York who were bothered by frozen ponds, marshes, rivers and bays should note the 28 day average temperature of -2°F . in the Champlain Region. Some regions witnessed more raw faces than species on Christmas Counts. Snowfall records were set in Regions 3 and 5, and the entire state was blanketed with a heavy mid-March fall. This late blizzard delayed many early migrants and showed evidence in some regions of exacting a toll of those which did arrive on time.

Warblers give perhaps the best evidence of the severity of the early winter cold. Early records are good: a Chat Dec. 1 on Long Island, a Yellow Warbler Dec. 18 at Cortland. But there is only one record of a possible wintering warbler upstate: a Yellow-throat at Rochester (found by a peregrinating Buffalo group. Even southern areas found the Myrtle in only small numbers. Snowy Owls and wintering hawks were also down. Purple Finch populations were very poor in most regions with no build-up in March.

Contrary to expectations herons were reported in five of the eight upstate regions, Wood Ducks in three. A Yellow-crowned Night Heron was found on the waterfowl count on Long Island. Shrike counts were good; Robins surprising. Regions 2, 3, 5, 8 and 9 found Robins in unprecedented numbers. Evening Grosbeaks were state-wide in large numbers; one of the best items of evidence: Sally Hoyt banding over 700. There were good populations of other finches except Purple. Six Towhees evidently wintered in widely scattered parts of the state, and although fluctuations were apparent Snow Bunting populations appeared to be very good.

Other good records: a Kittiwake and late Little Gulls in the Niagara Gorge; a Magpie on Long Island; a Barrow's Golden-eye near Albany.

REGION 1 — NIAGARA FRONTIER

CLARK S. BEARDSLEE

This was a period of severe winter weather, particularly during the first half. December was the coldest in eleven years and during January the temperature at no time reached 40° . February was a trifle warmer than average, due more to lack of below-zero days than to the presence of warm days; and March was never-ending disappointment to those who were looking for two nice days back-to-back. Early March migrants such as swans, geese, Robins, Red-wings, and Killdeer, were treated to some mighty stiff weather soon after their arrival, and their powers of endurance were severely tested. Difficult to explain in light of this unusually cold winter was the presence of Bonaparte's Gulls on the Niagara Rive all winter, something which has happened rarely in the past and then only during a very mild win-

ter. Furthermore, wintering Robis were reported everywhere in far greater numbers than usual. Other instances of wintering or late lingering will be found below.

LOONS — DUCKS: Common Loons were last reported 12/11 (Niagara Gorge, Schaffner, Brownstein) and appeared again 3/27 (L. Chautauqua, Elderkin). Horned Grebes were present all winter at Dunkirk. A single Pied-billed Grebe remained at Celeron until 1/15 (Beal). Great Blue Herons had not yet returned to their nesting sites at the end of the period (unusual). A single hardy (or stupid) Amer. Bittern was seen twice in January on Grand Island, the second time on the 22nd (Rathbun, Rew). Whistling Swans returned early, being reported from three places 3/10 and reaching the northern swans counties by the 12th. Their numbers were small, 39 being the maximum reported from any of seven localities. Canada Geese reached Oak Orchard 3/3, and by the 12th 4700 were reported there. Single Gadwalls were seen in January and February from Grand Island and Goat Island, and one male stayed from 1/21 to 3/26 with the Mallards and Blacks in Forest Lawn Cemetery, Buffalo (Schaffner et al.). Migrant Pintails showed up 3/10 at Dunkirk (Parker) and 3/12 at Oak Orchard (Mitchell). Ditto for Baldpate, with an additional record on 3/3 at Celeron (Elderkin). A single Ring-necked Duck was seen off Grand Island on 1/22 (Beardslee) and 2/25 (Schaffner, Brownsteins). The largest number of Canvasbacks ever counted on the Niagara River (15,196) was a highlight of our Federation census. Five thousand Old Squaws were in the lower river on that occasion, filling the air with their "ah, ah-de-let" calls. Ruddy Ducks were noted as late as 1/28 (three at outlet of L. Chautauqua, Parker), and Robinson reported one there 3/18. The usual wintering Hooded Mergansers were absent, the year's first record being a prompt 3/17 (Celeron, Elderkin).

HAWKS — OWLS: The first Turkey Vulture was reported from Chestnut Ridge Park 3/13 (Coggeshall); the species was not seen at Oak Orchard until 3/27. Bald Eagles were reported every month, mostly from the Grand Island area. Elderkin found a Duck Hawk at Frewsburg 3/13. Coots were seen all winter at Niagara Gorge, Grand Island, L. Chautauqua, and Dunkirk. One had returned to Oak Orchard 3/18 (Brockner). Our first Killdeer record was of two at Alden on 3/3 (Wolfling). Glaucous and Iceland Gulls were reported throughout the period (mostly single individuals). One Kumlien's Gull was seen 12/8 at the Falls (Coggeshall) and one on the lower river 3/18 (North). Wintering Little Gulls (very unusual) were reported on the Niagara during December and as late as 1/8 (2 at Lewiston, Schaffner et al.). A Kittiwake was observed in the Niagara Gorge 12/24 (Kemnitzer) and 12/25 (Axtells). A few Bonaparte's Gulls were seen through January and February and as late as 3/11 (12 on lower river, Beardslee). An early Common Tern was observed by Mitchell off Grand Island 3/31. Snowy Owl records were very few. Long-eared and Short-eared Owls were frequently seen on Grand Island throughout the period, and from one to three Saw-whets could almost always be found in the Lewiston cemetery.

SWIFTS — SHRIKES: The only winter record of a Kingfisher was of one which appeared out of nowhere 1/29 at Forest Lawn Cemetery (Brockner) and returned to the same place. A few wintering Flickers were reported. A Red-bellied Woodpecker was seen at the Bakers' feeder at Belmont from 1/1 to 1/12 (fide McMurtry). Several Red-headed Woodpeckers (max. 8) wintered just east of Youngstown. The Heilborns' Austrian pines attracted a Sapsucker from 12/1 to 12/26 (most unusual). Probably the first migrant Prairie Horned Larks were those reported 1/22 from Grand Island (Rew, Rathbun, Verrill) and from Cambria (Nathan et al.). Our only Northern Horned Lark record comes from Mrs. McMurtry who found one at Wellsville 2/24. Carolina Wrens were seen at Jamestown (Parker), Hamburg (Avery), and Olean (Eaton) during the period. Mockingbirds visited the Koch feeder at Dunkirk and the Kuhn feeder at New Leon throughout February. A Hermit Thrush was seen at Dunkirk 1/7 and 2/1 to 2/5 (Meierhofer, rep. Stanley). The first Bluebird was noted at Oak Orchard on 3/4 (Brockner). Gray Shrikes were repeatedly seen throughout the area during all four months. The first Loggerhead Shrike was found near Wolcottsville 3/23 (Mitchell).

VIREOS — WARBLERS: A Myrtle Warbler was seen in the Youngstown Cemetery by many observers from 12/11 to 2/19.

BLACKBIRDS — SPARROWS: Mrs. McMurtry reported 75 Red-wings at Belmont on 2/27. A Rusty Blackbird was seen at Oak Orchard on 3/14 (Creighton

et al.). Grackles were first reported by Wolfling from Alden (6 on 3/3), and Cowbirds by Mitchell from Oak Orchard (10 on 3/12). Evening Grosbeaks were present in many localities and in large numbers (100 Frewsburg, 80 Hamburg, 100 East Aurora, 150 Wellsville). Mrs. McMurtry had Purple Finches at Wellsville all winter; few were reported elsewhere. Siskins were much more numerous than usual; most of the flocks were rather small, but many observers reported finding them, and Eaton writes of "large flocks" wintering. Common Redpolls were well represented, most being recorded in February. Both species of crossbills were reported rather frequently, they being most numerous in, but by no means confined to, Cattaraugus County. A Towhee may have wintered at Chestnut Ridge Park; it was seen there 3/5 (Creighton et al.). From 1/7 to 3/31 a female Oregon Junco was seen daily at the Klabunde feeding station at Lewiston, where scores of birders were privileged to study it. A White-throated Sparrow spent the entire winter at the Avery feeder at Hamburg. I thought Tree Sparrows were especially common this winter. A single Fox Sparrow visited the Avery feeder in Hamburg from 3/11 to 3/15. Our first Swamp Sparrow record is supplied by Mrs. McMurtry, who observed one at Wellsville 3/5. Longspur records were few, but many Snow Buntings were seen, some in tremendous flocks, the largest being one of 3000 (2/28 and 2/29, Armor, by Bason et al.).

132 McKinley Ave., Kenmore 17, N. Y.

REGION 2 — GENESEE

LEO J. TANGHE

The winter of 1955-56 was marked by a total snowfall of 119.6 inches up to April 10, the largest amount in recent years. Continued cold from November to the very end of March kept the bird population at a comparatively low level and held back early migrants. The Christmas Census gave only 64 species compared to high counts of 77 in 1953 and 1954.

LOONS — DUCKS: The Red-throated Loon was last seen on Dec. 4 and did not appear again until March 11; the Common Loon showed up on March 25 after an absence of 5 months.

A Great Blue Heron survived until mid-January at the Clover St. Locks of the Barge Canal (Dakins), and a Bittern was seen near open water in the Braddocks Bay marsh by Listman on Feb. 14.

Four Whistling Swans appeared at Braddocks Bay on Mar. 24. Among the Geese, only the Canada had been seen by the end of March. These first appeared at Durand Eastman on Mar. 4 (N. Moon) and built up to a flock of about 1000 at bays westward along the lake, principally at Shore Acres.

Normal duck population was maintained through the winter months, but the migrants normally appearing in March were retarded. Pintail was reported once in January and once in February, but definite migration did not start until about March 11. Unusual duck records for the winter were 1 Wood Duck by Klonick at the southern Tip of Irondequoit Bay on Dec. 26, and 3 American Scoters by Taylor, Conway and Mahoney in Lake Ontario at Rigney's Bluff on Jan. 2.

HAWKS — OWLS: Red-tailed and Sparrow Hawks, our most abundant hawks during winter, were reported regularly. The Cooper's and Sharp-shinned were present in much smaller numbers. The Rough-legged was unusually scarce. After May 1955, this bird was not seen until Jan. 15, 1956 (McKinney), and then not until March 25 (Corcoran). The Marsh Hawk was seen sparingly, but in every month throughout the winter (Dec. 26, by Corcoran; Jan. 29, by Dobson; Feb. 14, by Listman and March 24, by O'Hara).

First Coot on Lake Ontario near Rochester were seen by L. Moon on Feb. 13. Possibly these birds had migrated from Canandaigua Lake where a flock of about 100 were reported in Jan. (Whites and Dakins).

Black-backed Gulls were down somewhat from the numbers of recent winters. Many check lists reported 3 to 5 birds. Iceland and Glaucous gulls were well distributed along the lakeshore throughout the winter, but usually only single birds were reported. A Kumlein's Gull was seen on the Christmas Census (Dec. 26) at the mouth of the Genesee River. It was first spotted by A. Kemnitzer, but was

seen later by several others. The Bonaparte's Gull was seen on the Christmas census, and it reappeared on Feb. 26 (A. Kemnitzer). Of the four owls reported on the Christmas census, the most noteworthy was the Barred seen by Listman at Salmon Creek, one of the streams flowing into Braddock's Bay.

Mourning Doves were reported regularly throughout the winter. The largest flock was 60 birds at Ballantyne Rd. on Feb. 5 (Listman).

SWIFTS — SHRIKES: A few Kingfishers and Flickers stayed through the winter. Pileated and Red-bellied Woodpeckers, both uncommon in this area, were up slightly from counts of recent winters. A single Red-headed Woodpecker was seen at Payne Beach by Listman on Feb. 14.

Cold weather late in March held the Tree Swallow back until the 30th. A Tufted Titmouse was seen on the Christmas Census at the Atlantic Ave. Dugway by H. and O. Schaefer.

An exception to the overall scarcity of birds during the winter was the abundance of Robins. Flocks of 50-100 were seen at Durand Eastman, Ling Rd., Powder Mill Park, and in the back yards of various "non-birders". The whereabouts of these birds during the late fall and winter leaves much to be explained. The highest count of these birds during Nov. and Dec. was 6, except on Dec. 26, when 34 Robins, mostly in Durand Eastman, were counted. The high counts mentioned above were mostly during late Jan. and early Feb. The flock at Ling Rd. built up to a peak on Jan. 28, with counts as follows: 1 on Jan. 14; 4 on Jan. 21; 67 on Jan. 28; 50 on Feb. 5; 2 on Feb. 12; none on Feb. 26 (Tanghe). By early March migrant Robins were present in small numbers throughout the area.

Hermit Thrushes were reported in January at Durand Eastman by McNetts, Davis and Miller, and in February at Highland Park by Holland.

VIdeos — WARBLERS: A Northern Yellowthroat was seen at Ling Rd. on Dec. 4 by McKinney, and again on March 4 on a combined hike of the Buffalo and Genesee Ornithological Societies. In the latter case the bird, a male, was discovered by Miller and Rising and seen under excellent light conditions by about 20 observers.

The Myrtle Warbler, which sometimes winters here, has not been seen after Oct. 23.

BLACKBIRDS — SPARROWS: Several Red-wings and Cowbirds wintered at the Flynn Rd. Dump, near Braddock's Bay, and 8 Rusty Blackbirds at Ling Rd. (Tanghe, Listman).

Meadowlarks were absent during December, but were reported several times during January and February. Migrants arrived during the first week of March.

Evening Grosbeaks were present throughout the winter, but in smaller numbers than in Buffalo and Syracuse. Highest count was 17 birds at a private feeder in Durand Eastman. Redpolls were present in moderate numbers for this species; high count, 400 at Mendon Ponds by G. Jones on Feb. 18. Pine Siskins, Goldfinches and White-winged Crossbills were normal. Single Red Crossbills were recorded by Mrs. G. Davis at Burness Rd. in Webster, and by McKinney at Frisbee Hill Rd. in Greece, both on March 18.

First Fox sparrows were early: on March 11 by G. Jones and one day later by Mrs. H. Patterson and C. F. H. Allen. Lapland Longspurs were absent during December and January, but were seen regularly during February and March. Snow Buntings were abundant, with several reports of 500-1500 birds.

852 Stone Rd., Rochester 16, N. Y.

REGION 3 — FINGER LAKES

SALLY F. HOYT

This has been generally described as a 'rough winter' in the Finger Lakes Region. Snow cover was continuous and there was no January thaw. Temperatures were consistently low, although not to the extremes of February '48, but lakes and streams were ice-bound. Middle and late March brought floods, when thawing weather was succeeded by several heavy snows, the one of March 16 reaching a depth of 18 inches at Ithaca. Birds were driven to feeders in unusual numbers when natural food was covered or exhausted.

The large flocks of wintering Robins and Waxwings stripped trees and shrubs of fruits. Multiflora rose hips were gone two months earlier than usual.

Evening Grosbeaks and Goldfinches were the commonest winter finches. February and March saw an increase in flocks of Redpolls and Snow Buntings.

LOONS — DUCKS: Common Loons were scarce on Cayuga and Seneca Lakes with almost no reports for the winter. Not as many Horned Grebes reported as usual, and on Seneca, on 12/31 more Pied-billed (13) than Horned (4) were seen (Bardeen). Great Blue Herons wintered again at the Montezuma Refuge (Dewey) and one was also seen late in December at the Montour Falls airport (Waterhouse). The first Whistling Swan report of the spring was at Branchport basin, 3/31 (R. Jamieson). Canada Geese began going north through the Finger Lakes in large numbers the first week in March and as usual rested near King Ferry. 3000 were at Montezuma the week of 3/11 (Dewey). 111 Black Ducks were on the river at Elmira on 12/31 (Census group), 5 on river at Avoca 1/15 (Carter). 1000 Pintails at the Refuge 3/11. 2 Wood Ducks spent Dec. and Jan. at Hollister's Swamp south of Branchport (Guthrie et al).

Redheads were lower in numbers on the Christmas Count at Geneva than in past years (Ward) and were scarcer on Cayuga all winter. One small flock of Canvasbacks could be seen daily at the south end of Cayuga, but this species and Scaups did not appear in the rafts of other years. At Rock Stream, on Seneca, 200 Canvasbacks were reported the middle of January (Mrs. F. Brown), 7 Goldeneyes remained on the river at Avoca from 1/15 on, but few were seen on Cayuga Lake. However, an unusually high count for Montezuma Refuge was that of 200 Goldeneyes on 3/18 (Dewey).

There were no reports of Old-squaws on Keuka, or by Eaton Bird Club for their area this winter, but 21 were seen on the waterfowl census (1/15) on the west side of Cayuga (Hewitt, Swanson). There were no Scoters nor Ruddies reported on the census but on 1/2 two Ruddies were seen on Seneca by Eaton Bird Club. Buffleheads were seen south of Aurora in mid-December (EGA). American Mergansers were reported in larger numbers than usual this winter, and 4 Red-breasted Mergansers were seen on 1/2 by Eaton Bird Club on Seneca. At Hornell, the Reservoir Basin was still ice-covered by the end of March, so no waterfowl reported. The east arm of Keuka was frozen over. Cayuga Lake in general had fewer waterfowl all winter and the largest concentrations in the Finger Lakes again were found at north end of Seneca.

HAWKS — OWLS: The first Turkey Vulture report was on 3/11, 10 miles north of Geneva (Phillip Allen). Most areas reported a scarcity of Hawks during the winter, especially Accipiters. No Goshawks reported at Elmira, one seen at Guyanoga Valley 12/11 (Spiker) one near Sumner Hill 2/26 (Gustafson). A Sharp-shinned Hawk visited the Munford feeding station often at Clifton Springs, and a Cooper's spent the winter near feeders on Triphammer Road in Ithaca (McIlroy) taking Starlings and an occasional Evening Grosbeak. Walker reported Red-tailed Hawks fairly common near Geneva. Fewer reports of Rough-legged Hawks than usual: one dark phase at King Ferry 12/22 (AAA), two light phase at Avoca 3/31 (Carter) and several during winter by Walker and Ward are the only reports I have. The pair of Eagles was seen on the nest at Montezuma on 3/3 (Walker) and reported as brooding on 3/25 (Trail). A few reports of Marsh Hawks, and Sparrow Hawks reported as fairly common throughout the Region except at Avoca.

Ruffed Grouse were scarcer around Elmira. Two came to the feeder at Sapsucker Woods. Pheasants were scarcer around Geneva, probably in usual numbers elsewhere. Coots continue to increase as wintering birds. More than in past years at south end of Cayuga where they joined the Mallards in the duck pond at Stewart Park. Present in good numbers on Seneca, and 100 at Branchport Basin and Brandy Bay on Keuka. 200 on Canandaigua (census group). A Woodcock was heard on 3/12 near Ithaca (Swanson) and a Wilson's Snipe killed by a cat in Ithaca 3/22. As usual in recent years, a Glaucous Gull stayed with the Herring and Ring-bills at the south end of Cayuga. An Iceland Gull was seen with the Glaucous in mid-January (McIlroy). One Great Black-backed wintered at south end of Seneca again and several on Cayuga. In most areas, Mourning Doves wintered in unusual num-

bers, being so reported from Keuka Park, Watkins Glen and Sapsucker Woods, Ithaca. Screech Owls seemed down in numbers. There were just three reports of Snowy Owls: one on 1/15 at Penn Yan (Whitaker), one on 2/23 three miles south of Waterloo (Mrs. E. P. Walker) and one on 3/25 at Burdett (M. and B. Bardeen). Six Long-eared Owls were spotted on census in Elmira area 12/31. No Short-ears reported. A Saw-whet Owl at Ithaca 3/15 (Jehl).

SWIFTS — SHRIKES: 4 Kingfishers were seen by the census group at Elmira (12/31) but otherwise there were no winter reports, and for the first year in ten, 'my' Kingfisher was missing from Fall Creek in Etna. One Flicker wintered near Ithaca (Cole) and 2 near Elmira (Welles). Pileated reports more frequent near Elmira and for the second winter, the pair came to the feeder at Sapsucker Woods, Ithaca. A Red-bellied Woodpecker came to a Montour Falls feeder in late December and remained (Bardeen). A Sapsucker wintered on the Keuka College campus (Guthrie) and one near Kellogg's feeder in Ithaca. Hairies were scarce at Elmira, Hairies and Downies scarce at Avoca, both common at Geneva. Apparently because of the late snows, Phoebes were not reported before the end of March. Horned Larks, both Prairie and Northern, were abundant at Keuka (Guthrie), scarce around Watkins Glen. Prairie Horned Larks were abundant near Ithaca in late March (Hoyt) but few Northern seen. Almost no March reports of Tree Swallows except 3/15 at Ithaca (Jehl). Blue Jays seemed scarcer at Avoca, where Crows were more abundant (Atwood, Carter). Crows also abundant at Hornell (Groesbeck). No report of Brown-headed Chickadees this winter. A pair of Tufted Titmice wintered at the feeder of the E. P. Walkers in Romulus and were enjoyed by many observers. 9 of this species counted at Elmira on 12/31, definitely increasing there. Few reports of Red-breasted Nuthatches except one south of Geneva 1/22 (Murden). Carolina Wrens on increase at Elmira, but fewer reports of them this winter at Ithaca and elsewhere.

Robins were abundant throughout the Finger Lakes. Only one winter Bluebird report, by Kopp near Reading Center. A Ruby-crowned Kinglet appeared on the Keuka campus 12/15 (Guthrie). Golden-crowned Kinglets were scarce everywhere. Walker reported a flock of 25 Pipits flying N. W. over Waterloo 2/22, an early report. Cedar Waxwings in good flocks were reported throughout the Region. At Avoca they are usually not present in winter, but this year stayed and found the fruits of multiflora rose (Carter) and at Hornell fed on flowering crab (Groesbeck). Northern Shrikes were noted frequently and lingered rather late, one being trapped and banded 3/27 at Etna (Hoyt). A Loggerhead Shrike appeared at Avoca on 3/26 (Atwood). Mrs. Carter reported Starlings frantic for food in late March at Avoca, and flocks made nuisances of themselves at feeders everywhere.

VIREOS — WARBLERS: One or two reports of Myrtle Warblers at feeders in Ithaca during December, none elsewhere.

BLACKBIRDS — SPARROWS: The Elmira census group (12/31) found fewer House Sparrows than in other years, but no other area had this experience. There were scattered reports of wintering Meadowlarks. Beginning the third week in March, observers said they had never seen so many as this year. However, the lingering heavy snows drove them, and other species, to the few bare patches where they were easily observed and this may account for the seeming abundance. One female Cowbird wintered in Watkins Glen at Ruth Champion's feeder. Cardinals are holding their own around Avoca, where 2 males and 1 female were present this winter (Carter), and 4-6 pairs occur now in the vicinity of Hornell (Groesbeck). Evening Grosbeaks were about as numerous as last year, reported as abundant everywhere except at Keuka, but in their erratic way shunned some feeders, turning up at other new ones. An idea of abundance may be gained from my banding score at Etna of over 700 by the end of March. Purple Finches were scarce, none being reported at Watkins or Hornell, very few elsewhere. Almost no Pine Grosbeaks although a small flock was seen near Varna on 2/12 (McIlroy). The first Redpoll report was 1/15, a flock of 12 in Ithaca (Wheeler). In February reports began to come in regularly from all areas except Hornell (and only one was reported at Geneva). Flocks of up to 100 at Keuka (Guthrie). Until March the only report of Pine Siskins came from the Munfords at Clifton Springs who had them feeding on sumac and trumpet vine all winter. They were seen at Elmira for the first time in two years in January (Ryan, K. Fudge). The last of March a flock was reported at Ithaca (Sibley). It was a good winter for Goldfinches. 7 Red Crossbills seen on edge of Cornell campus 2/24 (Fisher) and 5 at Elmira on 3/31 (Coleman). A flock of 30 White-winged Crossbills near Caroline 12/15 (R. Smith).

One wintering Red-eyed Towhee 2/15 at Ludlowville (Sharkey). Slate-colored Juncos were locally abundant. Again a Pink-sided Junco was reported, this time from Avoca where it spent Jan. and Feb. (Carter). All observers found Tree Sparrows unusually abundant, and over 300 were banded at Etna by the end of March, a hundred more than during any of the previous nine years. Deep snow covering natural food may have driven them to feeders in greater numbers. One White-crowned Sparrow wintered at the Murden home, south of Geneva. 2 White-throats at Watkins Glen, and 5 south of Keuka, appearing at feeders at the Ness home. No White-throats reported around Ithaca after January 1. Fox Sparrows were unusually common in migration the end of March. Heavy Song Sparrow migration in the week beginning 3/17 (Hoyt). Lapland Longspurs were noted at Keuka (Lerch), but few other reports except from Elmira where more were seen in March than ever before. Snow Buntings were reported plentiful around Burdett, Hornell and Elmira, but the big flocks usually found north of Ithaca were missing.

"Avianna", Etna, N. Y.

REGION 4 — SUSQUEHANNA

LESLIE E. BELMONT

December was extremely cold, as cold as any month for several years. While there were no especially heavy snowfalls the constantly cold weather insured a constant, if not thick, cover of snow. This cold weather continued until the middle of January. The rest of January and all of February the weather was milder, but not really warm, and the ground was at least partially bare most of the time. Early March produced some warm bright weather that turned out to be a false Spring. Our heaviest snowfall of the year came March 16. Eleven inches fell and stayed on the ground until about the 25th of the month. A flock of Meadowlarks found in a weakened condition was the only record of early migrants being adversely affected although several species were quite late.

LOONS — DUCKS: The only grebe reported all winter was a Pied-billed near Chenango Valley State Park 1/15 (Sheffields) seen during the duck census. Two Great Blue Herons were reported from along the Susquehanna River just west of Endicott 1/30 (Mallory). The only other one reported was near Deposit 3/25 (Wilson). The January Waterfowl Count produced a total almost exactly twice that of last year in spite of the relatively severe weather. It is interesting to note that Mallards, Black Ducks and Am. Mergansers, the only important wintering ducks in the region, each totaled about twice the number found last year, so that no one species is responsible for the increase. Three Wood Ducks at C. V. State Park 3/18 were our first (Triple Cities Naturalists' Club). The only Redheads reported were 4 at Unadilla 3/24 (Wisner). The 5 Am. Golden-eyes found at Centre Village, Broome Co. on the Waterfowl Census Jan. 15 (Saunders, et. al.) were revisited Jan. 22 and found to have increased to 13. Golden-eyes are not usually seen in this area until the middle of February or early March. Two male Red-breasted Mergansers, an unusual bird in the region, were seen at North Norwich 2/5 (Whites).

HAWKS — OWLS: A Turkey Vulture was seen 3/25 and two 3/29 near Deposit (Wilson). A Sharp-shinned Hawk was at Deposit 3/18 (Wilson). Wintering Red-tailed Hawks seemed more common than usual in the region as a whole. A Rough-legged Hawk was seen near Deposit 2/26 (Wilson) and another 3/4 at Sherburne (Stratton). An immature Bald Eagle was seen feeding in the road just north of Owego 1/8 (Rosevear). Mr. Rose of South Kortright reports that Bald Eagles have been seen there and at Gilboa and Oneonta, too. No wintering Marsh Hawks were reported. The first one was seen 3/11 near Binghamton (Marsi).

A Killdeer was near Deposit 1/22 (Wilson). The next report was from the Messengerville area, in Cortland Co. 3/3 (Washburns et. al.). Not seen at all frequently until 3/9. A Mourning Dove was seen in the Binghamton area Jan. 1

(Jennings) and two more were at Homer 2/26 (Gustafson). No more until 3/17 and still not common by the end of March. Two Horned Owls were heard 1/2, at 10:00 A. M. of a bright sunny day, apparently calling back and forth to each other near Norwich (Whites). Horned Owl reports have been more frequent than usual. A Snowy Owl was seen near the Greene Golf Course 2/18 (McLean).

GOATSUCKERS — SHRIKES: Kingfishers seem to have been present all winter in one part of the region or another. No wintering Flickers were reported but Pileated Woodpeckers have been seen more frequently than usual. No Phoebes were reported before the end of March. Horned Larks seemed to be present in about normal numbers in the Binghamton area until 3/17 when they suddenly became very common. They were seen in small and medium sized flocks along roadsides everywhere. Mr. Wilson states that he had seen none in the Deposit area since 1947 but he saw 4 on 3/17, 45 on 3/18 and 40 on 3/24. At Oxford (Stratton) and Norwich (Whites) they were seen in medium sized flocks at about this time, too. This period of abnormal numbers lasted until about 3/25 around Binghamton. The timing corresponds with the falling and melting of our heaviest snow rather closely. No Tree Swallows had been seen in the whole region by the end of March.

Blue Jays were reported to be unusually abundant at Bainbridge (E. J. Smith) and at Deposit (Wilson) and seemed more numerous at Cortland, too (Thurber). Crows were also more numerous at Cortland (Thurber) and at Deposit, Mr. Wilson reports, they were present all winter for the first time in his memory. Tufted Titmice continue to increase in the Binghamton area. In at least one place where two were coming to a feeder last winter there are 6 or 7 this year, giving us strong evidence that they bred here during the past summer, although a definite breeding record is still lacking. One seen at Deposit was the first there since 1952. Red-breasted Nuthatches were more common than usual at Deposit (Wilson) but there were only very occasional reports from other areas. A Winter Wren was seen at Cortland 1/6 and again 1/15 (Thurber). There were several records of Carolina Wrens in the Binghamton area during January showing that at least some survived the severe December weather, but the effects of the late March snowstorms are still unknown.

There was a spectacular increase in the wintering Robin population in the Binghamton area. They were reported almost daily from Christmas time until the middle of February, sometimes in flocks numbering as many as 55 birds, but flocks usually numbered from 6 to 15 (TCNC). None were reported from 2/15 to 3/10 in Binghamton. Three records of single birds from Cortland (Thurber) are the only other winter records. The first spring migrant was at Deposit 3/6 (Wilson) and by 3/11 had been seen throughout the region, but even by the end of March were not really common. The first Bluebirds were four at Corbett 3/4 (Wilson). One at Oxford 3/11 (Whites) and one at Maine in Broome Co. 3/15 (Early) were the only other pre-snowstorm reports turned in. Only two more reports were received from the whole region before the end of the month. The Triple Cities Naturalists' Club has completed a project whereby 150 Bluebird houses were built and put out. The publicity the project received has apparently stimulated various 4-H clubs and Scout organizations to do likewise on a smaller scale.

Golden-crowned Kinglets have been reported only from Binghamton, Cortland and Deposit and they were quite scarce in those areas. Cedar Waxwings appear to have been somewhat more common than usual in the Binghamton area (TCNC), but in other areas they seemed normal or even low in numbers. For the third year in a row Gray Shrikes have been present in good numbers. Reports came from all parts of the region starting 12/26 near Binghamton and South New Berlin.

VIREOS — WARBLERS: A Yellow Warbler at Cortland 12/18, a cold snowy day, was one of the biggest surprises of the season (Thurber).

BLACKBIRDS — SPARROWS: The first Meadowlarks were at Deposit 3/4 (Wilson) at Binghamton 3/11 (TCNC) at Oxford 3/14 (Stratton) and at Norwich 3/24 (Whites). On 3/25 a flock of about 15 was found near Maine in such poor condition that a person could walk up to them and pick them up (Early). The snow which fell 3/16 still completely covered the ground. Redwings were first reported at Binghamton 2/28 (Easton & Shanley). Although several large flocks were reported they did not become very common in the marshes during March and no females had appeared by the end of the month. One Rusty Blackbird was found in a flock of Redwings 3/11 near Binghamton (TCNC) and there have been a few reported since. A Cowbird, a female, was at Hancock 1/1 (Standfests) and 3 were

at Unadilla 2/21, one male remaining until 2/23 (Wisner). The next report is of a female at Deposit 3/10 (Wilson).

Cardinals have been well established in the Binghamton area for a number of years, but at Cortland, Deposit, Oxford and Unadilla, while present this year they are still not firmly established. Dr. Thurber writes that this is the second year in a row that Cardinals have been present in the Cortland area during the winter after an absence of 10 years. This has been a great year for Evening Grosbeaks. Mr. Wilson reports a peak of 160 birds at his feeder in Deposit early in February. Mr. Smith at Bainbridge had a flock of 25 most of the winter and Mr. Wisner at Unadilla reports a peak flock of 35 or 40 birds. In the Binghamton area there were many flocks numbering 30 to 50 birds. They started coming to feeders in the latter part of December and early January. Their numbers had tapered off somewhat by the end of March but they were still very much in evidence. Purple Finches have been quite scarce all winter. Pine Grosbeaks were noted in several areas during January and early February but then disappeared. Redpolls were quite common during March in Binghamton (TCNC) and Oxford (Stratton) especially during the latter half and right up to the end of the month. In Deposit the peak was earlier and they were practically absent during March (Wilson). In Norwich they were first seen 2/10 and have been seen as late as 3/25 with numerous observations between (Whites). They seem to have been completely absent from other areas. 147 Pine Siskins were at Deposit 1/1 (Wilson). A total of 72 in two flocks were found in the Binghamton area 1/15 (TCNC). Only a few other reports of single birds were turned in. A few Red Crossbills were seen in the Deposit area (Wilson) and one small flock of White-winged Crossbills was at Willow Point near Binghamton 3/25 (Marsis).

Slate-colored Juncos have been more common than usual in Binghamton (TCNC) and Deposit (Wilson). Rather large numbers of Tree Sparrows were reported from the Binghamton area, Oxford (Stratton) and from Bainbridge (Smith). Dr. Thurber writes that they were present around Cortland all winter where they are usually absent during the mid-winter months. Two wintering White-throated Sparrows were reported. The one at Oxford, a first winter bird and partially crippled, was taken by a Sparrow Hawk 12/27 (Stratton) but the one at Deposit has been singing since 3/7 (Wilson). Fox Sparrows have been around Binghamton since 3/5 (Carpenter). There have been quite a few reports from various areas since but of only one or two birds at a time, whereas in other years flocks of 6 to 12 seem more usual. The only wintering Song Sparrow reported was at Oxford. It had been hurt but healed and later escaped the attack of a Sparrow Hawk at the expense of a few tail feathers (Stratton). One seen 2/27 in Endicott (N. Washburn) was apparently the first migrant. A flock of 30 or more Lapland Longspurs was near Maine 3/15 and 3/16 (Early). One or two stayed for a few more days but no more were reported all winter. Small flocks of Snow Buntings were observed around Cortland, Deposit, Norwich and Binghamton all winter. In the Binghamton area a definite peak in numbers was reached between 3/15 and 3/21 as though a migration wave were passing through (TCNC). This could not be detected in the reports from other areas.

710 University Ave., Endwell, N. Y.

REGION 5 — ONEIDA LAKE BASIN

FRITZ SCHEIDER

December continued the harsh, cold weather of November and by 12/9 Oneida Lake had frozen over. By the end of Dec., Onondaga Lake, most of the Oswego River and much of Oswego Harbor were sealed with ice. By 1/8 the Oswego Harbor was more than $\frac{3}{4}$ frozen, the severest ice conditions observed in recent years. The persistent (12/15 to 2/4) and heavy (5 to 25 inches, depending on the sector of the region) ground snow severely hindered winter birding in general and local Christmas Counts in particular and was a potent factor in the distribution of certain wintering species, notably the Kestrel, Song Sparrow, and Snow Bunting. From 2/5 to 2/14, a prolonged thaw erased much of the ground snow and initiated an influx of Crows, Ring-

billed Gulls, Kestrels, and Horned Larks. The remainder of Feb. was dominated by cold spells, wet snows and brief thaws, none of the last protracted enough to lure early migrants into the area. The 1st 2 weeks of March, moderately warm and very wet, gradually melted the ground snow but left the lakes and swamps still frozen; by the 11th, large flocks of migrants had arrived. A series of snow storms in the remainder of March broke the snowfall record (bringing it to 140.5 inches) and, coupled with near-zero temperatures, stalled any further migration. At the end of March, Oneida, Otisco, Skaneateles, and Mud Lakes and the major swamps of the area were still frozen. Correspondingly the flight of early dabbling ducks was late in coming, meager in species, and poor in numbers. Between 11 and 31 March, just 2 new spring migrants were recorded in the Syracuse area despite greater field work.

Evening Grosbeaks dominated the winter finch show but smaller numbers of Redpolls, Siskins, and Pine Grosbeaks were also noted. A few reports of Goshawks and Snowy Owls came in but no real flight of either species occurred. All owls and most "mouse" hawks were scarce, though mice were fairly common; the heavy ground snow and the ensuing difficult hunting probably explains this scarcity. Gray Shrikes again invaded the area in numbers, the 3rd winter in a row this occurred. The number and species of wintering half-hardies, especially the icterids, were very high. On the debit side is the paucity of Juncos, Purple Finches, Goldfinches, Golden-crowned Kinglets, and Snow Buntings; for all but the last this was a winter-long condition.

LOONS — DUCKS: Common Loon — 2 wintering records; 1 found grounded on 12/26 on a country road near Lysander was sent to Nashville, Tenn. by air-express (B. P. Burt); 1 on 1/21, Skaneateles Lake. Red-necked Grebe — 1 on 1/21, Skan. Lake; 1 on 2/19, Oswego are the only winter records. Horned Grebe — a high of 91 on Skan. Lake on 1/21; only 1 stayed at Oswego thru the winter. Pied-billed Grebe — singles wintered at Oswego, Baldwinsville, and Skaneateles. Great Blue Heron — a few wintered along fast-flowing Limestone and Butternut Creeks near Fayetteville (Mr. R. Gould); 1st migrants were 2, 3/21, at Westerville.

Mute Swan — between 12/14 and 1/15, single adults of this species, all apparently wild, free-flying birds, were reported from Oneida (Wayland-Smith), Fulton (Schaffner), Onondaga Lake (F. S.), and Brewerton (fide Spofford); at least 2 different swans were involved, as 2 birds were seen in widely separated areas on the same day. Canada Goose — last date was 25 birds, 12/14, on the ice at Mud Lake; first spring arrivals on 3/3, about a week late; numbers had not arrived by 3/31. Mallards and Blacks — both reduced to 50% of last year's wintering numbers, undoubtedly because of severe weather conditions. Pintail — no wintering birds; first arrivals on 3/11, actually weeks late. Green-winged Teal — last birds at Sandy Pond on 12/10; 1st arrivals on 3/31 (late) at Clay Swamp. Wood Duck — a pair on 1/8 at Baldwinsville, a single male between 1/15 and 2/19 at same place, and a female at Manlius from 1/4 to mid-March are our first established wintering records; first arrivals on 3/4, Onondaga Valley and Phoenix. Canvasbacks and Red-heads — both extremely scarce along the Seneca and Oswego Rivers and in Oswego Harbor thru Dec. and Jan., but a marked influx to both areas in the first 2 weeks of Feb. American Golden-eye and Old-squaw — wintering numbers about twice the '55 counts. Hooded Merganser — 3 wintering birds, all females, from Skaneateles, Minetta, and Oswego; first migrants back on 3/11, but uncommon for the balance of the month. Red-breasted Merganser — the Oswego wintering flock was approximately 1/5 of last year's numbers; by 3/25 the Red-breasted: American Merganser ratio at Oswego approached 1:1.

HAWKS — OWLS: Goshawks — 6 reports, the majority in Dec. and early Jan.; 1 adult on 3/4, Three Rivers Game Management Area (possible return flight?). Sharp-shinned Hawk — a scattering of wintering individuals, mostly immatures, from Oneida, Baldwinsville, and Dewitt; first positive migrants were 2 on 3/11 along

Lake Ontario. Red-shouldered Hawk — 1 on 3/4, Three Rivers G. M. A., is a record arrival date. Rough-legged Hawk — extremely scarce; though 5 Nov. records, just 5 birds between 12/1 and 2/29. Harrier — none after 12/10; first arrivals on 3/11 along Lake Ontario and at Euclid. Kestrel — this bird was remarkably scarce from mid-Dec. until early Feb. and just 3 were seen on the Syracuse Christmas Count. This scarcity (also that of the Rough-leg and Harrier) is almost certainly due to the deep ground snow and attendant poor hunting conditions; after the early Feb. thaw, Kestrels again appeared in numbers (3 to 6/day).

Ruffed Grouse — its absence from or scarcity in known haunts, though such places are undisturbed or unchanged from earlier years, points up the "crash" these birds have taken locally. Pheasants — the combination of artificial stocking, extensive feeding, and letting fields of corn stand has tremendously aided this species locally; a high of 300 was noted on 1/1. Virginia Rail — 1 observed, 12/31, in a spring-fed mash SE of Syracuse (P. Armstrong). Killdeer — last was 1, 12/17, Nedrow; first arrivals on 3/3 near Tully. Neither Woodcock nor Snipe were reported in March; both quite late.

Gulls — along the Oswego River and in Oswego Harbor, the changes in gull concentrations, both in numbers and species content, paralleled weather conditions. With the severe freezing conditions of late Dec. and early Jan., heavy concentrations of Herring and Great Black-backed (all time high of 273 of the latter on 12/31) with very few Ring-bills appeared and remained until the prolonged thaw of early Feb. At that time numbers (1000+) of Ring-billed Gulls arrived and Great Black-backed Gull counts dropped sharply (5 to 15/day). Late Feb. to mid-March saw an exodus of all species of gulls from the Oswego River axis and only with the storms of late March did any concentrations again appear there. Glaucous and Iceland Gulls — present in small and approximately equal numbers (3 to 5/trip with high of 8 on 12/31) between late Dec. and mid-March along the Oswego River axis; none reported away from this section. Bonaparte's Gull — an immature, 12/4, Brewerton, is late, but the adult on 2/12 in Oswego Harbor is unprecedented as the bird is unreported from that area even in migration.

Mourning Dove — flocks of 5-25 wintered north of Skaneateles (L. H. Hiscock) and in the township of Cicero, Onondaga Co.; they have benefited greatly from the standing corn left for pheasants. Snowy Owl — 5 reports mainly in late Dec. and early Jan. from the south shore of Lake Oneida; in late Feb. and early March, 1 near Caughdenoy (V. P. Mathis); (possible return flight?). Screech Owl — the scant numbers of reports throughout the winter would seem to indicate a sharply reduced wintering population. No Short-eared Owls reported for entire period.

SWIFTS — SHRIKES: Belted Kingfisher — a few in early Dec.; only 1 Jan. report, 1 on 1/1 at Oneida (D. Ackley); no March migrants of this species reported, a condition not surprising in view of the silt-laden creeks and frozen lakes. Flicker — first spring birds seen on 3/3; however, the main migration did not occur in March, for it was actually a rarity for the rest of the month. Red-bellied Woodpecker — an adult male observed near Nedrow from mid-Dec. to end of March (Lee Chamberlaine). Hairy Woodpecker — appears somewhat more common this winter with a high of 13 on 1/1 (J. Ashley). Phoebe — 1st arrival, 1, 3/25, Cazenovia Lake. Horned Lark — almost a rare wintering bird; however, marked flights went thru from 2/7 on; 2 birds observed in sustained flight singing on 2/11 and a flock of 700+ seen south of Syracuse on 2/12. Crow — the 5-14 Feb. thaw brought a heavy influx of this species throughout the region; 4000+ were seen in 1½ hours migrating along Lake Ontario on strong S winds, 3/11. Blue Jay — scarce except in the Rome-Westernville Area (May, Aspinwall) and in the valleys south of Syracuse. Brown-capped Chickadee — 1 reported from the Hahn's residence near Forestport, NE Oneida Co. (Paquette, the Ackleys). White-breasted Nuthatch seemed scarce this winter. Red-breasted Nuthatch — what few reports have come in have been mainly from feeding stations at Rome, Syracuse, Oneida, and Skaneateles; however, 1, 1/28, at Selkirk State Park was apparently surviving on the natural food supply. Carolina Wren — reported from Skan. in Dec. (L. H. H., R. Seaman) and Feb. (L. H. H.) and from South Onondaga (L. C.) in mid-Feb. Robin — many wintering flocks (5-65) but all south of an east-west line drawn thru Syracuse; in the Rome-Oneida-Westernville area, only single birds were reported (12/15 to 2/14); first unquestionable migrants on 3/1. Golden-crowned Kinglet — similar to last year in being very, very scarce; many observers noted only their complete absence; however, they appeared to be tolerably common in the hemlock stands north of Oneida Lake. Pipit — none reported to end of period; already 2 weeks late. Cedar Wax-

wing — wintering flocks numbered from 10 to 200 and were reported from all sections; reports in late Feb. and the first 2 wks. of March seemed to show increased numbers plus a report of a veritable invasion of this species in Skaneateles on 3/11 (L. H. H.).

Gray Shrike — throughout the winter, 1 to 4/trip was the rule; several times up to 7/day were seen; as usual the greater numbers came from the flat country between Syracuse and Oneida Lake but many were seen in Onondaga Valley south of Syracuse; the great majority appeared to be adults with an adult: immature ratio of 10:1; present to end of period.

BLACKBIRDS — FRINGILLIDS: Meadowlark — only 3 winter reports, all singles, a scarcity of birds consonant with the heavy ground snow. Red-winged Blackbird — 4 winter records, the most unusual one being a single male at the Hahn residence, Forestport, Oneida Co. Grackle — 1 on 1/1 is the second wintering record in 5 years. Cowbird — 6 wintering records: the majority from pigstys and garbage dumps, a few (including the only female Cowbird reported) from feeding stations. Rusty Blackbird — despite large flocks of Red-wings, Grackles, and Cowbirds, this species was a numerical washout in the March icterid flights.

Cardinal — definitely still on the increase; more reports from Westernville and Oneida and birds are now being regularly seen in the flat country between Syracuse and Oneida Lake, a blank area for this species for years. Evening Grosbeak — literally hundreds of reports; flock size from 5 to 150; in Dec. and early Jan. the majority appeared to be males and fed mainly on the abundant seed crop of the box elder; from late Jan. to 3/31, more females appeared (about 1:1 male: female ratio in the Syracuse area, however 6:1 or 7:1 in the Rome area in the same period) and the local feeding stations were beleaguered with the birds. Purple Finch — just 1 winter report, 1, 1/1, in Syracuse; almost amazing is the total lack of March reports. Pine Grosbeak — 2 reports, a flock of 50+ near Vesper, Onon. Co. on 2/20 (E. Estoff & J. Probst); 1 female on 3/17, Brewerton (F. S.). Redpoll — flocks of 5-60 seen thru the winter, mainly from the higher hills of the southern section, but from mid-March on, both reports and flock numbers have increased remarkably and flocks of 100 and 200 were still present as of 3/31. Pine Siskins — small flocks, 10-60, thru the winter; no indications of a return flight yet. Red Crossbill — the only report is a flock of 6 at Syracuse on 3/31; probably part of a light return flight, not a local wintering group. Towhee — a female, 2/18, South Onondaga, is a first wintering record for the area (L. C.). Goldfinch and Junco — both actually only fairly common winter birds; a flock of 50 Goldfinches on 3/21, Tully, is an exception; the large flocks of Juncos usually passing thru in the last week of March did not appear. Tree Sparrow — wintering flocks of 100-300 to mid-Jan.; some diminution in numbers in Feb.; the large flocks of spring migration and much singing noted during the closing days of March. Chipping Sparrow — 1 immature trapped and banded 12/3, Oneida (H. P. Nodecker). Very few reports of the White-throated, only one report of the Swamp, and phenomenally low numbers of Song Sparrows; the combination of deep snow, freezing over of the small marshes where these birds prefer to winter, and a poor weed seed crop are the probable reasons for the scarcity. Fox Sparrow — first arrivals on 3/12, Oneida (Ackleys); very uncommon thru the rest of March. Snow Bunting — average winter flocks from 15-60 were reported; frequent comments on its absence or low numbers; a flock of 2000, 2/20, near Cardiff, undoubtedly represents pre-migrational flocking up; small numbers, however, present to 3/31.

151 Seventh North Street, Syracuse 8, N. Y.

REGION 6 — ST. LAWRENCE

FRANK A. CLINCH

This winter was cold without warm weather to produce the usual thaws. As a result the ground was covered with snow from December to the first week in April. In Watertown the total snowfall for the four months was only 76 inches, because there were many storms that left less snow near Watertown than in many other places. However there can be no doubt that the total snow in many parts of this region was much greater. There was much cold weather before the January Waterfowl Census.

The latter part of March was more like winter than the first half. Few of the usual spring birds appeared at this time. At Potsdam there were no Bluebirds or Meadowlarks, only Redwings. At Watertown most of the usual birds were seen, but in small numbers only.

LOONS — DUCKS: Both Horned and Pied-billed Grebes were on the St. Lawrence River near Waddington until Dec. 1. A few Horned Grebes remained in Lake Ontario where they were last seen near Stony Point Jan. 22. Both Grebes were found at the time of the Waterfowl Census. Buffleheads and Old Squaws stayed in the lake all winter. Canvasbacks wintered in the St. Lawrence near Cape Vincent. A Hooded Merganser was seen on Jan. 2 near Waddington on the St. Lawrence River by Rev. Edward Nichols. Ten Canada Geese were seen March 12 (J. Belknap) but most of them came early in April.

HAWKS — OWLS: A Glaucous Gull was seen near Waddington Jan. 14 (EN). He also saw ten Great Black-backed Gulls the same day. A Gull which probably was an Ivory Gull was reported by Marie Elitharp Jan. 15 near Stony Point. J. Blake saw an Iceland Gull. Gulls were scarce after the middle of December. A Barred Owl was caught in a trap at Brownville in December, and one was seen near Antwerp Feb. 1. Snowy Owls were noted between Dec. 19 and March 12. Several were seen in Jan. and Feb. (JB). Short-eared Owls were present near Philadelphia late in Feb. (JB). Mourning Doves were on the Christmas Bird Count at Watertown for the first time (Common and Wilson). Three were probably being fed by a farmer and several were feeding on unharvested buckwheat. They have been reported in December in the southern part of Jefferson county where they could get corn. Belknap saw Mourning Doves the latter part of March and he feels that they were not held back by the wintry weather.

SHRIKES — SPARROWS: Shrikes seemed to be numerous. A Rusty Blackbird came to the feeder of E. Nichols at Madrid on March 20, and returned several times during the next week. This was one early arrival in spite of frigid weather and 18 inches of snow over everything. One was reported earlier in the southern part of Jefferson County. A Grackle was seen at Norfolk, one at Massena Jan. 14 and one in Watertown March 14. Eight immature Red-winged Blackbirds were seen near Alexandria Bay Feb. 5 (M.E.). Others were seen in Jefferson County early in March. Some Meadowlarks arrived long before the winter weather departed. There were many reports of Evening Grosbeaks during the entire period. They came to at least six feeders in Watertown, and more were fed in the Southern part of Jefferson county. At Potsdam a huge flock, said to number easily three or four hundred, has been feeding at the Dr. Hart home. One hundred pounds of sunflower seeds only last about ten days. In some places the Evening Grosbeaks are quite tame (L. Blake). Redpolls were frequently seen, and a few stayed after the first of April. A flock of 14 White-winged Crossbills were seen near Gouverneur Jan. 17 (JB).

Correction to the last Regional Report (1955 Kingbird V (4):109): only one Northern Phalarope was seen, the one seen by Charles Mason off Grenadier Island on June 23. The second was an incorrect report of the same bird.

173 Halsey St., Watertown, N. Y.

REGION 7 — ADIRONDACK-CHAMPLAIN

THOMAS A. LESPERANCE

December through March brought little snow but intense cold prevailed. Twenty-eight days through January and into February had an average temperature of -2° . The minimum was -32° and the maximum daily temperature seldom above 22° even on bright days. Early March saw a thaw followed immediately by persistent snows. Total accumulation for March alone in the Keeseville area was 51 inches with much more on the higher elevations. On March 28th spring arrived in style with rivers and streams going out in a rush and doing great damage. The 28th also brought the first spring migrants. Twenty-three species were recorded on the Keeseville Christmas Census (Lesperance) on a poor day.

LOONS — DUCKS: Loons, Grebes, Black Duck, American Goldeneye, Old Squaw, Bufflehead and White-winged Scoter stayed until Champlain froze over in mid-winter. Snow Geese returned on March 26th, Helms reporting flocks of 75-100 over Essex and Willsboro.

HAWKS — OWLS: Bald Eagle seen at Westport and again at Au Sable Pt. Jan. 20 and 23. First migrant hawks seen throughout the area on about the same dates which tends to show a general infiltration. Red-tail and Duck Hawk at Saranac (Mar. 29, Chase), Broad-wing, Red-tail, Sharp-shinned, Duck and Red-shouldered at Keeseville Mar. 29. A Goshawk was seen from early January until the first week in March near Augur Pond. Sparrow Hawks remained as isolated individuals all winter. Killdeer was reported from Saranac April 5 (Chase) and at Keeseville April 11. Mourning Doves at Peru March 22 (Gibbs) and at Keeseville March 10.

GOATSUCKERS — SHRIKES: Prairie Horned Lark at Pt. Au Roche March 13 (Gibbs), 20 in one flock. First Robin at Pt. Au Roche March 13 (Gibbs) some three weeks later than usual. Migrant and Northern Shrikes were seen first in early March, increasing in numbers in the Keeseville area to date, and now are very common.

BLACKBIRDS — SPARROWS: A flock of Cowbirds wintered about Keeseville feeding along the highways. There were some 30 birds which seemed not to mind the cold at all. Purple Grackle was at Pt. Au Roche March 13 (Gibbs). A March 13 Meadowlark (Gibbs) might have wintered. Red-wings were not reported in March. Goldfinches fed in very large flocks along Route 9 as soon as snow plows cleared the roads. Both these and Purple Finches were about all winter, the latter seen only occasionally. All areas reported large flocks of Redpolls, the maximum at Saranac March 7 to 9 (Chase), but still plentiful at Pt. Au Roche, Chazy, Plattsburg and Peru at the end of the period (Gibbs). There were also large flocks in the fields in Keeseville. Evening Grosbeaks wintered in the entire reporting area, reports coming from Saranac (Chase), Essex (Mason), Ellenburg Depot (McGregor), Sunmount (Amstutz, Kingsbury) and Plattsburg (Gibbs). Only three Pine Grosbeaks were seen this winter, three individuals at widely scattered places.

Tree Sparrows were very common all winter. No migrant sparrows were reported until April. Snow Buntings were common just north of Keeseville in open country, but observations made by Gibbs indicate that they were down in numbers in his area.

I should like to welcome Bob and Sally Gibbs of Plattsburg as correspondents. Bob is an associate professor of biology at Plattsburg State Teachers' College.

Keeseville, New York

REGION 8 — HUDSON-MOHAWK

JAMES K. MERRITT

The winter weather in the Schenectady area followed a somewhat unusual pattern. December and March temperatures were below average. January temperatures were 3.7 degrees above normal, and February temperatures were almost 6.3 degrees above the average. Much of the winter's snowfall came during March, and principally in the latter part of the month.

The winter season was marked by the scarcity or apparent complete absence of certain winter finches and by the presence of others in good, and even exceptional, numbers. Robins were recorded in small numbers throughout the winter, but during February, when spring weather had apparently arrived, flocks of up to 100 or so were observed. Among the outstanding individual records during the period were a Barrow's Golden-eye, a Hoary Redpoll, and an Oregon Junco. The relatively heavy snows and cold weather that prevailed during the last two weeks of March undoubtedly account for the lack of any records of such early land bird migrants as the Phoebe and Tree Swallow. The waterfowl migration, however, developed about as expected along the central Hudson during March. The larger area lakes and reservoirs remained completely frozen over.

The Schenectady Christmas Count, taken on December 26, yielded 44 species, which equalled the high set in 1954. Thirty-four species were observed on the Troy count of January 2.

One word on terminology: local birders refer to that portion of the Hudson between Albany and Dutchess County as the "lower Hudson," although in a geographical sense this is not, of course, correct. Similarly, the upper Hudson comprises the river and river valley north of the Capital District.

LOONS — DUCKS: The first Pied-billed Grebe report of the spring season was from the upper Hudson on March 3 (Byron Hipple). Canada Geese reports were few that month. Two American Widgeon were seen along the lower Hudson on March 11 (Marjorie Foote), and there were scattered March reports of the Pintail. A Green-winged Teal was seen near Troy on January 2 and on several February dates. A Redhead was observed along the upper Hudson on January 15 (Schenectady Bird Club). Ring-necks and Canvasbacks were reported in fair numbers during March. One of the highlights of the season was a male Barrow's Golden-eye first seen on January 21 on the Hudson about four miles south of Mechanicville; this bird, which was with a group of American Golden-eyes, was first spotted by Ken Hart of New York City. The Barrow's was seen that same day and subsequently by other observers through February 4. This constitutes our first local record for the species since 1952. No Wood Ducks were reported throughout the period. Such waterfowl species as the White-winged Scoter and Red-breasted Merganser are not normally considered "inland" birds, and yet 2 White-wings and 40 Red-breasts were observed along the upper Hudson on January 15 (SBC). Another Red-breasted Merganser was recorded in that area on March 3 (Esly Hallenbeck). American Mergansers, like the Black Duck, wintered wherever there was suitable swimming room. Hooded Merganser reports were relatively numerous. Eighteen were seen at Saratoga Lake on December 6 (EH); one was observed at Schenectady on December 26 (SBC — this was the first local Christmas count record); three were along the upper Hudson March 10 (BH); one was seen near Cohoes on March 18 (Walt Kashan), and a pair was seen near Schodack on March 31 (James Meritt).

HAWKS — OWLS: On March 21 Lillian Stoner saw a Turkey Vulture along the Thruway a few miles north of Saugerties. The record is either just within or just outside of Region 8, but it is certainly of interest in any case. On December 26 a Goshawk was seen at Vischer's Ponds near Schenectady (SBC). Two Rough-legged Hawks were seen near Meadowdale on December 26 (SBC); another was seen

there on March 10 (EH, JM), and a black-phase bird was observed just south of Ravena on March 31 (JM). An adult Bald Eagle was observed near Thacher State Park on December 26 (SBC), and another was seen near downtown Schenectady three days later (Ben Seguin). An Eagle was observed near Troy on January 2 (SBC), and an immature bird was observed at Castleton on March 31 (JM). Two Peregrine Falcons were recorded near Albany on December 26 (SBC). One was seen at Scotia on February 19 (Rudd Stone), and another was observed near Troy on February 26 (Brother Austin). Reports of the more common hawks were quite frequent, especially late in the period.

Although Pheasants were present locally in good numbers, reports of the Ruffed Grouse were few. The Woodcock is an expected March arrival, but apparently none were recorded. Seven Great Black-backed Gulls were observed along the upper Hudson on January 15 (SBC), and there were several March reports for the species along the lower Hudson. There were scattered Mourning Dove reports throughout the winter.

Four species of Owls were reported. On December 20 a Screech Owl was seen near Scotia (fide Guy Bartlett), and another was heard near Albany (Sam Madison). A Great Horned was heard at East Chatham on December 22 and seen there on January 29 (Eleanor Radke). A Great Horned was recorded at Schenectady on December 26 (SBC). The only report of the Barred Owl was from the Ballston Lake area on March 14 (Gladys Hackett). A Snowy Owl was seen by the ranger at Saratoga National Historical Park either in very late February or in very early March (fide MF); I am unable to determine the exact date.

SWIFTS — SHRIKES: A Pileated Woodpecker was observed in Gallupville on January 5 (Grace Zimmer); another was seen at Ballston Lake on February 5, and one was recorded near Charlton on February 21 (MF). Eleanor Radke reported the Pileated as a resident at East Chatham throughout the period. One was recorded near Vischer's Ferry on March 18 (WK). Flickers were quite scarce, and Sapsuckers were apparently completely absent. Red-breasted Nuthatches were observed in good numbers in Thacher Lake in December, and there were several winter reports of the Brown Creeper. A Winter Wren was observed at Scotia on February 19 by Frazier Turrentine, Rudd Stone, and Robert Yunnick. A Mockingbird was reported near Ballston Lake on several dates during December, January, and February (MF). A Hermit Thrush was observed at Scotia on February 28 (EH). As stated earlier, there were several reports of wintering Robins, with a heavy influx occurring during February. A Golden-crowned Kinglet was seen at Scotia on March 2 (EH). Gray Shrikes moved into the region in mid-December in average numbers. Six or eight individuals were seen in the Schenectady area during the winter. On March 6 a Loggerhead Shrike was seen at Scotia, and another was seen at Vischer's Ferry on March 13 (EH).

BLACKBIRDS — SPARROWS: Two Rusty Blackbirds were seen at Loudonville on March 3 (Mabel French). A Grackle was a winter resident at an Albany feeder (Alice Shaffer). The Cardinal was recorded from Niskayuna throughout the period (Caroline Diggs, Hazel Eddy), and the species was also reported from the lower Hudson area (fide Lucille Grace). Evening Grosbeaks appeared early and in very good numbers. These birds were even more generally distributed this year than last. Although they could be consistently seen at at least a dozen area feeders, there were many other reports submitted. In contrast, I know of only three or four reports for the Pine Grosbeak. Eleven were seen on several December dates at East Chatham, and the species was recorded there once in January (ER). Two were seen in Thacher Park on December 26 (SBC), and another report comes from the Saratoga area on March 11 (fide Marjorie Foote). The heavy influx which occurred last winter certainly did not materialize again this winter. There were only scattered reports of the Purple Finch, the high count being twenty on March 21 (GB).

Last year's good Redpoll incursion looked pale in light of the heavy influx this winter. Both last year and this Redpolls were scarce early in the winter, but by late January of both years they were quite widely reported. This winter numbers reached a peak in March, when the birds were reported from feeders, downtown areas, and virtually all outlying regions. On March 3 Byron Hipple reported the rare Hoary Redpoll near Vischer's Ferry. With Redpolls present in such good numbers, it would seem that Siskins should be present also. Yet I know of no Siskin records throughout the period. Crossbills, too, were absent, but this is a little easier to explain.

A male Towhee was present near Scotia for about two weeks in mid-December (fide GB). On December 12 a well-marked Oregon Junco appeared at Mrs. Louis Novak's feeder in Niskayuna, and the bird has been seen there off and on throughout the winter. Several observers have confirmed the identification. Three Field Sparrows were seen near Troy on January 2 (SBC), an addition to the composite Christmas Count list there. Four White-throated Sparrows appeared at an East Chatham feeder on January 12 and were more or less regular thereafter (ER). There were one or two December reports for this species. Snow Buntings were observed in better than average numbers. The high count of 300 was obtained by Robert Yunnick at Sacandaga Reservoir on December 29. There were other reports from Fultonville, Vischer's Ferry, Rexford, Rotterdam, and Mechanicville.

901 State Street, Schenectady 7, New York

REGION 9 — DELAWARE HUDSON

ROBERT F. DEED

A delightfully crisp early winter, marred for waterfowling only by the heavy freeze even of the brackish Hudson, turned suddenly snowy in March. Even in Ulster County, high and northerly, the snowfall was insignificant through February; then 16 to 18 inches fell in two weeks (Fred Hough). Near New York City, December was 5.4 degrees below normal—coldest for the month in 29 years—without any extremely cold days; January and February were near normal in temperature, far below normal in precipitation.

Southerly counties of the region may have had more snow than northerly ones in March. Through February, for example, Rockland County had less than 3 inches of snow; in March and the first week or so of April, it had nearly 3 feet of snow.

This late snowfall caught many birds in transit. Such migrants as Mourning Dove, Robin, Phoebe, the blackbirds, and Fox Sparrow come to feeders in villages in such numbers that birders were deluged with phone calls from non-birders, asking for indentifications and explanations. Fortunately, we escaped severe icing conditions that might have taken a heavy toll of bird life.

Your compiler must make special note of the excellence of this season's reports from cooperators in the various counties: Mrs. William Grierson, Northern Westchester and Putnam; Wilber P. Carr, Sullivan; Fred Hough, Ulster; Edward D. Treacy, Orange; John C. Orth, Bear Mountain Park, and many Rockland Audubon Society members. Coverage was the best yet attained, as it was also for the January waterfowl count.

LOONS — DUCKS: A new reservoir, two and a half miles long and barely half a mile wide, started filling up in February between West Nyack and New City, in Rockland County. It replaces an area that was superlative for nesting Least Bitterns, Pileated Woodpeckers and other species, but local birders' sense of loss is eased by the readiness of waterfowl to take advantage of the open water. Through March, Mrs. Marjorie R. Hooper had seen the Canada Goose, Horned and Pied-billed Grebe, and ten species of ducks, including such "bay" ducks as Canvasback, Red-head and Bufflehead.

A Great Blue Heron at Rock Hill, Sullivan, on Mar. 29 was quite early (Furman). An American Bittern at New City, Rockland, on Mar. 18 was either very early or had wintered (Frank R. Steffens). Hooded Mergansers wintered in notable numbers in northern Westchester (Stanley Grierson et al.).

The waterfowl migration was in full swing by Mar. 10, on which date Ed Treacy found 11 species on Orange Lake, near Newburgh: Mallard 6, Black 112, Baldpate

6, Pintail (first he had seen in Orange County) 20, Ring-necked 59, Greater Scaup 13-15, Golden-eye 20-plus, Bufflehead 1 male, Hooded Merganser 6, American Merganser 50-plus, Red-breasted Merganser (rare inland) 1 male. On the same date, six Canada Geese were on Tomahawk Lake, south of Washingtonville and far from the Hudson River.

Blue-winged Teal appeared at Congers Lake, Rockland, on March 29 (Hopper), a new early date for the county.

HAWKS — OWLS: Red-tailed Hawks, Bald Eagles, Peregrine Falcons and the usual accipiters were about normally abundant. Ulster County had the only notable additions: a Goshawk spotted by Heinz Meng and others near New Paltz on Jan. 15, during the waterfowl count, and a Rough-legged Hawk found near Stone Ridge in mid-December by Fred Hough. The Rough-leg was studied at length by Hough and Daniel Smiley until Feb. 3; it did most of its hunting in one small field that was found to contain a high population of field mice. The hawk often hovered on a wind coming up the slope from the north. A five-inch snowfall on Feb. 2 apparently caused it to move on.

Two very late Turkey Vultures were seen over South Salem, Westchester, by Edward Kurka on Dec. 14. This species' absence was brief, since the first seven returning birds are reported for Feb. 23 at Orr's Mills, Orange (Treacy). By four days later, this roost had built up to 23 birds. The first Turkey Vulture noted in the Bear Mountain area was on Mar. 3, but more than 25 were present on the next day (Orth). Also on March 4, Wilber Carr saw Sullivan County's first four vultures at Pond Eddy.

A Bald Eagle was feeding on a dead deer at Kensico Reservoir, Westchester, at the end of December (William Russell). After a heavy, crusted snow on Mar. 22, Wilber Carr found an obviously hungry female Sparrow Hawk eating fat from a ham rind for half an hour at his feeder; other birds stayed out of sight for this time.

A Coot visited the Monticello lumber yard on Mar. 3, was caught by Mrs. Edward McBride and Mr. and Mrs. Atwell, banded by Kenneth D. Niven, and released at Mongaup Reservoir the next day.

Several reports of Great Horned Owls. Hough reports hearing Long-eared Owls in Ulster County a few times in January and the Saw-whet Owl several times in February, up to Mar. 2. In Mt. Kisco, Westchester, Mrs. H. A. Yoars saw a Saw-whet Owl eating a mouse on Dec. 12.

SWIFTS — SHRIKES: Carr reports Pileated Woodpeckers seen more often than usual in Sullivan County, and closer to habitations. One bird visited a feeder in Monticello (McBride).

Two Phoebes were noted in Rockland County on Mar. 10 by Eugene R. Brown. Such early arrivals had to endure a two-day, 18-inch snow on the following weekend, but they seemed to survive. The first Westchester date for Phoebe was Mar. 17 (Andrew McWaters), and the first for Fort Montgomery, Orange County, was Mar. 24 (Orth).

Horned Larks were scarcer than usual. A small flock of Tree Swallows on Mar. 6 at Rockland County's new reservoir was very early (Dr. Hopper, Ruth Steffens). Another apparent Raven (1956, Kingbird 5 (4):114) was seen at Congers on Dec. 5 by Dr. Hopper. Through December and January, a Tufted Titmouse frequented the feeding station of Mrs. C. A. Smith in Croton Falls, Putnam County — near the northern and inland range limit of this species in this area. A Carolina Wren turned up at Bear Mountain, Rockland-Orange, on Apr. 3 (Orth), showing survival through the March storms near its northern limit of range in the Hudson Valley. Ed Treacy found a Catbird at Highland Falls, Orange, on Feb. 5, and a Brown Thrasher visited the feeder of Mrs. Bradhurst Field, Jr., in Sloatsburg, Rockland, on a mild, sunny Jan. 15.

A spectacular feature of the winter in Rockland, Orange, and Westchester was the unprecedented number of Robins. Some of the larger flocks: Jan. 15, more than 300 at Rockland Lake (Eben Moore and party); late January, between 700 and 800 at Viola, Rockland County; Feb. 6, about 100 at Purdy's, Westchester (Kurka); Feb. 10, 40 in Pound Ridge, Westchester (Mrs. Murry); Feb. 25, about 100 at New Windsor, Orange (Treacy). Hough reports a few flocks wintering in Ulster County, too. Unlike their behavior in most winters, this year's Robins flooded into villages and fed on lawns and at feeders. The darker colors of the northern race were often noticed by even the most casual backyard bird-watchers.

A Hermit Thrush in Sparrowbush, Sullivan County, was noteworthy on Feb. 26 (Hammond). Hough reports Bluebirds scarce in Ulster.

It was a big winter for the Northern Shrike. The occurrences are worth listing

as an index of distribution, strongest in Ulster and northern Westchester:

Ulster County — Frequently encountered all winter, bare ground apparently favoring their hunting, as in the case of hawks and owls. During the Mar. 19 blizzard, Hough found a bird in full song at Stone Ridge. This Catbird-like song is rarely heard here.

Sullivan County — One bird on Mar. 14 at Liberty (Chernick).

Westchester County — Dec. 5 and 8, Katonah (Stanley Grierson); Dec. 27, two in Katonah (William Russell); Jan. 14, Purdys (Mr. and Mrs. Grierson, John, Margaret and Edward Kelly); Jan. 15, Cornell Dam at Croton (same observers); Feb. 26, South Salem (Grierson); Feb. 27, Armonk (Grierson).

The Migrant (Loggerhead) Shrike also appeared in early spring. The species was carefully identified by Frank Steffens and Ed Treacy on Mar. 30 and Apr. 3 at different localities in Rockland.

VIREOS — WARBLERS: With a poor bayberry crop, Myrtle Warblers were scarce in Rockland and Westchester Counties. They are noteworthy in Ulster, and Hough reports one staying near his home throughout March; another was seen near High Falls on Mar. 25 by Hough, Mr. and Mrs. Henry K. Dunbar, and Samuel and Helen Hayes.

BLACKBIRDS — SPARROWS: In many ways, this segment of the checklist offered the winter's best sport. Blackbirds, as a family, were more prevalent than usual, and it was a good year for northern finches.

Even in Ulster County, a few Meadowlarks wintered (Hough). There were more than average in Rockland and Westchester. On Mar. 19, after a heavy snow, one sat on the window sill of Stanley Grierson's home in Katonah. At Ferndale, in Sullivan County, Wilber Carr had six Meadowlarks feeding on his patio on Mar. 17, the day after a heavy snowfall and freeze. They ate corn and wheat, perching on the back porch between feedings. One tailless bird stayed close to the door, perhaps to catch the heat that leaked out, and would move only when the door was opened. Carr remarks on the unusual number of birds this season with damaged or missing tails; he suggests the unusually severe winds of late winter may be responsible.

Red-winged Blackbirds returned Feb. 22 to the Nyack area and Feb. 23 to Katonah (Stan Grierson). During the subsequent storms, they came frequently to village backyards, along with Grackles and Cowbirds. Rockland Audubon Society had a record high count of 197 Red-wings on its Christmas census, Dec. 26.

An Orchard Oriole fed on suet at Pearl River, Rockland, from Jan. 31 through February (Mrs. Edward Backus, Mrs. Richard Weindling, Dr. Hopper). Six Rusty Blackbirds visited a feeder at Sparrowbush, Sullivan County, on Feb. 26 (Hammond).

The Mar. 19 blizzard brought no less than three Dickcissels and two Oregon Juncos to the feeder of Mrs. William G. Irving in West Nyack on Mar. 21. A Dickcissel was in Katonah, Westchester, on Jan. 18 (Mabel Melahn). Mrs. William Grierson in Katonah had a Pink-sided Junco at her feeder on Feb. 4 and thereafter; one had wintered in nearby Bedford a year earlier (Mrs. James Coyle). One was also reported at Kingston in February.

Evening Grosbeaks were abundant, widely distributed, while Pine Grosbeaks were relatively scarce. Five parties on the Rockland Audubon Society Christmas count, Dec. 26, reported a total of 27 Evening Grosbeaks; in January, Dr. Guy Deming counted about 30 in one tree near New City. Westchester records include: Dec. 9, small flock in Mt. Kisco (Mrs. Yoors); Dec. 11, 40 in Katonah (Robert Hamerslag); Dec. 15, 24 in Bedford (Peter Feret) and 65 in Katonah (Mrs. John Birch, Mrs. Clem Fowler); Dec. 27-31, 150 in Katonah (Russell). Jan. 13, 100 in Bedford (Mrs. Samuel Carter, III); Jan. 21, Bedford Hills (Mrs. James Cox); Jan. 27, 100 in Katonah (Mabel Melahn); Feb. 22, 20 in Katonah (Mrs. F. H. Lent); Mar. 3, Mt. Kisco (McWaters); Mar. 31, 50 in Katonah (Mrs. Lent).

Three Pine Grosbeaks appeared on the Rockland Christmas count, Dec. 26. Ed Treacy found 17 birds at West Point on Feb. 18. The only Pine Grosbeaks in Ulster County were reported by Mr. and Mrs. Dunbar and Tom Morgan. None were reported in Sullivan. In Westchester: three at Amawalk Reservoir on Dec. 3 (Dr. Andrew Weir and Stan Grierson); one in Katonah at the end of December (Russell); three in Bedford Center on Jan. 20 (Grierson); about 12 at Salem Center on Feb. 26 (Stan and Ruth Grierson); 15 at Cross River on Feb. 28 (Grierson).

Redpolls were common in March, with flocks of well over 100 (Orth). Purple Finches were scarce in Ulster (Hough). A few White-winged Crossbills: Dec. 10 and almost daily from Mar. 26 to Apr. 3 at Fort Montgomery (Orth); two in Sullivan County on Mar. 19 (Niven), and one in Katonah on Mar. 24 (Russell).

A male Towhee spent the entire winter in Forestburg, Sullivan County, sleeping at night in a clothespin basket against a house (Winterberger). Another Towhee was seen at Pond Eddy on Mar. 4 by Wilber Carr. Fox Sparrows were unusually abundant during March. Snow Buntings were generally scarce, but Kenneth Niven counted 100 at Monticello on Feb. 21.

50 Clinton Ave., Nyack, N. Y.

REGION 10 — MARINE

JOHN J. ELLIOTT

Cold December weather brought a freeze-up with many ponds and large parts of the bay closed; these opened to some extent with a January thaw which permitted better counts of Anatinae. Early winter snows were light on western Long Island with a mid-January fall of several inches on the western half; this developed into 11 inches in eastern Suffolk county woodland, and snow-drifts to the top of snow fences bordering the wind-blown rye fields around Water Mill.

The real heavy snowfall of the winter came March 16-19 with eastern Long Island again taking the brunt and huge drifts tying up trains and traffic. Later the weather was cold and backward into early April. Early spring migration progressed until the mid-March snowfall when the northern movement slackened and many reports come in of hungry birds at feeding stations. Excellent coverage by numerous observers on the Audubon Christmas Bird Count resulted in large number of species identified. In some cases numbers were down, but Mourning Doves, Robins, Hermit Thrushes and Cowbirds were plentiful on western Long Island along the north shore.

January highlights were the Federation's second annual waterfowl count, January 15-22 and the third annual Montauk rendezvous of birders, sponsored by the Queens County Bird Club, which was well attended and helped augment records at this slow time of the year. Regarding the waterfowl count, some 65 observers gave excellent cooperation in covering the Long Island-New York City region. Clubs well represented by individuals were: Linnaean Society, Brooklyn Bird Club, Lyman Langdon Audubon Society and Queens County Bird Club. This year's poor approach to the 1955 count of 202 Common Loons was 70, while the 1955 count of 128 Pied-billed Grebes almost doubled this year's total of 67. The 83,336 Greater Scaup listed in the entire Marine Region, over last year's 55, 638, was almost 59 percent of the total of all 38 species listed.

The extended hunting season seemed to affect Black Duck, American Golden-eye, Buffle-head and Red-breasted Merganser which were drastically down from last year. Scaup on the other hand were in safe or semi-protected waters with seven-eighths around New York City wharfs and harbors, in Jamaica Bay and on the western bays of the north shore.

LOONS — DUCKS: There were large numbers of Horned Grebes; no Eared Grebes and Red-necked were rather scarce. Five Gannets were present at Montauk, Feb. 28; over 25 European Cormorants rather regularly reported at the point and several in three or four locations westward. There were also two records of Double-breasted Cormorants, one bird each. Herons: fair numbers of Great Blue; three American Egrets in the Hempstead region, Dec. early Jan., with one on Feb. 13 at Hempstead Lake State Park (D. Guthrie); one Yellow-crowned Night Heron, Lindenhurst, Jan. 14 (M. Nichols). Only one Whistling Swan reported: Brookhaven, early

Jan. into Feb. (D. Puleston). A lone Snow Goose was seen at Mecox in late Jan. Gadwall were plentiful; two European Teal were seen at Pelham Bay Park in early Jan. and two at Hempstead, Mar. 29 (A. Penberthy). Practically the only records of Wood Duck: two at Orient, Jan. 2 and two the same day at Babylon. Comparatively large numbers of Ring-necked Ducks were present into April. A maximum of five Harlequin Ducks at Montauk, with three, Feb. 26 (R. Arbib, R. Preisick). Three King Eiders were seen at Riis Park, Mar. 24, two American Eiders at Montauk, Jan. 28, three there on the waterfowl count.

HAWKS — OWLS: Hawks comparatively scarce, practically no Goshawk, very few Accipiters and aside from Sparrow Hawk, no Falcon records: Duck Hawk lacking, no Gyrfalcons recorded. There were several Red-shouldered, four or five Red-tailed and three or four Rough-legged Hawks reported. Three Bald Eagles were listed in one day at South Haven; Osprey appeared in early March. Several Grouse records; 12 Bob-white at Brookhaven, fewer Virginia Rail reports than last year; outstanding was a Yellow Rail at Orient, Dec. 31 to Jan. 2 (R. Latham).

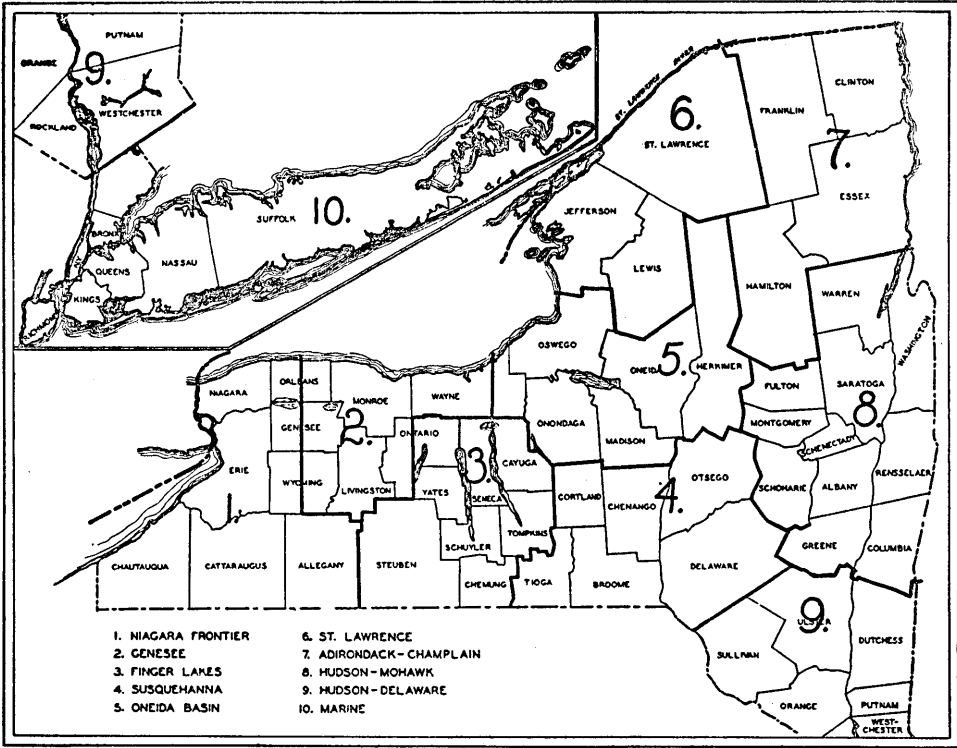
Shore birds were about normal; late was a Piping Plover at Tottenville Beach, Jan. 15 (Brooklyn Bird Club). Purple Sandpipers and Sanderlings were regularly recorded; a Black-bellied Plover was seen at Moriches, Jan. 28. Scattered reports of white-winged gulls on Long Island, but excellent records from Brooklyn Bird Club with 1,000 Great Black-backed Gulls, three Glaucous and three Iceland Gulls at Fresh Kills, Staten Island, Jan. 15 and a Lesser Black-backed Gull, Jan. 22; two Kittiwakes were seen at Riis Park, Jan. 21 and a Black-headed Gull was reported at Dyker Beach, western Long Island, March 11 (R. Grant). Regarding Alcids, Dovekies were rare compared to many seasons; a Murre was seen at Montauk, Feb. 26; Latham had a Razor-billed Auk at Orient, Feb. 10 and one was seen at Montauk, Jan. 16. In Jan. two were also seen on Lake Montauk, at which time large oil deposits were seen on the water outside the breakwater apparently from some ship's bilge. There were three reports of Snowy Owl; a Barn Owl was seen at Brookhaven, Feb. 28 and a Long-eared at Jones Beach, Jan. 2. There were three records of Great Horned: Manorville, Hempstead and the third a breeding pair at Bronx park in Feb. and March. The Saw-whet was scarce.

SWIFTS — SHRIKES: Phoebees were seen on Western Long Island in late March; maximum Northern Horned Larks — 250 at Orient, Feb. 1-5 (Latham). Tree Swallows increased in numbers, March 24, 25. Magpie: first reported at East Islip, Jan. 20, followed by records from three locations eastern Long Island to Montauk. Outstanding on the north fork of eastern Long Island was a Red-bellied Woodpecker at Cutchogue, present at a feeder about two months (G. Raynor). The Red-breasted Nuthatch, Brown Creeper, Golden-crowned Kinglet and Winter Wren were scarce; two reports of Mockingbird: Port Jefferson, Jan. 15 (Queens County Bird Club) and one at Orient, Feb. 5 (Latham). Robins were locally common; one or two reports of Bluebird and a half dozen of Shrikes.

WARBLERS — SPARROWS: Myrtle Warblers were scarce, the bayberry crop being a failure; other warblers practically absent until arrival of Yellow Palm in early April. Yellow-breasted Chat at Amityville, Dec. 21. Crossbills were rather scarce compared to the last two years. One winter record of White-winged: Jones Beach, Jan. 28; also 13 Red-Crossbills, same place, March 18 (R. Grant). There was a maximum count of Redpolls in the western part of the region in late March; three records of Ipswich Sparrow on western Long Island on the Christmas census and several Vesper Sparrows. As for the large finch-type birds, 26 Cardinals were reported on the Lyman Langdon Audubon Society Christmas census. Unusual was one on the very tip of the north fork (at Orient), Feb. 5. Several flocks of a dozen or more Evening Grosbeaks, one of these at Staten Island, Jan. 15, and 15 birds at Roslyn, Jan. 13. The latest record: 22 at Babylon, Mar. 11 (M. Nichols). Lapland Longspurs were reported from Floyd Bennett, Brooklyn, and Orient, but very scarce elsewhere. Latham reported 1,500 Snow Buntings, Feb. 10, at Orient.

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