

The **KINGBIRD**



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FEDERATION OF NEW YORK STATE BIRD CLUBS, INC.

FEDERATION OF NEW YORK STATE BIRD CLUBS, INC.

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The Kingbird is a publication of The Federation of New York State Bird Clubs, Inc., which has been organized to further the study of bird life and to disseminate knowledge thereof, to educate the public in the need of conserving natural resources, and to encourage the establishment and maintenance of sanctuaries and protected areas. Individual member's dues are \$2.50 annually, and all individual members receive the Kingbird. A member wishing to make an additional contribution may become a Sustaining Member (\$5), a Supporting Member (\$10), or a Life Member (\$100—"payable over a four-year period in equal installments until the full amount is paid", if member so desires.) For all classes of membership contact the treasurer, Mrs. Dayton Stoner, 399 State Street, Albany 10, New York.



The KINGBIRD

PUBLICATION OF THE FEDERATION OF NEW YORK STATE BIRD CLUBS, INC.

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The Editor's Page

Recently I learned of the Chinese proverb, "Those who plant trees do not expect to sit in their shade". Certainly none of the *four editors of The Kingbird has expected to do much more than to nurture the Federation journal, hoping that some day it will extend its leafy branches far and wide. This requires continually a variety of stimulating foods that will result in its growth becoming deep and steadfast as well as far-reaching.

Beginning with the July issue (Vol. XI, No. 2) a new editor will assume the responsibility of producing The Kingbird. She is Mrs. Edward Ulrich, who has served the Federation well in several capacities. She and her husband are Life Members. Their address is 193 La Salle Ave., Buffalo 14. I hope that you will help and encourage Mrs. Ulrich by sending to her often those Field Notes and Articles which are the "food" so necessary for the continued development of The Kingbird.

May I say "thank you" for the many favorable comments about the Tenth Anniversary Number of The Kingbird. Let me share with you such fragments as the following:

"I would like to offer my congratulations for a fine 10th Anniversary Issue of The Kingbird. All members of the Federation must be very proud of our publication"

"Just a note to tell you how pleased (and surprised) I was with the December Kingbird. I knew it was to be a big issue but didn't expect so many articles"

"The Anniversary Issue of the Kingbird was really something!! No doubt it will leave you with a deficit but it was a wonderful issue. Congratulations."

(Ed — Sorry that our limited budget determines the size of our journal. The Tenth Anniversary Number was an extra special one.)

"I have heard some very enthusiastic comments about the Anniversary issue of The Kingbird. . . . This should help to get word around about its usefulness."

"Congratulations The bird is fledged."

"Marvelous 10th Anniversary issue"

"My compliments to all who contributed to the 10th Anniversary issue of The Kingbird. It is a good issue"

"Congratulations on the 10th Anniversary issue of The Kingbird. It is excellent. We are proud of it. . . ."

"My! What a grand job on the December Kingbird. So many extras and so inclusive"

"The Kingbird has interested us both a very great deal. The editorial board is to be commended for issuing so readable a publication. The type is so clear, the paper so excellent, and the articles so well organized. . . ."

"Wonderful Anniversary issue of The Kingbird. I was thrilled with it and enjoyed every page. . . ."

"I am a new member and was not aware that the Editor's' Page was ever missing from The Kingbird. . . . Please **preserve** it and **use** it. . . ." (Ed — Mrs. Ulrich, take note.)

* Allan S. Klonick—Vol. I, Nos. 1-4; Vol. II, Nos. 1-4; Vol. III, Nos. 1, 2
Stephen W. Eaton—Vol. III, Nos. 3, 4; Vol. IV, Nos. 1-4; Vol. V, Nos. 1-4
Gerald R. Rising—Vol. VI, Nos. 1-4; Vol. VII, Nos. 1-4; Vol. VIII, No. 1
Minnie B. Scotland—Vol. VIII, Nos. 2-4; Vol. IX, Nos. 1-4; Vol. X, Nos. 1-4; Vol. XI, No. 1

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THE AMERICAN OYSTER-CATCHER IN NEW YORK

PETER W. POST

In the early 1800's the American Oyster-catcher (*Haematopus palliatus*) bred along the Atlantic coast much farther north than at present. Audubon found several breeding in Labrador during July (Audubon, 1835: 181). Baird, Brewer, and Ridgeway (1884: 113) write: "it was then [1837] no uncommon thing to see specimens of this bird in the Boston market," and Wilson (1832: 36) found the Oyster-catcher frequenting "the sandy sea-beaches of New Jersey."

By 1884 Baird, Brewer, and Ridgeway (p. 113) again referring to the occurrence of this species in the Boston market state: ". . . this seldom or never occurs now, and the bird for many years, so far as is known, has been a stranger to Massachusetts."

Giraud (1844: 222) writes of the Oyster-catcher on Long Island: "With us the Oyster-catcher is a rather scarce bird although during summer a few are found on almost every beach along the whole extent of sea coast."

In New Jersey, by 1857 and 1869 Beesley and Turnbull, respectively, regarded Oyster-catchers as rare summer residents" (*vide* Stone, 1937: 367). In 1937 Stone regarded them as "accidental" and he lists only eleven occurring between 1880 and 1937 (p. 367).

The Oyster-catcher is now returning to the Northeastern United States. This species started to reappear regularly in New Jersey, in the early 1940's (Fables, 1955: 31). The first definite breeding in New Jersey, in this century, occurred in 1947 (Kramer, 1948: 460), and the species now breeds in Ocean, Atlantic, and Cape May counties. At least eleven nests were located in 1954 (Fables, 1955: 31).

Oyster-catchers have since been discovered breeding in New York. The purpose of this paper is to document as fully as possible the occurrence of the Oyster-catcher in New York, especially their re-entry which is now going on.

Appended (table I) is a list of all specimen and sight records, known to me, since the time of Giraud, to and including 1960.

To date, there are two breeding records, for New York, in this century. On June 13, 1957 LeRoy Wilcox found a nest, with three eggs, on Gardiner's Island. The eggs were found to be addled and are now in the possession of Mr. Wilcox.

The second nest found on July 1, 1960, by Gilbert Raynor and Dennis Puleston, at Moriches, also contained three eggs. The young banded on July 8, by Wilcox, were later killed by Herring Gulls (*Larus argentatus*).

When the records are broken down into occurrences per month (table II), with the exception of one March record, we see there are records from May through November.

TABLE I
Records of the Oyster-catcher in New York

Year	Day	Location	No.	Authority & Remarks
1858	July 31	"Long Island"	1	Lawrence coll. Specimen in Amer. Mus. Nat. Hist.
—	—	"South Side Meadows, Flatlands"	1	Dutcher, Auk , 10: 272. Specimen in Amer. Mus. Nat. Hist.
1877	May 28	New York Harbor	1	Lawrence coll. N. O. C. Bull., 5: 117.
1880	Mar. 9	Ponquogue	1	Dutcher, Auk , 3: 439.
1882	Early June	Greenport	2	Dutcher, ibid.
1915	Late June	Gardiner's Island	2	Latham
1918	June	Gardiner's Island	1	Latham
1924	May (25)	Orient	1	Latham (vide Cruickshank)
* 1924	Aug. 28	Mastic	1	W. S. Dana (ibid.)
1927	May 25	Orient	1	Latham (ibid.)
1929	May 28	Orient	1	Latham (ibid.)
1934	July 1	Orient	1	Latham. Male in Latham's coll.
1936	Aug. 20	Orient	1	Latham. Female in Latham's coll.
1937	May 9	Moriches Inlet	1	S. Raven & Wilcox (vide Cruickshank)
1938	June 18-21	Moriches Inlet	1	Wilcox (ibid.)
1939	June 10	Moriches Inlet	1	Wilcox (ibid.)
* 1944	Sept. 23 & 24	Oak Island Beach	2	Grant, Nathan, Soll et. al.
* 1944	Sept. 30	Moriches Inlet	1	Wells & Yrizarry
1950	June 23 & 25	Moriches Inlet	2	Wilcox, C. S. Robbins, & A. J. Duvall (vide Nichols)
1951	Nov. 11	Moriches Inlet	1	J. Cadbury, et. al. (vide Nichols)
* 1954	Sept. 4-18	Mecox Bay	1	McKeever, et. al.
* 1954	Sept. 4	Moriches Inlet	3	Eisenman; & Grant
* 1954	Sept. 6-26	Jones Inlet	1	Bull, Carleton, et. al.
* 1954	Sept. 4-Oct. 17	Shinnecock Inlet	3	Carleton, Raynor, Puleston, et. al.
* 1954	Sept. 6-18	Cedar Beach	1	Bull, Carleton, et. al.
* 1954	Sept. 25	Captree State Park	1	Carleton, et. al.
* 1954	Oct. 2	Jamaica Bay Wildlife Refuge	1	Mayer (vide Nichols)
1957	June 13	Gardiner's Island	2	Wilcox. Bred. Nest & Eggs.
1958	Aug. 21	Orient	1	Latham
1959	Sept. 8	Orient	1	Latham
† 1960	May 17	Jamaica Bay Wildlife Refuge	2	Burnbaum
† 1960	May 30	Jamaica Bay Wildlife Refuge	1	Davis, et. al.
† 1960	May 29	Jones Inlet	1	Sixty observers
† 1960	June 3	Jones Inlet	2	Buckley & Scheider
1960	June 11	Democrat Point, Fire Island	2	Malone & Restivo
1960	June 17	Louise's Point, Springs	2	Hale
1960	Summer	Moriches Inlet	2	Raynor, Wilcox, et. al. Bred.
1960	July 8	Moriches Inlet	3	Wilcox (one adult in addition to nesting pair)
1960	Aug. 21	Shinnecock Inlet	2	Puleston
* 1960	Sept. 13	Short Beach	2	Norse & Post
* 1960	Sept. 13	Jamaica Bay Wildlife Refuge	2	Johnson
* 1960	Sept. 14-17	Moriches Inlet	5	Raynor, Puleston, et. al.
* 1960	Sept. 14	Captree State Park	1	Post, Ryan, et. al.

* 1960	Sept. 13-21	Mecox Bay	2	McKeever, <i>et. al.</i>
* 1960	Sept. 17-21	Shinnecock Inlet	1	Kallman, Post, Puleston, <i>et. al.</i>
1960	Oct. 10	Fisher's Island	1	Ferguson & Matthiessen (<i>fide</i> Nichols)

* Birds which can be directly attributed to hurricanes.

† Same birds?

TABLE II

No. of individuals/ occurrences*	Mar.	Apr.	May	Jun.	Jul.	Aug.	Sept.	Oct.	Nov.	Total
1	1	0	7	3	3	3	8	2	1	28
2			1	8		1	4			14
3							2			2
5							1			1
Total individuals/ month	1	0	9	19	3	5	27	2	1	
			67 individuals							
			(46 occurrences)							

Occurrences of Oyster-catchers in New York per month.

* Occurrence — No. of individuals seen in one locality at one time, or for a consecutive period of time.

The month of September contains more occurrences than any other month. However, this total loses its significance when we realize that all but one of these birds can be attributed directly to a hurricane. Out of the sixty-seven individuals listed in Table I twenty-eight can be attributed to such storms.

As would be expected, June, with nineteen individuals, and May, with nine individuals, follow September in the greatest number of individuals per month. Most of the June occurrences are of two individuals, at least one of which was definitely a mated pair, as presumably were the other six. Of these eight pairs five occurred in 1960 alone.

To my knowledge the Oyster-catcher has never occurred, in New York, away from Long Island.

Acknowledgments: I am indebted to the various observers who so generously supplied the records listed in Table I. Especially the following with whom I correspond by mail: Roy Latham, Dennis Puleston, Gilbert Raynor, and Fritz Scheider.

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575 West 183 Street, New York 33
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POSSIBLE HYBRIDIZATION BETWEEN A CLAY COLORED SPARROW AND A CHIPPING SPARROW AT ITHACA

MRS. MALCOLM MCLROY

About dusk on May 11, 1959, in Cayuga Heights at Ithaca, I heard a song new to me, a deliberate, low-pitched bzz, bzz, bzz. The next morning the bird was identified by sight and song as a Clay-colored Sparrow, and the song was recorded by Paul Kellogg. The only previous record of this species for the Cayuga Basin was in April 1935. The 1959 bird stayed between Highland Road and Cayuga Heights Road, in an area of weed-grown fields with some hedgerows and small cedar trees, from then until July 7 when observations stopped. During the first weeks the bird was chased and heckled by Chipping Sparrows. One could drive up at almost any time in the morning and soon hear the slow bzz, bzz, bzz, usually three notes but sometimes two or four, being repeated at 5 to 10 second intervals from the top of some small tree. Observations were made several times a week and no change in behavior pattern was noted.

On May 1, 1960 a Clay-colored Sparrow was heard and identified by sight in these same fields. During the first three weeks of May, observations were made several times a week. It sang almost constantly in the morning and occasionally during the rest of the day. No heckling or chasing by Chipping Sparrows was noticed. On May 15, "Spring Census" day, several groups drove up to the field and immediately saw and heard the bird. On May 16 it was also immediately found for visiting bird watchers. Beginning a few days later, its behavior pattern suddenly changed. It would sing four or five times and then disappear for half an hour or more before reappearing at one of its regular song perches.

Beginning June 8, at the suggestion of Dr. Arthur Allen, I began a thorough check of the area to find out whether this change in behavior might indicate nesting. Once that day while I was waiting between songs, I heard what sounded like a slightly hoarse, flat chickadee scold at the north end of the next field where the Clay-colored Sparrow had seldom been seen to go. There were many Chipping Sparrows in the area, which complicated following the Clay-colored Sparrow between songs. Unless a bird was closer than about thirty feet, I could not tell without binoculars whether it was a Chipping Sparrow or the Clay-colored Sparrow, so close are the two species in general size and shape. Beyond that distance the lighter color and the face pattern and streaked head of the Clay-colored Sparrow could be seen only with binoculars. For four days I spent many hours in the fields trying to follow the Clay-colored Sparrow between songs. On the ninth I heard the odd "chickadee" scold twice. On the tenth, I found a pair of Chipping Sparrows feeding young in a nest in one of the cedar trees in the field.

On June 11 the odd "chickadee" scold was given many times. I checked it, and found the Clay-colored Sparrow giving this song while feeding on inch worms in some pin oaks by the road. This song was a "zee", all on one pitch, repeated 5 to 10 times in rapid succession, considerably higher pitched

than the usual song. I watched and listened once when the bird dropped from the faster song to the slow one, and the pitch dropped by an interval of at least a sixth. I investigated all the cedar trees in this field, since the bird seemed to be spending quite a bit of time there, although whenever the slow song was heard it was from the next field south. As I came past the most northeasterly cedar tree in the field near the road, the Clay-colored Sparrow popped up in the tree quite disturbed. During the next half hour it went into this tree three times, staying only a few seconds each time. A Chipping Sparrow was seen in the tree once.

On June 13, watching from the car for two hours, I saw the Clay-colored Sparrow go into the tree at about 15 minute intervals, staying in the tree only a few seconds. Twice it carried an inch worm in its bill when it went in. It usually stopped briefly in one of the nearby trees, both before and after going into the cedar tree, making identification easy. Looking up into the tree from directly below, I saw a nest in the densest part about twelve feet from the ground. Later Sally Hoyt watched the Clay-colored Sparrow going in and out and saw the nest. In the afternoon Dr. Allen and David Allen came to check. As David Allen climbed up to the nest, a Chipping Sparrow flew off the nest and the Clay-colored Sparrow flew around quite disturbed. The nest was a typical Chipping Sparrow nest, and the three eggs in it looked like typical Chipping Sparrow eggs.

On June 14 and 15 the Clay-colored Sparrow was observed visiting the tree about every 10 minutes, never staying long. During one period of 2½ hours, it went in 19 times and a Chipping Sparrow went in 3 times. Neither bird was carrying food. No further observations were made until the twentieth, as I was out of town.

On June 20 the Clay-colored Sparrow was coming to the nest every 5 or 10 minutes carrying food, mostly inch worms. A Chipping Sparrow was identified bringing food twice. During the same period an unidentified bird which was either the Clay-colored Sparrow or a Chipping Sparrow came in many times, flying straight in from the west from a long distance. From the timing of these visits and because the Chipping Sparrow approached in a similar way from the same direction, it was assumed to be the Chipping Sparrow. The Clay-colored Sparrow still stopped in a nearby tree before and after visiting the nest. There were no feeding noises from the young. On June 21, both birds were carrying food constantly. There were still *no* feeding noises from the young.

On June 23 loud feeding noises were heard from the young. In the afternoon Dr. Allen and David Allen photographed both the Clay-colored Sparrow and the Chipping Sparrow feeding the three young. The young birds, which looked like young Chipping Sparrows, were well feathered out and almost ready to leave the nest, indicating that the eggs must have hatched on June 15 or 16. To keep the young from leaving the nest, they were placed in a cage which was concealed lower in the same tree. It was hoped that the parents would continue feeding them in the cage until they could be taken care of easily at the Laboratory of Ornithology, where development of the plumage could be watched to see whether there was any indication

of hybridization. Dr. Allen had used this method of keeping young birds before. In the morning and at noon the next day, both adults were observed feeding the young regularly through the cage. The young were very noisy. When a check was made in the late afternoon, all three young had disappeared. Some predator, perhaps a Blue Jay which was seen in the area, had pulled them out between the closely spaced bars of the bottom of the cage, leaving behind only a few feathers and one wing. At no time during the entire period of observation were two Chipping Sparrows seen at or near the nest, although one Chipping Sparrow and the Clay-colored Sparrow were seen at the same time.

Beginning the next morning, the Clay-colored Sparrow again sang continuously the slow bzz, bzz, bzz as in early May from many of the same song perches. On July 10 it was still singing about every 5 seconds for as long as 2 hours at a time, with occasional short interruptions to feed in a small patch of tall weeds missed in the June mowing. Only once, about 8 p. m. July 10, did I hear the second faster, higher-pitched song. Close watch was kept to see whether there might be a second nesting. Periods of song became shorter and occurred only in early morning until, on July 29, it was heard only a few times about 7 a. m. After that it was not heard again and could not be found in any of its regular feeding places. It had been followed many times during these weeks after the loss of the young, although the presence of many young Chipping Sparrows made this more difficult as its song frequency decreased. Cedar trees and bushes in the area were checked carefully but no evidence of a second nesting was found.

Because of the loss of the young, it is not known whether there was an actual mating between the Clay-colored Sparrow and the Chipping Sparrow, or whether the Clay-colored Sparrow took over from a male Chipping Sparrow. The Clay-colored Sparrow was observed visiting the nest regularly for three days during incubation, and it apparently fed the female on the nest a few times. Two Chipping Sparrows were never seen at or near the nest. For a Chipping Sparrow, incubation takes 10 to 12 days and the young are ready to leave the nest 9 or 10 days after hatching. Since the young birds were almost ready to leave the nest June 23, egg laying must have begun between May 31 and June 3. The sudden change in song pattern and behavior of the Clay-colored Sparrow about the third week in May would coincide with the approximate time pairing and mating would have taken place for the young to be fledged June 24 or 25. However, all this is circumstantial evidence, and we are hoping the Clay-colored Sparrow will return a third year and nest. My experience with these two birds leads me to believe that the Clay-colored Sparrow could occur in New York State more often than is realized. A female would probably never be noticed, and a male would be reported only in an area where there were active bird watchers to note the unusual song.

The January 1957 issue of the KINGBIRD (Vol. VI, p. 117) reports the appearance of a Clay-colored Sparrow in the Adirondacks, on the outskirts of Tupper Lake, Franklin Co. The behavior as described was similar to that of the Ithaca bird in 1959.

Dr. Allen has pointed out that in certain respects the Chipping-Clay-colored Sparrow relationship resembles the even more unusual Yellow-Prothonotary Warbler complex, reported before the A. O. U. in Regina, Saskatchewan, on August 26, 1959 by Harold Mitchell. (This latter nesting occurred in Bertie Township, Welland County, Ontario.) In the latter case, however, the male Yellow Warbler, though apparently driven out by the male Prothonotary, was observed at the nest with the female Yellow from time to time, whereas a second Chipping Sparrow was never seen near the nest in the Ithaca situation. Furthermore, the male Prothonotary Warbler sang the song of a Yellow Warbler, whereas "our" Clay-colored Sparrow sang its own song.

(Ed. — "As this goes to press, word has come that the Clay-colored Sparrow was found by Mrs. McIlroy singing from the same perches in the same field, the morning of April 28, 1961, for the third consecutive year.")

419 *Triphammer Road, Ithaca*

HERONS OF NEW YORK STATE

DAVID C. GORDON

The herons belong to the family *Ardeidae* of the order *Ciconiiformes* which is worldwide in distribution. The family contains 64 species divided into two subfamilies, the true herons and the bitterns. Of the 13 species now found in the United States, 11 have been recorded in New York State. These are the Great Blue Heron, Green Heron, Little Blue Heron, Cattle Egret, Common Egret, Snowy Egret, Louisiana Heron, Black-crowned Night Heron, Yellow-crowned Night Heron, Least Bittern, and American Bittern.

Hérons are long-legged wading birds of marsh and swamp. They have a slender, sharp bill on the end of a long neck which is used as a spear for catching food. The mandibles are also used for pinching food. The diet includes fish, other aquatic animals and insects, although some small mammals and other foods are taken. The neck is kinked in the middle to form a tight S when retracted for flight.

The three toes in front and one behind are at the same level and may be either partly webbed or not webbed. The feet are well adapted for perching and walking on mud. The middle claw has a comb-like serration on the inner side.

It is in the feathering that herons have their greatest distinction. The plumage is generally soft and in the breeding season both sexes of true herons usually have nuptial plumage containing long ornamental plumes on the head and extending from the middle of the back. There is a complete molt in late summer or fall after the breeding season and a partial molt in the spring. The young are covered with a sparse, light colored down when hatched. The juvenal plumage is similar to the adult plumage by fall but the full adult plumage is not assumed until the second fall when the birds are approximately $1\frac{1}{2}$ years old. In some cases traces of juvenal plumage linger until the second postnuptial molt at $2\frac{1}{2}$ years.

There is usually a naked area in the eye region (lores) so the bill appears to run directly to the eyes. There is also a bare spot on the back of the neck which is covered by side feathers.

Powder downs are a typical feature of herons. They are small feathers resembling yellowish patches on the skin obscured by other feathers. They grow continuously and crumble into a kind of talc used in preening the feathers. The bill is used to crumble the powder downs and dust them on the plumage soiled by the slime of fish. They soak up oil and then the pectinated claw is used to comb out the oil-soaked powder. This "dry-cleaning" or dressing process gives a hoary bloom appearance to some dark-colored herons.

True herons are separated from bitterns in the classification system partly on the basis of three pairs of powder down tracts compared with two pairs in bitterns. The three areas are on the lower back over the hips, on the lower belly under the hips and on the breast over the furcula or "wishbone". The bitterns lack the second mentioned pair. True herons have 12 stiff

tail feathers and bitterns have 10 soft ones. There are other characteristics and habits that separate bitterns from the true herons which will be mentioned later.

Except for the Least Bittern, both sexes are similar in plumage. The female is commonly smaller, on the average, than the male.

Most young herons, including bitterns, seem to have a good early climbing ability on leaving the nest. They have strong feet. On falling into the water accidentally before they can fly, the young exhibit ability to swim although they may never need to again.

There is a random wandering and dispersal northward of many species of herons after the nesting season, especially of the immature birds. This poses a fascinating question 'why' inasmuch as all herons are truly migratory and will leave for their winter ranges to the south by late autumn.

Most species of true herons are gregarious and nest in colonies of more than one species called rookeries or heronries.

The Great Blue Heron is known to many country people as the blue crane, although there are no real cranes in New York. Herons fly with their necks curved backward so the head is lying on the shoulders, whereas cranes fly with necks outstretched. The long legs trail behind in flight. The big 70 inch wingspread of the great blue is suitable for landing slowly to protect these slender legs but produces much friction and drag in the air so it is not a fast flier. The cruising speed has been clocked at 18 to 28 m.p.h. and when pressed has reached 36 m.p.h.

The Great Blue Heron breeds throughout the state. However, due to persecution and destruction of large trees in which it nests, the number and size of its nesting colonies has been considerably reduced during the last seventy years. The heronries are usually in an isolated spot such as an island in a river, lake or swamp.

These herons usually leave the interior of the state during October and November and winter south as far as Bermuda, Panama and northern South America. However, in December and January a few hundred stay on in scattered localities where water remains open and may be seen all winter, especially on Long Island, the New York City region, and near Buffalo. It is our hardiest heron.

Migrant Great Blue Herons return between the second week in March and the second week in April depending on weather and the locality in the state. They are rare to common summer residents, being more common in some northern localities near breeding sources. The adult feeding range may be several miles from rookeries. By late summer some large concentrations occur in favored places and the immatures are scattered throughout the state along shallow bodies of water from August to October.

When you see this magnificent bird standing like a statue in a roadside pond or slowly flapping over a highway, you can readily believe that his four foot height makes him the tallest bird in New York State.

The great blue is a wary bird and does not allow a close approach. It is often considered solitary but several may be seen flying or resting and

feeding together during migration. Most of our herons migrate only at night but the great blue also travels during daylight.

This heron builds a very large nest in a tall tree in a colony of a few to several hundred pairs. There may be several nests to a tree. The nest with an outside diameter of 30 to 60 inches is made of sticks of $\frac{1}{4}$ to $\frac{1}{2}$ inch diameter and is lined with finer twigs and grass. It is usually at the end of a branch and may be reoccupied in succeeding seasons when more materials are added.

From three to seven unmarked, pale greenish-blue eggs of an elliptical-ovate shape are laid, although the usual number is four or five. There is only one brood each year sometimes in May or early June. Both parents help during the 28 day incubation period. When adults are disturbed off their nests in rookeries, other smaller nest robbers such as crows may sneak in and eat some eggs before the herons return.

The food of the great blue is mainly fish of whatever kind is most available in shallow water. An extensive survey based on stomach contents found that 43% of the diet was non-game fish, 25% was game and food fish, 8% insects, 8% crayfish and their relatives, 5% mice and shrews, and 4% were frogs, snakes, turtles and miscellaneous.

The fishing methods of most herons are either stalking or standing and waiting. However, a few observers have reported seeing great blues dive into deep water and float on the surface while catching fish. When caught by a quick stabbing motion, the fish may have to be banged off the end of the beak on the shore and if very large will be tossed so as to be swallowed headfirst.

Young herons are altricial, meaning they are born helpless and dependent on the parents. Young great blues stay in the broad nest, (3 feet or more), about four weeks being fed by regurgitation. When a parent returns with a meal it goes into violent contortions of its neck which produces a mass of partially digested food. A youngster grasps the parent bill at right angles with its own bill and the transfer is made after a few more maneuvers. On being startled by an intruder at the nest, the young themselves are very prone to regurgitate their recent smelly repast.

Although usually quiet, Great Blue Herons make a series of low squawks when startled and in flight may make a harsh, loose-like honk described as "frahnk, frahnk, frahnk". Young in the nest make a constant din of barking croaks.

The Green Heron has vernacular names like "fly-up-the-creek" or "chalkline" attesting to the familiarity people have with it. The last name comes from the typical heron trait of letting go a stream of white waste as it becomes airborne when frightened.

This bird is a locally common breeder throughout the state, but is scarce in the Adirondacks and on the Tug Hill Plateau. It winters from extreme southeastern U. S. to northern South America. It arrives in the southern part of the state about mid-April and the northern part about May 1st. The three to six (usually four or five) elliptical pale green eggs are laid in May and incubated by both parents for 17 days. The nest is usually by itself rather than in a colony and is in a low tree or bush near water. It is frail

and made of small sticks loosely put together with an inside diameter of 10 to 12 inches.

Most generalizations about other herons will hold true for this little one. Small fish, crayfish and insects are its food. The young are fed by regurgitation and may themselves regurgitate food when disturbed. The young climb in the tree before they can fly, using bill, neck, wings and feet and, if they fall in the water, can swim. They usually migrate at night and leave the state during October. Its most common call is "kyow".

Of the rarer herons, the Little Blue Heron has been seen most widely in the state, usually in late summer and early fall, e. g. in parts of the Hudson and Mohawk Rivers and at Montezuma Refuge. The Little Blue Heron is not yet well established as a nester on Long Island. The most northerly records for the state have come from Oswego County near the southeastern corner of Lake Ontario. The immature birds are more often seen than the adults and may be confused with Snowy Egrets as both are all-white birds.

For detailed descriptions of any species of herons the reader is urged to consult "A Field Guide To The Birds" by Peterson.

The Cattle Egret of recent fame as an old world immigrant now established as a permanent resident in Florida was first recorded on Long Island in May, 1954. As of June 1, 1960, there are about 20 widespread state records. These are mostly in the spring and, with one exception, are of single birds. One of the most recent was in May, 1960 near Clayton, Jefferson County, showing how far north these birds may wander from the nearest breeding sources.

The Common Egret (American Egret) nests on Fishers Island and at Jamaica Bay and Jones Beach on Long Island. These herons usually arrive between the second and fourth weeks of April and nest in June and early July. Although they may be seen near water in spring almost anywhere in the state except extreme northern New York and mountainous areas, they are usually not seen until mid July and August. These egrets leave inland areas in late September and October. They remain in the marine area of Long Island into early December and a few stay into early winter. The largest concentrations inland have occurred at Montezuma Federal Waterfowl Refuge and in the lower Hudson River when 40 to 100 individuals are seen in the post-breeding season. It has been seen north to Jefferson County.

The Snowy Egret, in recent years is a more numerous nesting species in the Long Island rookeries than the Common Egret but it is never as abundant or widely seen elsewhere in the state. The Snowy Egret is usually not seen as early in spring as the Common Egret and departs for the South earlier in the fall.

The Common and Snowy Egrets were saved from probable extinction resulting from intensive slaughter in the southern rookeries at the turn of the century. The birds were killed for their breeding plumes used in the millinery trade for women's hats. The passage of federal and New York State laws outlawing the plume trade in 1910 and 1913 and protection by the Audubon Society allowed egret populations to recover to their former peak in the 1930's. There is considerable concern once again about the

status of some of the herons, notably the Common Egret, whose numbers have declined rapidly country-wide since the 1930's. Coincident with the decline of southern heronries there has been a northward expansion of the breeding ranges accounting for the appearance in New Jersey and Long Island of new heronries, none as large as the ones in Florida.

Egret is a corruption of 'aigrette' which is the French word for plume applied to the 40 to 50 dorsal feathers that nearly caused the downfall of these magnificent birds.

The Louisiana Heron is essentially a breeding bird of the southern states along saltwater. However, there are several records for New York State in recent years mainly on Long Island in late summer and fall. This heron has been seen in the spring and might become established as a nester on Long Island.

The Black-crowned Night Heron arrives on or is migrating toward its breeding grounds in the state by mid-April. The largest colonies of this species are not in the southeast along with most herons but are in the northern states. The largest, for many years, has been the Barnstable colony on Cape Cod, Mass. There are several sizeable colonies consisting of two or three hundred pairs or less, scattered from Jones Beach, Long Island to the Mohawk River near Schenectady and elsewhere in the State. One of the farthest north is on a small island near Henderson Harbor in Lake Ontario.

This species does not seem to mind man too much as some colonies get started in the midst of busy cities. They can become a nuisance as witness the case of the colony in Elmira where citizens complained for several years about the raucous noise and streets littered with dead fish and excrement. Night herons are not easily driven from their chosen homes but these were finally dispersed with fire hoses and the nests torn down in 1957.

Nests are 15 to 30 inches in diameter and vary in construction from small, crudely built platforms of sticks, lined with twigs, to large well built structures of sticks lined with twigs, roots, grass and pine needles. They are found toward the tips of the branches in very low to quite high trees in a wooded swamp or even in a dry hillside thicket.

The one to seven (usually three to five) pale bluish green eggs are incubated by both sexes from 24 to 26 days. Incubation starts after laying of the first egg. The young are fed first by regurgitation of predigested food in liquid form. After a few days, predigestion of food has tapered off and they are fed more solid food. Night herons feed mainly at night but are active in daylight especially in late afternoon and when the sky is overcast. It is noisy at all times in a rookery. This species is known as the squawk or quawk for good reason.

They eat small fish, crayfish, frogs and other aquatic animals.

The immature birds of the year are great post season wanderers northward. Fall migration south commences in late October and continues through November. A few night herons are still in some areas through December and January, particularly western Long Island and near Buffalo.

As befits a nocturnal bird, the eyes are quite large and unlike other

herons and bitterns which have yellow eyes, the adult night heron has a red iris. The immature birds, which have orange eyes, could be mistaken for young bitterns but they are more spotted with whitish and in flight the shorter legs do not project beyond the tail. They flap their wings slowly and occasionally sail with the wings curved downward slightly.

Black-crowned Night Herons do well in captivity as do most herons, and banding of numerous immature wild birds has established that they may live to be 15 years old.

The Yellow-crowned Night Heron is not often seen in the state outside of Long Island where it breeds and a few may spend the winter. The best place to see these birds is at the large Jones Beach rookery. Young Yellow-crowned Night Herons are similar to young Black-crowned Night Herons which is of significance because of northward dispersal of immature herons.

The American Bittern, mudhen, stake driver, thunderpump, plum-pudden etc. is a well-known inhabitant of the cattail marsh. Bitterns are more solitary and retiring than most herons. They are never gregarious and do not nest in communities in trees but in separate pairs on the ground. The eggs do not have the characteristic pale bluish-green color of true herons. The young resemble the adults.

The bittern is a common migrant and summer resident in some areas and an uncommon migrant and summer resident in other areas. The usual spring arrival dates are in early April.

There is an interesting courtship display in which tufts of white scapular feathers are uncovered on the back near the base of the wings. Sometime between mid-May and late June a nest is made in a dense cattail marsh or rarely in a meadow. It is a flat platform of dead cattails a foot or so in diameter raised a few inches above the water or mud. Flags may be arched over the nest. The three to seven (usually four or five) olive-buff eggs matching the color of dead cattails are incubated from 25 to 28 days.

The bittern spends much time standing crouched with its neck laid back on the shoulders looking like a hunchback as it waits for prey or walking slowly and stealthily. When it thinks it is observed by man, its only enemy, it stands rigid and erect with the bill pointed upward and its "low-slung" yellow eyes are directed forward binocularly for danger. The stripes of the underparts blend with the vertical lights and shadows of reeds and flags in this typical "freeze" posture. Even young in the nest will adopt this pose. In a breeze affecting the movement of the cattails it will also sway the body duplicating the effect. I approached within a few feet, a bittern loses confidence in its camouflage and flushes with a croaking note.

The voice box is specially modified in the breeding season when the wonderful thunderpumping is heard. Bill-clicking precedes the pumping notes which have been likened to the sound of a stake being driven into the mud and are accompanied by severe contortions of the neck upon each delivery.

The diet is all animal matter and consists of frogs, small fish, meadow mice, small snakes, crayfish, molluscs, dragonflies, grasshoppers and other insects. The young are fed by regurgitation.

This species leaves for the winter range in late October — early November. Few stay downstate through the winter although an occasional bird is seen in December and January.

Both the Great Blue Heron and the American Bittern if injured or cornered will assume a threatening attitude and are able to inflict considerable damage by driving their sharp beaks at the enemy.

The Least Bittern, smallest of its family, is very secretive but is probably more common than is supposed. Because of its quiet, retiring ways it is seldom seen, as it stays in the inner recesses of cattail marshes. This is the only species of heron in which the sexes are distinctly different in plumage, the female being lighter colored and more streaked. The so-called Cory Least Bittern was once thought a separate species but is a darker, more reddish color phase.

Least Bitterns range throughout the state in suitable habitat but are more common in southern and western New York. They generally arrive about the middle of May.

The nest is a flimsy platform four or five inches deep by six or seven inches across made of grass, reeds and flags just above water. It is sometimes arched over with reeds. The four to seven (usually four or five) bluish or greenish white eggs are laid in late May or early June. Both sexes incubate for 16 or 17 days.

Its food list contains few fish but mainly insects, amphibians and crustacea.

It has many natural enemies in the marsh and the Long-billed Marsh Wren is known to puncture its eggs.

Like the American Bittern it has a stiff hiding pose with the bill pointed in the air, but may abandon this protective mimicry and flush to fly weakly a few yards over the reeds and flop down again.

This little fellow walks or runs about in the marsh most of the time without getting his feet wet by clamboring along the bent and broken stems of vegetation. He can compress his body to pass through rank growth with almost no motion detectable from outside.

The call is a low rapid "coo-coo-coo".

Migrating at night these birds leave in late September and October and winter from Florida south to Colombia.

In the time of Audubon and until much later, we are told that herons were shot for food. During living memory the plume trade nearly wiped out the egrets for milady's hats. Fishermen protest that some herons take too many sport fish and it is true that they may have to be controlled around fish hatcheries. However, screening would be a better protection for the tanks than shooting the birds. Careful research has proven that herons eat only a small percentage of desirable food fish compared to non-food fish and they are one of nature's ways of controlling and keeping the populations

of aquatic animals balanced. They also eat quantities of insects.

Marsh drainage, timber cutting and various land development operations of man have seriously affected the overall population of herons which seems to be diminishing.

All members of the heron family have legal protection under the Migratory Bird Treaty Act passed by Congress in 1918 and separately by Canada and Mexico. And yet we often hear of some misguided person shooting a slow flying Great Blue Heron or Bittern for target practice.

We hope the sight and sounds of herons will long help to gladden the heart of the outdoorsman and marsh visitor.

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SAVING SOME OLD FRONTIERS

MAXWELL C. WHEAT, JR.

This may be the era for "New Frontiers", but it is also the final opportunity to preserve some of our Old Frontiers, namely those designated wilderness areas in our National Forests, Parks, Monuments and Refuges. The areas would be given formidable protection under S. 174, "A Bill to Establish a National Wilderness Preservation System for the permanent good of the whole people . . ."

Fortunately, the chief New Frontiersman of them all, President John F. Kennedy, recognizing that the America he envisions cannot be without the physical benefits and inspiration accruing to its people from the natural out-of-doors, urged Congress to "enact a wilderness protection bill along the general lines of S. 174."

The former Secretary of Agriculture, now U. S. Senator Clinton P. Anderson of New Mexico, chairman of the Senate Committee on Interior and Insular Affairs, introduced the bill which would require Congressional approval before any areas in the wilderness system could be abolished. At this writing, a wilderness area can be eliminated by the head of the particular administering agency — by a few strokes (no matter how hesitatingly) of his pen. The proposed law could give mighty support to executive officers of the Agriculture and Interior Departments when they are trying to resist pressures of encroachment — whether to lumber wilderness acreage in a National Forest or to construct tourist facilities in a National Park's wilderness area.

Conservationists were urging Congress to pass the bill at this session. Carl W. Buchheister, president of the National Audubon Society, at the February hearings in Washington, D. C., warned that "Without such a law . . . not even remnants of true wilderness will be left in the United States for our grandchildren to know, to study, and to enjoy."

He predicted the loss of several wildlife species unless remnants of wilderness were preserved. "The spectacular . . . rare, California Condor, one of the largest birds on earth, will stay with us only if we protect the wilderness character of its nesting range in a National Forest In a general way we know why the Bald Eagle is in trouble. It needs a wilderness habitat, and as wilderness goes, so goes the Bald Eagle." To cite what can happen, Mr. Buchheister lamented that "Had we been foresighted enough a few decades ago to set aside a couple of areas of forest wilderness in the Southeast, we might have saved another interesting species, the Ivory-billed Woodpecker."

It is interesting how often New York State's Forest Preserve has been cited as precedent and example for similar protection by the Federal Government as provided for in S. 174. Mr. Buchheister brought it up in these hearings saying that "Had it not been for the foresight of the framers of the State constitution, who years ago wrote protection for the Forest Preserve into the basic law, this wilderness would long ago have been lost to the people of the State who treasure it highly."

But he was forced to admit that "Almost daily the newspapers of New York report new schemes and new pressures to invade and despoil, for one commercial purpose or another, the great New York State Forest Preserve." At the time, the bill that would have leased Hunter Mountain for a privately operated ski slope had caught fire in the State Assembly from where it escaped by a three-vote margin. It was snuffed out in the Senate where only seven approved it. But it was like putting out a brush fire (important as that is) while the forest fire was beginning to rage. Only a third of the Preserve would be left as wilderness under a proposed rezoning that would make the remainder generally available for lumbering and recreation. The bill to implement the rezoning was introduced for study purposes — that is, to authorize hearings that probably will be held this summer at times and places that were to be announced by Assemblyman R. Watson Pomeroy, chairman of the Joint Legislative Committee on Natural Resources. Mr. Pomeroy introduced the bill on behalf of the Committee.

The Committee had opposed the ski bill having, in effect, criticized it as piece-meal as compared to the Committee's comprehensive multiple use view for the Preserve. However, two of the Senators approving the ski bill are members of the Committee: Dutton S. Peterson and Robert C. McEwen. Senator McEwen is vice chairman.

If action is taken by the Federal Government to protect the Golden Eagle, the Federation and its members will have jointly played a major role in the accomplishment. The effort had its start in the request for help from a transplanted Texan, John Alderman, who was serving as a radar expert in the New York City office of Western Electric Co. But he continued the fight for the Golden Eagle he had conducted while a member of the Texas Ornithological Society's conservative committee.

Golden Eagles, which bunch up in Texas during winter, have been the subject of aerial massacres. Texas ranchers, mistakenly believing the eagles threaten their sheep herds, have organized to hire pilots for this hunting. Mr. Alderman reports that the Big Bend Eagle Club of 1500 members was active this winter. Its most successful pilot killed at least 500 Golden Eagles this winter — 149 in one month.

When Mr. Alderman asked bird clubs to urge a letter writing campaign asking the State's U. S. Senators to introduce legislation, bird watchers from all over the state responded. Joseph A. Blake, Jr., Federation conservation chairman, included an appeal in his bulletin to the clubs and himself wrote the Senators on behalf of the Federation.

Senator Keating was perplexed — but, as he said later, impressed — by the deluge of letters urging him to take the lead in saving a bird seldom seen in New York State. Nevertheless, he made a sincere effort to inform himself. There was every indication he would get behind a bill providing for the bird's protection. He assigned one of his staff to handle the "eagle problem." This individual was visited in March by Mr. Alderman in company with the Federation's own Dr. Walter Spofford of Syracuse who for 20 years has spent his summers visiting the aeries of Golden Eagles to study

their behavior. The two also called on some Texas congressmen who were beginning to show concern.

However, Mr. Alderman reported a necessary delay in legislative efforts pending results of negotiations between American State Department officials and Mexican authorities regarding protection of the Flamingo, Wood Ibis and Golden Eagle under the Migratory Bird Treaty. The eagle was added following a conference with a representative of the Mexican Interior Department last March in Washington. He said that the Golden Eagle was considered Mexico's national symbol and that the Government might well be interested in protecting it — a few of the Mexican birds are thought to wander into Texas. Inclusion under the Treaty would, in effect, provide for nation-wide protection of the eagle in America.

Efforts persist to bring about more satisfactory management of Mourning Dove hunting in the south where the seasons are felt to be too long. Two organizations doing important work in Mourning Dove protection are the Committee for Dove Protection, Box 562, Palm Desert, Calif. and Conservation Militant, Box 72, St. Paul 2, Minn.

Thomas A. Lesperance, Keeseville, summed up the situation at the conclusion of his note on ground nesting of these birds, published in the Field Notes of the December, 1960 KINGBIRD: "The Mourning Dove is a protected species in the North, and it would seem that the species should be accorded the same protection in southern areas where it is now hunted. As evidenced by literature sent to banders by the Fish and Wildlife Service, this is a declining species. Its status merits the attention of Federation members in seeking nationwide protection of it as a species."

Bird clubs from throughout Long Island and New York City are joining with other interested groups, including those of fish and game, in fighting the proposed development of 8,000 acres of wetlands in Nassau County near Jones Beach on the south shore. Clubs sending representatives to organizing meetings of the Hempstead Town Lands Resources Committee have been the Baldwin Bird Club, Lyman Langdon Audubon Society, Brooklyn Bird Club, Linnaean Society of New York and the recently organized Huntington Audubon Society. A leader in the effort has been John J. Elliott, vice president of the Federation.

The Resources Committee has been formed to halt contemplated development by the Town of Hempstead of these wetlands for residential and industrial purposes. An engineering survey to implement these purposes has been underway. Support for the opposition has come from the National Audubon Society which issued a press release calling these lands "the heart of a key area on Long Island that is vital to the wild waterfowl of the entire Atlantic flyway."

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THE JANUARY WATERFOWL COUNT: VII

LEO J. TANGHE

The 1961 Waterfowl Count of the Federation of New York State Bird Clubs was carried out from January 14 to 22, 1961. The total count of 248,791 individuals considerably surpassed the previous high of 222,408 in 1956, and was in astonishingly close agreement with the 1961 aerial count of 248,780. Regions III (Finger Lakes), Xa (New York City), and Xb (Long Island) turned in higher counts than in any previous year.

This year's count included 39 species and one hybrid. The Lesser White-fronted Goose was reported from Babylon, Long Island, by John J. Elliott, for the first time in this census series. This European species had been present in the area for several weeks and is considered possibly an escapee. Other rarities included one Snow Goose, three European Widgeons, five Harlequin Ducks, and three Common Eiders from Regions X, and King Eiders from Regions I, II, V, VI, and X.

Red-necked Grebes and Whistling Swans, usually seen in small numbers, were unreported this year. Mute Swans were down considerably from previous reports.

Large flocks of Redheads again spent the winter on Seneca, Keuka, and Canandaigua Lakes. Smaller numbers of Canvasbacks were with them. In contrast, the Niagara River had over 4000 Canvasbacks but only 14 Redheads.

Dr. Fritz Scheider, leader of the Syracuse group, made an eloquent plea that "those pure, benighted, benumbed observers should get some credit and due — if only to see their names in print once a year." Such a list might be too long to publish, but I would like to ask the regional leaders and compilers, namely

Region	1	Edward Seeber	Region	6	Arthur Allen
"	2	John Mitchell	"	8	Guy Bartlett
"	3	Sally F. Hoyt	"	9	Edward Treacy
"	4	Leslie Bemont	"	10	John J. Elliott
"	5	Fritz Scheider			

to pass along my thanks for their efforts in compiling this census.

	1961 DUCK CENSUS								GROUND COUNT			Total
	I	II	III	IV	V	VI	VIII	IX	Xa	Xb		
Common Loon			3						5	56	64	
Red-Throated Loon									3	19	22	
Horned Grebe	1	1	213		63				61	319	658	
Pied-billed Grebe			5							11	23	
Mute Swan								7				
Canada Goose								3	17	189	209	
Brant			113		156				446	619	1,334	
Lesser White-fronted Goose			1						125	34,420	34,546	
Snow Goose										1	1	
Mallard	297	16	981	422	667	12	125	222	702	2,381	5,825	
Black Duck	2,297	58	1,297	252	1,487	127	1,130	531	2,756	12,421	22,356	
Mallard-Black Hybrid			1								1	
Gadwall				4	3					48	55	
Pintail					7					28	39	
Green-winged Teal								1	4	24	27	
Blue-winged Teal									2		1	
American Widgeon			2						343	2,148	2,493	
European Widgeon									1	2	3	
Shoveler					9					35	44	
Wood Duck			2		1					1	6	
Redhead	14	3	6,719		543	3			2		7,288	
Ring-necked Duck		1	19		5				2	4	123	
Canvasback	4,407	3	2,221		140	1			65	33	13,182	
Greater Scaup	3,763	1,058	7,632	3	9,876	3,850			2	3,999	2,409	
Lesser Scaup		7			55				1	28,352	106,692	
Common Goldeneye	4,572	7,002	939	35	2,704	463	75	21	609	1,588	18,008	
Bufflehead	41	149	69		139	2			2	657	2,304	
Oldsquaw	980	1,628	8		270	4				116	3,704	
Harlequin Duck											5	
Common Eider											3	
King Eider	1	2			1	1				6	11	
White-winged Scoter	4	208			17				32	10,962	11,223	
Surf Scoter					1						325	
Common Scoter											326	
Ruddy Duck					2				38	571	609	
Hooded Merganser	2	8	12		19		2	25	11	27	40	
Common Merganser	2,165	339	292	254	6,387	125	50	344	42	44	154	
Red-breasted Merganser	136	45	17		143	2			10	12	9,978	
Coot	2		199		7				232	2,968	3,543	
Unidentified	2,005		66	5	120	200		1		114	323	
								9		1,100	3,505	
Total	20,687	10,528	20,811	975	22,822	4,790	1,382	1,238	38,568	126,990	248,791	

SUMMARY OF TREE AND SHRUB FRUIT CROP

STEPHEN W. EATON

Everyone will admit that there is a great deal of subjectivity in judging the general fruit crop over such a wide geographic and ecologic area as New York State. But from the reports obtained from the regional editors of all ten regions on the status of a representative group of trees and shrubs certain general conditions appear which may help to explain winter finch distribution, and perhaps attendant predators. It would be advisable to standardize a sampling procedure to judge fruit crops more accurately but this seems too far from fruition to attempt at this stage.

The cone crop of the Adirondacks appears to be generally fair to good. Hemlock, the dominant conifer of the Allegheny Plateau, has generally a good crop. *Carpinus* (variously known as ironwood, blue beech, water beech) produced good seed all across the Plateau. No general statement seems warranted about the unpredictable American Beech. Wild Black Cherry varied from poor on the western Plateau to from fair to good in the east.

Where commitments were made on the various species a total of 70 good estimates, 37 fair, and 9 poor were tallied. This indicates a generally fair to good larder available.

	Adiron- dacks*	Ontario Lake Plain	Western Allegheny Plateau	Eastern Allegheny Plateau	Lower Hudson & L. I.
Red Pine -----	-	-	-	-	-
White Pine -----	P-G	-	P	F-G	-
Pitch Pine -----	-	-	-	-	-
Larch -----	F-G	-	-	-	-
White Spruce -----	F	-	-	-	-
Black Spruce -----	F	-	-	-	-
Red Spruce -----	F	-	-	-	-
Balsam -----	F-G	-	-	-	-
Hemlock -----	F	-	-	F-G	-
Arborvitae -----	F-G	-	-	G	-
Red Cedar -----	-	P-G	-	G	F
Bayberry -----	-	-	-	-	G
Ironwood (Ostrya) -----	-	-	P	G	-
Blue Beech (Carpinus) -----	-	-	G	G	-
Yellow Birch -----	F	-	G	P-G	-
White Birch -----	G	-	-	F	-
American Beech -----	F-G	F-G	P-F	F-G	-
White Oak -----	-	F-G	F	F-G	G
Red Oak -----	-	-	F	F-G	-
Cucumber Tree -----	-	-	G	-	-
Mountain Ash -----	F-G	-	-	G	-
Thornapple -----	G	G	F	G	-
Wild Black Cherry -----	F-G	-	P	F-G	-
Box Elder -----	-	F-G	-	G	F
Sugar Maple -----	F	-	F	F-G	-
Grey Dogwood -----	-	G	-	-	-
Red Osier Dogwood -----	-	F-G	-	-	-
White Ash -----	-	-	P	F-G	-
Black-berried Elder -----	-	G	G	F-G	-
Sour Gum -----	-	-	-	-	G
Russian Olive -----	-	-	-	-	G
Japanese Black Pine -----	-	-	-	-	F-G

*REGIONS OR PARTS

OF REGIONS ----- *(5, 6, 7) (1, 2, 5, 6) (1) (4, 8) (10)
 Dep't. of Biology, St. Bonaventure Univ., St. Bonaventure

CLUB NOTES

Alan Devoe Bird Club — A memorial fund has been established by friends and relatives of Mrs. C. W. Turner, a charter member, who died on October 18, 1960. Mrs. Turner's active interest in the club's Wilson M. Powell Wildlife Sanctuary induced the club to use the fund to create a glade particularly attractive to wildlife at the Sanctuary.

Buffalo Audubon Society — John P. Bruck was a member of the Buffalo Audubon Society and also a supporting member of the Federation of New York State Bird Clubs, Inc. At his death early in 1960 (Kingbird Vol. X, No. 1) it was learned he had bequeathed to the Federation a sum of \$1,000. This gift has just been received by the Federation treasurer.

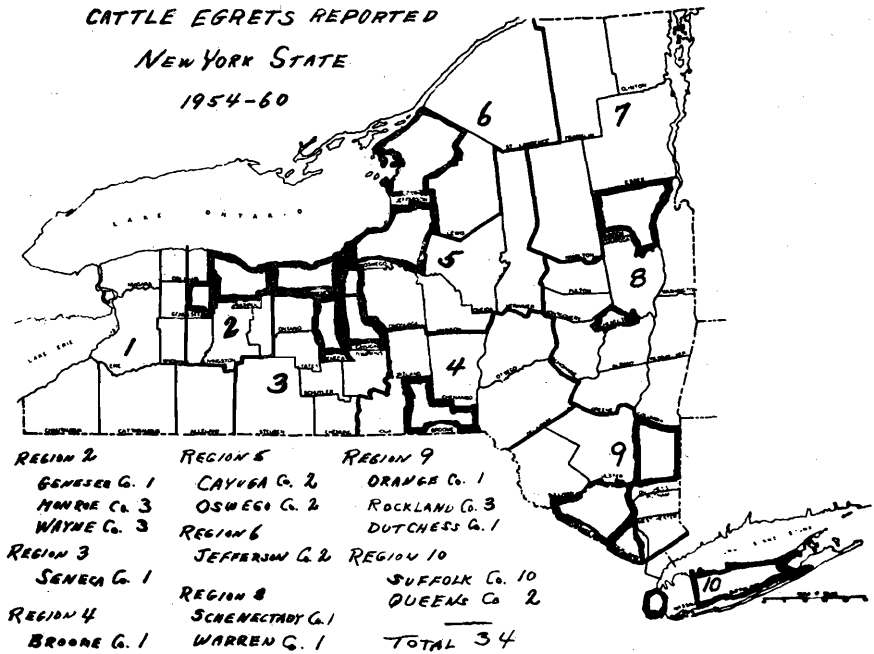
The **Edgar A. Mearns Bird Club** in Orange County is a prospective Club Member which the Federation will vote on for acceptance in the Council Meeting in September.

CALL FOR PAPERS

The 15th Annual Meeting of The Federation of New York State Bird Clubs, Inc., will be held in New York City on September 29, 30, and October 1. This is a CALL for the participation of members in the presentation of papers relating to ornithology in New York State. Those willing to help in making this program on Saturday afternoon informative and interesting should kindly communicate with John J. Elliott, 3994 Park Ave., Seaford, L. I.

FIELD NOTES

The Cattle Egret in New York State: Living up to expectations, the Cattle Egret appeared in New York State in more places and in larger numbers during 1960 than in any previous year. As shown in the table below, the number of birds reported in 1960 is more than double the combined totals of all earlier records. Since reaching North America the Cattle Egret has aroused wide interest and has been the subject of numerous articles. Hence it is unnecessary to dwell on the arrival and subsequent success of this species in the New World. Suffice it to say that from Florida the breeding range has extended westward along the gulf states and north up the Atlantic coast as far as southern New Jersey.



The Cattle Egret is a great wanderer and has been seen in our state in all but the coldest months of the year. There are more records in the spring than in other seasons. Until 1960 single birds only were reported, but during the past year there were several instances in which two or three birds were seen together. An examination of the map will show that the Cattle Egret has now been reported from fifteen counties and from all regions except Regions 1 and 7.

Summaries of this type yield information as to geographical distribution and, in addition, give an indication as to abundance. As observations multiply, there will, of course, be instances in which a bird is reported more than once. The Cattle Egret will, no doubt, continue to be a regular visitor to the state, particularly in the spring. To date the portions of the state which have been favored are Long Island, the Hudson Valley, and the counties bordering Lake Ontario.

The following table gives the annual totals for New York State:

1954	-	1	1958	-	3
1955	-	0	1959	-	4
1956	-	1	1960	-	24
1957	-	1			

Further occurrences should be brought to the attention of the respective regional reporter. — John B. Belknap, 92 Clinton Street, Gouverneur.

Observations of the Black-backed Three-toed Woodpecker at Syracuse: On November 3, 1960, at 8:30 a. m., while checking Oakwood Cemetery for lingering fall migrants, my attention was attracted by a repeated sound, rather like the dripping of water onto stone. The source of the sound proved to be an adult female Black-backed Three-toed Woodpecker in a nearby grove of Scotch pine and white cedar. The bird seemed rather restless, moving from trunk to trunk about ten feet from the ground and thus not permitting the close observation often possible with this species. As I followed it up a driveway toward the Syracuse University campus, the bird flushed repeatedly from one conifer to another before becoming lost from view.

The "nervous" movements of the bird during this first observation subsequently proved to be typical. Owing to the fact that local birdwatchers, notified of the Black-backed's presence, had a variety of hours available to search for it, there were six further observations, of what was probably the same individual, during the following eight days and at various times of day. On the next four sightings the woodpecker was on a dead elm with a great deal of fresh woodpecker work on it, about 300 yards from the first location, both around 8:00 a. m. and in late afternoon, sometimes "flaking" and sometimes resting on a limb about 30 feet from the ground. The bird was found on two other cemetery elms, which also bore evidence of Dutch elm disease and woodpecker work, during this first round of observations which ended on November 11.

On the latter date the bird flushed toward Comstock Avenue, which bounds the cemetery on the east. This led to the discovery of the row of diseased elms, extensively enjoyed by Hairy and Downy Woodpeckers, which lined this street and, after several unsuccessful searches there for the Black-backed, to the eventual finding of a male Black-backed there on November 25.

During December sightings of Black-backeds, usually with Hairies and Downies working the same elms, increased in the vicinity of Comstock Avenue (a high count of three male and two female Black-backeds was made December 3). This provided more opportunity to study their behavior. On one occasion a female flushed from the elms to an oak on which she worked for a half hour. On another occasion both a male and a female were observed working on a locust tree about 3/8 mile diagonally across the cemetery from the Comstock elms (H. and C. Ives); it is quite possible that this pair was of the group seen around Comstock. The times from 7:00 - 8:30 a. m. and around 4:00 p. m. were normally the best in December for finding these woodpeckers, usually moving from branch to branch in the upper parts of the elms as they worked. The "pwick" note, which first revealed the bird to me (November 3), was frequently heard as they fed. There was sometimes a nasal and raucous "aegh-aegh-aegh-aegh" call given as the bird flushed. Since I had many more observations of a female than of a male, I hadn't the opportunity to hear any vocalization of the latter.

Several observers commented on the apparent restlessness of this group of Black-backeds, in contrast with the usually described behavior of the species. These birds often moved rapidly from limb to limb, feeding as they went, and if they were present, they were easily spotted.

On the Syracuse Christmas Count (December 26) one male and two females were seen in the cemetery vicinity (E. Estoff and J. Propst). An interesting observation was made of one of these birds. It and a Hairy were apparently asleep (with eyes closed), i.e., roosting, right on the food trees, at 8:00 a. m. of a clear day,

the Black-backed horizontal on the upper side of a limb. The censusers raised their voices in an attempt to arouse the birds without flushing them, whereupon both woodpeckers awoke and immediately began to feed.

A male and a female were still present January 8 on the Comstock elms. On January 10 the two of these diseased elms most favored by the woodpeckers were taken down. After this, a female was seen once more on each of two of the cemetery elms frequented previously by Black-backed. The bird flushed almost immediately upon observation these last two times, the final observation being on January 24.

One is left to surmise to what extent the removal of the "favorite" trees or the concurrent severe cold followed by a two to three feet snowfall caused the disappearance in midwinter of these interesting woodpeckers. — Margaret Rusk, 114 Standard Street, Syracuse 10.

Evening Flights of Migrating Waterbirds on Long Island: The intriguing study of waterbird migration is occasionally depicted at such coastal jumping-off places as Jones Beach, where some forty to fifty miles of ocean separate the southwestern-bound travellers' journey from Long Island to the middle New Jersey coast. Evening is often the jumping-off time. Usually by sundown the flock assembles or has assembled, and toward dusk the birds are on their way.

Three such flocks were observed by this writer, two in the fall of 1960 and a previous departure some years ago which seems worthy of mention. The latter, my first introduction to dusk migration, came rather unexpectedly. It was in the fall, around 1930, and I had trespassed on the south shore of the Jones Beach Sanctuary Pond, then a private shooting preserve of the Guggenheim family. Breaking through the Phragmites, I startled a flock of clamorous Canada Geese which brought swift verbal chastisement from caretaker Carman from Baldwin. After I identified myself as a bird student, however, he offered me a "front row seat" on top of the roof of the hunting lodge (now torn down) at the north edge of the pond, where he pointed skyward. For about five minutes I watched with intense interest some half dozen or more Great Blue Herons swinging in wide circles over the poison ivy and bayberry tracts north of the pond. Ever mounting upward, they, for all their huge size, appeared infinitesimal as they wheeled high over the water. Then, as if released by a single impulse, they cut an abrupt tangent to the circle and, together, flew into the southwest and out of sight over the ocean.

On October 12, 1960, again at dusk and again at Jones Beach, about 25 Black-crowned Night Herons flew over the ocean boulevard and out of sight over the ocean in a southerly direction. Their assembly preparations were not observed. However, they flew in a more compact flock and higher than usual when travelling locally. These birds flew straight out at right angles to the coast, as if intent on putting some miles of ocean under them before veering southwest to the distant New Jersey marshes.

The third flock of the three mentioned above consisted of some 30 Black Skimmers which assembled in Sloop Channel, east of the Meadowbrook causeway bridge and a half mile west of the fishing station at Jones Beach. They were first observed about sundown by Cornelius Ward of Roosevelt, my wife, and myself. The birds were assembled in customary feeding behavior as they skimmed over the surface of the water near a sandbar, their forms distinct against the bright western sky. Some fifteen minutes later as the brightness faded, they were seen flying over the sandbar, gathering in what appear to be an excited assemblage. The flock then veered upward, and in gyrations very similar to flocking sandpipers they zig-zagged and wheeled ever higher until they had gained an altitude of an estimated 400 feet. Then with strong rapid wing beats they headed straight southwest over the ocean, passing Jones Inlet on the way.

Although such departures are inclined to leave an empty feeling in the mind of the observer as one sees birds leave for the year, it is far better that they go on time while the migration urge is strong than to linger perhaps in some confused state until hopes of survival have almost disappeared. After the hurricane of

September, 1942, hundreds of Black Skimmers were found around our South Shore inlets, and a lingering flock of fifty to sixty stayed all fall. Some of these, in pathetic condition, were seen in snowy weather on the Jamaica Bay flats; the depleted flock was later observed skimming over the surface of the slips in New York harbor for such floating edibles as they might pick up. On the last day of that year the writer saw a long line of an estimated twenty to thirty slow-flying skimmers against the bright western sky as they passed down the Narrows. Through a 50-power telescope they were observed out in the middle, between Staten Island and Brooklyn, and seemingly headed for the New Jersey coast. These birds, low-flying and barely skimming over the surface of the water, appeared to be half-starved, weak, and thoroughly dejected. Evening again was the time of their departure, but by the calendar they were several months late. What a contrast to the properly timed, seasonal departure which produced the vivacious, high-flying Sloop Channel birds! — John J. Elliott, 3994 Park Avenue, Seaford, Long Island.

Virginia Rails in Winter in Columbia County: During the early morning hours of January 22, 1961, the temperature fell to 26 degrees below zero, but by early afternoon it was nearly ten above, and the day was otherwise breezy, sunny, and beautiful. The Stony Kill, a small spring brook that runs through Canaan in eastern Columbia County, was, for the first time in years, completely frozen over where it passes through our field. The snow which had fallen on the windy night of January 19-20 showed no signs of settling.

It was under such weather conditions that I received a phone call from an excited neighbor about two "dark, long-billed birds" which he had seen further down the brook. My immediate reaction was "probably Starlings," but fortunately my neighbor was a determined man.

The birds had been seen at an area where the brook, fed by the comparatively warm water of springs, passes under a road and enters a marsh. The brook has never been known to freeze at this point. Upon our arrival there no birds were immediately in evidence, but when a boy with boots jumped from the bridge into the brook, he flushed out the two birds. They flew upstream for a few yards, then circled to return, alighting in the shallow water nearly under the bridge. The birds were Virginia Rails. One was noticeably the darker, and as it picked its way along the stream edge, a very light patch was apparent under its short wedge-shaped tail. The other was much browner, and it appeared slightly larger. The darker of the two birds was probably a young of the past season.

Although there is enough animal life in the Stony Kill to keep fat a fair-sized trout population during the winter, this was a period of bitter cold. Night time lows averaged —17, with minimums of —26 to —30 on three nights. Snow covered many of the small branch streams and most of the vegetation. It was felt that supplemental feeding should be tried. Shrimp and minced clams were dropped into the brook in both silted and gravelly spots where the birds had been seen probing the bottom. Both birds were subsequently seen picking around in these places, and we think they ate some of this seafood, most of which disappeared.

In the several days after January 22 many Alan Devoe Bird Club members came to view these birds. This was the initial result of a recently instituted "bird alert" telephone system.

The darker of the two rails appeared much tamer than the other, browner bird. When seen, the birds were active, walking quickly over patches of ice and snow or alternately wading and swimming in the open water of the brook, probing the bottom in shallow places or picking among the stones at the edge of the water. Rarely one or both flew short distances upstream or downstream, but never away from the brook. Occasionally they stood still for a few minutes in the running water, which was, of course, many degrees warmer than the air. Six or seven times they were seen to select a spot in bright sun, on the sheltered side of the bank, fluff their feathers out, and settle into the light, soft snow for periods of ten to fifteen minutes. Several times, when observers arrived at the bridge, the darker bird was seen to emerge from a rocky crevice at the brook's edge. This was a hole half the size of a man's head.

The rails were not punctual, and one could not be sure of seeing them, except that on most late afternoons they were seen working downstream toward the swamp. This swamp covers an area of about thirty-five acres, growing the usual alder-willow-osier somewhat sparsely but with a rank growth of coarse grasses and weeds. A few small trees grow in drier spots, but the more predominant wet areas combine with clay-mud and unstable hummocks to make it a difficult place in which to walk.

Both rails were seen on February 2, and one was seen on the afternoon of February 3. That night the heavy blizzard began, and when we again looked for them on February 5, they could not be found nor were they seen during the much warmer weather that immediately followed. — Aden Gokay, Canaan.

A Mockingbird Congregation in Freeport: The squad of Mockingbirds I observed together in Freeport, Long Island, on November 6, 1960, is apparently unusual in the New York City region during a season other than that of breeding. The observation further underlines Ludlow Griscom's perplexity regarding the status of this southern species in the New York City area. "The Mockingbird," he declared, "is one of our local species which defies classification."

I discovered one Mockingbird in a pine tree after having heard a loud, thick chip note while I was inside my house. I summoned my wife Virginia to the backyard. While watching this one, we were amazed to see another alight in a flutter of white wing and tail patches. After seeing three flitting about in the trees, my discernment had been taxed too much to credit the quartet Virginia was beginning to believe she was seeing. Then three alighted in an oak in front of us. In a nearby tree another was perched. We saw four Mockingbirds at the same time.

They remained awhile that morning. They disappeared for a time but were seen later in the afternoon. I did not study them for plumage differences but did not notice any. I did not have much time to look for them again, but I did see two in a nearby hawthorne tree on November 14. Only one was observed after that and the last recorded date for seeing it is December 5. Actually it was observed for approximately a week later. It has not been seen there since.

It fed on the red berries of a thorny bramble hugging a wooden fence that abuts, at a right angle, a long hedge about seven feet high. Often the bird perched in a small wild cherry tree in that corner. It would be seen flying, headed apparently for the other side of the canal located across the street from my house.

The proximity to the beaches of the bay and the ocean (Freeport is about seven miles from the beginning of Jones Beach) may have had something to do with the Bird's presence. J. P. Giraud, Jr., writing in **Birds of Long Island** in 1844, points out that "at times it frequents the dry sandy beaches in the immediate vicinity of the sea." In recent years single birds (most reports from the New York region are of single birds except for those breeding) have come in great part from such places as Riis Park, Jamaica Bay Wildlife Sanctuary, Oak Beach, Jones Beach, Fire Island State Park and Montauk. John J. Elliott reported a Mockingbird visiting a feeding station at Oceanside (four miles from Freeport) since before Christmas through at least, as of this writing, February 25 — a bird that had survived last winter's severe cold and snow.

It certainly seems to be true that many more Mockingbirds have been reported of late. This, of course, may be due in part to an increased number of observers. But in the last four years there has also been a rise in the number of nesting and breeding records. Mr. Elliott, reporting a Mockingbird's nest at Roxbury in Rockaway Beach in 1956, said it was "believed to be the first authentic record for Long Island for many years" (KINGBIRD Vol. 6, No. 3, p. 104). Two Mockingbirds were observed at a nest with two nearly fledged young near Mecox Bay at Watermill in 1956. This was reported by Dennis Puleston and Gilbert S. Raynor (KINGBIRD Vol. 7, No. 1, p. 14). A probable nesting Mockingbird was reported for western Long Island in 1957 (KINGBIRD Vol. 7, No. 3, p. 104). Herbert Johnson, superintendent of the Jamaica Bay Wildlife Sanctuary, told me he had a pair breeding there in 1959 and again in 1960.

Emanuel Levine, editor of the **Linnaean News-Letter**, published by the Linnaean Society of New York, in the June, 1960, issue lists the breeding Mockingbirds as part of a northward movement of southern species. However, 117 years ago

Giraud reported that "this unrivaled songster occasionally passes the season of reproduction on Long Island." And Griscom cites a few sporadic breeding records for the New York City region between 1875 and 1884. It would be interesting to determine whether there were any invasions from the south during these periods. It should be said here that Dr. Elon Howard Eaton in the **Birds of New York**, published in 1910, commented that "on Long Island and southeastern New York this bird has been reported on numerous occasions and there seems to be some evidence that it has bred near Rockaway, Long Island and possibly other portions of southeastern New York, but no definite evidence to this effect has been brought forward."

These 'occasional' reports of Mockingbirds have been — and still are — frequent enough to always elicit considerable interest. Theodore Roosevelt noted a Mockingbird shot at Oyster Bay, August 15, 1876. Around the turn of the century, the belief was prevalent that the reported Mockingbirds were escaped cage birds.

Allan D. Cruickshank in *Birds Around New York City*, published by the American Museum of Natural History in 1942, quotes Griscom extensively on the subject (the source for the Griscom quotes in this piece). Then Cruickshank asserts that the analysis of the records "indicates that the bird is rarest in June and July and occurs most frequently in autumn between September 30 and November 30." Griscom points out that "no other southern species occurs chiefly in fall and winter" as the Mockingbird does in the New York City area. What is their origin? Where did the four birds come from that popped up in my yard? Cruickshank, or a writer today, could not do better than quote Ludlow Griscom: "where the birds recorded locally can come from is a mystery which still awaits solution." — Maxwell C. Wheat, Jr., 333 Bedell Street, Freeport, Long Island.

Hook, Line and — Wings: Early July, 1960 featured warm, clear, windless, full-moon nights, as well as the state opening of bass-fishing season. Two of us, W. T. Cook of Schenectady and I, were as usual opening our season with some surface-action plugs, casting into a shallow bay of Jenny Lake, Saratoga County. I was using a black Jitterbug which, for the uninitiated, is a floating lure with a bright metal "paddle" on the front to give it a wobbling action and noise, and leaving a trail of bubbles. It weighs 5/8 ounce, is nearly three inches long, and has two treble-hooks. My companion was using a quiet, light-colored surface lure. We were casting alternately into the same general area, with about 100-foot throws ahead of the boat.

It was midnight, but the moonlight was more than enough to make flashlights unneeded. We could see far along the shore without difficulty and well enough to fix our lures. The water was without ripples except for our lures and oars — even to absence of semi-usual tail-slapping beavers and jumping fish. In general we were casting slightly to the right of the moon's reflection, making easy for us to follow the action of our lures.

The bay, and that half of the lake, is heavily wooded right to the shore, and undeveloped. Barred Owls have nested there for years and have added interest to night-fishing trips during a week or so of the high-pitched, insect-like hisses of the young birds, out of the nest but not yet entirely on their own. This penetrating hiss, incidentally, seems too high-pitched to be heard by some people.

We heard action up in the trees ahead of us, in the direction in which we were casting. It was as though a bird had landed heavily on a leafy branch. Then things were quiet.

I cast, waited a couple of seconds, and started to retrieve. Again the noise in the trees and then, over my lure a hundred feet head of us and 50 feet out from shore, a bird dropped vertically with slowly flapping, big wings. Its feet touched the water. Then it flew back to the trees from where it had appeared. There was no slack in the line, and the lure was now a dozen feet or so to the left. Mr. Cook cast his quiet lure — no action.

I cast again. The bird came in on a swoop, reached down for the plug, and continued its swoop upwards. I left the reel with no drag, and again the bird dropped the lure. It had carried the floater about 50 feet. Then another no-action cast of the quiet lure.

On my next cast the Jitterbug had hardly struck the water when the owl was right there, and away. I kept the reel on free-wheeling. The bird flew about 50 feet to one of the many boulders protruding a few inches above the very shallow water back in the bay.

I waited several seconds. The bird simply sat quietly. I reeled in slowly. The monofilament line, particularly with so much out, had considerable stretch. Soon the line was tight, with no hint of a struggle. It was as though some of the hooks had caught on the boulder or that the line had wedged around some of the rocks. A jerk on the line, however, and I was in business. The bird was splashing in front of the rock.

The water was too shallow and had too many just-submerged rocks for rowing in, and the situation was no better for wading. I reeled in. The bird came in facing us, with feet and tail on or in the water, its body above, and wings occasionally flapping.

When the bird was at arm's reach beside the boat I stopped reeling. Now the bird was quiet and floating on its back, feet toward us and the lure held in its left talons. I had no difficulty in grasping the bird's legs above its talons and bringing it aboard, with flapping wings.

We released the lure at the snap fastener, and found one prong of the rear treble-hook caught in the gristly sole of the foot. Removal was easy.

Except for the lower feathers of its legs, the bird's plumage hardly looked as though it had been dragged through the water — and its leg feathers quickly dried.

The bird, a Barred Owl, uttered no sound, made no passes with its beak, and even did not strike with its talons. It perched on my arm after its release and then for a while on the edge of the boat. Then it flew low across the water and up into a tree on the opposite shore.

It was probably a bird of the year, judging by slight amounts of down in its head plumage, and its docility.

We continued to fish the same area with the same lures, but had no more strikes — neither ornithological nor piscatorial. In fact, the owl was our only catch that night.

Apparently this owl's conduct had precedent. Dr. Ralph F. Jacox of Rochester, in a note in **The New York State Conservationist** (December-January, 1958-59, page 45) relates his experience in catching a Barred Owl in the evening on a "Crazy Crawler" lure, also a noisy floater. He also refers to the cover of the June, 1958 issue of **Florida Wildlife** depicting, in a painting, the same situation. — Guy Bartlett, 1053 Parkwood Boulevard, Schenectady 8.

Observations on Visual Activity in Birds: An Osprey often uses a dead limb 35 feet up in an oak at the edge of our creek as a fishing post. He sits there and scans the pools for trout. When he spots a fish he takes aim by weaving his head back and forth, passing the image from one eye to the other, possibly getting a momentary binocular view as the image is passed from side to side. When the Osprey has secured a satisfactory orientation, he plunges and gets his fish.

I recall watching the specific actions of a Great Blue Heron which I flushed from the edge of the marshy creek. As my canoe nosed around a bend in the stream, the somewhat startled heron was standing about two hundred yards in front of me. He stared with one eye, slowly turned his head until he could see me with the other eye, and then crouched down a little, spread his wings, and sailed away.

Owls, of course, possess frontal vision, and some other species of birds would appear to have at least some frontal sight. Many birds, such as warblers, fly-catchers, and chickadees, have their eyes very much towards the side of the head. I intend to make a study of the visual activities of Phoebes this spring. With their aerial movements one should be able to ascertain how they get a focus on their prey.

This entire subject is of considerable interest, and I would much appreciate hearing from readers who may have made, or intend to make, similar visual activity studies or observations. — Ilse K. Dunbar, RD 3, Box 194, Kingston.

A Kingfisher and Some Swallows: About 8:00 p. m. on July 29, 1948, while sitting on the porch of our camp located on a 75-foot bluff overlooking Canandaigua Lake, ten miles south of Canandaigua, I observed an interesting sequence of bird behavior. A Belted Kingfisher was flying south over the lake approximately a hundred yards from shore when it was annoyed by a flock of about twenty swallows (species undetermined). One swallow, then another and another, separated from the rather loose flock and flew in single file down toward the kingfisher. The kingfisher dove into the water and after one or two seconds emerged and flew in the opposite direction. The swallow flock circles back, and another two or three swallows, in file, again stooped down toward the kingfisher. Again it dove and emerged flying in the opposite direction. The swallow flock, flying approximately a hundred feet above, circled back and again swallows flew down toward the kingfisher. The bird dove a third time, and this time the swallows did not wheel back. The kingfisher flew in toward shore and perched while the swallows continued down the lake.

I have often wondered whether this could be interpreted as "play" on the part of the swallows and kingfisher or whether it was true attack and escape behavior on the part of both birds. Swallows are known to be aggressive as a flock (Forbush, E. H., *Birds of Massachusetts*, Vol. 3, p. 150) and to even chase Sharp-shinned Hawks (Bent, A. C., *U. S. Nat. Mus. Bull.* 179:452). Kingfishers have been seen to escape attack from other kingfishers (Bent, A. C., *U. S. Nat. Mus. Bull.* 176:123) and Cooper's Hawks (Johnson, S. E., *Auk* 42:585-586), but the situation reported here is an apparent combination of errors, the swallows misidentifying a short-necked kingfisher as predator and the kingfisher misidentifying the short-necked pointed-winged swallows as a stooping hawk.

Another possible explanation, on the assumption that the swallows and kingfisher were young birds, is that this might represent what E. A. Armstrong (*Bird Display*, Cambridge, p. 261) calls "play". Another thing that is difficult to explain in this observation is the ability of the kingfisher to turn under water and reverse his field. This was also noted by Johnson (*ibid.*) when a kingfisher was attacked by a Cooper's Hawk. — Stephen W. Eaton, Dept. of Biology, St. Bonaventure University, St. Bonaventure.

Notes On a Wintering Catbird: Here in Ulster County wintering Catbirds are difficult to find since few ever remain beyond the Fall migration period. Those that do stay usually linger in some favored thicket area of bushes and vines that have a southern exposure. With the instinct to migrate lost the Catbird may remain here for the winter. So it happened at my residence near Kripplebush last fall (1960). I first noticed a Catbird in a little thicket back of the house during late October but felt that the bird was a migrant that would soon pass on. This did not turn out to be the case as I kept on infrequently seeing the bird on into November when it became apparent that he was going to stay. Where he was spending the nights during this period I never knew but when winter set in during early December I discovered he was using the dense honeysuckle vine growing against the corner of the house. Two Song Sparrows were also using the vines for a roost. Snow came and stayed and the rigors of winter were constant. Snow was definitely hostile to the Catbird's normal ground frequenting habit and he avoided it most of the time. Consequently, his daily habits became restricted and were centered about the vicinity of the house with short trips up and down the shrubbery bordering the driveway. The only bare ground he had was a few inches along the foundation of the house. The sun helped to keep this bare and the bird spent much time here. His survival food was mainly the dried fruits of the Boston Ivy vine growing over the sides of the house. Fortunately these were not cleaned up by a Starling horde. From the observations I could make this was his main diet. He ate but little from the bird seed mixtures and was not seen to take any suet although he might have. He sampled Holly berries but did not seem to prefer them.

As winter progressed more snow and cold came and our Catbird spent most of the day about the roost, his food supply, and immediate vicinity. The shyness exhibited earlier was tempered by the existing conditions and he became easier to approach. On stormy or very cold days he would often sit in the vines just under one of the windows which was nearly always open a few inches and probably offered a little warmth or he would sit on the canopy of the kitchen exhaust fan

securing what warmth that came through here. His flight was slower on cold days and he spent much time in inactivity. Any warmth of the sun nearly always perked him up and if warm enough his activity increased to a point where he would even give forth one or two of his cat-like notes. He survived the worst storm of the winter and he was indeed an out-of-place sight when seen bucking the swirling snow of a blizzard that temporarily covered just about everything exposed to the outside. We could see that the elements were fierce but there was a life-line present and our Catbird was being provided for. We were fearful with one apprehension. At least three prowling neighborhood cats were in the area almost daily and we knew that the Catbird would be lucky to escape being caught. Near mid-February the seemingly inevitable happened — the Catbird was missing and the tracks and feathers found by the foundation of the house told the story. — Fred Hough, Accord.

A Partially Albino Blue Jay: On January 31, 1961 Mrs. Ruth Williams and the writer received a call from the Misses Grace and Florence Kirk of 47 George St., Owego asking us to check the identity of a grayish white bird that had been coming to their feeders regularly since January 16. They believed it to be a Canada Jay. After waiting inside the Kirk house for about an hour and a half we were rewarded with an excellent view of the bird, at a distance of about 15 feet with 7 x 50 binoculars and in good light.

We immediately noticed that the bird in question had a prominent crest. Then by comparing its size, shape, flight pattern and behaviour with that of the Blue Jays visiting the feeders at the same time we soon realized that it was merely a Blue Jay that was lacking in color. We could see no trace of blue anywhere on it. Instead it was predominantly grayish white, gray enough so that the pure white of the wing bars could be readily seen by contrast. The normally black collar was a reddish brown color and the bill was yellowish brown. The feet and eyes were dark. The other Blue Jays behaved normally towards it and showed no particular tendency to attack it. It was still visiting the Kirk feeders as late as March 8, 1961 and had been seen by several of the neighbors. — Mrs. Mildred White, 1 West Front St., Owego.

Barrow's Goldeneye on Oneida Lake: On March 31, 1961, Dr. David Peakall, Jon Bart, and I were scanning a mixed collection of waterfowl on a small crescent of open water along the west side of Fischer's Bay, Oneida Lake. With the 30X Balscope we had optically bagged numerous Common Goldeneyes, Buffleheads, and Red-Breasted Mergansers when an adult male Barrow's Goldeneye was located along the ice-rimmed edge of open water. Repeated perusal through the scope confirmed the initial identification, and the details of greater extent of black upon the back and sides, the differently-shaped head, the fat crescent pre-ocular patch and, most striking, the black peripectoral bar, were seen and commented upon by the three of us. Despite abundant courtship activities of the adjacent Common Goldeneyes, this bird was never noted to perform any courtship maneuvers on this day or on days of subsequent observation (up to April 5). The bird was found again on April 1; on April 2 it was seen by two different parties somewhat further east on Fischer's Bay (the first bay east of Hitchcock Point at the mouth of Chittenango Creek north of Bridgeport). On this date a female was noted with the male which by head shape but not by bill color could well have been a female Barrow's Goldeneye. This pair of birds remained consistently together, usually resting or feeding at the ice edge of the open water. On April 3 and 4 extensive melting occurred, and the open water area enlarged considerably. On April 5 the pair was seen at two different times, and one observer (who had previous acquaintance with the species) felt that the female accompanying the male was definitely a Barrow's Goldeneye. At the time of the last observation on the afternoon of April 5, this pair of birds and many other waterfowl were scared away from Fischer's Bay by target shooting on the western margin of the bay. A vigorous search on April 6 failed to turn up the birds, and repeated checks thereafter to April 14 were similarly unsuccessful.

This is the first recent (past 20 years) record of this species in this sector of the state, and neither Eaton (**Birds of New York**, 1909) nor Stoner (Ornithology of the Oneida Lake Area, **Roosevelt Wildlife Annals**, V. 2, Nos. 3 and 4, 1932) gives a definite record for Oneida Lake. — Fritz Scheider, 151 Seventh North Street, Syracuse 8.

Whistling Swans Near Schenectady: The Whistling Swan is a rare visitor in the area around Schenectady, but on March 18, 1961, two adults and an immature were seen by two boys on Glass Pond in Guilderland. Guilderland is located along Route 20 between Schenectady and Albany. News of the find spread, and many members of the Schenectady Bird Club had the opportunity to see the swans. From accounts furnished by residents of that area it would appear that the birds came in on March 15.

The birds left Glass Pond on March 18. SBC members thought that they were perhaps not far away, and so some of the surrounding unfrozen ponds were checked. On March 23 the three swans were sighted again on a small pond along the D&H tracks near Meadowdale. The immature was still there as late as April 19, although the two adults had departed. The Meadowdale ponds, incidentally, had another unusual visitor this April, a Snowy Egret.

Prior to this year, the only other local reports for Whistling Swans have been in April, the last time being in 1956. Records of the Schenectady Bird Club indicate the species has been sighted in at least six different years in April. — Nelle G. Van Vorst, 67 Snowden Avenue, Schenectady.

Crossbill Flight Year in Saranac Lake Area: The winter of 1960-61 was noteworthy for the large flocks of Red Crossbills and White-winged Crossbills which could be seen daily in the Saranac Lake area. During December, January and February there was a high mortality rate — particularly among the Red Crossbills — due to road kill. The flocks would rise when a car drove through them and then settle again in exactly the same place. They ignored the individuals that had been killed by the car and pecked all around them.

As the season progressed the birds seemed to become more wary or less in need of the grit or salt which had brought them down to the sanded highways.

It is generally conceded that Red Crossbills are attracted to salt such as the calcium chloride mixed with the sand on icy highways but I have not heard this of the White-winged Crossbills or the Pine Siskins which were equally numerous on the roads. On several occasions I observed White-winged Crossbills fighting over places on a snowbank where dogs had urinated. I also observed White-winged Crossbills swallowing small pebbles found on the sanded roads.

Red Crossbills, being either less shy or less quick on the wing, were killed in greater numbers than the other two species mentioned.

Conclusions on "flight year" statistics are almost non-existent; deductions about road kill are contradictory. Have any observers recent data on these subjects? — Harried L. Delafaire, 8 Old Military Road, Saranac Lake.

HIGHLIGHTS OF THE WINTER SEASON DECEMBER 1 - MARCH 31

JAMES K. MERITT

The winter of 1960-61 will be remembered for some time to come. As to just how it would compare to some of those fabled old-fashioned winters, perhaps no one can say, but all were agreed this season was a rough one. The pattern of the previous year was reversed and accentuated. Whereas in 1959-60 our winter weather occurred primarily late in the season, this winter it arrived early and was with us almost continually through the first few days of February when milder temperatures began to generally prevail. The real temperature extremes were experienced the last half of January and in very early February, and reporting the lowest thermometer readings was a game which every community seemed to be winning. Tom Lesperance reports 18 consecutive days when the reading was below -5° , and New York City had, during the same period, a record stretch of below freezing weather, a string which ended, oddly enough, on the day when the city received its heaviest February snowfall on record and its heaviest single fall since the "big snow" of December 1947. Most of this year's snowfall, like the frigid weather, arrived early in the season. From the standpoint of expected, or normal, snowfall the southern and western parts of the state were harder hit than the northeastern regions. But there was more than ample to go around in any case.

The winter finch flight was, like the weather, quite a contrast to that of a year ago. The heavy Evening Grosbeak flight, to which we have become accustomed in recent winters, did not materialize. All areas reported these birds, but they were few in number and irregular in appearance. More were probably seen during March than in any other month. The Redpoll, the other winter finch to invade the state so heavily in 1959-60, was extremely scarce this winter. Most areas had only scattered reports of very small groups or individual birds, and some regions had no reports whatsoever. The species which showed the greatest change over last year in a positive direction was the Red Crossbill. Flight years for this species are relatively few, but this was certainly one of them. These birds were quite generally reported early in the winter, and then there was a big resurgence in March. White-winged Crossbills were seen simultaneously in lesser, although still above-average, numbers. The Pine Siskin was reported in excellent numbers in all but the southeastern portion of the state, and it was described by some as *the* winter finch in areas where it occurred. Goldfinches, too, were more conspicuous than normal; this might be expected in view of the heavy Siskin flight. Pine Grosbeaks were scarce in some areas and completely absent in others; they were nowhere common. Purple Finches were scarce in most areas, but in other sectors there was at least the average number of reports, especially late in the winter.

The status of some of our other normal or expected winter landbirds may be summed up briefly. There were reports of Black-backed Three-toed Woodpeckers in four of the ten reporting regions, but with the exception of the Syracuse observation documented in the field notes section of this issue, all records were apparently of single birds. The possible mild influx

hinted at late in the fall did not take place, as the number of reports statewide was perhaps average for the season. Red-breasted Nuthatches put in a very poor showing, but Northern Shrikes had one of their better years, certainly an improvement over the previous winter. Boreal Chickadees and Gray Jays were reported only from the Adirondacks where they are, of course, resident. It was another good year for Snow Buntings and an even better one for Lapland Longspurs; the high count for the latter species was a flock of well over 100 seen in the Buffalo area.

Snowy Owls were generally reported with decreasing frequency as the winter wore on, although this was not always the case. Nine separate birds were seen by one group of observers in Region 1 in one day during the second week of March. Honors for the most unusual location, however, would go to the bird seen repeatedly inside prison grounds, an incident reported upon by Fred Hough. I steadfastly resist the temptation to make any further comment. As is usual during a Snowy Owl flight year there were the unfortunate reports of birds being killed or wounded by thoughtless gunners. There were scattered observations of the Saw-whet Owl. Goshawks were reported in no less than eight of the ten reporting regions, and Rough-legged Hawks were seen in good numbers throughout, a continuation of the trend that had become apparent in late autumn. White-winged gulls were quite scarce, except on Long Island, where two Black-headed Gulls were also seen.

Feeding stations, of course, provide their share of the ornithological highlights in any winter season. While we perhaps had nothing quite as exotic as the Varied Thrush and Green-tailed Towhee which appeared in neighboring states, there was a considerable amount of interest nevertheless, and the severe weather was undoubtedly a factor. Blackbirds of several types, including at least two Baltimore Orioles, were encouraged to stay on by feeding stations. A blackbird tentatively identified as a Brewer's was sighted in Region 4. Oregon Juncos were observed in several areas, and a Dickcissel was a feeder visitor in Region 8. An unprecedented nine White-crowned Sparrows were seen at or near feeders in Region 2, and there were reports of this species from several other areas. Many southern species, such as the Red-bellied Woodpecker, have spearheaded their way first into western and central parts of the state, and the appearance of one of these handsome woodpeckers at a Millbrook feeder in mid-winter constituted a first Dutchess County record. And feeding stations undoubtedly had a very important effect on the ever-increasing number of Cardinals reported. One was even seen in the central Adirondacks.

Waterfowl in general were reported in good numbers where there was sufficient open water, although some divers were still low. As Fritz Scheider suggests, the freezing over of some of the more northerly and normal wintering grounds was undoubtedly a factor. As an example, the icing conditions in the Niagara gorge forced waterfowl concentrations elsewhere. The results of the mid-January Federation Waterfowl Count are carried elsewhere in this issue, and readers will note that a record number of waterfowl was seen. There were the usual few and scattered reports during the winter of such species as the King and Common Eiders, Harlequin Duck, and Barrow's Goldeneye. The Lesser White-fronted Goose seen on Long

Island has been present there since early October and has received much local publicity; it is considered possibly an escaped bird. An Eared Grebe was reported from Region 1 in December. The March swan flight was considered quite good in the western part of the state.

As usual there were a few early December records of late southbound migrants. Chief among these was the empidonax flycatcher, probably a Yellow-bellied, that appeared in Region 9. A Scarlet Tanager was seen on Long Island through December 1. A Parasitic Jaeger on December 3 in Region 2 constituted the year's only report for that region. There was a Common Tern in Region 1 on December 3. Single Golden Plovers were seen the first week of December in both Regions 1 and 2, and a Red Phalarope was also noted in Region 2 on December 3.

Among other birds of especial interest during the winter were a Boreal Owl in Region 9 and a Hawk Owl in Region 4, and readers are referred to the respective regional summaries for details. A field note will be forthcoming on the latter record. In early February a Gyrfalcon was sighted over Katonah in Westchester County.

March was a sufficiently mild month to bring in the early landbird migrants, such as the Phoebe and Tree Swallow, about on schedule. Several areas reported moderate hawk flights. Two Greater Yellowlegs were noted in Region 2 late in March, and there was an early Pine Warbler in Region 1 on March 29.

Bluebirds were reported in somewhat encouraging numbers from several areas late in the winter, and this is a situation that will merit additional attention as the spring season develops.

REGION 1 — NIAGARA FRONTIER

RICHARD C. ROSCHE

Following an unusually mild and pleasant November, weather conditions reached the opposite extremes during the next two months. During January and February the average temperature at Buffalo was about seven degrees below normal, an unusual amount of deviation from the mean. Frequent snow storms and blowing, drifting snow helped make these two months what many called "an old fashioned winter". Although a record —20 degrees was registered February 2, this month, with its above normal temperature and precipitation, was a welcome relief from the previous two. The last half was considerably more mild than in most years and by month's end, early spring conditions generally prevailed. March was very changeable, but more mild than normal, and the usual storms were less intense than in most years. A record high of 71 degrees was reached on March 27.

A variety of conditions made the winter occurrence and distribution of birds interesting. Waterbirds, in general, were more scarce than in most years. An ice bridge formed in the gorge at Niagara Falls in mid December, thus rendering this area unsuitable for the normal concentrations of a variety of waterbirds through the end of the period. Lake Erie was said to be completely iced over from about late January to early March. However, parts of the harbor at Dunkirk remained ice free all winter. During the most severe weather conditions sections of the Niagara River were ice covered to a greater extent than usual. Inland, most ponds and lakes were frozen from early December through mid February, although Chautauqua Lake remained opened until at least mid December. During the last week of February many small ponds and lakes became ice free and remained so through the end of the period. Continuing below normal precipitation was reflected during March in the 'sink' regions, especially in the Towns of Clarence and Newstead. There, many of the usual depressions attractive to migrant waterfowl either lacked water altogether, or were in a constant state of flux.

What was lacking in waterbirds was more than made up for by landbirds. The notes below show that a great variety of birds lingered in the region well into December, probably a direct result of the mild preceding two months. Half-hardies, many of which were known to have survived the most severe weather conditions, were reported throughout the period in somewhat above normal numbers. A good finch flight coinciding with an excellent cone crop, probably resulted in crossbills and siskins remaining in the region in good numbers. In certain sections of the Lake Plains small rodents were unusually abundant. As might be expected, the population of some species of hawks and owls reached unprecedented highs. A peak year in the Snowy Owl cycle added something more.

Weather conditions conducive to bird movement commenced in late February and by the end of that month a raft of early spring migrants had invaded this region. While this movement was less obvious in the hilly interior than on the adjacent Lake Plains, most areas experienced an influx of migrants from two to three weeks earlier than during the average year. A number of species were observed much earlier than the average arrival dates for the region. On the other hand, for some unknown reason, a few usual mid March arrivals were either later than usual or were not reported at all.

In the following notes BAS Count, BOS Count and JAS Count indicate annual Christmas Bird Counts taken by members of the Buffalo Audubon Society, Buffalo Ornithological Society and Jamestown Audubon Society respectively.

Loons — Ducks: Common Loons were observed at Chautauqua Lake Dec 4 (Parker et al) and Mar 29 (Brownstein et al). Only one other record, four birds Feb 22 at Dunkirk Harbor (Pillsbury), was reported. A single Red-throated Loon was reported Dec 3 at Niagara Falls (Schaffner et al). The freezing of remaining open water in early February probably accounts for a Red-necked Grebe being picked up in an open field Feb 9 in the Town of Orchard Park (specimen in Buffalo Museum of Science) and a Horned Grebe picked up Feb 6 along the Allegheny River near Allegany (Eaton). One Red-necked Grebe Mar 11 on the Niagara River opposite Buffalo (Axtells et al) was the only other report. About ten Horned Grebes remained on the Niagara River until mid December. At Dunkirk Harbor four were observed Jan 7 (Red et al) and one was still present Jan 22 (Stanley). Spring migrants began to appear in mid March. One Eared Grebe was reported Dec 19 at FortNiagara (Schaffner et al). One Pied-billed Grebe remained on the Niagara River until Dec 26 (BOS Count) and another occurred Dec 31 at Jamestown (JAS Count). The first migrant appeared Mar 12 at Dunkirk Harbor (Mitchell et al) and there were numerous reports Mar 25-31. One Double-crested Cormorant was observed Dec 19 at Fort Niagara (Schaffner et al). Wintering Great Blue Heron numbers on Grand Island gradually decreased from a maximum of 16 on Dec 4 (Brockner). After Jan 19 when four were seen (Freitag), only single individuals were reported through the end of the period. One was observed Dec 20-29 near Vandalia and was known to have survived a night of —16 degrees (Eaton). A good flight occurred Mar 27 when six were observed migrating past Wanakah (Clark) and five were seen flying over Buffalo (Thompson et al). Nesting birds were present Mar 26 at the Attica heronry (Rosche) and Mar 31 at Oak Orchard (Schaffner et al). Single Black-crowned Night Herons were observed at Buffalo Dec 11 (Freitag), Jan 13 (Axtells) and Feb 26 (Freitags). Another Jan 29 at Angola (Stevensons) was the only other report. Forty-seven Whistling Swans were observed Dec 4 and 10 at Chautauqua Lake (Parker et al). The March swan flight was good, but probably because there was open water elsewhere, they did not occur in their usual numbers on the Niagara River and in the Clarence Sinks-Oak Orchard region. Unusually early were three observed Mar 3 on the Niagara River (Schaffner) and seven observed Mar 4 on Attica Reservoir (Rosche). Maximum counts: 100 on Mar 15 on Red House Lake, Allegany State Park (Klonski) and 70 on Mar 27 over Elma (Coggeshall). Canada Geese were reported during every month in this report area. One occurred Dec 4 at Grand Island (Klabunde et al); members of the Jamestown Audubon Society reported them during the Christmas Count period; and 80 were reported Jan 2 over Batavia (Buckland). Migrants over Buffalo were first observed Feb 20 (Quitt) and many were observed in all parts of the region thereafter. Maximum count in the Oak Orchard-Wolcottsville area was 16,400 on Mar 26 (Brockner). One Canada Goose believed to be *B. c. hutchinsii* was observed Mar 31

at Oak Orchard (Schaffner et al). Blue Geese were observed Mar 20-31 in the Wolcottville-Clarence-Medina Sinks region, a maximum of eight being counted Mar 26 (Axtells). Black Ducks appeared to be more abundant than usual on the Niagara River during January and February. Four Gadwall Dec 4 at Grand Island (Brownstein) was the only report. Several Pintail remained at Niagara Falls until Jan 10 (Schaffner). The first migrants appeared Feb 28 in the Town of Newstead (Mitchell). Three Green-winged Teal were last reported Dec 4 at Grand Island (Brockner). One on the Niagara River opposite Buffalo Mar 12 (Axtells) was probably an early migrant. A Blue-winged Teal Dec 16 in the gorge at Niagara Falls represents the first winter record for the Niagara Frontier region (Mitchell et al). Somewhat earlier than usual was one reported Mar 19 at Grand Island (Rew). The American Widgeon was last reported Dec 26 at Niagara Falls (BOS Count) whereas away from the Niagara River region, ten Dec 4 at Chautauqua Lake (Parker et al) were the latest. The first migrants were observed Feb 26 in the Town of Newstead (Rosche). Three Shovelers appeared Mar 26 at Oak Orchard (Axtells et al) and three others were observed Mar 27 near Boston (Bourne). One pair of Wood Ducks Mar 11 at Wethersfield Springs (Rosche) was the earliest report. Winter populations of diving ducks on the Niagara River impressed some observers as being somewhat lower than usual. This was especially true for such species as Redhead, Bufflehead and Oldsquaw. Canvasbacks were somewhat less abundant than usual, but some observers did not agree. After last year's large concentrations of Common Mergansers, this species was obviously less abundant this winter. Migrant divers began to appear on various inland waters during the last few days of February. Seven Ring-necked Ducks were observed Dec 4 at Chautauqua Lake (Parker et al) and one was noted Feb 14 at Dunkirk Harbor (Schaffner et al). A number were reported during the first few days of March, indicating a somewhat earlier than usual flight. Scattered Lesser Scaup were observed during the winter, but the March flight did not seem to amount to its usual proportions. King Eiders were present in various places on the Niagara River until early January, and from late February to late March. As many as five occurred in the gorge at Niagara River until the ice bridge forced them elsewhere. At least one, and perhaps two, adult males in breeding plumage, unusual in this region, were observed under satisfactory conditions in late February and March. One male was still present Mar 26 at Fort Niagara (Mitchell et al). One Common Scoter was observed Dec 26 at Grand Island (Seeber) and small numbers of White-winged Scoters were present on the Niagara River and Lake Ontario throughout the period. One Ruddy Duck was last noted Jan 2 near Niagara Falls (Nathan et al). Ten Mar 29 at Chautauqua Lake (Brownstein et al) were somewhat earlier than usual. Eight Red-breasted Mergansers and one female Hooded Merganser wintered on the Allegheny River between Olean and Salamanca (Eaton). Small numbers of Hooded Mergansers were reported from various places on the Niagara River, Lake Ontario and Dunkirk Harbor throughout the period. Migrants appeared in early March.

Hawks — Owls: Weather conditions on certain days in March were favorable for what many called an unusually good March for hawk migration. Three notable flights were reported: Mar 12 along the south shore of Lake Erie near Portland when about 105 individuals were counted (Mitchell et al), Mar 18 over Forest Lawn Cemetery at Buffalo when about 48 birds were noted (Thompson et al) and Mar 27 on the south shore of Lake Erie between Athol Springs and Derby when about 51 individuals were observed (Clark). The Red-shouldered Hawk was the most common migrant followed by the Red-tailed and Sparrow Hawks. A few accipiters, Rough-legged and Marsh Hawks also were reported. Unusually early were two Turkey Vultures reported Mar 5 near Lawtons (Webster). They were observed regularly in the Oak Orchard area after Mar 12 — in marked contrast to last year when none were reported in the region prior to Apr 3. A Goshawk was reported Dec 31 at Jamestown (JAS Count). Six reports of single birds Mar 12-27 indicates a greater frequency than in most years. Near last year's nesting site in Allegany State Park a single bird was present Mar 29 (Kloniski). Two Sharp-shinned Hawks and a number of Cooper's Hawks were observed prior to March when migrants began moving into the region. Red-tailed Hawks were more abundant on the Lake Plains than usual, the resident population being obviously augmented by a darker backed, lighter breasted, brownish-headed subspecies of probably midwestern origin.

The latter were all but gone by the time the permanent resident population began nesting activities. During January and February Red-tails were hard to find in the higher hills of the Allegheny Plateau. The unusually mild November probably induced an unprecedented number of Red-shouldered Hawks to linger through the winter. Single birds were reported Dec 18 at Springbrook (Danner), Dec 31 at Jamestown (JAS Count), Jan 1 near East Aurora (BAS Count) and Jan 21 near Derby (Bourne). Courting individuals were observed Mar 3-31 in various areas and 34 were observed migrating over Lakeview Mar 26 (Axtells). Rough-legged Hawks were present in moderate numbers on the Lake Plains throughout the period, the maximum count being 11 between Lewiston and Wilson Jan 8 (Klabundes). Like last year a number penetrated the foothills of the Allegheny Plateau during December and early January. Much interest was aroused by the presence of a Bald Eagle at a former nesting site on Navy Island in the West Branch of the Niagara River. The bird, an adult, was observed Jan 19-Mar 25 by many. Another, an immature, was observed Mar 22 at Oak Orchard (Brownstein) and Mar 31 (Schaffner et al). Marsh Hawks continue to increase, there being many more winter reports than in the past two years. Turkeys were reported in greater numbers from southern tier localities than in past winters. Flocks of 25 were observed Dec 3 in the Town of Great Valley (Eaton) and Feb 1 at Bone Run, Cattaraugus County (Hiller) in addition to scattered smaller groups. Mr. Fred Evans, New York State Conservation Department foreman in charge of trapping, stated that the birds were harder to catch and did not come to baited areas as they have in previous years; perhaps good mast in the woods or increased wildness after two hunting seasons is the reason (Eaton). Whether or not the Chukar becomes established as a member of our local avifauna in the Lewiston area remains to be seen. A number of birds released last autumn by local sportsman's groups in that area were noted throughout the winter in a variety of locales including several individuals that were 'hardened' windowsill perchers (Klabundes et al). Eighty American Coots were still present Dec 4 at Chautauqua Lake (Parker et al). At least three wintered at Dunkirk Harbor again (Rew et al). The only migrant occurred Mar 15 at Oak Orchard (Brownstein). Early Killdeer were observed Feb 12 at Randolph (Rew et al) and Feb 13 at Youngstown (Brownstein). During the last week of February they were widely scattered and moderately common. An unusually late Golden Plover was studied carefully Dec 4 at Grand Island (Brownstein et al). The American Woodcock was first reported Mar 10 at Grand Island (Schaffner). There were many reports Mar 20-31. One to three Common Snipe spent the winter at Jamestown (Beal et al). An early migrant was observed Mar 25 at Wethersfield Springs (Rosche). The number of all species of gulls, with the possible exception of the Great Black-backed, were much lower than in many winters on the Niagara River. Glaucous and Island Gulls were very scarce, the latter not being reported until Dec 31. Of interest are observations of the Glaucous Mar 25 at Oak Orchard (Mitchell et al) and Mar 30 at the Clarence Sinks (Freitag). This is a rare bird away from the Great Lakes and the Niagara River. The Iceland Gull (*L. g. kumlieni*) was not reported. During December Bonaparte's Gull populations on the Niagara River diminished from a maximum of 2500 on Dec 3 (Schaffner et al). Forty-seven were last observed Jan 8 (Webster et al). Migrants began moving into the area Mar 25-31 and five Mar 29 at Chautauqua Lake (Brownstein et al) were of interest. Three Little Gulls were observed Dec 3 on the Lower Niagara River (Schaffner et al). One was last noted there Jan 2 (Klabundes). Two individuals Dec 18 at Dunkirk Harbor (Parker et al) help to accentuate the increasing importance of this area for waterbirds in winter. A single Common Tern remained on the Niagara River opposite Buffalo until Dec 3 (Schaffner et al). Mourning Doves wintered in larger numbers than usual, especially in some southern tier areas. About 100 wintered in the vicinity of Olean (Eaton) and groups of up to 50 were regularly reported from the Jamestown area. A single Barn Owl was still present at the Hamburg nesting site Jan 1 (BAS Count). Another was periodically observed from early January to early March at Wilson (Klabundes et al). No one would deny that this was a peak year in the Snowy Owl cycle. Moderate numbers were present throughout the period especially in the vicinity of metropolitan Buffalo and the open water of the Niagara River. All reports came from an area northwest of a line drawn from Jamestown northeast through Machias and Attica and reports from the southwestern or northeastern sectors of this area were

sparse. A number of birds were known to have been shot or crippled by other means. A pronounced movement was evident during the first two weeks of March, enabling one field party on Mar 11 to observe nine different individuals in one day (Axtells), a feat seldom possible in this region. Long-eared Owls appeared to be somewhat less numerous than in most winters, four being the maximum observed Jan 15 at Somerset (Axtells). Unprecedented numbers of Short-eared Owls wintered on Grand Island and the Lake Ontario Plain. There were few reports south of Buffalo. As many as 27 were noted on Grand Island Dec 26-Mar 12, and on two occasions several were observed roosting on ice floes in the Niagara Fiver (Coggeshall). Single Saw-whet Owls were observed Dec 26 on Grand Island (Seeber) and Mar 25 near Youngstown (Axtells et al).

Goatsuckers — Shrikes: The number of observations indicate that the Belted Kingfisher wintered in better than average numbers along open streams in the Allegheny Plateau. Likewise, Yellow-shafted Flickers were more abundant than usual in certain areas on the Lake Plains. Numerous migrants were reported Mar 25-31. One Red-bellied Woodpecker was periodically observed in the town of Batavia (Buckland) — a regular station. One - two Red-headed Woodpeckers wintered at a feeder at Lewiston (Binghams) and another individual was observed Dec 4 and Feb 19 at Grand Island (Brockners). These are regular wintering areas. Single Yellow-bellied Sapsuckers were observed Dec 26 at Grand Island (Seeber) and Mar 18 at Gowanda (Rew). Of outstanding interest was a Black-backed Three-toed Woodpecker observed by many active field observers Feb 13 - Mar 12 at Grand Island. It probably was the same individual observed last October in a woodlot several miles distant. Several Eastern Phoeebes were reported Mar 22-30 and four Tree Swallows occurred Mar 30 at Oak Orchard (Brownstein et al). These insectivorous species first appeared during a period when Eaton reported a good hatch of Stoneflies in the Olean area. Horned Larks began moving through Jan 15 - 20 with the peak movement about Mar 1-14. An indication of the severity of weather conditions during mid winter was experienced in sections of the higher hills when hundreds of Blue Jays were commonly observed feeding on exposed manure fields (Rosche). Many observers commented on a scarcity of Black-capped Chickadees, but this condition was much less apparent away from the Lake Plains. After what was termed "a mild invasion" a year ago, the Tufted Titmouse appears to have held its own, and possibly increased, only in two southern tier areas. Seven were observed Jan 2 in wooded river bottoms in the vicinity of Seneca Junction (Eaton). Two additional birds were observed on several occasions in the Jamestown area (Hiller et al). Only one other, a single bird that visited a feeding station at Angola throughout the period (Stevensons), was reported. Red-breasted Nuthatches were very scarce. No apparent change occurred in the status of the Carolina Wren, single individuals being reported from long established localities in the region. A Mockingbird was again observed Dec 25 and Mar 3 in suburban Buffalo (Dietrich). At least three individuals were observed during February and March in the Lewiston-Cambria region (Klabundes et al) — the same general area where they first occurred a year ago. Single Catbirds visited feeding stations Jan 14 and 20 at Hamburg (Avery, Bourne) and Feb 5 in the Town of Stafford (Masons). Robins were generally well scattered throughout the region in above average numbers all winter. Migrants were common beginning in late February. Hermit Thrushes were observed at Grand Island Dec 26 and Jan 7 (Rosche) and at Jamestown Mar 7 (Swanson rep. Beal). Eastern Bluebirds were more frequent after the first two were observed Feb 19 at Lewiston (Wendlings et al) than a year ago. One additional February report and several March observations suggest that continental populations are at long last on the increase. An abundance of winterberry, dogwood and viburnum berries, particularly in southern tier areas, probably accounts for the larger than normal number of Cedar Waxwings observed. Northern Shrikes were well distributed throughout the region. Loggerhead Shrikes occurred Mar 23 near New Oregon (Bourne) and Mar 27 at Derby (Clark). There were fewer than the usual number of reports in late March.

Warblers — Vireos: Two Myrtle Warblers were observed Dec 25 at Grand Island (Brownstein) and one was still there on the following day (BOS Count). A very early Pine Warbler was observed Mar 29 at Emery Park (Byron et al).

Blackbirds — Sparrows: Eastern Meadowlarks, Red-winged Blackbirds and Brown-headed Cowbirds wintered in unusually large numbers in many sections of the region. The last week of February saw a great movement of these species as well as the Common Grackle into the region. A noteworthy blackbird flight was witnessed Mar 27 along the south shore of Lake Erie between Athol Springs and Sturgeon Point (Clark). In six hours the following numbers were estimated to have passed by: Eastern Meadowlark, 3500; Red-winged Blackbird, 18000; Common Grackle, 8000; Brown-headed Cowbird, 11000; Starling, 6000. There were a number of unusually early Rusty Blackbird observations, the first occurring Feb 26 near Napoli (Mitchel et al). A male Baltimore Oriole was picked up dead Jan 7 at Hamburg (Csont, Avery et al). Some aspects of the winter finch flight were disappointing while others made winter birding more regarding than in most years. The very species, Evening Grosbeak and Common Redpoll, that were the most conspicuous a year ago were very scarce. Only six reports of each of these species were received. The maximum count of five Evening Grosbeaks occurred Jan 7 at Batavia (Masons), Jan 14 near Youngstown (Rew et al) and Feb 6 at Hamburg (Bourne). Five Common Redpolls were observed Jan 8 at Wilson (Klabundes). The remainder of the reports were confined to Mar 15-26 with a maximum count of six occurring Mar 25 near Youngstown (Axtells et al). There were scattered observations of Purple Finches, their numbers noticeably increasing in early March in many localities. Three Pine Grosbeaks were observed Feb 24 near Hamburg (Bourne). After being widespread in large numbers throughout the region in late October and November, Pine Siskins were most abundant in the southern tier during December and January. Maximum counts occurred at Allegany State Park Dec 24 when about 400 were estimated (Schaffner et al) and Jan 20 when 350 were reported (Brockners). On Dec 31 a total of 1208 were counted in the Jamestown area (JAS Count). From mid February through March they were more widely scattered in generally smaller flocks. American Goldfinches were, perhaps, more abundant than usual, the maximum count of 78 occurring Dec 31 in the Jamestown region (JAS Count). Crossbills, too, were most numerous during December, January and February in the southern tier before a notable March flight occurred throughout the region. Red Crossbills were far more frequent than the White-winged, although more January observations of the latter were reported. During the last three weeks of March Red Crossbills were widely scattered and some were observed on several occasions within the city limits of Buffalo and several other suburban villages. Maximum counts of 230 Reds and 125 White-wings were noted Mar 15 in the Youngstown-Wilson area (Brownstein). Available data suggests that the southward White-winged flight did not pass through this region. Several Rufous-sided Towhees wintered at feeding stations and a number were reported in late March. A Vesper Sparrow was reported at a feeder in East Aurora during January (details unknown). A single Oregon Junco was observed Jan 1 and Feb 22 at Wilson (Brownstein et al) and up to seven Oregon-type juncos, all females, visited a feeder near Vandalia Dec 20-Mar 31; two of these were collected (Eaton). A male was noted near South Vandalia several times during the winter. Slate-colored Juncos and Tree Sparrows impressed some observers as being less numerous than usual on the Lake Plains, but, if anything, the opposite was true in the hill country south of Buffalo. For the second consecutive winter a number of Field Sparrows were reported. At Wilson seven were observed Jan 10 and six Mar 15 (Brownstein et al). One was reported Dec 31 at Jamestown (JAS Count) and 12 were reported Jan 1 in the Hamburg-East Aurora region (BAS Count). Two groups of two-four individual White-crowned Sparrows wintered at Lewiston and near Wilson (Klabundes). Another was observed Feb 12 at Randolph (Rew et al). More than the usual number of White-throated Sparrows wintered, many of these being reported from feeding stations. Two Fox Sparrows were observed Dec 24 near Vandalia (Brownstein et al) and Feb 12 at Lewiston (Heilborns). Several probably migrants occurred Mar 16-31. Maximum count of 125 Lapland Longspurs occurred Jan 7 at Somers (Schaffner) and the last were reported Mar 17 at Shelby (Mitchell et al). Snow Buntings were scarce during December but numbers began moving through the region in early January. The peak of a much better flight than usual occurred Feb 11-13 when at least 12,800 individuals were estimated in five separate areas in addition to numerous smaller concentrations.

4R Dartmouth Avenue, Buffalo 15

REGION 2 — GENESEE

HOWARD S. MILLER

The first ten days of December continued the mild weather of November. The rest of December and the first half of January brought average winter weather with several days of sub-zero temperatures (-7° on Dec 24). The last half of January and the first few days of February brought a protracted cold spell during which the mercury did not rise to freezing for over two weeks. This cold spell reached a climax on February 2 when the temperature dropped to -16° , tying the second lowest reading recorded at Rochester. The last ten days of February were well above average in temperature with a maximum of 65° . This brought an early start in migration, with numbers of Canada Geese, Pintails, American Widgeon, and Red-winged Blackbirds being present by March 1. The migration continued at a fairly steady pace during about an average March. The temperatures reached a high of 74° March 27, which produced a good but short-lived hawk flight and a heavy movement of small land birds.

Snowfall for the period, although somewhat above average, was only slightly above half that of the two previous winters. Heavy rains the last week of February produced some "flash" flooding which quickly subsisted, leaving the water level below normal for the time of year.

The freezing of most bodies of water by Christmas drove most of the "puddle" ducks south, leaving only a few stragglers present until late February. The March swan flight was much better than a year ago, and the respective Canada Goose flight was above average. Migrant ducks seemed rather slow in arriving in any large numbers. White-winged Gulls were rather scarce. Eastern Meadowlarks, Red-winged Blackbirds, and Brown-headed Cowbirds wintered in good numbers. Among the finches, the Pine Siskin was very common, and the Red Crossbill was quite common and generally distributed except during January. Evening Grosbeaks were very scarce and Common Redpolls only slightly less so. White-winged Crossbills were present during the last part of the period in small numbers, but Pine Grosbeaks were unreported. Lapland Longspurs and Snow Buntings were present in fairly good numbers, especially the latter.

Outstanding birds seen during the period included the Barrow's Goldeneye, Harlequin Duck, King Eider, Goshawk, Pigeon Hawk, Golden Plover, Red Phalarope, Parasitic Jaeger, Oregon Junco, and no less than ten wintering white-crowned Sparrows.

Loons — Ducks: A Red-necked Grebe was seen Dec 17 on Irondequoit Bay (Kemnitzer), and some 5 Horned Grebes were at the same locality on Dec 4 (Kemnitzer). After Dec 4 the latter decreased rapidly in numbers with only occasional single birds being seen after mid-December. A Pied-billed Grebe was noted from Dec 26-31 on the Genesee River in Rochester (Foster et al). The first spring migrant was reported Mar 9 at Highland Park (Tetlow), one was seen Mar 11 at Summerville (Listman et al), and two were observed Mar 26 at Buck Pond (Foley et al). A Great Blue Heron was at Irondequoit Bay on Dec 26 (Smith), and one was seen Mar 25 at Hamlin (O'Hara et al). A Mute Swan appeared at Holland's Cove (north of Ontario in Wayne County) about Feb 19 with a flock of Canada Geese (according to residents of the area). It was still present Mar 12 (Foster et al), and while there is no doubt of its identity, the fact that it was approached within ten feet raises the possibility of an escaped or wandering bird. Two Whistling Swans were noted Mar 14 near Manitou (Listman). Fifty-one were seen the following day on Irondequoit Bay by the same observer, and there were 22 on Mar 26 along the west lakeshore (Foster). The first "newspaper" reports of Canada Geese were the Feb 19 flock at Holland's Cove and a flock over Rochester on Feb 21. Average numbers were observed during March throughout the area. Some 500 Black Ducks were seen Dec 25 at Conesus (Listman), and 100 were noted Jan 27 on the Genesee River (Zachmann). A Gadwall was at Manitou on Jan 7 (Listman). A Green-winged Teal was seen at Ling Road on Jan 18 (H. Mitchell), and two were seen there Mar 11 (Listman et al). The first Blue-winged Teal was reported Mar 24 at Braddock's (Listman), and two were seen the next day at Long Pond (O'Hara et al). Two American Widgeon seen at Irondequoit Bay Feb 25 by several observers were the first reported for the season as were three Shovelers seen at Braddock's Mar 28 (Listman). A Wood Duck was seen on a small creek in the center of Hemlock on

Jan 2 (GOS Count). A Wood Duck had also been seen at this spot on the previous year's count, which raises the interesting question as to whether it was the same bird. Two Wood Ducks were noted at Manitou Mar 21 (Listman). Eight Red-heads were seen Dec 24 at Russell Station (Listman), and 800 were observed at Sodus Bay Mar 17 (Peakall). Aside from these two records only scattered individuals were reported. A Ring-necked Duck was seen Jan 15 at Holland's Cove (Kemnitzner, Lloyd). Five were noted Mar 4 at Braddock's (Miller, Starling), and 75 were seen Mar 31 along the west lakeshore (Foley et al). This duck has become increasingly common in recent years, especially as a spring migrant. Thirteen Canvasback were counted Feb 19 along the lakeshore (GOS hike), and 40 were seen at Sodus Bay Mar 17 (Peakall). Five hundred Greater Scaup were seen Jan 28 in the Genesee River (Zachmann). Some 2500 Common Goldeneyes seen Jan 26 at Manitou is a high count even for this common winter duck. A female Barrow's Goldeneye was carefully observed under very favorable conditions and in direct comparison with male and female Common Goldeneyes at Pultneyville Mar 12 (Foster, Miller). A specimen was collected years ago at Sodus Bay, and there are two other more recent sight records of this rare species. A count of 107 Buffle-heads was made Jan 15 at Sodus Bay (Kemnitzner, Lloyd), and 50 were noted Feb 4 at Rigney's Blubb (Listman). These were the peak counts on this increasingly common winter duck.

A male Harlequin Duck was seen Dec 12 at Manitou (Listman), and two females or immatures were present from Dec 17-27 at Sea Breeze where they were seen by several observers. About 1500 Oldsquaws were at Sea Breeze on Jan 15 (Kemnitzner). Single King Eiders were seen at various points along the lakeshore from Webster Park to Troutberg on dates ranging from Dec 10 to Jan 26. The peak count on White-winged Scoters was 200 at Sea Breeze Jan 15 (Kemnitzner). A Surf Scoter was seen Dec 4 at Silver Lake (Rosche), and there was a Ruddy Duck at Russell Station on Feb 7 (Listman). Ten Hooded Mergansers seen Mar 15 on Irondequoit Bay (Lloyd, Listman) was the maximum count on this species. Six hundred Common Mergansers along the lakeshore Mar 15 (Listman, Lloyd) was a rather high count for this species.

Hawks — Owls: Two Turkey Vultures seen at Braddock's Mar 28 (L. Moon) were the first of the season. A Goshawk was observed at Perry on Mar 11 (Rosche). Occasional Sharp-shinned and Cooper's Hawks were reported during the winter, and a few (mostly the former) were observed during the hawk flights of Mar 27-28. Red-tailed Hawks were rather uncommon during the winter along the lakeshore, but 35 were seen on the "Little" Finger Lakes Count of Jan 2. Forty-two were noted during a hawk flight at Braddock's on Mar 28 (L. Moon). Peak counts on the Red-shouldered Hawk, a common early spring migrant, were 12 on Mar 15 at Braddock's (Listman) and 24 at the same locality on Mar 28 (L. Moon). Rough-legged Hawks were regular along the lakeshore during the winter, and nine were seen Jan 2 on the "Little" Finger Lakes Count. An immature Bald Eagle was observed Mar 22 near Holcomb (Listman), two immatures were seen during the Mar 28 hawk flight at Braddock's (L. Moon), and an immature was seen Mar 28 near Irondequoit Bay (McNeth). A Pigeon Hawk, always a very rare winter resident in this area, was seen at Livonia Jan 2 (Listman).

A Virginia Rail, almost certainly a wintering bird, was noted Mar 26 at Buck Pond (Dobson). A Common Gallinule was seen Dec 4 at Irondequoit Bay (Kemnitzner, Smith). A Killdeer was seen in unfrozen shallows of the Genesee River in the heart of Rochester from Jan 29 to Feb 5 (Foley et al). The first migrant was reported Feb 24 at Lighthouse Road, west of Manitou (Listman). Fourteen were seen near Rose's Marsh Mar 21 by the same observer. A very late Golden Plover was studied Dec 3 at the Irondequoit Bay outlet (Kemnitzner). The first migrant Woodcock was reported Mar 12 at Railroad Mills (Jarvis), two were seen Mar 26 at Hamlin Park (Listman), and one was seen Mar 28 at Braddock's (Listman). Two Greater Yellowlegs were seen Mar 27 at Long Pond (B. Brown). A Sanderling lingered at the Irondequoit Bay outlet until Dec 11 (Tetlow et al), and a Red Phalarope remained in the same general area until Dec 3 (Kemnitzner).

The year's only report of a Parasitic Jaeger was a very late bird seen at Manitou Dec 3 (Listman). Two Glaucous Gulls were seen along the west lakeshore Feb 25 (O'Hara, Tetlow). Single birds were seen at Irondequoit Bay Jan 15

(Foster et al), Mar 12 (Lloyd et al), and Mar 18 (GOS hike). One bird was seen at Sodus Bay on Jan 15 (Kemnitzner et al), and there was one at Braddock's on Mar 15 (Listman). Two Iceland Gulls, one at Highland Park Dec 26 (Starling) and one the same day on the Genesee River near Summerville (Mitchell), were the only records for the period. Great Black-backed Gulls seemed more common and generally distributed than during many winters, with a maximum count of 50 on Mar 15 along the lakeshore (Listman, Lloyd). Some 4000 Herring and 8000 Ring-billed Gulls in the same area and on the same date (Listman, Lloyd) point to the usual spring buildup of these two very common species. The peak count of fall Bonaparte's Gulls was 1000 birds Dec 10 at Sea Breeze (Starling et al). They decreased rapidly after this and were unrecorded on the Christmas Count Dec 26. Seven, however, were seen Dec 31 on the Genesee River in Rochester (Foster et al). They had not reappeared at the end of the reporting period.

Mourning Doves wintered in good numbers, with a high count of 55 in Irondequoit Dec 10 (Kemnitzner). When severe weather arrived, they appeared commonly around feeders.

Two Snowy Owls were seen during the middle of the winter in Penfield (Lloyd), and most trips along the west lakeshore during the entire period produced from one to three individuals. Two were still present Mar 28 at Manitou (Listman). At least two birds were found dead, apparently shot. A Long-eared Owl was seen in South Lime on Jan 2 (Haller et al). A maximum of six Short-eared Owls was present in the Braddock's area during the entire period, and five were seen during February in Pittsford (Mrs. E. White). A Saw-whet Owl was observed in Salmon Creek Woods on Mar 17 (Listman).

Goatsuckers — Shrikes: A Belted Kingfisher was noted along the Genesee River in Rochester from Jan 2 (Zachmann et al) to Jan 15 (Starling). Two Yellow-shafted Flickers were seen near Seneca Park Jan 29 (Tetlow), one was seen at Reed Road Feb 19 (Miller), and one was noted near Irondequoit Bay Mar 15 (Listman, Lloyd). The first apparent migrant of the season was reported at Manitou Mar 28 (Listman). Seven Pileated Woodpeckers noted Jan 2 during the GOS count of the "Little" Finger Lakes area indicates a gradual increase of the species in parts of our area. One was seen near Pultneyville Mar 11 (Listman et al). A Red-bellied Woodpecker was seen at a feeder in Rochester until Mar 28 (Barlow), and an immature Red-headed Woodpecker frequented a feeding station in Walworth until Jan 13 (Spencer). No Three-toed Woodpeckers were reported in the area.

Four Eastern Phoeebes were reported at Braddock's Mar 28 (Listman). They must have gone on a low calorie diet for some time after their arrival. Two Tree Swallows, the first of the season, were noted Mar 26 at Sodus Bay (Peakall). A Tufted Titmouse was seen Dec 25 in Rochester (Spitz), and one frequented the McNeet feeder near Irondequoit May until about Feb 1 when it disappeared. Last year five frequented this feeder. Since this individual disappeared we have had no reports of this bird in our area. It seemed well established along the east lakeshore for several years with scattered records elsewhere, but for some reason it appears to have decreased sharply. About three Red-breasted Nuthatches wintered in Durand, and one was reported in Letchworth Park Mar 11 (Rosche). A Winter Wren was reported from Avon until at least Jan 27 (Haller), and one was seen in Island Cottage Woods Mar 26 (Dobson). A Carolina Wren spent the winter at the McNett feeder near Irondequoit Bay, and one was reported at a feeder near Avon at least until Jan 27 (Haller).

A Mockingbird wintered in West Webster (McNett), one wintered in Fishers (Imms), one was seen in Penfield Feb 21 (Kemnitzner), and there was one in Greece on Mar 12 (Lloyd, MacRae). A Catbird was seen Jan 7 near Durand (Foley et al). A flock of about 30 Robins wintered in Durand, ten were seen near Hemlock Lake Jan 2 (Foster et al), and there were reports of scattered wintering birds in other areas. Small numbers (one to five birds) appeared in early March. These probably were birds which had wintered in the area, but large flocks were migrating before the end of the period, with a maximum of 250 on Mar 28 at Braddock's (Listman). Two Eastern Bluebirds were seen Dec 3 at B. A. N. C. (GOS hike), and four were noted Jan 29 at Powder Mills Park (Jarvis). One was seen Mar 23 at Holcomb (Listman), and five were seen at Manitou Mar 26 (Listman).

Thirty Water Pipits were observed Mar 28 at Manitou (Listman). The largest flock of Cedar Waxwings reported was one of about 40 birds seen near Webster Mar 11 (Zachmann et al). Northern Shrikes were frequently reported in various areas, with a maximum of three on Mar 26 near Hamlin Park (Webster et al).

Vireos — Warblers: A Myrtle Warbler was reported Dec 26 near the "Dugway" in Penfield (Schaefers), and two were seen at Reed Road on Feb 19 (Foster).

Blackbirds — Sparrows: Eastern Meadowlark records included 18 at Walworth on Dec 14 (Spencer), ten at Hamlin on Dec 18 (Foley et al), four at Hemlock on Jan 2 (Foster et al), three in Penfield on Jan 10 (Munson), and 12 near Braddock's Feb 17-18 (Listman et al). About 100 were seen migrating at Braddock's Mar 28 (Listman). Two hundred fifty Red-winged Blackbirds were seen in Irondequoit Dec 17 (Kemnitzer), and 20 were at the "Dugway" in Penfield Jan 8 (Miller). Five hundred were seen in migration at Braddock's Feb 25, and some 5000 were there Mar 28 (Listman). The last date produced a very heavy flight of mixed blackbirds plus an estimated 5000 Starlings.

Four Rusty Blackbirds appeared at the Leubner feeder in Irondequoit on Mar 4. Seven were present Mar 6 and three on Mar 8. The frequenting of feeders by this species is very unusual. Three Common Grackles were seen Dec 26 at Flynn Road (Listman et al), and there were two in Greece on Jan 5 (Dobson). One thousand were seen at Braddock's on Mar 28 (Listman). This undesirable species seems to be steadily increasing. Two hundred Brown-headed Cowbirds were noted Dec 26 in the 15-mile diameter Christmas Count area. Ninety were seen Jan 12 at Rigney's Bluff (Listman). There were 1000 at Braddock's on Mar 28 (Listman).

Five Evening Grosbeaks were observed Jan 14 in Webster (Kemnitzer), one was seen at a feeder in Pittsford from Jan 30 to Feb 6 (Cameron), and one was noted in Durand-Eastman Park on Mar 19 (Miller). This is in sharp contrast to a year ago. The Purple Finch was unreported on the Christmas Count. Three were seen on Feb 12 in Seneca Park (Lloyd, MacRae), and six were noted in Durand Mar 26 (Dobson). No Pine Grosbeaks were reported. The only reports of Common Redpolls were two birds in Seneca Park on Feb 12 (Lloyd, MacRae), one near Braddock's Mar 22 (GOS hike), and 18 at Hamlin Beach Park Mar 26 (Dobson). Last year they occurred in untold thousands. The case of the Pine Siskin is just the reverse. A year ago they were uncommon. This year they were common until mid-December. They decreased in numbers until early February when they again became common. From this time until the end of the period their twittering songs were a common sound in the hemlock groves and black birch stands. Maximum counts were 125 at Pellett Road woods Feb 21 (Kemnitzer), 300 in Irondequoit Mar 26 (L. Moon), 150 on Mar 26 at Hamlin Beach Park (Foley et al), and 200 on Mar 27 in Durand (Foley).

Red Crossbills, after Pine Siskins, were the most generally distributed of the winter finches. After a good late fall flight they decreased during December with only one being recorded on the Christmas Count. Ten were noted in Durand Feb 11 (Tetlow et al) and were present to the end of the period. Twenty were seen Mar 26 in Irondequoit (L. Moon), and there were ten the same day in Hamlin Beach Park (Foster et al). A count of 100 was made Mar 29 in Fairport (Jones). Two White-winged Crossbills were seen Feb 11 in Durand (Foster), three were seen at Hamlin Beach Park Mar 25-26 (Listman et al), and four were noted on the latter date in Irondequoit (L. Moon).

A Rufous-sided Towhee was observed Jan 11 in Union Hill (Lloyd). Three Savannah Sparrows were seen Mar 28 at Braddock's (Listman). An Oregon Junco was noted at a feeder near Seneca Park in Rochester Jan 1 (Zachmann); and one was seen Jan 15 near Kendall (Listman). Three hundred Tree Sparrows were seen Feb 18 along the lakeshore (Tetlow). Two field Sparrows were noted Dec 3 at Powder Mills (GOS hike), and one was seen Dec 26 at Island Cottage (O'Hara).

Until two years ago the White-crowned Sparrow was unknown as a winter resident. That year one wintered at the McNett feeder. This year no less than ten were reported, all but one from feeders or nearby. They were most in evidence during the severe weather in January; they became irregular or disappeared when the milder weather of February set in. The records were as follows: two on Jan 5 in Greece (Dobson), four at the Weld feeder in Irondequoit (these four birds appeared in late December and were present until about mid-February), one on

Jan 8 at a feeder near Seneca Park in Rochester (Bachmann), two on Jan 10 at a feeder in Union Hill (Lloyd), and one on Jan 29 near Veterans Memorial Bridge (Tetlow). The latter was the only bird not seen at or near a feeder, but it is very possible that it was the same bird that was at a feeder near Seneca Park.

The White-throated Sparrow, which frequently winters in some numbers, was scarce, but at least two wintered in Durand Eastman Park, and another bird was present irregularly at the Leubner feeder in Irondequoit. A Fox Sparrow was seen Jan 5 at a feeding station in Greece (Dobson), and there was one in Durand-Eastman Park on Mar 26 (Miller). Lapland Longspurs were quite generally distributed, with high counts of 37 on Jan 29 in Penfield (Kemnitzer), 50 on Feb 11 on Jane's Road in Greece (Tetlow et al), and a migrating flock of 75 at Braddock's Mar 26 (Listman). Snow Buntings were very common, with peak counts of 1000 on Jan 2 on the "Little" Finger Lakes count and 1500 north of Ontario Feb 5 (Kemnitzer). Forty-five, seen Mar 26 near Holcomb (Listman), appears to be the last report for the season.

54 Luella Street, Rochester 9

REGION 3 — FINGER LAKES

SALLY F. HOYT

It was a winter of extremes — in cold and snowfall. Temperatures averaged below normal throughout, except for part of January. The extreme cold of December, following the dry fall, froze most bodies of water earlier than usual. Montezuma, for example, was ice-covered from December 8 on, in contrast with some years when there is open water into January. Fall Creek, behind my home, was frozen from bank to bank by Christmas — most unusual. The end of January and early February brought intense cold. There were unofficial readings of -40° in several places, and record-breaking official lows were everywhere. February 4 produced a snowfall that reached a depth of 36 inches in some places in the southern tier. But, unlike last year, temperatures rose the end of February and in early March, at least enough to bring in the early migrants on schedule.

Fortunately there was a bumper crop of seeds, cones, and other fruits, and the birds did not seem to suffer too much, although some drop in numbers (especially in House Sparrows!) was noted after the severe cold. Winds were not strong — which was fortunate inasmuch as the prevailing direction was west or northwest.

There were no extremely unusual birds. The predicted Snowy Owl invasion did not materialize in Region 3. Northern Shrikes were less common after the first of the year. Pine Siskins were the winter finch of the year, but there were lots of Goldfinches too. A late and notable invasion of Red Crossbills occurred in March.

Loons — Ducks: Loons were again scarce this winter. Horned Grebes were less common than in 1960 — only 201 in the Finger Lakes this year on the waterfowl count on Jan 15, in contrast with 302 in 1960. Pied-billed Grebes were noted more often, but Red-necked Grebes were unseen throughout the period. One Horned Grebe was found shot at Hornell around Christmas time, kept in a bathtub, and fed the family's pet goldfish! In spite of this sacrifice, the bird died (fide Groesbeck). The first Great Blue Heron returned to Montezuma on Mar 18 (M. Rusk). Whistling Swans made the news in March. Fifty-five were seen near Branchport on Keuka on Mar 14, and about 50 were seen flying n. e. of Clyde the same day (same birds?). Eight were found at the north end of Cayuga on Mar 25 and were seen several times after that. About 60 Canada Geese wintered on Cayuga Lake, near Sheldrake, but the group usually found at Stewart Park (Ithaca) was small this year, and often missing, dropping from the November count of 28 to five or six in January. The single Brant that had been with them disappeared in December, and it is not inconceivable that this is the bird that was found at Elmira on the Jan 1 count and which stayed around there for some time. Several Snow Geese and Blue Geese were reported at the end of March, on Cayuga Lake, with the Canadas. The first Canadas arrived at Montezuma on Feb 28 this year, and by Mar 31 the flock had built up to 3400 there (Morse).

The waterfowl count indicated that diving ducks were still low, but that dabblers were holding their own or increasing slightly. Sapsucker Woods played host to up to 500 Blacks and Mallards in February. Widgeon returned to Montezuma on

Mar 4 (Scheider), and a hybrid Mallard-Widgeon male appeared at Sapsucker Woods in mid-March. Other arrival dates at Montezuma are Gadwall Mar 18 (M. Rusk), Shoveler and both species of teal on Mar 24-26, and Ruddy Duck on Mar 31. Ring-necked Ducks were reported the last few days of March at several localities, including the Reservoir basin at Hornell. Redheads were still only a third of their 1959 numbers. However, Canvasbacks picked up on Cayuga, Keuka, and Seneca Lakes, and Scaups were also up slightly. Oldsquaws were scarcer than usual on Cayuga, and none were found on Keuka this year. The only scoter report was of one White-winged near Sheldrake on Cayuga on Jan 28 (J Doren). Small numbers of Hooded Mergansers were noted on the Stewart Park lagoon, the inlet, Fall Creek, and also on Sapsucker Woods Pond, the last of March.

Hawks — Owls: A Goshawk was seen west of Waterloo on Feb 28 (Walker). Half a dozen reports of Sharp-shinned Hawks this winter indicate a slight increase in this species. Reports of Cooper's Hawks were not too frequent, although two or more visited Sapsucker Woods almost daily. Red-tailed Hawks were scarce around Ithaca but in slightly better numbers at the north end of Cayuga. The Rough-legged Hawk invasion stopped about half way up Cayuga Lake. Frequently seen around Montezuma, they were rarely noted at Ithaca this year. However, Elmira had quite a few, which might indicate a more southward swing in the western part of the region. The first Broad-wing was seen at Montezuma on Mar 24.

The Montezuma Bald Eagles were absent from Dec 7 until Feb 17, but both birds were in the vicinity of the nest on Mar 2, and on Mar 31 one bird was on the nest. An Eagle was seen at Stewart Park, Ithaca, on Jan 26 (R. Sandburg). There were two reports of Peregrines, one over the Cornell campus on Mar 1 (P. Buckley) and the other at Aurora on Mar 18 (Hough). Of note was the occurrence of 25 Sparrow Hawks on the Jan 2 Christmas count at Elmira.

Ruffed Grouse were scarce everywhere. Some 25-30 of the Bobwhites released at Sapsucker Woods in November made it through the intense cold and deep snow of February, and we dare be hopeful of successful establishment, as others released at the same time are also to be heard calling. Quail were also seen at Italy Hill, near Keuka Park. Wild Turkeys came off the slope of Connecticut Hill to feed in barnyards; others were seen near Troupsburg feeding in a barnyard, and a high count of 40 appeared near Jasper (fide Margeson). Pheasants seemed very scarce in fields and along roads, but I know of two homes, at Ithaca and Etna, where a flock of a dozen fed all winter.

One Killdeer was found on the waterfowl census at Myers Point, Cayuga Lake (Sandburg). Records for early arrival of Woodcock were broken — the first came in at Ithaca on Mar 2 (Cox), and there were several others the same weekend. At Elmira the species was first heard on Mar 21. There were no Common Snipe reported by Mar 31.

Morse reported heavy use of Montezuma by gulls, as there was a heavy carp kill this year. There were two reports of Glaucous Gulls at the south end of Cayuga, an immature on Jan 8 (D. McIlroy) and an adult on Mar 2 (Hough). Great Black-backed Gulls continued to increase, with a peak count of 35 on Jan 26 at Stewart Park (Sandburg). There were "more than usual" at Geneva and Montezuma.

The Christmas count at Elmira on Jan 2 produced 165 Herring Gulls and 475 Ring-billeds. The Dec 31 count at Watkins Glen showed 185 Herring and 332 Ring-billed. No estimate could be made on Cayuga on the Jan 1 count there because the snow was too thick to see gulls, but Ring-billeds predominated all winter. An odd gull seen at the north end of Cayuga on Jan 1 was tentatively identified as an imm. Franklin's, but it could never be found again.

Mourning Doves wintered again at Sapsucker Woods and were reported also in other localities. There was a Barn Owl at Elmira on Jan 2. The Great Horned Owls have not been found at Stewart Park, but they have been present in other customary locations. The Snowy Owl invasion of farther north did not reach into the Finger Lakes, except for two December reports near Ithaca, three birds on the ice near Canoga on Jan 15, two seen at Penn Yan (Wheeler), and one near Keuka. None of these birds remained at the spot where seen. There was only one report of the Long-eared Owl. Short-eared Owls were frequently seen over the marshes at Montezuma by the muskrat trappers, and they were noted at Elmira on Jan 2. There was one report of a Saw-whet Owl at Waterloo (fide Walker).

Goatsuckers — Shrikes: Nine Belted Kingfishers were found wintering at Elmira on the Jan 2 count, but around Ithaca, with most streams completely frozen, only one could be found. Flickers wintered at Elmira, Clifton Springs, and Ithaca. Red-bellied Woodpeckers were at feeders in more places than usual: Geneva, Interlaken, King Ferry, Trumansburg, Bath, and near Hall. A Black-backed Three-toed Woodpecker spent two weeks in the Experimental Gardens at Geneva in December. There were two sightings of this species in the Ithaca area, but the bird could not be found again (J. Patterson). Phoebees were slow in returning, and seemed scarce, although it may be too soon to be sure. As usual, a few Horned Larks wintered, and migrants returned the end of February. Up to 200 fed in what had been an open meadow, where the new Bethesda Hospital is located near Hornell, coming right under the windows (W. Groesbeck). Blue Jays continued to increase. Black-capped Chickadees were down 25-30% everywhere; some observers felt it was a greater drop than this, and many have expressed alarm to me about the apparent decrease. However, in some woodlots, there seemed to be good numbers of these hardy species. Red-breasted Nuthatches were almost completely absent. Carolina Wrens seemed to maintain their very slight increase and wintered surprisingly well. One smart wren roosted nightly in an attic in Interlaken (fide Bemont).

The Mockingbird at Horseheads (mentioned in the previous summary) was there all winter. The Branchport birds reappeared; one was killed in the road, but the other soon had a new mate (Guthrie). Robins wintered in large numbers in some sheltered areas. A flock of 40-60 found worms along the steampipe-heated stretch of ground on the Tompkins County Hospital grounds. Migrants returned the first week in March. March reports of Bluebirds were encouraging; at least a half dozen pairs were located around Ithaca, and others were reported at Hornell, Avoca, and Elmira. Golden-crowned Kinglets were in usual numbers except at Burdett where they seemed scarce (Bardeen). Cedar Waxwings had no trouble finding food and were abundant. Northern Shrikes were fairly common in December and early January, then disappeared from the region. Starling flocks seemed enormous; I had reports of "largest numbers ever seen."

Warblers — Sparrows: Up to six Myrtle Warblers wintered in Stewart Park. A late Yellowthroat was seen Dec 18 in Stewart Park (Sandburg), but it was not found again.

Reports of Meadowlarks, including a flock of 15 near Ovid on Jan 7, were surprising considering the severity of the weather. Migrants arrived the first week in March. Red-wings arrived the last week in February — far more normal than a year ago, and actually a little early in some localities. A few wintered. Enormous flocks were seen with Grackles on the fields south of Waterloo on Mar 19 by Walker, who estimated the number at half a million. A female Baltimore Oriole turned up at a feeder in Watkins Glen the end of December (R. Steber) and was seen by a number of observers. A bird which certainly fitted the description of a male was at an Ithaca feeder on Dec 11, but this could not be found again or confirmed. Individual Grackles and Cowbirds (but no Rusties) appeared at area feeders all winter. Cardinals wintered well, were up in numbers at Keuka and Hornell, and as many as 14 were reported at some feeding stations.

Evening Grosbeaks made the news this year — by their absence. Most areas had only scattered reports of individual birds or very small flocks, turning up once or twice at feeders, then disappearing. Some areas had none at all. About Mar 12 reports became more frequent, and at least in the Ithaca area several feeding stations, including my own, had them daily. Most groups were 25-30, but I learned of one flock of 100 at Newfield. I am at a loss to explain this year's behavior — complete absence is easier to understand somehow. Purple Finches were present in small numbers. Redpolls were almost completely missing — only a few reports of very small flocks, mostly at the end of December. The winter finch was the Pine Siskin, which was present in the largest numbers in many years. Flocks of 3-500 were reported in sheltered areas, smaller flocks in every village. They were often mixed with Goldfinches, which were the second most outstanding finch of the season. Few or none came to feeders inasmuch as a variety of natural food was abundant. One flock of 1000 Pine Siskins was located at Watkins Glen.

There had been a few reports of Red Crossbills in December and January. Then, near the end of March, they moved into the area and aroused interest and excitement comparable to that of the Redpoll invasion last year, except that they did not come to feeders. But every hemlock around Ithaca had its little flock of crossbills — with a large percentage of males in every case. Some fed on pine and spruce, but the heavy hemlock cone crop seemed the chief attraction. The birds were tame; they sometimes fed on the ground and allowed close approach. Except for one report in mid-February (P. Allan) White-winged Crossbills were not seen in Ithaca. They were noted at Burdett on Mar 27 (Bardeen).

Towhees wintered — one at Freeville, one at Elmira, and two at Geneva. A Savannah Sparrow was present in Elmira at the Van Duzer feeder until Jan 2 when it was caught by a Sparrow Hawk. There were two reports of Oregon Juncos: one at the Champions in Watkins Glen on Mar 11 and one at Canandaigua, also in March (Mrs. E. Long). Tree Sparrows were considered less common in the western part of the region, but I had more this winter than last, and our Sapsucker Woods flock was larger, especially toward the end of the reporting period. Field Sparrows wintered in at least two localities. A White-crowned Sparrow was found on the Jan 1 count at Ithaca, and another was seen and heard **singing** on Feb 22 on the edge of the Cornell campus (R. Fischer). Almost no White-throats wintered this year, and Song Sparrows were very scarce. Lapland Longspurs were found more frequently than usual in flocks of Horned Larks or Snow Buntings. There were good flocks of Buntings throughout the region; one of 1000 at the Seneca Ordnance Depot on Dec 3 was noteworthy.

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REGION 4 — SUSQUEHANNA

LESLIE E. BEMONT

After a mild November December became abruptly cold. The snowfall and cold of Dec 1 seemed to set the pattern which held until the end of January. One of the heaviest snowfalls came Jan 1 and caused the first postponement in the history of the Binghamton Christmas Count. The cold intensified as Jan 18 to Feb 1 the temperature never went above freezing. Feb 1 was the coldest day of the season, and the record snowfall of all time, 22 inches, came Feb 4, but that seemed to mark the winter's turning point. There was quite a bit of cold and snow to follow but the rest of the way was down hill in comparison to what came earlier. By the weekend of Mar 3 - 5 temperatures as high as 72 were establishing record highs instead of the record lows of late Jan. That weekend was of considerable importance in the return of migrants although there was still snow and cold to follow, but not in sustained doses. In short, spring started early but progressed slowly.

In spite of the severe conditions there was an interesting assortment of semi-hardy winterers such as a Catbird, a Brown Thrasher, a Vesper Sparrow, a Savannah Sparrow and a possible Brewer's Blackbird. Mockingbirds were missing but Carolina Wrens survived in at least two locations. Some of the slightly harder species such as Robins, Meadowlarks, Redwinged Blackbirds and Cowbirds were reported more frequently than in most years.

The northern predators such as Rough-legged Hawks, Snowy Owls and Northern Shrikes were strangely more prevalent during Dec and Jan when snow cover was deepest and most persistent. But the prize finds, a Hawk Owl and a Saw-whet Owl, waited until March.

Purple Finches, Pine Siskins, Goldfinches, Snow Buntings and later on Evening Grosbeaks represented the bulk of the winter finches with Red Crossbills numerous in Chenango County only. Cortland County missed even the Purple Finches and Siskins. Redpolls and Red-breasted Nuthatches, after especially good years last year, were scarce.

Early migrants, both land and water varieties, seem to have been influenced by spring's early start and arrived a little early on average, but in the case of most species numbers had not built up much by the end of the period.

It's a pleasure to note the start of the Cortland County Bird Club. This will bring to three the known bird clubs in the region, one in each of the three western-most counties.

Loons — Ducks: A Common Loon was found in a small patch of open water in the Susquehanna River at Deposit Dec. 17. It was caught, banded and released at a point where there was plenty of open water but was caught again on the ice Dec 29. Again it was released in open water but about ten days later it was found dead (S. Wilson). A Horned Grebe spent a week or so on the Susquehanna River in the city of Binghamton in late Dec and early Jan and another landed in a back yard near Sidney Center Feb 12 (H. Wisner) but no more were reported during the period. There were no wintering Pied-billed Grebes reported. Mar 12 saw the first migrants at Endicott (N. & E. Washburn). A Great Blue Heron at Endwell Jan 15 (E. Washburn) was the only wintering record and the only migrants reported before the end of the period were at Owego Mar 27 (R. Williams).

The Canada Goose migration got an early start with the first report from Owego Feb 28 (C. Gerould). Another flock of about 50 seen at Oxford Mar 3 (A. Stratton) was also early. Half a dozen flocks were reported Mar 12 but numbers were otherwise relatively low. Wintering Mallards and Black Ducks were not far from normal with the former perhaps a little more common than usual. The main gathering point in the Triple Cities area was on the Susquehanna River, inside the city of Binghamton, just below the mouth of the Chenango River, rather than at Chenango Valley State Park as in past years. Four Gadwalls, an unusual species in the region, were found along the Susquehanna River in the Triple Cities area Jan 19 (H. Marsi, F. Linaberry). They were seen a few more times after that until Feb 13. American Widgeons were reported only from the Triple Cities — Whitney Point area, the first Mar 15 and the most so far were 40 or so Mar 25. Two Pintails at Whitney Point Mar 4 (M. Sheffield) and two more at the same place Mar 26 were the only ones before the end of the period. Green-winged Teal arrived at Whitney Point Mar 15 (H. Marsi, F. Linaberry) and two Wood Ducks were at Sherburne Mar 11 (R. & S. White). Fifteen Canvasbacks at Afton Feb 12 were an unusual concentration of the species in this region (R. & S. White). One other one was reported in the city of Binghamton (C. Morehouse). Two Scaup, probably Greater, were found along the Susquehanna River in the Triple Cities area during the Christmas Count Jan 2 (H. Marsi). Two or three were noted several times during Jan and in early Feb as many as ten were seen at a time in the same area. The species was also noted at Afton in mid-Feb and Owego in late Mar. A Bufflehead was seen on the Chenango River north of Binghamton Jan 28 and 29 (C. Jennings) and fifteen were at Afton Feb 12 (R. & S. White). Two Oldsquaw at the junction of the Chenango and Susquehanna Rivers Feb 7 (C. Howard) were the only ones reported during the period. A female Hooded Merganser was at Binghamton Jan 2 for the Christmas County and one was at Afton Feb 12. Another appeared on a rather small pond within about 100 yards of two houses Feb 26 at Choconut Center north of Binghamton (R. & M. Sheffield). What were apparently the first migrants were seen Mar 15. Wintering Common Mergansers were present in relatively good numbers. Eight Red-breasted Mergansers, never common in the region, were at Bainbridge Mar 12 (R. & S. White).

Hawks — Owls: One Goshawk was reported from Franklin Mountain, in Otsego County, Dec 4 (R. Burland) and another from Owego in late Dec (Mrs. W. Tinna), but neither with observational details. There were few other accipiter reports. Red-tailed Hawks wintered in the usual numbers. A Red-shouldered Hawk apparently wintered in nearby Pennsylvania (N. & E. Washburn) but none were reported in the region proper until two were noted at Owego Mar 5 (R. Burland). There were quite a few Rough-legged Hawks, mostly in Dec and Jan. The only winter Marsh Hawk record is from Emmons, near Oneonta, Jan 1 (R. Burland). Sparrow Hawks were present throughout the winter in normal numbers.

Ruffed Grouse were noted in moderately good numbers in the Triple Cities area, but were scarce at Oneonta. The low number found during the Binghamton Christmas Count, a single bird, was due to the heavy snow cover which kept observers pretty much out of grouse habitat. One Bob-white was reported at Owego (Mrs. W. Tinna) in late Dec. Perhaps a stray remnant of the Broome County stocking program of almost two years ago. Ring-necked Pheasants were reported to be very scarce in the Oneonta area (R. Burland) but seemed normal elsewhere. A Killdeer was at Chenango Valley State Park Jan 7 (M. Sheffield)

and another was seen at Sherburne Jan 24 and several times thereafter (R. & S. White). Still another was near the Broome County Airport Feb 15 (H. Marsi, F. Linaberry). Migrants started filtering in at the beginning of March but the frequency with which they were reported increased only gradually. They were still not common at the end of the month. Woodcock were first heard calling Mar 4 at Choconut Center (R. & M. Sheffield) and Mar 9 at Owego (W. Thomas), both rather early. Herring Gulls were more numerous in the Triple Cities this past winter than in any of the past eight if Christmas Count figures can be considered indicative. The 140 recorded this year were better than twice the previous high. There were the usual small number of winter Ring-billed Gull records, then in early March several moderately sized flocks in a three day period seemed to indicate a brief migratory movement. A Bonaparte's Gull was seen in Binghamton on the very early date of Mar 10 (R. Sheffield). Wintering Mourning Doves were reported from Spencer (H. Meyer), Newark Valley (L. Dean) and Owego (Mrs. C. Hills) in Tioga County, Homer (J. Gustafson) in Cortland County and from several spots around the Triple Cities. March records give no indication of migrants moving in.

Screech Owls continue quite scarce and Horned Owls common. Snowy Owls were reported from several areas; the first Greene Dec 12 (W. Bartlett), McGraw, in Cortland County, Dec 19 (B., G. & L. Stone), two in the Triple Cities area, Dec 26 (J. Warren) and Dec 27 (Bentz) and Feb 12 from Barton in Tioga County (via M. White). In addition there were "several reported in the area around Walton" (R. Burland). On Mar 16, about five miles north of Binghamton, a drawing was made of a bird while it was being observed through a telescope (J. Saunders). The drawing, which is on file, is the basis for what appears to be a valid record of a Hawk Owl. It is planned to provide further details in a field note in a future issue. Barred Owls were reported from Franklin Mountain, Deposit, Owego, Cortland and the Triple Cities area. Short-eared Owls were reported from both the Triple Cities and Oneonta (R. Burland) areas during Jan. On Mar 5 one was observed at the Whitney Point Flood Control Dam, apparently attracted by the large number of meadow voles that had been forced out of the area flooded by the dam. On Mar 27 a dead Saw-whet Owl was picked up along the highway at Berkshire (M. Bates via S. Hoyt). The specimen is now in the Cornell University collection. This is only the third record on file for the region, one in each of the last three years.

Goatsuckers — Shrikes: A Flicker is known to have wintered in each of two different localities in the Triple Cities area and in a third locality one was reported once, Jan 2 on the Christmas Count. Pileated Woodpeckers continue to be reported too sporadically to give a reasonable idea of their status. Phoebes were reported from several places during the last few days of the period, the first date at 27 at Deposit and Owego. Horned Larks could be found along almost any back road in the Triple Cities area from the beginning of Jan on. For several days early in arch large flocks of the were seen on the river flats near Oneonta (R. Burland). Tree Swallows were reported from Owego Mar 30 (R. Williams) and from Chenango Valley State Park Mar 31 (S. Lincoln). Blue Jays were plentiful wherever mentioned and at Owego a "partially albino" became a regular visitor at a feeder (M. White, R. Williams) (Ed — see field notes section, this issue). There were larger numbers of wintering Crows than usual in several parts of the region. At Norwich it was noted there were lots of Black-capped Chickadees around but they weren't coming to feeders; instead the hemlocks were full of them (R. & S. White). Tufted Titmice were reported from three new areas, Oneonta and Schenevus in Otsego County and Andes in Delaware County (R. Burland). Red-breasted Nuthatches were back to their normal winter status; rather scarce. They were reported only from Sherburne, Norwich and three or four spots around the Triple Cities. The only Winter Wren reported was at Owego Jan 1 (M. White). A Carolina Wren was at Owego Feb 8 (M. White) and two were near Vestal Mar 11 (E. Washburn, MacDonald, C. Morehouse). No Mockingbirds. A Catbird was at Kattellville, north of Binghamton, Jan 1 (H. Thomas) and a Brown Thrasher was found on the Tioga Christmas Count (C. Gerould). There were quite a few winter reports of Robins but the ten or so recorded as a by product of the Waterfowl Census, Jan 15, was the highest count until the first few days

of March when the influx of migrants became obvious. The winter records came from all parts of the region except Cortland County where they weren't seen until Mar 9. Mar 22, when a large meadow near Bainbridge was observed to be "completely covered with them — there were several hundred" (E. J. Smith), seems to be the date when they became truly abundant. Bluebirds were reported from two localities in the Triple Cities area Mar 5 and have been seen regularly since. Northern Shrikes were not very common and the few reported were all seen Jan 15 or earlier.

Vireos — Warblers: A Myrtle Warbler at Endwell Dec 2 (G. Smith) and another found on the Binghamton Christmas Count Jan 2 were the only winter warbler reports received.

Blackbirds — Sparrows: Several late or wintering Meadowlarks were noted up to Jan 13 when one was at Whitney Point (P. Kelsey). Then no more were seen until Mar 5. They were still not common by the end of the period. A similar pattern was followed by Redwinged Blackbirds, the last of the late records Jan 17 at Homer (J. Gustafson) and the first of the migrants Feb 21 near Cortland (McLaughlin) with the difference that they soon became common with a major influx around Mar 4. The earliest spring Rusty Blackbirds were six at Oneonta Mar 10 (R. Burland). During the Tioga Christmas Count a bird appeared at a feeder that was described as smaller than a Grackle with a "purple head blackish body" and a squared off tail. It was seen by several observers and identified as a Brewer's Blackbird (Mrs. R. Richards, fide M. White). There were several Jan and Feb Common Grackle and Cowbird reports. The Grackles became generally distributed Mar 4 and the Cowbirds Mar 9.

Cardinals were reported at Oneonta, Unadilla, Norwich and Newark Valley all winter and at Cortland there seemed to be more and more at feeders as winter progressed (J. Gustafson). In the Triple Cities area they have become commonplace. At Deposit Evening Grosbeaks arrived towards the end of Dec and have been plentiful since (S. Wilson) but elsewhere in the region there were few seen before various dates in Feb but then numbers built up quickly and they became as common as ever. Purple Finches were particularly numerous after Jan 1 and continued so until the end of the period. There were only a few Pine Grosbeaks reported; two at Franklin Mountain Dec 4 (R. Burland), ten at Norwich Dec 30 and twelve at Oxford Jan 15 (R. & S. White), and two at Unadilla Feb 12 (H. Wisner). There were very few Redpolls reported, especially in comparison with last year, and all these few reports came from the Triple Cities — Owego area. Pine Siskins took up the slack and were seen in moderately large flocks throughout the period all over the region, with the notable exception of the Cortland area where they didn't appear until Mar 20 and only in small numbers then (J. Gustafson). Goldfinches were also quite common during the period and on Feb 22 a male was found in full summer plumage (L. Hevey) near Binghamton. From mid-Jan on Red Crossbills were quite numerous, but only in Chenango County (R. & S. White, W. Bartlett). The only White-winged Crossbills reported were at Newark Valley Feb 11 (P. Biehl). A Rufous-sided Towhee remained at Choconut Center until Dec 18 (R. & M. Sheffield) and another was found during the Tioga Christmas Count (C. Gerould). Still another turned up at a feeder in Norwich Feb 4 and stayed until Mar 26. It disappeared once when the snow melted off but returned when it snowed again (R. & S. White). A Savannah Sparrow was at a feeder in Newark Valley Dec 26. It returned several times and was seen at close range (Mr. & Mrs. W. Dean, P. Biehl) but the requested description has not been received yet. Migrants were noted at Unadilla Mar 10 (H. Wisner) and at Binghamton Mar 23 (Jordan, Casperlin). A Vesper Sparrow, described as striped like a sparrow with white outer tail feathers, came to a feeder in Owego during the period of the Tioga Christmas Count (M. White, R. Williams). It appeared droopy and sick and disappeared after the first week of Jan. A migrant appeared Mar 31 at Binghamton (H. Marsi). Slate-colored Juncos and Tree Sparrows were quite plentiful generally. An Oregon Junco was at Binghamton Jan 5 (H. Marsi, L. MacArthur). One White-throated Sparrow was at Spencer in mid-Dec (H. Meyer), another was reported during the Tioga Christmas Count (R. Williams) and two were found on the Binghamton Christmas Count. In addition there was one Feb and one Mar record in the Triple Cities area. Winter Fox Sparrow records were

obtained at Oneonta, Binghamton and Corbett (S. Wilson), in Delaware County. Migrants were first seen Mar 4 at Newark Valley (L. Dean) and continued through the month but were always seen in small numbers. There seem to have been Song Sparrows wintering everywhere. Migrants started swelling numbers recorded about Mar 4. Four Lapland Longspurs were reported at Greene Jan 2 (W. Bartlett) and another was at Endicott Jan 7 (M. Marsi, J. Vivier, A. Watkins). Numerous flocks of Snow Buntings were reported and from all parts of the region, numbering all the way from one or two up into the thousands.

710 University Ave., Endwell

REGION 5 — ONEIDA LAKE BASIN

FRITZ SCHEIDER

Weatherwise it was a wretched winter. Dec was cold (mean temperature 4.5° below normal with four days zero or lower) and snowy (27.8 inches, ten inches above average.) Severe freezing and heavy snow prior to Chirtsmas dimmed local Christmas Count hopes, but at Syracuse a surprising all-time high of 72 species, a compliment to diligent observers and many feeding stations, was recorded. Jan was even colder (6.7° daily below normal) and the maximum temperature reached 20° or higher on just **one** day. Snowfall of 37.3 inches (all but one inch in the first 15 days) was twice the normal amount. The severe cold and snowfall were the doom of many half-hardies (Wrens, Icterids, Sparrows, q.v.) but in turn produced high waterfowl counts, especially in Scaup, Common Goldeneye and Common Merganser, presumably from icing over of more northerly wintering quarters. The high raptor counts of Dec (e.g. 111 hawks, 32 owls, 11 Northern Shrikes and the Dec 26 Syracuse Christmas Count) held up fairly well thru Jan despite the snow cover, except for a moderate drop in Sparrow Hawks and a complete absence of Marsh Hawks. Early Feb had the same weather as Jan but worse — a 21.8 inch snowfall on Feb 3-4 was the greatest Feb fall ever recorded. Rapid thawing Feb 18-24 engendered early flooding in the last third of the month, especially in the bottomlands of Black, Limestone, Butternut, and Chittenengo Creeks. The consequent excellent waterfowl habitat, however, remained unutilized and regarding early migrant ducks many wet bottoms were bare of same. Mar continued the persistent cold of the winter with daily mean temperatures below normal every day between Mar 2 and Mar 23. Over 26 inches of snow fell, the majority in the second week of Mar. A surge of south winds and warmth on Mar 26-28 initiated a splendid influx of early migrants and redeemed an otherwise wearying month.

The abundant mice in the Kirkville-Bridgeport-Cicero farmlands attracted and held many open-country raptors (Rough-legged-Hawk, Short-eared Owl, Northern Shrike, q.v.) crops seemed quickly depleted, but local cone crops appeared to hold up well despite repeated onslaughts by hordes of Pine Siskins and lesser numbers of crossbills. Icterids and Starlings fared well at pigsties, garbage dumps, and local feeders, but the small groups of Redwings and Cowbirds in local marshes and farmlands disappeared with the first corn-deep snowfall of Jan.

Notable and quotable thru the past season were 1) the superb Snowy Owl flight, 2) the equally good but less spectacular invasion of Rough-legged Hawks and Northern Shrikes, 3) the high counts of winter diving ducks (q.v. and also 1961 Waterfowl Census), 4) the crossbill-siskin flight, 5) the early winter spate of half-hardies and 6) the continuing spread of permanent-resident southern species (Red-bellied Woodpecker, Tufted Titmouse, Carolina Wren, Mockingbird, and Cardinal q.v.). Negatively 1) the persistent paucity of Redheads and Canvasbacks, 2) the meager flight of white-winged gulls, 3) the very poor showing of wintering sparrows, especially Tree, White-throated, and Song, and 4) the decimation of half-hardies by the Jan weather received the most comment.

The loving cup for rarity of the season goes to the adult male Barrow's Goldeneye on Fischer's Bay, Oneida Lake Mar 31 (Peakall, Scheider, et al) to Apr 5 (see Field Notes this issue). Other notables observed include King Eider, Goshawk, Black-backed Woodpecker and two Oregon Juncos.

In the summary below, the following initials will be used for much-frequented local birding areas:

Howland's Island Game Management Area near Port Byron -----HIGMA
Three Rivers Game Management Area near Baldwinsville -----TRGMA
Selkirk Shores State Park near Pulaski -----SSSP
Sandy Pond and Sandy Pond Inlet -----SP and SPI.

Loons — Ducks: No wintering Loons. First Common Loon Mar 30 at Brewerton (Peakall), and first Red-throated Loon Mar 26 near Texas (Seaman), both early. No wintering Red-necked Grebes. Wintering Horned Grebes, though common at Skaneateles Lake, were extremely scarce at Oswego and along Lake Ontario (one-two/day). First migrant Horned Grebes noted Mar 11 (early) at Maple Bay, Oneida Lake near Bridgeport. Pied-billed Grebe: noted to Jan 31 along the Seneca River but unreported thereafter until arrival of spring birds Mar 31 at Brewerton (Rusk). No grounded grebes reported this winter. Double-crested Cormorant: an adult Mar 27 at Maple Bay, Oneida Lake (Scheider) is both very early and unusual "inland", i.e., away from Lake Ontario.

Whistling Swan: observed only on the extensively flooded Seneca River flats Mar 18 (fide Kelsey); no Oneida Lake records this spring. Canada Goose: 80 wintered at HIGMA and 76 at TRGMA and Phoenix (1961 Waterfowl Census); both groups received supplemental feeding from the NYS Conservation Dep't during the severe storms of Jan and early Feb; first migrants noted Feb 28 (late); flock counts ranged from 60 to 250 thru the latter half of Mar at Oneida Lake, HIGMA, and the Seneca River flats.

Mallard and Black Duck: despite good counts (1000/species/day) thru early Dec, the Jan counts fell rapidly (max 667 Mallards, 1487 Blacks on 1961 Waterfowl Census) largely because of severe ice conditions along the Oneida, Oswego, and Seneca Rivers and the discontinuance of open feeding at the anatine fleshpots of HIGMA; both species noted as migrants Feb 28, but flock counts of 1000/day were noted on only one day in late Mar. Gadwall: three wintered at HIGMA with first arrivals there Mar 5; a male Mar 27 on Maple Bay, Oneida Lake is the editor's first record of this species from Oneida Lake in twenty years. Pintail: up to 17 wintered at HIGMA (Bauer); at least five birds attempted to winter along the Oswego River (Rusk, Seaman) plus two at Onondaga Lake (Thomas), but few if any made it; first migrants Feb 19 at HIGMA. No wintering teal, and no Blue-winged Teal reported for the area as of Mar 31. First Green-winged Teal observed Mar 26 at HIGMA (Felle) but extremely scarce even to date. American Widgeon: last noted Dec 4 at Beaver Lake; arrival date is Mar 3 at Brewerton but, like the Green-winged Teal, extremely scarce thru the remainder of Mar (peak count is 35). Eight Shovelers wintered at HIGMA (Bauer) and a wintering pair was noted at the south end of Skaneateles Lake Jan 14 (Propst, Seaman); a male Mar 27 on Maple Bay, Oneida Lake where it is most uncommon is the first local arrival. Wood Duck: a male wintered to Jan 15 at Manlius but disappeared with the onset of total freeze-up of the pond and subsequent invasion by ice-skaters; first arrivals Mar 26 at SSSP (Rusk) are somewhat late.

Redhead: max winter count of 543 on 1961 Waterfowl Census, mainly from Skaneateles Lake (Propst, Rusk, Seaman); the Mar flight was extremely sparse and no regional record this Mar exceeds 100. Ring-necked Duck: four held over thru the winter at Skaneateles Lake and a single male remained at Baldwinsville thru the major part of Jan; unreported at Oswego for the second year running; arrival date Mar 12, rapidly increasing to 150/day by Mar 25 (Propst, Scheider). Canvasback: woefully scarce thru the winter with seasonal peak 500 in early Dec at Shackleton Point, Oneida Lake; the 1961 Waterfowl Census tallied a very low 140 and the Feb flight was virtually absent locally; Mar numbers on Oneida Lake 60-100/day (Peakall, Rusk) with peak of 300 Mar 31, a time when normally 1000 are present. The Greater Scaup tally of 9800 on the 1961 Waterfowl Census was an all-time local high for the annual local Waterfowl Count as were 2700 Common Goldeneye, 139 Bufflehead, and 270 Oldsquaw; these higher figures are almost due to the severe freezing weather closing off more northerly wintering areas with consequent augmentation of the usual Oswego River-Ontario lakeshore populations. Upwards of 4000 Scaup with a sprinkling of Lesser Scaup and 1000 Goldeneye were regularly present in the lower Oswego River (north of Fulton) thru late Jan and

Feb, but had moved out with the muddy flooding of late Feb, only to return in early Mar; late Mar counts of Goldeneye at Oneida Lake (Brewerton and Bridgeport sectors) ran 300-800/day. King Eider: two reported Dec 12 near Sandy Pond (Rusk), an immature male noted Jan 15 at Pleasant Point on Lake Ontario near Mexico (Ives, Scheider), and a female in Oswego harbor in early Feb (Sandburg) are the only reports, a poor showing after the fine spate of fall records of this species. White-winged Scoters were present in small numbers (one-seven/day) at Oswego and along Lake Ontario thru the winter (Peakall, Rusk, Spofford); 11 on Jan 14 at Skaneateles were unusual (Propst). A female Common Scoter was noted Dec 31 on the Oswego-Fulton Christmas Count (Hoyt, Rusk, et al) and a female Surf Scoter was spotted intermittently at Fulton Dec 31 to Mar 4 (Hoyt, Rusk(Thomas). This is the second successive winter that all three scoters have been recorded there.

Ruddy Duck: two males in Oswego harbor Jan 15 are the only winter record; no Mar migrants of this species noted.

Hooded Merganser: 19 reported on 1961 Waterfowl Census with a male: female ratio of five: 14, a distinctly lopsided ratio; what is the sex ratio of wintering birds of this species in other Regions?? Common Merganser: some 5000 noted in Oswego harbor Jan 20 after a windstorm on Lake Ontario (Estoff, Propst); numbers thru the remainder of Jan and early Feb were much less (700-1000 +/-day); the freezing-over of the Seneca River and Cross Lake in early Jan forced out the usual flocks (500-1000) of Common Mergansers that winter there; it was scarce 30-85/day) in the waterfowl gatherings at Bridgeport and Brewerton, Oneida Lake in late Mar.

Hawks — Owls: Turkey Vulture: five Mar 25 over HIGMA are rather early (Peakall). Goshawk: a superb adult Jan 15 (Scheider) near Lakeview on Lake Ontario, Town of Scriba, Oswego County is an irregular winter visitant; an adult Feb 18 at Big Moose (Spofford et al) is probably a permanent resident, and another adult Mar 26 near Texas (Minor) is certainly a migrant. Wintering Sharp-shinned Hawks were reported at various feeders at Oneida and Syracuse thru Jan and Feb with unsubsidized (non-feeding station) individuals noted in Dec at SSSP (Propst et al) and Battle Island, Fulton (Hoyt). Cooper's Hawk: frankly scarce thru the winter with a high tally of six on the Syracuse Christmas Count Dec 26. Red-tailed Hawk: Dec counts of this bulky Buteo were high (five-35/day) with a moderate drop (three-20/day) in Jan and Feb; 25 noted passing over HIGMA Mar 25. A hawk flight on Mar 26 at the Hawk Lookout near Texas tallied one Goshawk, three Sharp-shinned, five Cooper's, 13 Red-tailed, 124 Red-shouldered, two Rough-legged, and one Sparrow (Minor, Rusk, Seaman); on Mar 28 at the same station Minor noted two Turkey Vultures, eight Sharp-shinned, three Cooper's, 91 Red-tailed, 109 Red-shouldered, six Rough-legged, one Sparrow, and 40 unidentified Buteos. The lack of appropriate weather conditions — and the sharp cessation of suitable winds on Mar 28 — explains the paucity of flight days and the low numbers on these days, as the Hawk Lookout was manned on all but one favorable day.

Rough-legged Hawk: an excellent movement of these fine Arctic mousers; 33 noted on Dec 26; 20-29/day (Cade, Peakall, Rusk) noted from late Jan to mid-Mar in the Bridgeport-Kirkville-Cicero area despite persistent and often deep ground snow. Noteworthy was the active hunting of this species during snowstorms which forced Red-tailed Hawks and Sparrow Hawks to morose and mouseless (?) idleness (observed by Dr. T. Cade, who was actively hunting for Rough-legged during snowstorms!); the dark phase: light-phase ratio was close to two: three (e.g., 12:17 dark: light on Mar 11 — Cade, Scheider). Marsh Hawk last noted Dec 26, an immature lurking about a Starling-rich pig farm near Cicero Center; unreported to Mar 12, a female at Brewerton (Propst). Sparrow Hawk: peak count of 36 Dec 26 around Syracuse; a dwindling to one-seven/day in Jan (may be due to reduced observational efforts) continuing thru Feb with best counts consistently from the Onondaga Lake dumps and the Bridgeport mousefields (Cade); a sharp influx (11-15/day) on Mar 11-12 in the Bridgeport-Brewerton area.

Killdeer: last noted Dec 4, five at Sylvan Beach (Paquette, Rusk, et al); first arrival Mar 2 near East Syracuse (Peakall). Woodcock: two on Mar 22, Ram's Gulch (Rusk) are the earliest; scattered reports thereafter but no counts in excess of ten. Common Snipe: first noted at Oneida Mar 24 (Felle) but no appreciable numbers by Mar 31.

Glaucous and Iceland Gull: a very poor flight throughout the winter, confined to the Onondaga Lake dumps and the Oswego River axis; total observations by month were — Dec three Glaucous and three Iceland, Jan four Glaucous and two Iceland, Feb one Glaucous and three Iceland, Mar three Glaucous and four Iceland; all but three reports were of first-year birds, and no second-year birds were noted. Great Black-backed Gull: 400 on Dec 31 along the Oswego River (Fulton to Oswego inclusive) is a record high; numbers thru Feb were very low (ten-35/day). Herring and Ring-billed Gulls: widespread despite severe freezing, but poor numbers thru the entire winter: seasonal peaks are 1800 Herring on Jan 15 and 2500 Ring-billed Mar 12, both at Oswego (the latter number undoubtedly includes many late February Mar migrants).

Screech Owl: max of nine on Dec 26 around Syracuse; abundant spontaneous calling noted in early Mar at HIGMA, Baldwinsville, and Clay Swamp. Snowy Owl: a wonderful irruption of these fine Arctic owls; reported from almost all regularly-covered sectors of the Region except HIGMA and the country north of Utica; most frequently observed along the west side of Onondaga Lake (one-four/day) and the south shore of Oneida Lake between Bridgeport and Brewerton, with max count there of seven Mar 31. Because of their conspicuousness and mobility it is difficult to say exactly how many individual birds were present, but 3 to 35 would be a conservative score (a field note is being prepared). Short-eared Owl: less obvious but much more numerous than the Snowy Owl; two-eight/day noted in the mouse-fields around East Syracuse and Bridgeport (Cade, Propst, Rusk), Onondaga Lake (Thomas, Thurber), and Utica (Curtis); those birds at Bridgeport and East Syracuse were noted regularly roosting in the adjacent pine plantations (Futuyma, Scheider).

Goatsuckers — Shrikes: Belted Kingfisher: hardy individuals noted thru Dec and Jan at Baldwinsville, Sandy Pond, Oswego, Oneida, and Minoa; severe ice conditions thru Jan either killed or forced them south as they were unreported until Mar 28, the arrival date of the year for these and so many other late Mar and early Apr migrants.

Flicker: wintered in numbers (up to 13/day) at NIGMA and near Fayetteville; it was also reported regularly at feeders around Oswego (fide Burtt) where it rarely winters; a flock of 30 on Mar 3 at Onondaga Lake (Thurber) are certainly migrants. The Hairy and Downy Woodpeckers maintained a winter-long ratio of one: two on the Burtt feeder survey: Jan 108 Hairy: 192 Downy, Feb 91:171, Mar 92:203. Black-backed Woodpecker: one-three seen intermittently at Syracuse thru Dec and Jan with max of five Dec 3; single females at Oneida Jan 2 (Ackley et al) and in Baldwinsville in mid-Jan (fide Burtt); no Feb or Mar reports.

Southern Permanent Residents — Red-bellied Woodpecker: besides the regular corn-plucking pair (or pairs?) at HIGMA, singletons were reported at Skaneateles Feb 11 (Seaman), at Otisco Lake thru Feb (Lamb fide Burtt) and at Fulton intermittently thru Feb (Parker); none at Syracuse or Oneida this winter. Tufted Titmouse: four were regularly observed thru the winter at Baldwinsville (Bisdee, Estoff, Propst); Mrs. Bisdee reports that a pair of Titmice brought young to her feeder in the summer of 1960, probably indicating nearby breeding; at least three were reported at a feeder in Fulton (Parker) and one (two?) at Brewerton in early Mar (fide Burtt); a possible Titmouse at a feeder in Sherill was reported to P. Paquette Jan 21 but it could not be confirmed. Carolina Wren: singletons appeared at Fayetteville and DeWitt thru Dec but either succumbed or moved elsewhere with the heavy Jan snows; their disappearance in Jan and the lack of this species at feeders (Burtt feeder survey) bode ill for it locally; at least one survived at Camillus Valley as a singing bird was there Mar 25 (Rusk). Mockingbird: one noted at a feeder thru Jan in Sandy Creek (Wheeler) and a second was noted, also at a feeder, near Jamesville (Crosby); at least two Mockers have been frequenting feeders on the west side of Skaneateles (Seaman) and one was reported north of Sherill in early Feb (fide Paquette). The propensity of Mockers and Titmice to seek out feeders for winter survival is obvious; it may also reflect the propensity of birdwatchers to remain indoors in bad weather. Cardinal: total of 90 on Syracuse Christmas Count Dec 26; all reports indicate continued high populations at Fayetteville, Manlius, and Camillus; numbers up at Oneida (11 in Dec 1959, 30 in Jan 1961); further reports from Oneida Lake, Rome, and Utica; also present at Lacona and Sandy Creek, and even at Mexico, Texas, and Port Ontario; one singing vigorously in late Mar at the Hawk Lookout east of Texas represents new ground colonized.

Horned Lark: very poor Feb flight with a trickle of birds after each snowstorm to late Mar; max 75 on Feb 18.

Blue Jay: a very successful winter population with some 350-400/feeder survey thru the winter (Burt). Crow: large Mar flights noted at Texas and along eastern Lake Ontario with 3000 on Mar 5, 8000 on Mar 12, and 4000 on Mar 25, the majority in but three to four hours of watching.

Red-breasted Nuthatch: extremely scarce both at feeders (Jan two, Feb three, Mar three) and in the usually favorable pine and spruce groves of the area; singleton Red-breasteds were seen on the Oswego and Syracuse Christmas Censuses, quite in contrast to the plethora of White-breasted Nuthatches and Brown Creepers.

House Wren: last noted at Oakwood Cemetery, Syracuse Dec 1 (Rusk). Winter Wren: reported repeatedly in Dec with seven on Dec 26; no field reports after the severe early Jan snows, none at feeders thru Jan, Feb, and Mar (Burt), and not noted until first migrant arrived Mar 28 Oneida (Felle).

Wintering half-hardy mimids include at least three Brown Thrashers — (Lacone — Wheeler, Fayetteville — Evans, Syracuse — Dawley) and the Mockingbirds (Southern Permanent Residents, q.v.).

Robin: small winter groups at Manlius, Marcellus, Cicero Swamp, and Kirkville; first migrants on Feb 23 but counts were low until Mar 17 when flocks of dozens became common panregionally. Bluebirds were not reported until Mar 26 (late) and remain quite scarce.

Northern Shrike: a notable invasion of this species with the majority of reports from the mouse-rich farm country from Bridgeport to Cicero and lesser numbers as far west as Port Byron; reports by months are: Dec 21, Jan 12, Feb 22, and Mar 15; some singing noted in early Mar; still present as of Mar 31. Loggerhead Shrike: beginning migration represented by singletons seen Mar 25 at Bridgeport and Mar 28 near Texas (Propst) and Mar 31 at Onondaga Lake (Thurber).

Vireos — Warblers: Nyet!

Blackbirds — Sparrows: An unidentified Oriole was seen at Syracuse for a few days in Jan (fide Armstrong). The usual flurry of Icterids, mostly Cowbirds, Redwings, and Grackles, appeared at local feeders, refuse dumps, farmyards, and pigsties; Burt's feeder survey shows a marked attrition in numbers thru Jan and Feb, a condition applying even to the somewhat hardier Cowbird this year; Cowbird numbers have held up rather well thru the winters heretofore. Arrival dates are: Redwing Feb 26, Rusty Mar 5, Grackle Feb 28, and Cowbird Feb 28, all rather late; numbers by mid-Mar had built up to the usual raucous thousands, but on the Mar 26-30 flight the Icterids descended like the Asiatic hordes upon the area, with Clay Swamp counts up to 70,000+.

Cardinal: (Southern Permanent Residents, q.v.). Northern finches for the second successive winter invaded the Region in chattering flocks. The garland for numbers goes to the Pine Siskins (replacing last year's Redpolls) with flocks of 15-300 reported from almost every hemlock grove and birch clump in Onondaga and Oswego Counties. Lesser numbers of Purple Finch and Goldfinch were associated with them. Evening Grosbeak: present in small flocks (six-25) thru Dec and Jan south of Syracuse, in the hill country north of Oneida Lake and in the southwestern Adirondacks, but numbers did not begin to pick up until mid- and late Feb (e.g. Burt feeder survey — 17 in Jan, 156 in Feb, and 1000+ in Mar). Common Redpoll: two small flocks of seven and 12 reported from Manlius and Phoenix (Evans), just two (Jan) were reported in all the four months of the feeder survey (Burt), two at Brewerton (Barclay); 25 on Mar 12 at Oneida (Ackley) may be northbound birds. Red and White-winged Crossbills: a moderate flight of both present from Dec 15 on; numbers (two-15/flock) of White-winged distinctly less than the Red (eight-90/flock) but almost all well-birded sections in the peri-Syracuse and peri-Utica area had a few reports thru Jan and Feb; a marked influx of Red Crossbills in Mar but no corresponding increase in White-winged (Curtis, Propst, Rusk). Notable are the frequent reports of "many flocks . . . dozens . . . little groups . . ." of these birds, Pine Siskin, and Purple Finches along the grit-treated roads of the southwestern Adirondacks in Herkimer and Oneida Counties.

Towhee: four individuals reported with one each from — Oneida (Ackley, Sherman, Thurber), Amber on Otisco Lake (Lamb), and two at Syracuse (Burt, Rusk).

The majority of wintering Towhees are female or immature, but two of the four this season were adult males.

Wintering half-hardy sparrows include an adult Chipping Sparrow at the Barclay feeder in Brewerton (fide Burtt) and single White-crowned Sparrows at Jamesville (fide Burtt), DeWitt (Scheider), Oneida (Ackley), and Red Creek (Hallock); the DeWitt bird, an adult, seemed to fare quite well without benefit of local feeders. Junco and Tree Sparrow: winter numbers were up slightly (120+ feeder survey for Juncos; 600+ feeder survey for Tree Sparrows); no appreciable Mar influx of Tree Sparrows noted before Mar 11 although much early Mar singing was noted and enjoyed by local observers. Oregon Junco: singles seen at Green Lakes State Park Dec 26 and at VanderKamp Woods north of Constantia Mar 11 (Rusk) are rare winter visitants to the area. The Dec. scant scattering of wintering White-throated, Swamp, and Song Sparrows remained briefly for local Christmas Counts, then dwindled with the early Jan snows; no Swamp Sparrows were reported after Jan 1, and most of the Jan and Feb White-throated Sparrows noted were feeder-dependent birds at Oneida, Syracuse, Baldwinsville, and Brewerton. Lapland Longspur: a fine Mar flight with scattered singletons and small groups from Oneida to Baldwinsville; max count of 45 Mar 26 on the sparsely grassed wastebeds at Onondaga Lake (Thomas, Thurber).

N. B.: Special thanks to all those hardy observers who participated in local Christmas Counts and on the Waterfowl Census, thereby providing abundant quantitative data in a difficult season.

151 Seventh North Street, Syracuse 8

REGION 6 — ST. LAWRENCE

FRANK A. CLINCH

The weather in December and January was cold, and there was plenty of snow. Much of the snow fell between December 12 and January 2. These storms usually came on a Saturday or Sunday. As a result of the cold there was little open water by Christmas. The period from January 19 through February 3 was especially cold, with many temperature readings below zero. More moderate temperatures prevailed for the two weeks thereafter, and the sun began to melt the snow in spots sheltered from the wind. February 19 to March 8 was mild, and much of the snow melted. By March 7 two large flocks of Red-winged Blackbirds, a few Robins and Grackles, and at least one Killdeer had reached southern Jefferson County. However, snow covered the ground again on March 9. The remainder of March was cool except for milder weather March 22-24 and again on March 27-28.

It is interesting to note some of the birds that survived, at least for some time, the severe winter weather of December and January. These included a Rufous-sided Towhee, Cowbird, Junco, Red-necked Grebe, and several Robins.

Loons — Ducks: A Red-necked Grebe was picked up alive a little south of Watertown during the first week of February, but it died a day or two later. A Great Blue Heron appeared at Chaumont Mar 25. Eight Canada Geese flew over Watertown early on the morning of Mar 26. Many could be seen at the Perch River Game Management Area two or three days later. The Conservation Department has 22 pairs of Canada Geese which they hope will breed in the Perch Lake section, and the same number will be sent to the Wilson Hill Game Management Area between Waddington and Massena. By the end of March Pintails were numerous at Perch River Flats, and there were some Blacks, Mallards, Goldeneyes, Ring-necked and Wood Ducks, and also Blue-winged and Green-winged Teal. Several Hooded Mergansers were seen the last part of March.

Hawks — Owls: Marsh Hawks were seen during the latter part of March. The first date for the Red-tailed Hawk was Mar 12. Gordon says Rough-legged Hawks were numerous most of the winter, with the light phase outnumbering the dark phase about four to one. The first Killdeer was seen near Adams on Mar 7. An early date for Common Snipe was Mar 30 near Watertown. Belknap saw a Glaucous Gull at Fishers Landing on the St. Lawrence River on Mar 1. Great Black-backed Gulls were last seen near Watertown Dec 26. Ring-billed Gulls were back before the end of March.

Snowy Owls were noted throughout the area all winter. There may not have been any more owls than last year, but people did more talking about them this winter. Perhaps the greatest concentration of Snowy Owls was near Lake Ontario where Gordon reported at least seven on Point Peninsula Mar 25. Short-eared Owls were seen at Point Peninsula, and one was at Dexter Jan 21, but they seemed scarce in the rest of the region.

Goatsuckers — Shrikes: A male Belted Kingfisher was found near Baggs Corners Mar 30. The first Flicker appeared near Watertown Mar 31. Crows stayed around Watertown all winter where they fed on garbage. Robins were also seen every month this winter. A flock of ten or more was seen near Watertown Dec 26, and another group of that size was found in January. A Mockingbird was discovered near Watertown early in January and was seen several times until about the middle of February when it probably was killed (by a Cooper's Hawk?). Golden-crowned Kinglets were reported Jan 7 near Fargo and Mar 30 in Adams Center. Flocks of at least 35 Cedar Waxwings were seen near Watertown in December, February, and March. Northern Shrikes appeared at feeders in Carthage and Watertown in December. Later they were found in other parts of this region. Gordon saw the first Loggerhead Shrike near Louisville Mar 31.

Blackbirds — Sparrows: The first Red-winged Blackbirds appeared in Watertown Mar 3, and about that time two very large flocks were reported south of Watertown. Two Common Grackles arrived in our back yard Mar 7, and they survived the snow and cold that soon followed. Cardinals seemed about as numerous as last year. A Cowbird banded in Watertown Dec 19 was found injured early in February and died.

It is not easy to describe the Evening Grosbeaks this winter. They were present in good numbers in some places while scarce or absent in others. A few were around during December and January but seldom showed much interest in sunflower seeds. Their numbers at feeders increased in February, and by about Feb 15 large numbers were being seen daily at a few feeders. Evening Grosbeaks arrived in Watertown in large numbers just after the snow of Mar 9 and were seen daily the rest of the month.

Purple Finches were unusually numerous in March. In December Pine Grosbeaks were found near Wanakena and in January near Fargo and in Lewis County. Belknap found Redpolls very scarce all winter. They did come to a few feeders in small numbers for a short time. Pine Siskins were numerous, especially in March. They were seen at Fargo and Point Peninsula in January, at Tug Hill in February, and at Henderson Harbor and other places in March. Allen found White-winged Crossbills at Wanakena Dec 11. Red Crossbills were noted several times in Lewis and Jefferson Counties. They were seen near Barnes Corners Feb 11 and in Watertown and Adams Center late in March.

A Rufous-sided Towhee found shelter in a garage and food at a feeder in Watertown and was still around late in March. Slate-colored Juncos were seen near Watertown Dec 26, at Point Peninsula Jan 15, and in Watertown Mar 16. Another stayed around a feeder in Adams Center. Tree Sparrows seemed to be numerous. A Song Sparrow came to Allen's feeder Mar 23. The only Lapland Longspurs were two at Point Peninsula Jan 15. People frequently saw Snow Buntings.

173 Haley Street, Watertown

REGION 7 — ADIRONDACK - CHAMPLAIN

THOMAS A. LESPERANCE

The early defoliation of last fall provided the only ground cover until New Year's Day. To start the year off locally, there was a 15-inch snowfall which remained, with only a small flurry added, until late in February. During this period we experienced, as did most of the northeast, prolonged frigid weather. Temperatures went below -30° and for one continuous 18-day period never went above -5° . Another snowfall occurred in early March, but lengthening days and a warming sun made short work of it. Lake Champlain was completely frozen over, with ice in some protected coves and bays as thick as 25 inches. At this writing (April 12) the Lake Champlain Transportation Co. is unable to operate at Cumberland Head,

Port Kent, or Essex because of ice still present from 10-15 inches in thickness. Normally the ferry starts the crossing by April 5. Rivers and streams, and even the rapids, were locked in winter's cold grip. With abnormally light snowfall there was no flooding, and many persons are concerned about possible local drought conditions in the coming months. Total accumulation of snow in the Keeseville area was about 25 inches; normally we receive 75-100 inches. In the higher elevations total accumulation was about 75 inches; the normal there is 160-200 inches. Those that braved the cold in search of wildlife found a bleak and desolate stillness in most cases. Feeders were life savers to many urban species, while the more wild denizens were no doubt saved by the large quantities of "most" which Nature had ingeniously provided ahead of time. While variety of species was possibly at an all-time low, numbers of some species were phenomenal, a fact commented upon by local newspapers. Many birds perished along highways, strewn by cars for yards in area where they had collected to feed. In one stretch of road over 100 birds were counted; these were mainly Redpolls, but Crossbills, Juncos, Siskins, and Tree Sparrows were also among the casualties.

We are presently entertaining the thought of forming a club. Unlike in other areas, our meetings and activities would be restricted by the vast distances. A visit to the homes of the birders living on the perimeter of our circle would entail a day's drive and a clocking of nearly 600 miles on the speedometer. So, for the most part, our activities as a group would be restricted to the summer and fall months.

Inasmuch as the spring season is now upon us, there is a growing concern regarding the development of the AuSable marsh into a public recreation area. As I have previously indicated, I have acquired pertinent information which has been forwarded to the Federation Conservation Committee.

The summary below includes certain records for the month of November which were omitted from the previous summary.

Loons — Ducks: A Pied-billed Grebe and a Great Blue Heron were at AuSable Marsh on Mar 29 (Hart). Common Goldeneyes, Common Mergansers, and Black Ducks were on the AuSable River at Keeseville at a spot just above the Rainbow Falls throughout January and February (Lesperance). Black Ducks were present in small numbers in November, December, and early January in open water of the Saranac River near Saranac Lake (Delafield); a few were back at the same spot by Mar 31 (Hart). Black Ducks and Common Goldeneyes were noted at Tupper Lake on Mar 25 (Amstutz), and Common Mergansers and Scaup were also seen there that day (Kingsbury). The Hooded Merganser was at Tupper Lake by Mar 30. Four Ring-necked Ducks and two Common Goldeneyes were seen at AuSable Marsh Mar 29 (Hart).

Hawks — Owls: There were two Bald Eagles at Lumberjack Springs on Mar 26 (Amstutz), and there was a pair of these birds at Tupper Lake on Mar 29 — the same individuals? (Delahanty). Two Eagles were seen in a weak northwesterly flight of hawks at Keeseville on Mar 30 (Lesperance). Several Broad-wings and Red-tails were also in this flight. A Broad-winged Hawk was at Mooers, near the Canadian border, on Nov 7, and a Red-tailed Hawk was at Saranac Lake on Mar 27 and 30 (Delafield). Sparrow Hawks were seen throughout the period at Keeseville, and there were other reports.

Ruffed Grouse seemed present in normal numbers throughout the winter, but they were more frequently seen because of the low snow depth. Seven Killdeer at Canon Corners and one at West Chazy on Mar 28 were the first spring arrivals (Delafield). Lone Herring Gulls were over the Saranac River near Saranac Lake on Dec 3 and Mar 30; two had been seen over the same river near Redford on Nov 6 (Delafield).

A Snowy Owl was observed at Point au Roche, north of Plattsburgh, on Feb 7 (Hart).

Goatsuckers — Shrikes: A Belted Kingfisher was present near Saranac Lake throughout November and December (Delafield), and there was one on Jan 14 near Raybrook Hospital (Keji). Pileated Woodpeckers seemed quite common in suitable areas throughout the region. A Black-backed Three-toed Woodpecker was observed at Pt. Douglas on Mar 10 (Lesperance). The common resident woodpeckers seemed about normal in numbers. The first Eastern Phoebe showed up in Keeseville on Mar 31 (Lesperance).

Small flocks of Horned Larks were noted at Saranac Lake through Jan 5 and again in March, with a lone individual being reported there on Feb 4 (Delafield). Blue Jays were conspicuous. A Gray Jay was at Tupper Lake on Dec 10 (Amstutz), and another was at Saranac Lake on Mar 18 (Delafield). Crows were not as common as might be expected, but counts of 67 and 53 were made in the Saranac Lake area on Mar 13 and Mar 25 respectively (Delafield). The resident Black-capped Chickadee was not as numerous there as in the previous year, if the Christmas Count results are a good barometer. Boreal Chickadees, up to ten in number, were at Saranac Lake on Mar 16 and for several days thereafter (Delafield).

Both species of nuthatches were present in normal numbers. Brown Creepers were quite frequently reported; among the individual records were one at Raybrook on Dec 6 (Keji) and one at Sunmount on Dec 10 (Amstutz). On Jan 23 a Winter Wren was seen sheltering among steam exhausts on buildings of the Raybrook Hospital (Keji); the bird was present for several days. A Winter Wren had been reported there the first week in January (Keji).

A hardy Bluebird which had "Been around all winter" caused much interest at Tupper Lake. This individual was seen by many birders, including Amstutz, Delahanty, and Kingsbury. The last fall Robin report was by Delahanty on Dec 13, and the first spring report was at Tupper Lake on Mar 18 (Amstutz). Other Robin reports were by Kingsbury on Mar 25, Keji and Delafield on Mar 28, and Lesperance on Mar 29.

Golden-crowned Kinglets were quite common throughout most of the winter. There was a flock of Cedar Waxwings at Tupper Lake on Mar 6 (Delahanty). A Loggerhead Shrike was at Saranac Lake on Mar 22, and single Northern Shrikes were there on Dec 25 and Jan 4 (Delafield). Another Northern Shrike was at feeders in Tupper Lake on Jan 18 and occasionally thereafter (Delahanty).

Blackbirds — Sparrows: Among the winter blackbird reports were feeder records of a Cowbird at Tupper Lake from Dec 5 to Jan 3 (Delahanty, Kingsbury), a Red-winged Blackbird all winter at Sunmount (Amstutz), and a Common Grackle throughout the winter at Saranac Lake (Delafield).

Two Red-wings were at Saranac Lake on Mar 2, and flocks of 80 and 350 seen there on Mar 22 and 30 respectively were certain omens of spring (Delafield). There was a flock of 500 or more in the vicinity of Ellenburg in northern Clinton County on Mar 28 (Delafield). Spring arrivals were noted at Tupper Lake on Mar 25 (Kingsbury) and Mar 31 (Delahanty). At Keeseville the first birds were seen and clarion calls heard on Mar 29 (Lesperance). Among the late fall reports was a flock of 60 near Mooers on Nov 7 (Delafield).

A mixed flock of Grackles and Cowbirds was at Sunmount on Mar 11 (Amstutz). Spring migrants began to arrive at Saranac Lake on Mar 27, and by Mar 30 they were common there (Delafield). Grackles in good numbers were seen at Tupper Lake by Mar 28 (Delahanty), and the species was noted in Keeseville by Mar 29 (Lesperance). Kingsbury noted the increased number of Cowbirds on the Sunmount VA Hospital grounds by Mar 27. One Cardinal was seen at feeding stations by several observers during the reporting period (Amstutz, Delahanty, Kingsbury).

Evening Grosbeak were late in putting in an appearance in any numbers. Twenty-five were at Saranac Lake on Nov 14. Smaller groups were there in January and February, and a count of about 115 was made on Mar 15. Smaller numbers were then present there for the remainder of March (Delafield). There were other reports from feeders and roadways throughout the region. Pine Grosbeaks were described as fairly numerous at Saranac Lake, where they were seen until Mar 25 (Delafield); the largest flock there was 15 on Feb 3. Small flocks were seen throughout the winter on the hospital grounds at Sunmount (Amstutz, Kingsbury), and Pine Grosbeaks were noted at Tupper Lake on Feb 13 and 16 and again on Mar 25 (Delahanty). Purple Finches were quite common throughout the area in March. They were common at Keeseville until early January when apparently forced out by the severe cold wave (Lesperance). Two Redpolls at Saranac Lake on Mar 17 was the only record there for a species which had been so common the previous winter (Delafield). Pine Siskins were seen in flocks at Saranac Lake from Nov 19 on (Delafield); other reports indicated a general abundance of this species this winter. Both species of crossbills were noted in perhaps record numbers in the Saranac Lake area, where, unfortunately, many were killed along the highway by cars (Delafield).

Many birders from outside areas journeyed to Saranac Lake to see the crossbills (Ed — see field notes section for an account of the Saranac Lake crossbill influx).

Tree Sparrows were present in normal numbers. A Whitethroated Sparrow was at a Tupper Lake feeder from Dec 8 until Jan 6 (Amstutz, Kingsbury). A few Song Sparrows were seen late in March, the first one being on Mar 22 at Tupper Lake (Delehanty). The Savannah Sparrow was reported on Mar 28 (Amstutz) and Mar 30 (Delehanty). Slate-colored Juncos were present in good numbers, with singing birds being heard late in March. Eight Lapland Longspurs were sighted near West Chazy on Jan 15 (Delafield). Snow Buntings could be readily found in suitable areas.

Corrigendum: Following are several corrections to the fall summary (**Kingbird**, Vol. 10, No. 4, pp 196-197):

The only Horned Grebes, Common Goldeneyes, and Ruddy Ducks reported by Harriet Delafield were at Lake Champlain on Oct 28. Records of those species by this observer on other than the above date and in other than the above locality are incorrect. The Rough-legged Hawk location for this observer's report of this species was Canon Corners, not Saranac Lake. Under the paragraph on warblers Harriet Delafield's home area was erroneously stated as Tupper Lake; it should read Saranac Lake, and the Rusty Blackbird record near Clayburg on Oct 23 should be credited to this observer. Also, the height of the Horned Lark and Snow Bunting migration was Oct 27; the date Oct 23 should be deleted in connection with this observer's Snow Bunting reports (Ed — the Editor regrets these errors of omission and commission, which were the fault of the editorial board, not of the observer or the regional reporter).

Keeseville

REGION 8 — MOHAWK - HUDSON

WALTON B. SABIN

The first half of this winter, up until February 13, was unusually severe in that the temperature fell to 0° or below on 25 days, 13 of them in January. The coldest day of the winter occurred on February 2nd when the thermometer dipped to 18° below zero. After February 13 there was a warming trend evident and the thermometer climbed to a high of 73° on the 28th of March. Snowfall was considered about normal until March when the fall was about double the normal expected amount. Total precipitation for the period was 8.40", or 0.32" above average. Most bodies of water were frozen over about December 10th.

The wintering bird populations approached what could be called normal conditions, with but few exceptions. One of the puzzling facts was the complete absence of all gulls from December 26 to February 26. Usually a few can be found along the Hudson River, but not so this winter. Deviations from the normal in other respects were the good Rough-legged Hawk, Snowy Owl, and Short-eared Owl flights. In conformity with normal conditions was a lack of any pronounced invasions by so-called "northern finches". Unusual species for this period were few, such as Virginia Rail and Catbird. Rarities or near-rarities included Whistling Swan, Snow Goose, Barrow's Goldeneye, Dickcissel, and Oregon Junco.

Loons — Ducks: The last Common Loon was seen at Saratoga Lake on December 10 as were six Horned Grebes (Hallenbeck). No herons were reported wintering, however an early Great Blue Heron was seen near Onderdonk Lake (Albany County) on Mar 29 (Kent). Three Whistling Swans, two adult and one immature, were seen on Glass Pond, Guilderland on Mar 15 (Linch). Subsequently they were reported by many observers at the Meadowdale Marshes until the 26th. On the 31st, only the immature swan could be found (Sabin). Apparently the adult birds had moved on in the interim between the 26th and the 31st. A late fall Canada Goose was seen on a New Concord pond on Dec 2. A single bird of this species accompanied by a Snow Goose was seen feeding at Castleton near the Hudson River on Feb 10 and again on Feb 12 (Cook). The spring Canada Goose flight reached Region 8 during the last week of Mar. Mallards, Black Ducks, Common Goldeneyes, and Common Mergansers wintered well and in their usual numbers along the Hudson River. Noted with these wintering ducks were one Pintail, one Ring-necked Duck and one Red-breasted Merganser at Troy on Schenectady Bird Club's Troy

Christmas Count, Dec 31. Returning dabbling ducks were as follows: American Widgeon at Niskayuna on Mar 26 (Kaskan), Pintail at Stockport Station on Mar 2 (Erlenbach) and at Meadowdale on Mar 7 (Eddy), Green-winged and Blue-winged Teal at Meadowdale on Mar 31 (Sabin), and Wood Duck at Meadowdale on Mar 26 (Bartlett, Hallenbeck). A Canvasback was observed at Saratoga Lake on Dec 4 (Schenectady Bird Club field trip). On Feb 26 a Canvasback was seen at Stillwater and a Ring-necked Duck at Mechanicville (Stone, Yunick). Ring-necked Ducks arrived in numbers at the close of the period with a high count of 30 birds at Meadowdale on Mar 29 (Austin). Four Lesser Scaup arrived at Cohoes on Mar 28 (Foote) and thirty Greater Scaup at Niskayuna on Mar 29 (Hallenbeck). The only report this winter of a Barrow's Goldeneye concerns a beautiful male bird seen on the Hudson River above Troy on Feb 2 (Austin). A pair of Buffleheads were seen in the same general area as the preceding species from Feb 2 through the end of the period (Yunick). Five Hooded Mergansers were observed at Tomhannock Reservoir on Dec 5 before it became frozen over (Austin). A pair of this latter species was seen on the Hudson River above Troy on Jan 15 (Mid-winter duck count). Migrants started to show up the last two days of the period with as many as ten noted at Vly Creek Reservoir on Mar 31 (Sabin). Six Red-breasted Mergansers were observed at Saratoga Lake on Dec 10 and one at Niskayuna on Mar 29 in company with fifty Common Mergansers (Hallenbeck).

Hawks — Owls: The first spring Turkey Vulture report was of three birds seen at Red Rock (Columbia County) on Mar 1 (Smilow). This species wasn't generally reported until the last few days of Mar. With the exception of two birds seen at West Glens Falls on Jan 15 (Sabin), single Goshawks were seen at Castleton on Jan 15 and 18 (Cook), at Nassau on Feb 2 (Shineman), and at Castleton again on Feb 15 (Cook). A few Sharp-shinned and Cooper's Hawks were reported. Red-tailed Hawks were numerous enough but appeared to be slightly less abundant this winter. A late Red-shouldered Hawk was observed at Saratoga Battlefield on Dec 4 (Schenectady Bird Club field trip), and either a wandering, wintering individual or an early spring migrant was noted at New Concord (Columbia County) from Feb 26 to 28 (Radke). Rough-legged Hawks, predominantly light phase birds, were common to abundant in many areas. At Meadowdale and vicinity on Mar 15, seven individuals were counted with five visible in the air at one time (Hallenbeck). Certainly, these hawks should **not** have gone hungry considering the extremely high mouse populations in all areas. A lone Marsh Hawk was seen at Cohoes on Jan 15 (Schenectady Bird Club's Mid-winter Duck Count field trip). Early arrivals were noted at Meadowdale on Mar 19 and 26 (Hallenbeck). A fine adult Bald Eagle was seen under ideal conditions near Meadowdale on Dec 1 (Waite). Ruffed Grouse and Pheasants were widely reported. Bob-whites were reported from several localities chiefly in Columbia County (Alan Devoe Bird Club), and at Schenectady (Eddy). Two Virginia Rails were observed feeding in a small, spring-fed, open brook at Canaan from Jan 22 to Feb 4 (Gokay). While one of the birds appeared normal in all respects, the other oddly enough appeared to be a much darker runt of a bird and was considered to be an immature bird. This report was confirmed by Dr. E. M. Reilly, of the New York State Museum, and is reported upon elsewhere in this issue. First spring arrivals of Coots were seen at Niskayuna on Mar 29 (Hallenbeck). Except for a Killdeer seen at Saratoga Lake on Dec 10 (Hallenbeck) none were reported until early spring arrivals appeared between Feb 25 and 28 in many areas. The only Woodcock reported were of singles seen at Raymertown on Mar 22 and 28 (Yunick). A Common Snipe was seen, on the Schenectady Christmas Count, near Meadowdale on Dec 26 (Waite). All gulls disappeared from lakes and ponds when there was no more open water available. Usually some birds continue to be present along the Hudson River, but after four Herring Gulls were counted there on the Schenectady Christmas Count on Dec 26 no species of gulls were seen until Feb 26 when five Black-backed, twenty-five Herring and three Ring-billed Gulls were seen (Stone, Yunick). About a week later the Black-backed Gulls became abundant when over 100 were seen at Hudson (Mapes). Numbers of Herring and Ring-billed Gulls did not increase until the last few days in March after the ice had gone out of the rivers. Mourning Doves wintered in considerable numbers in several areas. Resident Screech and Great Horned Owls were regularly reported. Snowy Owls were reported on eleven different occasions, the last one being seen at Basic Creek

Reservoir on Mar 22 (Kent). Two Long-eared Owls were present all of January in Delmar (Madison) and one was noted at Stockport Station on Jan 14 (Brown). Short-eared Owls were reported almost as many times as Snowy Owls, with the last report coming from Guilderland Center on Mar 18 (Hallenbeck). Only one Saw-whet Owl was reported for the period. It was a single bird observed and photographed at Broadalbin on Feb 18 (Wright).

Goatsuckers — Shrikes: Belted Kingfishers may have wintered at Schenectady or Meadowdale. At Schenectady a bird was seen on Jan 29 and Feb 24 (Kaskan). At Meadowdale a bird was seen on Jan 10 only (Hallenbeck). Two Flickers were observed in Columbia County in December. One was at Canaan on the 3rd (Gokay) and one at Chatham on the 27th (Erlenbach). Probably the same Flicker was seen near Troy on Jan 14 (Long) and 15 (Schenectady Bird Club's Mid-winter Duck Count field trip). Spring arrivals of this species appeared in the last week of March in several areas, along with Phoebes. Horned Larks were first heard singing on Feb 9 (Foote). Tree Swallows were first reported from Columbia County on Mar 28 (Alan Devoe Bird Club). There was no Red-breasted Nuthatch invasion this winter and only an occasional report was received, as was also the case with the Brown Creeper although one was present at Slingerlands the entire month of December (Grace). Tufted Titmice and Mockingbirds were quite regularly reported. Apparently the winter weather killed off or drove south any Carolina Wrens since none were reported during the period. A lone Catbird was seen at Latham on Jan 27 only (Hicks) and a Brown Thrasher, on the Troy Christmas Count, at Melrose on Dec 31 (Yunick). Robins were regularly but sparingly reported. The spring influx took place about the beginning of the third week in March, after which they became common. Six Bluebirds were seen at Ghent from Dec 5 to 8 (Erlenbach), five at Scotia on Dec 28 (Hallenbeck), two at Ghent on Feb 11 (Erlenbach), and a general influx of spring migrants during the last ten days of March. Golden-crowned Kinglets were seen in Schenectady (Eddy) and at Tomhannock (Austin) on Dec 5, on both the Schenectady and Troy Christmas Counts (Dec 26 and 31 respectively), at Altamont on Jan 17 (Waite), and at Gallupville on Jan 31 (Zimmer). No other were reported. The Ruby-crowned Kinglet was seen only on the Schenectady Christmas Count on Dec 26 (Madison) and at Meadowdale on Mar 23 (Eddy). Cedar Waxwings were reported on both the Schenectady and Troy Christmas Counts (Dec 26 and 31), two in Columbia County in Jan (Erlenbach and Gokay), and three in Albany County in Feb (Eddy, Hallenbeck, Waite, and Zimmer). No shrikes were reported in March.

Blackbirds — Sparrows: This winter apparently was a good one for Meadowlarks and Cowbirds as they were reported by most all observers. Red-winged Blackbirds on the other hand were not reported until they made their spring appearance along the Hudson River after Feb 24. A second large influx of this species occurred in the vicinity of Ghent on Mar 15 when over 1,000 were noted (Erlenbach). Only one Baltimore Oriole was seen during this period. It was seen to feed on dried grapes at Latham on Dec 5 and again on Dec 7 (Hicks). Rusty Blackbirds were commoner this winter than usual judging by reports received. Common Grackles were noted at Schenectady on Dec 7 (Van Vorst), at Albany on Jan 27 (Thomas), and along the Hudson River with the migrating Red-winged Blackbirds. Dickcissels were reported as follows: one present at a feeding station in Canaan throughout the month of December, said individual travelling with a flock of House Sparrows, and one which appeared at a feeding station in Old Chatham on January 18 only (Alan Devoe Bird Club). Cardinals were widely reported during the period. Evening Grosbeaks, except in the area east of the Hudson River, were rather scarce until the month of March. During the first three weeks of March they were quite common in most areas. The species was still present at the close of the period. Purple Finches have been even scarcer than Evening Grosbeaks, with a flock of 24 at Schermerhorn Road, Rotterdam on Mar 19 (Schenectady Bird Club field trip) considered unusual for this winter. Pine Grosbeaks were reported from Columbia County only, in Jan and Feb (Mickle, Radke, Reilly). Redpolls were scarce this winter in comparison to a year ago. In December, a flock of five was seen at Taborton on the 2nd (Yunick), another flock at Nassau on the 18th (Shineman), and a flock of 29 at Saratoga Battlefield on the 4th (Schenectady Bird Club field trip), and four on the Schenectady Christmas Count on Dec 26 (Kaskan, Yunick). None were reported

in January. In February two reports were received from the Melrose area where 50 were seen on the 18th and 20 on the 25th (Yunick). Pine Siskins and Goldfinches were widely reported with the former having a slight edge in numbers. Red Crossbills were reported occasionally from Chatham during Jan (Reilly) and from Scotia on Mar 24 and 28 where flocks of 4 and 20 were seen respectively (Hallenbeck). Towhees were present throughout the period except for the month of March. In East Chatham a single bird was present at a feeding station from Dec 1 to Feb 28 (Wilson), while another bird visited a feeding station at Red Rock on Dec 21 and again from Jan 1 to 31 (Smilow). Returning Savannah Sparrows were reported from Canaan on Mar 29 (Payne). Several Vesper Sparrows were reported from Columbia County on Jan 29, Feb 1, 2, and 19 (Alan Devoe Bird Club). Juncos, Tree Sparrows, and Song Sparrows were widely reported. An Oregon Junco was present in Albany off and on from Jan 28 to Mar 9 (Thomas). No others of this species were reported this winter. Field Sparrows first appeared at Latham on Mar 13 (Hicks) and at Berne on Mar 27 (Kent). White-throated Sparrows were noted at Loudonville on Jan 21 and 28 (French), as well as one on the Troy Christmas Count, Dec 31 (Kilcawley). A Fox Sparrow was present at Slingerlands from Dec 1 at least to Feb 28 (Grace), while another individual was present at Charlton all of Feb (Hackett). The only report of Swamp Sparrow concerns the two recorded on the Schenectady Christmas Count, Dec 26 (Kaskan, Yunick). Snow Buntings were quite common this winter with as many as 1,000 estimated present at Meadowdale on Jan 10 and the last two seen at the same place on Mar 15 (Hallenbeck).

652 Kenwood Avenue, Slingerland

REGION 9 — DELAWARE - HUDSON

FRED N. HOUGH

Typical winter weather was slow in reaching us since November went down through the shortening days as quite pleasant. We were glad to get these "lucky" days but they ended abruptly after the first few days of December. The first appreciable snowfall of the season came on the 12th, and from then on it was constant winter lasting through to mid-February. A sub-zero period occurred during the latter part of January and early February. Warmer weather then arrived so that by the end of the month much of the snow had melted away. Spring came gradually, being held back by light snows and cool weather of the first half of March. In some shaded areas the first snowfall was still on the ground come April.

Our winter birdlife was, as usual, interesting but hardly spectacular. Ducks were down in numbers while remaining hawks were about in fair abundance. The Rough-legged Hawk occurred in numbers about the same as last winter. Owls were normal except for a slight incursion of the Snowy which always attracts attention. The Tufted Titmouse, Carolina Wren, and Cardinal seemed to be at an all-time high in the Hudson Valley. In numerical abundance the Cardinal leads with the Titmouse next followed by the Carolina Wren. The northern finches continued spotty and were generally unimpressive in numbers. Spring migrants of February and March arrived about the usual time for the type of season.

Loons — Ducks: The winter waterfowl population hit a low as indicated by the annual count in January. Wintering Pied-billed Grebes were reported in Dutchess Co (J. Beck), Putnam Co (M. Little), and Westchester Co (S. Grierson). Stan Grierson watched a Great Blue Heron flying over Bedford Center, Westchester Co, on Jan 28, a time of severe cold and snow. We wonder how the big bird made out. During the latter part of February and early March a small number of Mute Swans appeared on the Ashokan Reservoir in Ulster Co, making a first interior record for this area (Al Feldman et al). During early January near Manuet, Rockland Co, a lone Pintail was seen by Frank Steffens as it mingled with some tame Mallards. The only winter record for the Green-winged Teal came from the northern Westchester Co area covered by Stan Grierson. He also had the only winter record for the Wood Duck. Thirteen Red-breasted Mergansers were seen near Grand View, Rockland Co, on Jan 2 by Edwin Gamble — a nice concentration for this species.

Hawks — Owls: Turkey Vultures were spotted in many areas of the region by the end of February. A Goshawk was seen near Lomontville, Ulster Co, on Dec 26 (Mrs. H. Dunbar, A. Feldman). It was chasing the common pigeon. Dutchess Co observers found the Red-tailed Hawk in good abundance in that area. The ever

magnificent Rough-legged Hawk was about the region in good numbers with nearly every county reporting them. Various Bald Eagles were reported along the Hudson River during the course of the winter, but some observers feel they are down in numbers. Mr. William Russell reports seeing a **Gyrfalcon** on Feb 7, flying south over Katonah, Westchester Co. It is a treat of a lifetime to spot one of these rare visitors from the North. A Pigeon Hawk was seen by Mr. and Mrs. John Dye and Martha Earl near Hamptonburgh, Orange Co, on Dec 26. A pair of this species was also seen near Clinton Corners, Dutchess Co, on Mar 24 by T. Haight and F. Germond. Sparrow Hawks were about in near usual numbers.

Dr. Andrew Weir found a Virginia Rail in a marsh near South Salem, Westchester Co, on Dec 22; the bird was undoubtedly attempting to winter. Over in Orange Co near Blooming Grove Martha Earl also discovered a Virginia Rail in one of the local swamps and reported it stayed there through most of the winter. A Coot was seen on the Bear Mountain Count Jan 2. The return of Killdeers was first reported on Feb 24, in Dutchess Co (Walter Clare; J. Germond). Woodcock were in South Salem, Westchester Co, on Mar 7 (Ruth Rice) and at Tappan, Rockland Co, on Mar 2 (Nancy McDowell). On Jan 23 Richard Donovan rescued a Common Snipe from the claws of a cat that lives in the vicinity of Armonk, Westchester Co. Stan Grierson aided the situation by caring for the injured bird.

A Glaucous Gull was observed near Piermont Pier, Rockland Co, on Mar 12 (Joseph Marlan; Julian Scala) and again on Mar 15 at the same place by Marjorie Hopper. Most gulls were up in the Rockland area (Bob Deed). Mourning Doves were fairly numerous during the winter. Near the Armonk School in Armonk, Westchester Co, a pair of Mourning Doves really got off to an early nesting start. Students saw them building a nest in a nearby spruce on **Feb 14**, and by the 23rd they appeared to be sitting on eggs (Mrs. Wm. Grierson).

In some sections of Ulster Co the Great Horned Owls were more noisy last fall than they were during January and February, their usual time, but down in Rockland Co the situation was reversed. We wonder what influenced the difference. Snowy Owls did make a pretty good showing in our region this year; they were reported from most counties. An interesting incident concerning this owl comes from Dutchess Co. According to Eleanor Pink et al one comes to the Green Haven Prison and spends every winter inside the walls and has done this for the past eleven years! It is said to live on the local pigeons. Dr. Heinz Meng of New Paltz, Ulster Co, took possession of an injured Snowy that really turned out to be quite tractable. The only Short-eared Owl reported for the winter season was seen by Stan Grierson in the Tri-loba Hill Sanctuary area of Katonah, Westchester Co, during late January and early February. Mr. Walter Clare Jr. of Dutchess Co was getting a Christmas tree on Dec 11 from a large evergreen stand located near Hyde Park, and as he went about his pleasant task he came face to face with an owl. One would suspect a Saw-whet, but upon close scrutiny Mr. Clare concluded he was looking at a rare visitor — the **Boreal Owl**. This is a first record for Dutchess Co, and we wish others could have been fortunate enough to see it also. Saw-whets were reported here and there throughout the region.

Goatsuckers — Shrikes: Most of the wintering Kingfisher reports came from Dutchess County. Flickers were off for the season. A **Red-bellied Woodpecker** was seen visiting a feeder at Millbrook, Dutchess Co, during mid-winter and was checked by E. Brown and G. Ball. This is another first for the Dutchess Co records of the Ralph T. Waterman Bird Club. Sapsuckers were found in Rockland (RAS) and in Orange Co (E. A. Mearns Bird Club) on the Christmas Counts. At Cornwall-on-Hudson M. Ward had one on Jan 23.

In early December an empidonax flycatcher appeared at the feeder of Mr. and Mrs. John Dye, Cornwall-on-Hudson, Orange Co, and judging from the great amount of yellow underneath it was believed to be a **Yellow-bellied Flycatcher**. It slept on the window sill behind the feeder but was not seen after Dec 11. A Tree Swallow was noted near Hyde Park, Dutchess Co, on Mar 16 (Alice Jones); this is an early date. Very few Red-breasted Nuthatches appeared on any of the winter lists. Two were seen near the Ashokan Reservoir in Ulster Co (Al Feldman), and there was one near Barrytown in Dutchess Co (Brother Michael). Mockingbirds were reported from most counties. Catbirds were very scarce. Brown Thrashers were also scarce; one wintered at Middletown, Orange Co (Mrs. J. Kniep Jr), and there was another at

Nyack, Rockland Co, late in the winter (Marjorie Hopper). Nowhere in the region was there any indication that Robins were numerous. All counties reported Bluebirds in small numbers, although Mrs. Javius Matsumoto of Chappaqua, Westchester Co, had as many as 18 about her place on Jan 14 and 27. John Leaycraft of West Nyack, Rockland Co, saw nearly 40 in a flock near there. Cedar Waxwings were not numerous anywhere in the region. Northern Shrikes, too, were scarce. One was noted near West Haverstraw, Rockland Co, on Dec 26 (John Orth, John Kenney), and there was another on Jan 2 in Harriman Park (M. Hopper).

Vireos — Warblers: Myrtle Warblers were extremely scarce this year. A Pine Warbler was studied closely by Mrs. Chandler Stetson on Dec 18 as it fed on her window sill feeder in South Nyack, Rockland County.

Blackbirds — Sparrows: The first Red-wing was reported on Feb 22 by Stan Grierson who found one singing at Armonk, Westchester Co. The next few days found them spreading through the Hudson Valley in good numbers. From Dec 2 to 11 Mr. and Mrs. John Dye (Cornwall-on-Hudson) had another interesting visitor to their feeder. This was a male Baltimore Oriole that ate quite a variety of the fare offered — sliced oranges, ash seeds, wild bird seed, and raisins. He should have stayed! A few Rusty Blackbirds, Common Grackles, and Cowbirds were reported wintering. Again the Cardinal numbers have reached new highs. In Rockland Co the Christmas Count yielded 341, the highest count of any report. This fraction alone indicates how common this bird has become in this Valley. A Dickcissel appeared at Saugerties, Ulster Co (Mrs. J. Remensnyder), early in the winter, and another remained throughout the winter in Peeksville, Westchester Co (John Given). Evening Grosbeaks wandered about the region visiting the many feeders, but it was no year of great abundance. Purple Finches were spotty. Again the Pine Grosbeak all but completely avoided us. Three were seen at Orangeburg, Rockland Co, on Jan 13 (John Zehner). In contrast to being so numerous last year Redpolls were broken down to just individual birds this year. Some areas did not report them at all. Pine Siskins were very scarce. A small flock of Red Crossbills was seen near Kripplebush, Ulster Co, on Dec 26 (F. Hough), and another flock was observed in Barrytown, Dutchess Co, on Mar 10 (Br. Michael). No White-winged Crossbills were reported.

Most of the wintering Towhees seemed to be down in the Westchester and Rockland areas. The Rockland Audubon Society had five Savannah Sparrows on the Christmas Count, and four were found up in Ulster on the count there. Savannahs were returning from the South during the last few days of March. Vesper Sparrows were found during the winter in Rockland Co (RAS); Dutchess Co (RTWBC), and in Ulster Co (JBNHS). During part of December Paul Wolfe had a Pink-sided Junco at his feeder in Putnam Valley, Westchester Co. Field Sparrows wintered quite heavily in Rockland and Westchester Counties. Rockland had a high of 33 on its Christmas Count. In Dutchess County Marion Van Wagner had four at her feeder in Pleasant Valley all winter. White-throats were about in near normal numbers. Most of the Fox Sparrows reported were down in the Rockland Co area. Marion Van Wagner (Pleasant Valley) had one at her place on Feb 24, which she believed to be an early migrant. Swamp Sparrows were low, but most of the Song Sparrow counts were high. Members of the Ralph T. Waterman Bird Club of Dutchess Co were fortunate to have Brother Michael spot for them a small flock of Lapland Longspurs feeding with Horned Larks and Snow Buntings in an open area near Red Hook. This was during the January period. Snow Buntings were about usual in this region.

Accord 1

REGION 10 — MARINE

JOHN J. ELLIOTT

The winter of 1960-61 was a desperate one for numerous species of wildfowl and water birds. Cold weather prevailed for a couple of weeks after an early December snowfall, but then the cold modified somewhat and landbirds on the Christmas Counts were rather high in species, but low in number of individuals.

The Waterfowl Census (January 14-22) barely preceded a prolonged steady sub-freezing period which included the remainder of January and the first part of February. Practically all our bays, including the larger ones, were deeply frozen. There were very few channel holes, and on western Long Island these were thronged

with Brant and many species of ducks. As the prolonged cold, assisted by about two feet of snow, weakened them, gaunt and starved Great Blue Herons died on the marshy edges and Black-crowned Night Herons in the pine groves. Brant lay frozen in the snow, and there were heavy Black Duck mortalities.

Equally as tragic was the disappearance of practically all our landbirds, including Meadowlarks, which were extremely scarce in late winter after the severe snowstorms. One weakened Meadowlark at Jones Beach fell into the bay, was caught floating and devoured by a Great Black-backed Gull (N. Ward); and on eastern Long Island a wintering Pigeon Hawk was reported subsisting on Meadowlarks and other birds of the marshes. As fatalities increased, conservation-minded clubs and individuals spread out grain or provided funds for it, and many other birds were saved.

The cold broke rather abruptly in early February, and comparatively spring-like weather followed, soon melting the snow. Grackles and Redwinged Blackbirds appeared about on time (February 20), and Prairie Horned Larks were on location on ocean beaches. The winter was practically destitute of such winter finches as Pine Grosbeaks, Redpolls, Pine Siskins, and crossbills, but Evening Grosbeaks appeared in several locations.

Loons — Ducks: Again the greatest number of loons appeared at extreme eastern Long Island. A Red-necked Grebe (rare this winter) was at Rockaway on Feb 18, and 150 Horned Grebes were seen the same day (J. Mayer, G. Rose). On the Waterfowl Census there were fewer Pied-billed Grebes than usual; one in salt water at Lindenhurst on Jan 15 appeared out of natural habitat. Great Cormorants were at several locations; there were five at Montauk on Jan 16 (P. Connor). A count of 35 Great Blue Herons at Jones Beach was made on Jan 2 (South Nassau Christmas Count), and 15 were on the North Shore in late December (Lyman Langdon Audubon Society). These practically disappeared during the sub-freezing weather of late January and early February.

The January 14-22 Waterfowl Census: Down in numbers from other years were Mute Swan, Canada Goose, Green-winged Teal, Ruddy Duck, Common Merganser, and particularly Redhead; none of the latter were reported east of Brooklyn. The count included 37 species, three over last year. Rarities included Snow Goose, European Widgeon (three), Blue-winged Teal, both eiders, and Harlequin Duck (five). Highest on the count, as usual, was Greater Scaup, totaling 80,509 for entire Region 10, including New York City, Staten Island, and Long Island Sound to the Connecticut line. Brant was second — 34,545, practically all from southern Nassau and Queens Counties. Good counts were made of the next three highs: Black Duck (15,177), White-winged Scoter (10,994), and Canvasback (6,408). Red-breasted Merganser (3,200) was up from the past several years. Common Goldeneye (2,197) and Oldsquaw (814) were considerably down. The Census total for the entire region was 165,558, of which about 48% were Scaup.

Other interesting waterfowl notes included one Whistling Swan, Quogue, Feb 25 to Mar 3; Snow Goose singles wintering at Hook Pond and Mecox (D. Puleston); four Snow and two Blue Geese at Jamaica Bay Mar 10 (numerous observers); the Lesser White-fronted Goose still at East Islip; single European Widgeons in four locations; and two Shovelers wintering at Westhampton and six at Patchogue (Puleston). Redhead reports included two at Brooklyn Jan 28 (E. Whelen) and two at Captree Feb 12 (H. Pembleton, E. Mudge). There were a half-dozen records of both eiders, Point Lookout, Jones Inlet, and Montauk. Unusual was a King Eider at Coney Island on Jan 28 (Whelen); two were at Shinnecock Inlet Dec 27 (R. Wilcox). A full adult male Barrow's Goldeneye was at Gardiners Bay, Orient State Park, Feb 22 (Elliotts), and there was a presumed immature male in brown plumage on Feb 11 at Atlantic Beach (Mayer, Rose et al).

Hawks — Owls: Most remarkable among the birds of prey group was a Turkey Vulture at Jones Beach on Feb 9 (Mrs. A. Dove, Mrs. M. Matera). There were two Goshawk reports, and a Sharp-shinned Hawk at Jones Beach Feb 9-12 (Mrs. Dove, A. Dingnan, C. Ward). There were several reports of Redtailed Hawks, including one at Pelham Mar 4. It was another good year for Rough-legged Hawks to late February, Jamaica Bay to Quogue; there was an inland record at Dix Hills on Dec 14 (Pembleton, Good).

The only Bald Eagle was at South Haven Feb 26 and last seen Mar 26; this is

the first year in many that these birds have not been known to winter. A bird identified as a Pigeon Hawk wintered at Brookhaven, living on Meadowlarks, etc. (Puleston). There were several rail records from central to eastern Long Island: a Clapper at Shinnecock on Dec 14 (Connor), King Rail at Brookhaven Dec 25-26, and Virginia Rail Dec 26 to Jan 10 (Puleston).

Shorebird records included Piping Plover at Captree on Jan 7 and 8 (Pembleton, Good), Black-bellied Plover at Shinnecock Jan 13 and 26, Ruddy Turnstone Jan 31 and Feb 2, and Knot at Sagaponeck Dec 22 (Connor). There were good counts of Purple Sandpipers at Atlantic Beach, Long Beach, and Point Lookout; several were also seen at Shinnecock and Montauk breakwaters.

There were a half dozen records of Glaucous Gull, including two at Shinnecock on Jan 23 (Wilcox). Iceland Gulls were rather widespread. There was an inland record at Wantagh on Jan 7 (Elliott); other records were at Montauk on Jan 28 (Puleston, G. Raynor), Jones Beach on Jan 28 (Dignan, Levine, Ward), and at Atlantic Beach Feb 12 (P. Gillen, O. Dunning). A Kumlien's type was at Atlantic Beach Feb 22 (Mayer, Rose). Two Black-headed Gulls were identified at Captree on Jan 7 (Puleston, Raynor).

There were several reports of Razor-billed Auk, Dovekie, and Thick-billed Murre from Atlantic Beach to Montauk, and there was a report of a dead Common Murre at Moriches (Guthrie).

Barn Owl, Long-eared Owl, and two Saw-whets were seen at East Norwich. A Great Horned Owl, seen Dec 26 at Mill Neck (Lyman Langdon Audubon Society), was heard later through the winter (O. Heck). At Pelham on Dec 29 there were one Barn, one Great Horned, and 14 Long-eared Owls (Queens County Bird Club). The Snowy Owl was present in numbers in early winter; after their arrival in mid-November there was a maximum of six or seven at Jones Beach in early December (numerous observers). The maximum Short-eared Owl count for eastern Long Island was eight on Jan 10 from Moriches to Shinnecock (Connor). Long-eared Owls appeared openly along the coast in mid-winter; two were at Gilgo Jan 29 (Dignan, Ward). The Saw-whet was found in about half a dozen locations, with an eastern record of one banded at Westhampton Jan 22 (Wilcox).

Goatsuckers — Shrikes: Eighteen Belted Kingfishers on the Dec 26 Lyman Langdon Audubon Christmas Count was the most in six years; the last winter record was at Hempstead on Jan 14 (Mayer, Rose). Flickers were very scarce after mid-January. There were no Three-toed Woodpecker reports. Prairie Horned Larks were singing by Feb 18-19. Twenty Tree Swallows were at Jones Beach on Dec 3, and three were noted Dec 17 and Jan 7. An increase was noted in the numbers of Tufted Titmice on the north shore of western Long Island, with four in late December (Lyman Langdon Audubon Society). There were no winter Red-breasted Nuthatch records. A scattering of Winter Wren reports at the end of the season included two at Riverhead Mar 13 (Connor). Two Short-billed Marsh Wrens were at Brookhaven through Dec 6 (Puleston). There was a fairly good early winter count of Carolina Wrens, but this species should be watched for a decline, often occurring after a severe winter. Mockingbird singles were reported in December and January from Oceanside, Quogue, Hampton Bays, Shinnecock, and Amagansett. An usual flock of 15 Bluebirds was at Mill Neck on Dec 10 (Puleston). A Loggerhead Shrike was at Mecox Dec 2 (Connor), and there were other shrike records around the end of the year (Northerns?).

Vireos — Sparrows: Myrtle Warblers were reduced in numbers this winter. A Yellow-breasted Chat was noted Dec 4 (numerous observers). There was a good early winter count of Meadowlarks in fair-sized flocks, heavy mortality later. Rusty Blackbird records included 20 at Mill Neck on Dec 10 (Puleston) and three at Northport Mar 7 (E. Mudge). A Scarlet Tanager was present at Short Beach through Dec 10 (numerous observers). There were several Dickcissel records. Two Evening Grosbeaks were at a Great Neck feeder early in the winter (R. Adelson), and there were very small flocks in several other locations, including five at Freeport in mid-January (Dignan) and five at Westbury (E. Costich). There were two reports of Purple Finches: at Roosevelt on Feb 18 (Ward) and a small flock at Springfield on Jan 7 (Rose). The House Finch was found at Quogue and East Quogue for the first time on Dec 31; two were at Southampton Dec 27. There were no Redpoll, Siskin, or Crossbill reports to the end of the period.

Two Oregon Juncos were present at Cutting Arboretum during a large part of the winter and were seen by numerous observers. A White-crowned Sparrow was seen daily at Brookhaven through Dec 30 (Puleston). There were a half dozen reports of Ipswich Sparrows, with an easterly record of one near Shinnecock Inlet Jan 25. A Lapland Longspur was noted on the same date at the same place. At Jamaica Bay Sanctuary there were seven Longspurs on Feb 19 and about none on Jan 28 (Dignan, Levine, Ward). Snow Bunting counts included 35 at Jones Inlet on Jan 7 (Larrabee) and 150 at Jamaica Bay on Jan 24.

Addendum: Omitted from the previous summary and worthy of interest is a Western Kingbird banded at Speonk in mid-November (Wilcox).
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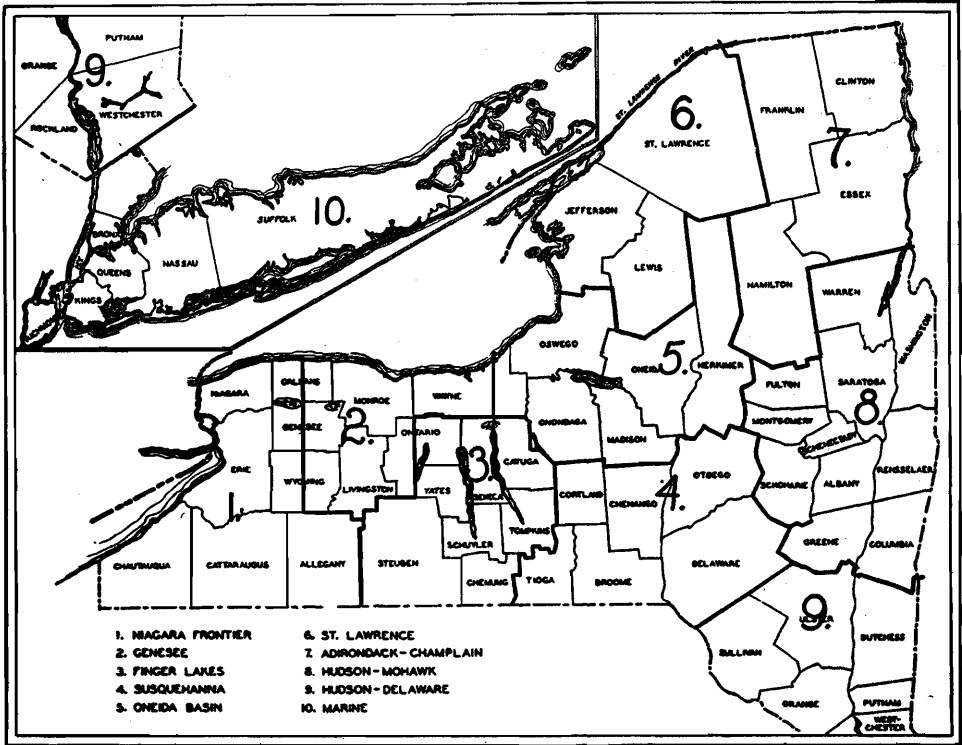
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