

The KINGBIRD



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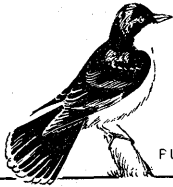
FEDERATION OF NEW YORK STATE BIRD CLUBS, INC.

THE KINGBIRD, published four times a year (January, May, July and October), 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 \$5.00 annually, of which \$4.00 is for a subscription to The Kingbird. A member wishing to make an additional contribution may become a Sustaining Member (\$7.50), a Supporting Member (\$10), or a Life Member (\$100 — "payable over a four-year period in equal installments," if member so desires). Student membership \$3.00. KINGBIRD subscription for non-members \$5.00 per year on calendar year basis only. Single copies: \$1.50.

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PRESIDENTS PAGE

When a reader turns to this page he expects to find the usual subject matter, be it an appeal for funds to preserve some ecologically unique area or for support of pending legislation vital to our future or for help on some special project of the organization. However, for this column I intend to write about something quite different.

As I contemplate the great increase of knowledge that has accumulated during the last three or four decades, as the result of exploration and research, I am happy at the corresponding growth of interest in many forms of natural history. With all the hustle, bustle, competition and mad races to exploit and expand in the name of progress, it is encouraging to learn that the average individual's attitude regarding nature has probably changed from indifference or apathy to curiosity, to genuine interest and more recently to real concern. The latter condition is no doubt due to the writings, scientific research and warnings of many famous ecologists. In my opinion, the writings of people such as Aldo Leopold, Rachel Carson, Stuart Udall and Peter Farb have stimulated interest and aroused us from our former lethargy.

Important and challenging as all these writings are, I like to think of the saying attributed to Confucius about the one picture and the one thousand words. This brings me to the real object of my entire dissertation. I am truly amazed when I take note of the great number of exceptionally talented nature artists who are currently illustrating many of our popular field guides, state bird books etc. Prior to 1930 there were just a relatively few well known nature artists. Today we have several dozen or more who are extremely talented in this field. There is no need to mention their names, for they are well known to ornithologists, bird watchers and nature lovers generally. Original paintings, prints and sketches by many of them are in great demand and some bring very high prices. This remarkable increase in the number of talented artists in this field reflects the growing interest in our entire environment and also a deep concern for our endangered species. As an added tribute to these artists, I think that it should be mentioned that many of them are dedicated conservationists who have given much of their time and talents to stimulate interest in conservation and to furthering its cause.

There is no doubt in my mind but that these many talented artists, thru their work, have fostered a greater appreciation of all living things and have helped to give our hobby a better public image.

Kenneth D. Niven

OVERLAND FEEDING FLIGHTS BY THE COMMON TERN ON LONG ISLAND

GILBERT S. RAYNOR

Although colonial sea birds are known to fly long distances in search of food, such feeding flights are generally over water. However, Common Terns (*Sterna hirundo*) nesting on small islands on the south shore of central Long Island, New York commonly travel about fifteen miles across the Island to feed in Long Island Sound.

Common Tern nesting sites in the south shore bays of Long Island are normally small islands created by tidal currents or, more frequently, by dredging operations and are most often located near an inlet between a bay and the ocean. Colonies are seldom permanent in a given location but tend to increase in size for some time after formation of an island. Islands usually begin as bare sand but vegetation normally becomes established within two or three years and after several more years becomes dense enough to diminish suitable nesting area. The colony then declines in size or the island is taken over by gulls unless additional sand is added.

During the period and in the area covered by this study, terns have nested on four islands (one no longer in existence) near Moriches Inlet and on one island in Bellport Bay (Fig. 1). The fifth column of Table 1 lists the status of the Moriches Inlet colonies, as far as known, during each year of the study. These colonies are composed largely of Common Terns but, in some years, as many as 5 to 10% of the individuals are Roseate Terns (*S. dougallii*).

Estimates of colony size were aided by information from two sources in addition to the writer's own observations. Leroy Wilcox supplied figures on Common Terns banded by him from 1936 through 1970 and a tabulation was furnished by the Bird Banding Laboratory of Common Terns banded by all banders in the block containing the colonies involved in this study for the years 1956 through 1969. The figures in the last column of Table 1 are Wilcox's totals through 1950 and those of all banders from 1956 to 1970. Wilcox did not band in this area from 1951 through 1955 and data from years prior to 1956 are not available from the Banding Laboratory so colony size is largely unknown for this period.

OBSERVATIONS

Ornithological observations have been taken by the writer at Manorville, near the center of Long Island, since 1936. Through 1958, Common Terns were observed over this area no more than a few times each year (Table 1) and most of these observations seemed to represent random wandering or sporadic cross-island flights. In 1959, however, well-or-

ganized, purposeful and frequent feeding flights from Moriches Bay to Long Island Sound began. These have been noted each year since except during seasons when no colony was present.

Except for a few omissions, every observation of terns over inland areas of Long Island has been recorded. After large flights began in 1959, the time of day, the direction of flight and the number of birds were usually recorded although, in some instances, non-quantitative terms such as "a few," "a flock," or "a small group" were employed. Additional observations were contributed by family members and other observers. Observations were possible nearly every day except for a few brief absences from the area but observations were not continuous throughout the day and the number of flights recorded can only be regarded as a minimum or a sampling of those that occurred.

However, significant patterns are evident from the data. In most years, flights commenced soon after the terns returned in spring and continued until they left in late summer. The number of birds increased after young hatched and again after they fledged. Flights were generally northward in the morning and southward in the evening although, in some years, considerable travel in both directions occurred during the intervening hours. The main flight path extended from East and Center Moriches through Manorville to Wading River (Fig. 1). A few birds were seen as far east as Calverton and as far west as Brookhaven National Laboratory. The writer's home, marked by an X on Fig. 1 is near the center of this flight path. A second flight path from the colony in Bellport Bay passed from Southaven and Brookhaven over Yaphank and Middle Island to the sound at Shoreham and Miller Place.

RELATIONSHIP TO BREEDING COLONIES

Reference to Table 1 reveals that organized flights did not occur prior to 1959 although a sizable nesting population existed at Moriches Inlet from 1939 to 1941, in 1947 and 1948 and possibly in other years as well. From 1959 on, the number of flight days is well correlated with the size of the breeding colony. They reached a peak in the 1960-1962 period and a smaller peak in 1967-1970 when the colony became reestablished. In 1968, many flights were not specifically recorded but notes such as "terns flying over daily" were made periodically.

SEASONAL OCCURRENCE

Dates of first and last observations and the number of days on which terns were observed inland are listed in Table 1. During non-flight years, inland occurrences tended to be in mid to late summer. In 1959, flights did not start until June 27, about the time young birds were hatching. In all later flight years, sightings began in May, about the time of colony

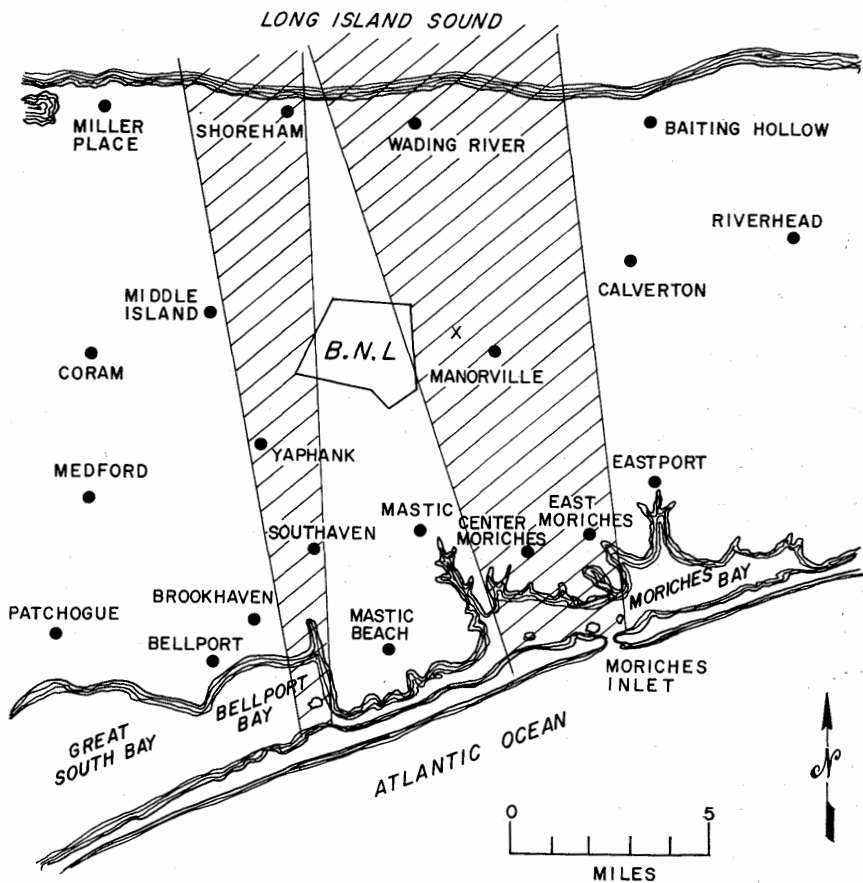


FIGURE 1

Map of a portion of central Long Island showing the location of tern breeding colonies in Moriches and Bellport Bays and the flight paths to Long Island Sound. The principal observation point is marked by X. B.N.L. indicates Brookhaven National Laboratory.

occupation, and continued to late August or September, well after essentially all young birds were flying and about the time many terns were leaving on their southward migration.

DIURNAL PATTERNS

As mentioned above, nearly all early morning flights were northward and evening flights southward. In 1960, for instance, 5 of 6 flights prior to 0900 were headed north. After 1600, 102 of 104 groups or individuals were headed south. In 1967, no morning flights were observed but 37 of 38 evening flights were southbound. The exception was a single bird. During mid-day hours, a relatively small number of flights were seen, partly due to absence at work, but more were headed south than north. During May and June, the basic pattern seemed to be a mass northward movement early in the morning with a few individuals and groups returning at any hour but the bulk of the birds remaining until late in the day. After young hatched, flights in both directions were frequent throughout the day but still predominantly north in the morning and south in the evening.

Relatively few early morning flights were documented since the terns normally arose earlier than the observer but northbound flights were noted as early as 0350 EST on June 21 and 0355 EST on June 29, 32 and 30 minutes before sunrise respectively. Evening flights usually terminated within 30 to 40 minutes after sunset but one flight took place 63 minutes after sunset and another group was heard flying south at 2130 on July 18, two hours and 13 minutes after sunset. However, the bulk of the birds passed in the two hour period prior to sunset.

NUMBER OF BIRDS

In non-flight years, flock sizes observed inland tended to be small, from one to ten individuals, although 55 were seen flying south in the evening of August 23, 1964. In flight years, flocks travelling northward in the morning sometimes totaled 50 to several hundred birds. Returning flocks were usually small in the early part of the season but often included from 50 to 100 birds after young had joined the adults. However, flocks often followed one another in rapid succession and an evening movement might include several hundred birds observed from one location with rather restricted lateral vision. The largest flight observed took place on August 25, 1960 when 1177 birds were counted in 40 minutes, an average of 29.4 birds per minute with an average flock size of 59 birds. Estimating a similar rate for a brief period when observations could not be made, nearly 1400 terns flew south in less than an hour. Probably many more traveled beyond the range of vision both east and west. However, it seems likely that more than ten percent of the population seldom took part in cross island flights on any one day.

FLIGHT ALTITUDE

No measurements of flight altitude were possible but estimates were frequently made. Early morning flocks often swept north just over the treetops at altitudes of less than 100 feet. Later northbound flocks tended to fly at heights of several hundred feet. Evening flights varied with weather conditions. On days with strong headwinds, flights were often low while on days with light winds and good weather, the usual altitude was several hundred feet. On a few occasions, birds were estimated as high as 800 to 1000 feet. Flight altitude often varied with terrain. Terns would fly close to the surface while crossing ponds or open fields and rise higher when traversing forested areas. Flocks leaving Long Island Sound, rose to a height of several hundred feet before crossing the shoreline since a range of hills, some as high as 200 feet, comprises the northern rim of the island. Upon reaching the southern coastline, flocks usually dipped low and skimmed a few feet above the bay the nesting island.

BEHAVIOR

Although silent flocks were sometimes seen and others were undoubtedly missed, most flocks called fairly frequently. At times, only an occasional call was given but, at others, the entire flock seemed to call almost continuously. No correlation was noted between calling and weather conditions, direction of flight, altitude or season. The presence of young birds could be detected by their distinctive calls and during August, 1960, Roseate Terns may have constituted from 5 to 10 percent of the evening flights as judged by their calls.

Southbound birds were often observed carrying fish, even early in the season before young had hatched, but more frequently later. All appeared to be Silversides (*Menidia* sp.) or Sand Lances (*Ammodytes americanus*) both frequent prey of the Common Tern. Often nearly every bird in a sizable flock was seen carrying a dangling fish but fish were never observed on northbound flights.

Flocks often showed interest in small, inland ponds by flying low or lingering over the water. Terns occasionally stopped to rest on ponds in the Manorville area particularly during the mid-day period and, several times, brief fishing forays by a few individuals were noted. No interactions between terns and other species of birds were observed except that one southbound flight included a domestic pigeon.

Flight direction was sometimes direct but flocks often engaged in a great deal of zig-zagging while progressing in the right general direction. During periods of fog, flocks often seemed rather disoriented, sometimes circled and usually zig-zagged excessively but always maintained progress in the desired direction. On one occasion, a straight flying flock paralleling a highway was timed for some distance with the car speed-

ometer at 30 mph. A light headwind was estimated at 5 mph at flight altitude indicating an airspeed of about 35 mph. At this rate, cross-island flights would average somewhat less than one half hour in duration.

DISCUSSION

Although the overland flights must be advantageous to the birds involved or to the colony as a whole, the advantages are not completely obvious in the absence of detailed information on food availability and intraspecific competition. Presumably, the flights function as a mechanism for reducing local competition for food, particularly during years of peak colony size but no data are available to indicate whether or not the local area could furnish adequate and readily available food during those years. Moriches Bay with its associated coves covers about 15.9 square miles. A flight 14 miles eastward from Moriches Inlet (the minimum distance traversed overland) would bring 7.3 square miles of Quantuck and Shinnecock Bays within reach while flight to the west for a similar distance would reach 20.8 square miles of Bellport Bay. Shinnecock Bay was utilized to some extent for food by Moriches Bay terns. Leroy Wilcox has frequently observed terns in numbers comparable to those making overland flights carrying fish westward from the vicinity of Shinnecock Inlet, a distance of 15 miles, during years when no colony existed in the Shinnecock area. No observations are available on flights westward into Bellport Bay but it seems to contain an abundance of small fish similar to the situation in Moriches Bay. In addition to the bays, a fourteen mile radius from Moriches Inlet includes about 308 square miles of ocean. Terns are frequently seen fishing off shore but not as regularly during the breeding season as later in the summer when, perhaps, the availability of small fish is greater. Thus, the food gleaned from the ocean may be small compared to that taken in the shallow water bays and, perhaps, not as readily available as in the Sound.

The birds which reach the Sound do not, of course, confine their foraging to the areas first reached but range widely both east and west and well off shore. No tern breeding colonies exist near this section of Long Island Sound although small colonies have been present for many years further west at Port Jefferson and Stony Brook Harbors. Thus, these birds utilize a nearly untouched food resource.

Certain observations suggest that the overland flights may be learned behavior. In 1959, the first year of their occurrence, flights did not begin until the hatching season, a period of increasing need for food. The number of birds involved was small at first but increased as the season progressed. In later years, flights started at much earlier dates, presumably by birds familiar with the procedure from the previous year. In 1964, the Moriches Inlet colony disappeared but at least some of the Moriches birds, as shown by banding recoveries, moved to the island in

Bellport Bay and promptly began cross-island flights from that location. These flights were similar in timing and other respects to those from Moriches Bay.

No evidence is available to indicate whether birds taking part in overland flights during the incubation period were breeding individuals or unmated birds attached to the colony. Since many birds evidently spent the whole day away from the nesting site, it seems likely that these were not breeding birds since both sexes incubate and change places rather frequently and both take part in feeding young (Bent, 1921). The increased number of birds and the greater frequency of mid-day flights in mid-summer indicate that breeding birds also participate after young hatched. When the young became able to fly, breeding adults undoubtedly took part in the flights for young birds follow and are fed by the parents for some time after achieving flight and many young were included in the late summer flights.

Leroy Wilcox has kindly furnished substantiating recoveries of banded birds. One young banded at Moriches Inlet was picked up dead in Manorville and six on the Sound shore between Stony Brook and Baiting Hollow. Two other birds were taken on the Connecticut shore of the Sound, one at Yonkers, New York and two in Peconic Bay. However, some of these may represent post-breeding season wanderers rather than birds engaged in cross-island flights. Two birds banded at Brookhaven were taken the same season at Smithtown, Long Island, which is further west on Long Island Sound, while three were taken in the Peconic Bay area.

In addition to these recoveries, six birds banded at Moriches Inlet were recovered on the north shore of Long Island between Stony Brook and Baiting Hollow in later years. Many of these probably were birds engaged in cross-island flights. However, only about half of all the recoveries on the north shore of Long Island occurred during years when large or frequent overland flights were observed.

Data from birds banded by Wilcox at Fire Island Inlet suggest that overland flights may also occur further west on Long Island. One bird was recovered at Brentwood, in the center of the Island and two on the Sound shore. Two other recoveries in New England were in mid-September and October and must represent post-breeding season dispersal.

Further investigation of this phenomenon might be fruitful as a study in population pressure and adaptive behavior but would entail considerable research effort including systematic sampling of prey items throughout the season in the waters involved, measurement of the area of the Sound actually utilized by the feeding terns, sampling of fish brought from the Sound to the colony, estimation of fishing success in each area and evaluation of the relationships between the terns and prey species.

TABLE 1

First and Last Date and Number of Days on Which Cross-island Flights
from Moriches Bay Were Observed and Size of the Breeding Colony

Year	Date		No. of Days	Size of Breeding	No. of Com. Terns Banded
	First	Last		Colony at Moriches Inlet	
1936	—	—	0	Small	363
1937	—	—	0	Small	184
1938	July 29	—	1	Small	462
1939	July 25	Aug. 10	2	Moderate	2300
1940	Aug. 8	—	1	Moderate	1354
1941	July 20	—	1	Moderate	1344
1946	July 3	Aug. 15	4+	Small	223
1947	May 24	July 28	3	Moderate	1277
1948	—	—	0	Large	744
1949	July 6	July 25	6	Small	42
1950	June 12	June 27	3	Small	83
1951	July 16	Aug. 10	4	Unknown	0
1952	Aug. 4	Aug. 13	3	Unknown	0
1953	—	—	0	Unknown	0
1954	—	—	0	Unknown	0
1955	Aug. 13	Sept. 14	6	Small	0
1956	Aug. 8	—	1	Moderate	48
1957	July 27	Aug. 7	7	Moderate	384
1958	Aug. 30	—	1	Small	93
1959	June 27	Sept. 6	19	Moderate	1102
1960	May 23	Sept. 4	44	Large	6756
1961	May 14	Sept. 6	54	Large	6892
1962	May 15	Aug. 26	39	Large	6611
1963	May 9	Sept. 9	24	Small	681
1964	May 12	Aug. 23	6	None	0
1965	July 5	Aug. 12	4	None	0
1966	May 16	May 23	2	Small	14
1967	May 18	Aug. 27	26	Moderate	1790
1968	May 4	Aug. 29	13+	Moderate	858
1969	May 3	Sept. 1	1	Moderate	854
1970	May 3	Aug. 22	18	Abandoned during season	0

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The writer is indebted to Leroy Wilcox, who banded most of the terns in these colonies, for permission to use his data and observations, to Dennis Puleston and Henry Halama for information on flights from the Bellport Bay colony and to the Bird Banding Laboratory for furnishing banding data.

LITERATURE CITED

Bent, A. C., 1921. Life Histories of North American Gulls and Terns. Bull. 113, U.S. Nat. Museum, Smithsonian Inst., U.S. Govt. Printing Office, Washington, D.C. (Reprinted, 1963, by Dover Publications, New York).

Schultz Road, Manorville, Long Island, New York 11949.

Plan now to attend the
Twenty-fifth Annual Meeting
of the
New York Federation of Bird Clubs
at the
Laboratory of Ornithology at Cornell University
Ithaca, New York
22-24 September 1972

SHOREBIRD RECAPTURE OPERATION

The University of Montreal is again conducting a research program to study the migration routes of North American shorebirds.

Several species of shorebirds mist-netted on the Magdalen Islands in the Gulf of St. Lawrence will be marked with yellow feather dye on the underparts and yellow streamers on their legs. Sanderlings will be marked only with the leg streamers.

The collaboration of bird watchers is again requested in reporting marked birds. Records should include the locality, date and species; the name and address of the observer; and the band number if the bird is taken alive. Also, if possible, the weight of the bird should be reported.

All information should be sent to Dr. Raymond McNeil, Centre de Recherches Ecologiques de Montreal, 4101 est, rue Sherbrooke, Montreal 406, Quebec, Canada.

NEW YORK STATE WILDLIFE PRESERVES

6. BASHERKILL MARSH

MARTIN BORKO

South of the Village of Wurtsboro, and lying between the westerly Catskills and the easterly Shwangunks, is the Basherkill. Its meandering waters and adjacent broad low banks form an extensive freshwater marsh — the largest of its type between Montezuma and the salty Jamaica Bay.

Rivulets from the Shwangunks (a hard, coarse conglomerate rock) enter the bowels of the valley where they come in contact with its limestone folds. Here, with the passage of time, water has carved out extensive underground caverns. Stalagmites reach up from the floor and stalactites are suspended from the ceiling, growing with each drop of lime-carrying moisture. Each drop of water passing through the rock dissolves and delivers the lime to the glaciated valley of the Basherkill.

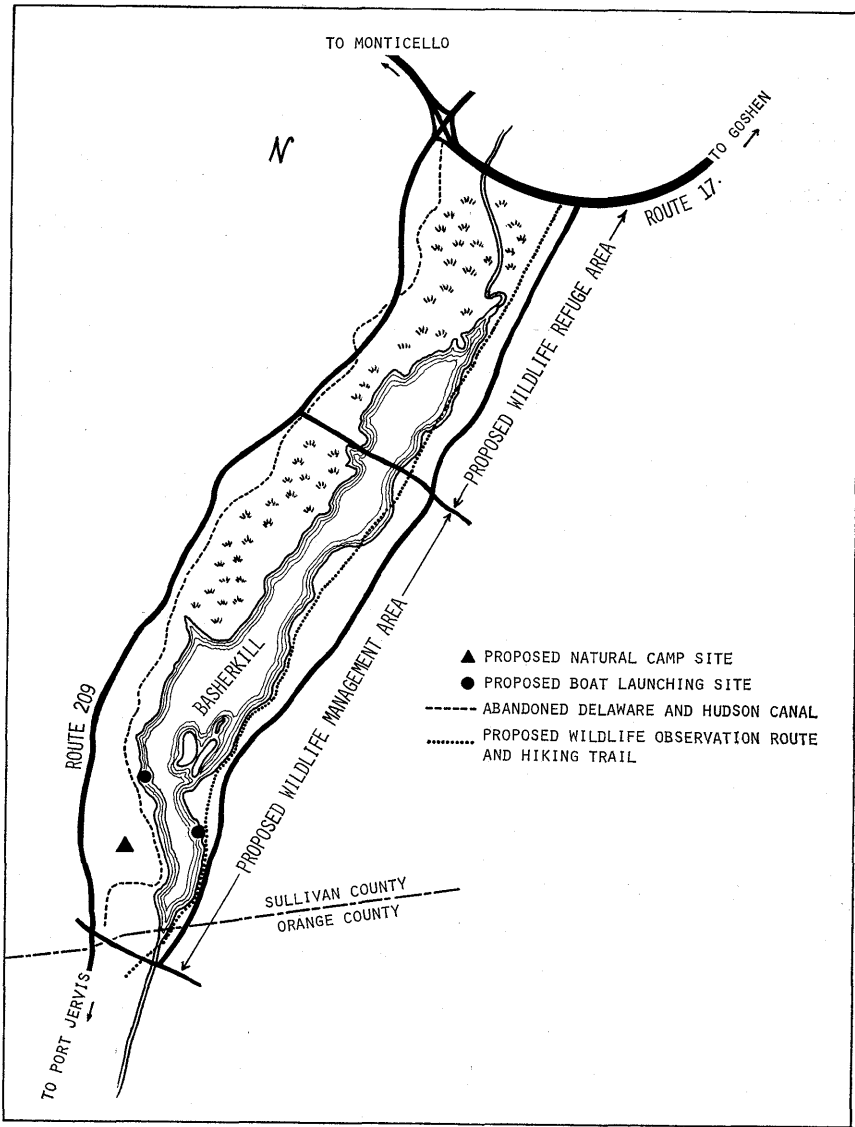
The lime or calcium neutralizes the shallow water of the marsh and fills it with a myriad of microscopic plants and animals. In amongst the aquatic vegetation, insects find sustenance and, with the sound of the peeper, there comes transformation after transformation as adults emerge from their watery nursery. Poised in the bushes and trees, as if they had the ability to predict the upcoming feast, are the warblers, vireos, and gnatcatchers. It is not unusual for a May count to turn up twenty warblers by noon. It is a good spot to see the Golden-winged, the Blue-winged and *both* their hybrids.

On the east side of the Basherkill lies the rail bed of the defunct Ontario and Western Railroad. A quiet walk along the rail bed takes the birder to the marsh edge, where he has a chance to see Great Blue and Green Herons, American and Least bitterns, Short-and Long-billed Marsh Wrens, the secretive Sora and Virginia Rails, the Osprey and the Bald Eagle.

Eagle watchers should visit here from mid-March to mid-April, when this magnificent bird comes to hunt the Basherkill's numerous fish species as the ice retreats.

Mergansers, divers, and dabblers join the eagles as they migrate to their northern nesting grounds. The sound of the Canada Goose fills the air as one hopes for a glimpse of the Whistling Swan.

Is the Basherkill unique? — no; uncommon? — yes. Wetlands — nature's rainbarrels — are few and are becoming fewer due to gradual development and an ignorance of their spiritual and materialistic value. The Basherkill is all this plus surrounding uplands, open meadows, and a spelunker's paradise. Yet, even this is threatened by gradual "progress."



Basherkill — an excellent multiple use wildlife management area.

Assemblyman Ben Gilman has introduced Assembly Bill #5605. This bill would allocate \$100,000 toward the purchase of the Basherkill marsh. This bill was introduced last year and reintroduced again this year. It lacks a companion bill in the Senate and lacks sustained public pressure needed for its passage.

115 South Street, Middletown, New York 10940.

Mr. Borko, a member of the Sullivan County Environmental Management Council and of the Federation, urges each Federation member to write his assemblyman, senator, Governor Rockefeller and Speaker Dur-
Ed. yea asking that action be taken on the Basherkill.

CORRECTIONS OF THE MINUTES OF THE PROCEEDINGS OF THE
COUNCIL OF THE FEDERATION OF NEW YORK STATE BIRD CLUBS,
INC., June 5, 1971.

Paragraph 6, on Page 136 of the July issue of the *Kingbird*, Vol. XXI, No. 3.

Dr. Dittrich requested permission to exchange copies of the *Kingbird* with the *EBBA News*, the publication of the Eastern Bird Banding Association, the *Ptarmigan*, Fort Collins Bird Club, Fort Collins, Col., and the *Bulletin of the New Jersey State Museum*. (Secretary's note: see page 115 of May, 1971 issue of the *Kingbird* for the complete list of exchanges.) He also requested approval for sending complimentary copies of the *Kingbird* to the Rogers Environmental Education Center at Sherburne, N.Y. and to Onondaga Nature Center at Beaver Lake near Baldwinsville, N.Y. Mr. Taylor felt we should do this. In reply to a question as to where the exchange bulletins are kept, it was stated that they have been kept at Mr. Taylor's home for a certain period of time, after which they are discarded. Some, however, have been passed on to the Laboratory of Ornithology. The council approved the request for the exchanges and complimentary copies.

Add to list of delegates: (on page 141, line 2) Gerald A. Smith, 4173 Makyes Rd., Syracuse 13215, Onondaga Audubon Society.

Visitants to Great Gull Island, N.Y. during the Summer of 1971

Great Gull Island, located at the eastern end of Long Island Sound, between Plum Island and Fishers Island, is a research station of the American Museum of Natural History (see Duffy, "Kingbird," 1970). Several interesting records for the area were established at Great Gull Island during the summer of 1971. On August 11 a Great Cormorant was seen at close range off the eastern end of the island and was carefully studied through a telescope by Helen Hays. This date is nearly a month earlier than the earliest fall record for New York, an individual seen on Great Gull Island September 6, 1969. Several hundred of these birds winter on the pilings and along the rocky shores of the island.

Parasitic Jaegers regularly pass Great Gull Island during August, sometimes stopping to pursue terns, other times flying west towards Plum Island. The first jaegers this year were two that appeared on August 11, one day later than the first of 1970. On August 26 twenty Parasitic Jaegers were seen at once during a 360 degree scan around the island; the maximum for the New York area is thirty (cf. Bull, 1964).

Besides the breeding Common and Roseate Terns, several other species of tern have been noted this year. As in previous years, single Forster's Terns appeared at the end of the summer, resting on the dock among the Commons. Two Sooty Terns were found on August 28 after hurricane Doria, during which winds up to 70 mph were measured on the island. One was completely exhausted and was easily captured by hand. It was banded, photographed, and released. This represents the second known occurrence of a Sooty Tern on Great Gull Island, the first having appeared after hurricane Camille on August 23, 1969 (see Jenner, J., "Kingbird," 1969, Vol. 20, pp. 13-14). While Least Terns breed nearby on Gardiner's Island and on Long Island, the first Great Gull Island record was one which appeared this year on August 26. Royal Terns were seen three times during the summer. The first was seen by Mary LeCroy on the dock on July 27, and two were seen there on the following day. On August 26 another appeared on the dock. Black Terns were seen in greater numbers than during previous years, when no more than two were seen at once. On the evening of August 26 this year at least ten Black Terns came in to roost with the Commons and Roseates.

For birds not seen as a group, banding is the only way to determine accurately the number of any species found on the island at once. On August 22 seven Yellow-bellied Flycatchers were caught in two mist nets in one quarter acre of bayberry. The maximum reported for the New York area is eight, found at Long Beach, September 2, 1920 (Bull, 1964).

A Carolina Wren was netted and released after banding on August 19. It remained on the island four days and sang early one morning. Although known to nest on nearby Gardiner's Island, the Carolina Wren was found on Great Gull Island only once before, on July 12, 1969.

An adult female Tennessee Warbler was banded, photographed, and released on the island on July 14. The latest this species had been found previously in the New York City area was June 9, and its earliest appearance in the fall, August 9 (Bull, 1964).

Acknowledgements

The authors wish to thank all the Gull Island volunteers who watched for birds on the island and manned the mist nets. Miss Helen Hays and Dr. Kenneth C. Parkes made many helpful suggestions while this article was in preparation.

Roger Pasquier, 235 East 73 Street, New York, N.Y. 10021

Alan Poole, "Bellwood Farm," Geneva, N.Y. 14456

FIELD NOTES

Winter Records of The Green Heron: The Green Heron (*Butorides virescens*) is considered to winter principally in Mexico and Central America, although there are at least two winter records of this species as far north as Indiana: Indianapolis — January 3, 1916 and Goshen — March 18, 1918 (Bent, 1926). Bull (1964), however, considers the Green Heron to be casual as far north as Maryland and southern New York.

All published winter reports of this species have previously been from the south shore of Long Island: Queens — December 29, 1948; Baldwin — January 2, 1954 and Quogue — winter of 1961-62 (Bull, 1964). In addition one individual was noted on the Captree Christmas Bird Count in December, 1965 (Audubon Field Notes, 1966). Prior to the winter of 1971-72 there are two unpublished winter records for this species on Long Island's north shore: Shelter Island — December 29, 1941 and Orient — December 28, 1942 (Latham, 1972).

This winter (1971-72) there were three sight records of the Green Heron, all noted on the Smithtown Christmas Bird Count on the north shore of Long Island. One individual was noted along the east bank of the headwaters of the Nissequoque River while two additional individuals were noted along the banks of the fresh pond at Sunken Meadow State Park.

Undoubtedly mild winters are an important factor in the winter occurrence of this species. Latham notes that the temperature prior to and during the 1941 observation ranged from a maximum of 54° on December 24 to a low of 31° on December 29. Unfortunately weather data for the 1942 observation period is not readily available. December of 1971 was remarkable for its mild temperatures throughout the Christmas Count period, the temperature ranging in the low 40's on the Smithtown Count day (December 27).

The Green Heron presumably perishes with the on-set of the typically colder winter weather. Latham notes that a green heron was found dead on March 17, 1943 on the same marsh that the December 8 record occurred.

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Possible decline of the Least Flycatcher in Northern Westchester County: This note is intended to alert observers to the possibility that the Least Flycatcher (*Empidonax minima*) is declining as a breeding bird in northern Westchester County. It is based on rather limited observations in one locality and should not be interpreted as proof of such a decline, for it may indicate only a local or temporary phenomenon. However, in these times of rapid changes in environment and in populations of animals in nature, it seems important to maintain vigilance over bird populations and to report such changes as may seem significant.

Observations were carried out three miles east of Peekskill, New York, where from 1954-1957 and 1960 I had carefully censused breeding birds on a 24 acre study area. This study area comprised 40% wet second-growth woodland and 60% lawns, gardens, and residences. The plot was 800' \times 1200', with the forest running lengthwise down the middle, providing a rather long forest-garden edge. This edge offered suitable breeding habitat for Least Flycatchers. In addition, I made other observations in an area of 360 acres (which included the study area), and casual observations in an adjacent area of woodland, marsh and old field, comprising about 1700 acres.

In the 5 seasons (1954-57 and 1960) the average number of territorial male Least Flycatchers found on the three plots was 2.2, 6.6, and 7.1. Because the coverage of the three plots was quite different, it would not be proper to reduce these figures to pairs/area. Of the total of 83 territorial males, the nest site was located for 34 pairs.

In 1970, during casual observations in these areas, I did not hear any Least Flycatchers, and in 1971 therefore, I devoted considerable time to looking for the species. I checked all of the previous nesting sites and heard only two individuals during the spring of 1971. When I revisited the location of these two birds, I did not encounter them, indicating that they may not have bred in the area. No Least Flycatchers were found on the 24 acre study area where a minimum of two pair had bred during the five initial census seasons.

It is still premature to report a definite decline of this species, but hopefully other observers will take the opportunity to look more closely at the status of the Least Flycatcher in coming seasons. The causes of the decline, if it is a real decline, are difficult to determine. From 1955 to 1969 the study area received weekly sprayings of various insecticides for mosquito control. Other species of insectivorous birds, except possibly the House Wren, (*Troglodytes aedon*) seem however, to have been present in normal numbers, in 1971. At least on the study area, there has been no habitat change noted in the 17 year period, and only slight changes have occurred in the two larger plots.

This apparent decline needs extensive study in the future, and similar data is needed for all species of birds. The usefulness of any bird census in providing a baseline for interpretation of unanticipated future population changes is amply demonstrated by this report. It is, of course, possible that my findings represent only a temporary local fluctuation, such as might be anticipated at the margin of a species breeding range, for the Least Flycatcher is at the southern limit of its range in southeastern New York. If significant, the cause of the change remains obscure, and in the absence of more data, further speculation at this time seems unwarranted.

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HIGHLIGHTS OF THE WINTER SEASON

FRITZ SCHEIDER

December and January seemed like an extension of the rather warm fall and great numbers of half-hardy species lingered in snowless coverts, especially cedar thickets, or at the numerous feeders. With February, winter returned with impressive snow and persistent cold, a condition that prevailed virtually throughout March. The result was the death of many wintering individuals and the decimation of certain species (Winter and Carolina Wrens, Swamp Sparrow) and such a residuum of ice that March waterfowl were hard pressed to find open water in which to feed and rest. The repetitive theme of half-hardy species crops up in numerous places, i.e., markedly increased numbers of wintering Canada Geese (3,5,6,9) and increased numbers of wintering dabblers such as Gadwall (1,3,5,9) and American Widgeon (1,3). Similarly the multiple records of wintering Hermit Thrush (1,2,4,5,8,9), Brown Thrasher (1,2,3,4,5,8,9), Catbird (1,2,3,5,8,9), and Eastern Bluebird (1,2,3,8,9) document the widespread response of half-hardies to milder, particularly reduced snow, conditions.

Most diving ducks seemed average but Redheads were specifically noted as increased in 2 and 3; most mergansers were strongly reduced in 2,5, and 8. Hawks presented a mixed picture — only Red-tailed Hawk numbers seemed increased across the state but reports of the smaller Accipiters and Rough-legged Hawk were increased in the western areas (1,2,3). No significant Goshawk invasion was noted.

In keeping with the very mild December, both Virginia Rail and Sora were reported upstate (3,5) and higher counts of Mourning Dove were widely noted (1,2,5,8,9). Both Glaucous Gull (1,2,5,6,9) and Iceland Gull (1,2,5,6,8,9) numbers seemed increased but this was not a function of the cold of the latter half of the winter as both species were present thru the season.

A definite incursion of Snowy Owls (1,2,3,5,6,7,8,9) ensued and lesser numbers of Short-eared Owls were reported in the western regions (1,2,3, with a few in 5 & 9). Rare owls were just that — rare. Perhaps in keeping with the mild weather, perhaps parallelling the rising numbers of wintering Mourning Dove, more Yellow-shafted Flickers were reported (3,5,9) and despite the subsequent cold and deep snow, the species did seem to persist. A minimal incursion (a minirruption!) of Boreal Chickadees produced records in 1,3,5, and 8. The number of wintering Robins was uniformly impressive and virtually all accounts except for Adirondack sectors mention them. Likewise virtually all regions noted numerous wintering Icterids with most commenting that the Eastern Meadowlark faded with the heavy snows of early February and the all too common Brown-headed Cowbird readily transferred from the waste grain of corn-

fields to the largesse of feeding stations with consummate ease.

Even warblers responded to the warmer weather of early winter with multiple upstate records of Myrtle Warbler and Ovenbird in Region 1 and 2 and a Palm Warbler in Region 8.

The dominant avian event of '71-'72, however, must be awarded to the heavy incursions of winter finches — all sectors reported notable invasions of Evening Grosbeaks and Common Redpolls (plus a few Hoary Redpolls) with good numbers of Eastern Goldfinch and Pine Siskins too. White-winged and Red Crossbills were widespread (1,2,3,4,5,6,7,8,9) but numbers were much lower and in certain areas you had to frankly hunt for them to log them in January, February, and March. Pine Grosbeaks were quite spotty, being apparently most common in the Adirondack and Adirondack fringe counties. House Finches continue their spread (1,2,4,5,8) which spread, I suspect, is most readily documented when winter hunger drives them to feeders for sustenance and survival — and corroborating photographs! And a prophecy out of Region 10 is already fulfilled — the Monk Parakeet, a frugivorous pest from South America, has been reported in Region 4 and 8 and I already know of a spring record of this species from the Ontario lakeshore.

If you didn't like chasing frigid fringillids this season, you could always scuttle from feeder to feeder checking on visiting western birds. Winter '71-'72 could well be labeled the winter of the western waifs and some of the greatest rarities of the season are in this group — Sage Thrasher (6), Varied Thrush (4,5), Bohemian Waxwing (3,5), Black-headed Grosbeak (5), Dickcissel (1,2,3,5,9), Oregon Junco (1,2,3,5,8,9) and Harris' Sparrow (2,5). Other rarities for the season include Glossy Ibis (1), Barrow's Golden-eye (5), Pomarine Jaeger (1), Lesser Black-backed Gull (3), Black-headed Gull (1), Black-legged Kittiwake (2), Boreal Owl (2), Black-backed Woodpecker (6,8), Bobolink (5), Lincoln's Sparrow (9), and Grasshopper Sparrow (3).

My compliments to the editors of Regions 1 thru 9; regrettably the Region 10 account was not available. C'est dommage!

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The Region 10 report unfortunately was received too late to be included in Dr. Scheider's Highlights. It is, however, a part of this volume.

Ed.

REGION 1 — NIAGARA FRONTIER

ROBERT A. SUNDELL

The winter of 1971-72 can be divided in half. December and January presented temperatures several degrees above the long-term average with precipitation several inches below normal. February and March found these patterns dramatically reversed. There was enough snowfall so that several areas experienced record or near record accumulations. The usual March thaw was delayed until late in the month and most of the smaller fresh water lakes and streams were still frozen until late in the month. Predictable results were (1) the larger numbers of "half hardies" and other stragglers, and (2) retarded movements and limited numbers of the usual March migrants.

Significant trends or points of interest were (1) slight increases in the numbers of Common Loons and Great Blue Herons, (2) a lackluster performance by swans, geese and most ducks, (3) increased numbers of wintering accipiters (two smaller species) and Red-shouldered Hawks, (4) encouraging counts of migrating Red-shouldered Hawks, (5) good winter totals of American Coot, Killdeer and Common Snipe, (6) record counts of Glaucous and Great Black-backed Gulls, (7) a mediocre showing of the owls except for the Snowy Owl which was relatively common and widespread, (8) larger numbers of wintering wrens and thrushes than in any recent year, (9) a surprisingly modest showing of icterids in view of the mild weather, (10) an excellent flight of all the winter finches featuring genuine invasions by thousands of Evening Grosbeaks and Common Redpolls (11) fair to good numbers of the most of sparrows, (12) low numbers of Snow Buntings compared with most winters.

Rarities recorded were the Glossy Ibis, Mute Swan, Golden Eagle, Peregrine Falcon, Red Phalarope, Pomarine Jaeger, Black-headed Gull, Boreal Chickadee, Ovenbird, Dickcissel, House Finch and Hoary Redpoll.

Abbreviations: Bflo—Buffalo; BOS—Buffalo Ornithological Society; CC—Christmas Count; Chaut—Chautauqua; Co—County; INWR—Iroquois National Wildlife Refuge; Nia—Niagara; obs—observers; Ont—Ontario.

Contributors: R(P)A—Robert (Patricia) Andrie; HRA—Harold and Rachel AxteLL; NB—Nina Bates; PB—Paul Benham; TB—Thomas Bourne; LDB—Lou and Doris Burton; DC—Douglas Carlson; FE—Flora Elderkin; PH—Paul Hess; WHK—Walter and Harriette Klabunde; CK—Clarence Klingensmith; WAM—Willard and Alice McKale; HDM—Harold D. Mitchell; JM—John Morse; OO—Odmund Olsen; WGS—William and George Smith; RS—Robert Sundell; OS—Ora Swanson.

LOONS—DUCKS: Compared with any recent year, the 4 Common Loons at three localities in Jan is unmatched. Red-necked Grebes were observed repeatedly in Dunkirk Harbor between Feb 22 and Mar 21 with a peak of 4 Mar 12 (WAM et al). As usual Pied-billed Grebes were found on Southern Tier county streams and rivers as long as they remained open, in addition to the Nia River and Dunkirk Harbor. Great Blue Herons were liberally represented throughout the winter with a near-record count of 6 Dec 19 on the Grand Island (BOS) CC and 5 at 4 localities during Feb when this species is usually rare. The Black-crowned Night Heron, however was unreported suggesting the possibility of contamination or loss of winter food in this area. An extraordinary straggler was a *GLOSSY IBIS* on the Genesee River at Scio Dec 21 (Dodson, Lucott) and Dec 24 (L. and M. Pendleton), the latest date for the region by about 20 days. The uncommon to rare *MUTE SWAN* was reported Mar 18, 25, 28 north of Caneadea (LDB et al). Several late flocks of Whistling Swans were observed on the southern half of Chaut Lake—17 on the Jamestown CC Dec 26, 76 Jan 1 (FE), 100 Jan 11 (Eckberg); the spring over-

flight was apparently concentrated in the period Mar 21-23 with a maximum count of only 170 Mar 23 on the Allegheny Reservoir (FE). Canada Geese at the Oak Orchard refuge complex ranged between 1000 and 2000 until early Feb but declined to 300 by Feb 11 (JM et al) with the onset of severe weather; the highest count during Mar was 25,400 on the 31st at INWR (JM). A few Snow and Blue Geese were reported late in Mar with 3 of each species Mar 25 at INWR (JM et al). Significant winter counts of ducks on the Grand Island (BOS) CC Dec 19 included 64 Gadwall, 191 American Widgeon, 147 Redhead, 7728 Canvasback (near average), 242 Greater Scaup (second lowest since 1933), 812 Buffhead, 4376 Common Merganser, 2 Red-breasted Merganser (lowest ever). A count of 70 Pintail over Dunkirk Mar 21 in the highest ever for that locality. Single Green-winged Teal wintered in the Forest Lawn Cemetery, Bflo (many obs) and along the Frissell Road, Frusburg (RS et al). The first mid winter record of the Shoveler was an individual Feb 16 in the Forest Lawn Cemetery, Bflo (Emersons). Wood Ducks wintered at Belmont, Allegany and Jamestown. Most of the counts of diving ducks were about average or below except for a few previously mentioned. Good counts of migrating White-winged Scoters on Lake Ont occurred on Mar 11 with 125 at Point Breeze and 130 off Yates Township (WAM et al) and off the mouth of the Nia River Mar 20 (RA, Thill). Four Ruddy Ducks in Dunkirk Harbor Jan 20-31 (DC) were unseasonal.

HAWKS—OWLS: Numbers of the two smaller accipiters seem to have increased significantly over recent winters. For example, 5 Sharp-shins and 12 Cooper's Hawks were reported from scattered locations. Significant counts of wintering hawks were 45 Red-tails on the Grand Island (BOS) CC Dec 19, 51 Red-tails Dec 27 on the INWR CC, 38 Rough-legs during Feb in the Lyndonville area (WGS), 14 Rough-legs Jan 29 near Centerville (LDB et al), 10 Marsh Hawks Jan 1 on the Allegany Co CC. More Red-shouldered Hawks were reported this winter than ever with 1-2 seen occasionally at INWR (JM,OO), 2 Jan 4 near Gerry (RS) and singles Feb 10 at Stockton (OS,NB) and Feb 17 at Cherry Creek (OS,NB, R. Olson). A *GOLDEN EAGLE* was seen Mar 29 over Lewiston (Klabunde). An immature Bald Eagle occurred Jan 8 at INWR (Meddaugh). The first *PEREGRINE FALCON* reported in several years was seen Dec 5 along the Nia River near Lewiston (many obs) and also on Grand Island (Rew). A significant movement occurred Mar 21 over Hanover, Dunkirk and Sheridan Townships, Chaut Co 55 Red-tailed, 130 Red-shouldered Hawks, 6 Marsh, 15 Sparrow Hawks (RPA). Still another encouraging count of Red-shouldered Hawks was 74 over Youngstown Mar 29 (WHK).

A substantial count of Ring-necked Pheasants was 100 Mar 9 along Lake Ont from Wilson to Point Breeze (WHK). Record or near-record counts of the American Coot were obtained for Dunkirk Harbor with 41 Jan 22 and 44 Feb 17 (DC). As usual, a few Killdeer and Common Snipe wintered successfully in Chaut Co with maximum counts of 4 Killdeer on Jan 31 at Claks Corners (Moe) and 5 snipe at Towerville Mar 1 (DC). The first regional record of the *RED PHALAROPE* for Jan was an individual Jan 1 in Dunkirk Harbor (DC) on the Dunkirk CC; this species has wintered successfully on Lake Ont at Rochester recently.

The rare and irregular *POMARINE JAEGER* was observed Dec 16 at Bay View (TB). Record high counts of Glaucous and Great Black-backed Gulls at Nia Falls, Ont are included here because some of the birds were in New York and they move freely back and forth across the international boundary. On Jan 13 (HRA) and on Jan 23 (PB et al) 23 Glaucous Gulls were recorded while 230 Great Black-backed Gulls were counted Jan 19 (HRA). A maximum of 4 Iceland Gulls was noted during Jan at the same location (HRA). A *BLACK-HEADED GULL* was seen Dec 4 in the Queenston, Ont—Lewiston, N.Y. area of the Nia River (HDM et al). The first Jan Franklin's Gull was observed Jan 15-24 on the Nia River across from

Bflo (many obs). The highest ever Jan count of Bonaparte's Gull was an estimate of 8000 on the Nia River on Jan 13 (HRA). A count of 4 adult and 2 immature Little Gulls on the Queenston, Ont—Lewiston section of the Nia River Feb 2 (HRA) was both large and late.

Wintering concentrations of the Mourning Dove were substantial and widespread with maximum counts of 160 Dec 27 on the INWR CC and 147 Jan 2 on the Hamburg-East Aurora CC. The decidedly uncommon Barn Owl was also reported on the last mentioned CC. The Snowy Owl was well represented by many individuals well scattered throughout the region and a superb maximum count of 7 on Feb 27 in the Lyndonville area (WGS). The Lake Ont plain produced four records of 6 Long-eared Owls, slightly higher than in recent winters. Short-eared Owls were also recorded from the Lake Ont plain or Erie Co with a maximum of 30 at Alden on Feb 12 (Wolffing). A Saw-whet Owl was reported Feb 4 at Hamburg (TB).

GOATSUCKERS—STARLING: The Red-bellied Woodpecker was noted in two areas where it is still very rare—Dec 19 (WAM) and Jan 4 (PB) in Beaver Island State Park on the Nia River and visiting a feeder in Jamestown Jan 22-Feb 18 (Morrell). As in past winters a few Red-headed Woodpeckers and Yellow-bellied Sapsuckers were observed; the former was represented throughout the winter by singles at INWR (several obs) and at a feeder during Feb at Clarks Corners (several obs) while a sapsucker survived at a feeder in Allegany State Park (several obs).

A *BOREAL CHICKADEE* was noted this winter Dec. 26, 27 (WAM, Karkak) and Jan 8 (WAM) and 15 (Goodman, Wilcove, Zehr) in Acacia Park Cemetery, Pendleton where a bird was reported last winter. Red-breasted Nuthatches were more widely distributed than last winter with many individuals or pairs visiting feeders and a maximum of 14 on Jan 12 in the Alfred area (CK, Brooks). At least 3 Winter Wrens were noted during the winter on the Lake Ont plain (several obs) while the Carolina Wren was noted in at least 6 localities throughout the winter but suffered some mortality during the severe Feb and Mar weather. The Mockingbird was reported from only 4 locations this winter compared with 9 last winter. A Catbird was reported again this year on the Hamburg-East Aurora CC Jan 1 while 5 Brown Thrashers were noted at scattered locations.

Substantial numbers of Robins were observed including a maximum of 43 Dec 27 on the INWR CC. Winter records of the Hermit Thrush included singles on Grand Island Dec 14 (WHK) and 19 (WAM), Jan 16 Jerusalem Corners (RPA), Jan 29 at a feeder in Spring Brook (Danner) and Mar 5 Batavia (Masons). For the first time in many years wintering Eastern Bluebirds were reported—5 Dec 12 in Evans Township and 7 Jan 4 at Evans (Coggeshall, Hauser); 4 Jan 18 on Hartland Road, Somerset (HRA); 1 Feb 1, 15 INWR (OO). The only Ruby-crowned Kinglet was seen on the Grand Island (BOS) CC Dec 19. An early Water Pipit was seen Mar 11 at Towerville (DC). The maximum number of Cedar Waxwings reported was 393 on Jan 1 Allegany Co CC. An excellent flight of Northern Shrikes found these birds scattered throughout the area during the winter with a high count of 5 on the Hamburg-East Aurora CC Jan 2. The first Loggerhead Shrike arrived on Mar 19 at Clarence (WAM).

VIREOS—SPARROWS: Predictable because of the relatively mild fall weather were lingering Myrtle Warblers with 1 on the Grand Island (BOS) CC Dec 19 and 19 on the Jamestown CC Dec 26. Unexpected and totally unprecedented, however, was an *OVENBIRD* which lived on mixed wild bird seed at a feeder and roosted in a garage in Fillmore Dec 1-Feb 14 (many obs); many detailed verification reports were submitted and are on file in the Buffalo Museum of Science.

Far fewer Eastern Meadowlarks than during recent similarly mild winters were reported with the peak only 42 Dec 27 on the INWR CC; a noteworthy count of

returning spring migrants was 128 over Lake View on Mar 21 (PH). Larger flocks of Red-winged Blackbirds than usual were observed with 30 Jan 1 on the Allegany Co CC and 47 Jan 2 at Griffin Lane, Elma (Wendlings). Two Baltimore Orioles were reported at feeders, Dec 16 at Riverside, Bflo (HDM et al) and Jan 16 in Boston (Dodges, Jones). Rusty Blackbirds were seen on two CCs — Dec 19 Grand Island and Dec 26 Jamestown; individuals were noted Jan 1 (JM,OO) and Feb 16 (PH) at INWR and at Tift Street marsh, Bflo Feb 6 (RPA). An unusual mid-winter concentration of Common Grackles was a flock of 12 on Jan 20 in the Town of Alma (LDB). The only large winter flocks of cowbirds were 132 and 111 on Jan 1 Scio and Allegany Co CCs. Returning flocks of several hundred Red-wings and grackles appeared in the Frewsburg area on Mar 2 (FE).

DICKCISSELS were reported at three feeders in Allegany Co but the only verified record was of an adult male Jan 1 in Wellsville (Ferrands) which was also reported Dec 19 and Jan 4 and 6. A fine invasion of Evening Grosbeaks involving thousands of birds peaked during Jan with numerous feeders serving flocks of many dozens or in a few cases over 100 individuals; maximum numbers were noted on area CCs — 2218 Jan 1 Allegany Co, 800 Jan 2 Hamburg — East Aurora, 785 Jan 1 Scio. Unusually large concentrations of Purple Finches were recorded at two locations — 75 to 85 Feb 23-Mar 4 at Riverside Road south of Frewsburg (many obs) and 44 Dec 31 at Belmont (LDB). From 6 to 12 *HOUSE FINCHES* wintered at a feeder in Eggertsville (Ward et al). Pine Grosbeaks were present in small flocks scattered widely throughout the region; high counts were 21 at Red Bird, Chaut Co Feb 5 (DC) and 18 Jan 2 on the Hamburg-East Aurora CC; the last report was of 1 at Lyndonville Mar 11 (WGS). Records of the always-rare *HOARY RED-POLL* came from two localities — 2 Feb 17 and 1 Feb 29 on the Bliss Road, Oakfield (Beebee) and 2 at a feeder in Hamburg Feb 17 (TB), the latter location where most authentic regional records of recent years originate. Numbers of Common Redpolls totaled in the thousands during Jan and Feb with most active feeding stations visited by small flocks; maximum counts were 800 Feb 26 and 600 Feb 6 in the Fredonia area (DC), 500 Jan 29 at Caneadea (CK); there were also between 20 and 30 estimates of flocks containing from 100 to 500 individuals. Pine Siskin were well scattered in small flocks frequently visiting feeders particularly from Jan through Mar with a high count of 50 Jan 28 in fields at Belmont (LDB). Very high CC totals of the American Goldfinch reflected the mild weather during Dec and Jan — 386 Jan 1 Alleghany Co, 315 Jan 2 Hamburg-East Aurora, 215 Jan 1 Scio, 103 Dec 19 Grand Island. The five reports of Red Crossbills were all from the Hamburg area (20 on Jan 2 CC) or from Allegany Co (71 on Jan 1 Scio CC) but White-winged Crossbills were widely distributed throughout the region during Jan and Feb with many individuals and small flocks visiting feeders during the severe weather of the later month and a maximum of 15 on Feb 2 in the Youngstown Cemetery (Emersons).

Most unusual was a Savannah Sparrow that wintered at Silver Creek including daily visits to the feeders of T. Welch during Feb and Mar where it was observed by WAM Feb 27. Significant CC totals of the Slate-colored Junco were 535 Jan 2 Hamburg-East Aurora, 431 Jan 1 Allegany Co, 297 Dec 19 Grand Island and for the Tree Sparrow were 1033 Dec 19 Grand Island and 662 Dec 27 NWR. Single Field Sparrows survived the rugged late winter weather at feeders in Allegany State Park (FE) and Hamburg (TB). Maximum counts of the White-crowned Sparrow, 19 Jan 1 Allegany Co CC compared with 20 on the same count a year ago and of the White-throated Sparrow, 93 Jan 2 on Hamburg-East Aurora CC compared with 96 a year ago, and 35 Dec 26 Jamestown CC compared with 35 a year ago. The CC total of 8 Swamp Sparrows Dec 27 at the INWR was significant. Song Sparrow totals were disappointingly low and did not compare favorably with those of a year ago (see Kingbird Vol. 21(2);75). The highest count of Snow

Buntings for the winter, 755 on Jan 6 at Fredonia (DC) was substantially lower than during most years.

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REGION 2 — GENESEE

RICHARD T. O'HARA

What began as a mild open winter during December and most of January became much more severe in February and continued colder and snowier than normal right through the end of March. It seemed milder than it actually was because the preceding winter was so heavy, but the comparison is deceptive. Nearly 100 inches of snow had been recorded in Rochester by March 30, and temperatures were very close to normal for the season. Several thaws in early winter prevented ice and snow from accumulating much until 11.4 inches fell on February 19 and 20. Most bodies of water were still locked in ice at the end of the season.

Total precipitation was just about normal for January, February, and March and water levels were higher than normal along Lake Ontario. Most weekends were pleasant enough to keep observers active and a large volume of reports were sent in to give an accurate view of bird life here.

The combination of mild weather and a fine finch flight resulted in very good, although not record-breaking numbers, on both local Christmas census counts. A combined total of ninety-one species left very few unrecorded. Many of the half-hardy species noted below were discovered on these useful counts, and it is also interesting to see how many had disappeared when severe weather set in during February.

March produced few migrants before the last weekend and most migrants other than waterfowl were still scarce on the 31st.

Positive trends include: (1) A strong flight of early returning waterfowl in late March including several species of dabblers as well as most divers. (2) Fine numbers of Redheads wintering on Canandaigua Lake. (3) Two records of Harlequin Duck. (4) Good season for Snowy Owls and Short-eared Owls and continuing up-trend for Screech Owl. (5) Several records for wintering Bluebirds and large flocks of Robins. (6) As noted above, better than average showing of winter finches, especially Pine Siskins, redpolls, and crossbills.

Negative trends include: (1) Apparent drop in wintering Greater Scaup Duck. (2) Relative scarcity of Oldsquaws and Common Mergansers. (3) Near absence of Red-breasted Nuthatches after a good fall flight. (4) Few reports of Lapland Longspurs.

Rarities include: Harlequin Duck, Goshawk, Bald Eagle, Dunlin, Black-legged Kittiwake, Saw-whet Owl, Boreal Owl, Catbird, Ovenbird, Dickcissel, House Finch, Harris' Sparrow, and Chipping Sparrow.

Abbreviations: BB—Braddocks Bay; BANS—Burroughs-Audubon Nature Sanctuary; CL—Canandaigua Lake; Con L—Conesus Lake; DEP—Durand Eastman Park; GOS—Genesee Ornithological Society; GR—Genesee River; HBP—Hamlin Beach Park; HL—Hawk Lookout; IB—Irondequoit Bay; LO—Lake Ontario; LLCC—Little Lakes Christmas Census; MB—Manitou Beach; MP—Mendon Ponds; RCC—Rochester Christmas Census; RP—Round Pond; SC—Sandy Creek; SB—Sodus Bay.

Observers Cited: JA—Jean Ambrose; RA—Robert Ambrose; MC—Michael Carlson; JC—Julie Claffey; GD—Gertrude Davis; JD—James Doherty; JE—J. Esley; AF—Arlene Foster; JF—John Foster; RJ—Robert Jones; AK—Alan Kemnitzer;

RK—Roberta Kilmer; RL—Ruth Lauderbach; WCL—Walter C. Listman; J&TM—Joseph & Thelma McNett; LM—Laura Moon; NM—Neil Moon; RO—Richard O'Hara; BO—Bernard Olin; BP—Betty Perrigo; GP—Glen Perrigo; AS—Al Shay; MAS—Mary Ann Sunderlin; J&JT—Jean & James Tate; M& TT—Michael & Thomas Tetlow; PW—Paul Weld.

LOONS—DUCKS: Both Common and Red-throated Loon were noted in December, but neither was seen again all season. One Red-necked Grebe was present off IB on January 8 (B&GP). A single Whistling Swan was feeding in the mouth of SC on January 15 (RO). A count of 6 Great Blue Heron on the RCC reflects the mild early winter. None were reported in January or February.

A fine count of Black Ducks, 461, on LLCC may be a good omen for this somewhat depleted species. An early flight brought 20 Gadwall to BB on March 30 (WCL et al); this is the best local count in recent memory. Some 400 Pintail in the same place is also noteworthy. While Canvasback were well-represented on the LLCC with 837 counted, they were not common elsewhere until the end of March brought returning birds. Redheads, however, were up sharply on CL with a peak of 4000 noted on March 11 (RO). Greater Scaup seemed scarce largely because they did not winter in large numbers in the mouth of the GR for the first time in memory; this was probably due to dredging and other activity there in the early winter. Bufflehead continue to surprise with excellent numbers present, while Oldsquaws still seem scarcer than a few years ago. Both dark-winged scoters were absent after a heavy flight in the fall. The Harlequin Duck appeared at MB twice, December 19–23, and also March 30. (WCL); both of these were female or immature birds. The Common Merganser, while not rare, seems to be down in numbers here. The RCC count of 82 is very low and it was entirely absent on the LLCC. 4 Hooded Mergansers on January 23 were unusual LO (MAS et al).

HAWKS—OWLS: The first Turkey Vulture appeared on March 30 at HL with the first sizable hawk flight of the spring (WCL). Goshawks were reported 8 times this winter; the last of these was apparently a migrant moving with other species along LO at HL March 30 (WCL). Cooper's Hawk was reported 10 times before the first 5 migrants occurred on March 30 also at HL (WCL). Similarly there were 7 reports of Sharp-shinned Hawks, but no migrants in the first flight. All these numbers are better than three or more years ago and continue the improvement noted in accipiters for the past two years. The March 30 date for the first noteworthy hawk flight is late and underscores the lack of any real break in winter weather before then.

The chief feature of the hawk movement on March 30 was 300 Red-tailed and Red-shouldered Hawks; these birds were quite high and light conditions prevented positive identification of many, but both were included in good numbers (BC et al). A late Red-shouldered Hawk was at MP on December 21 (GP). Rough-legged Hawk was quite well represented here all winter with 7 and 5 on our two CC. Otherwise the best daily count was 6 at Honeoye Falls on February 6 (JF). There were 25 of these birds in the movement on March 30 at HL (BC et al).

The resident pair of Bald Eagles was at the nest site near Hemlock Lake on March 26 (J&AF); one was also noted at CL on March 11 (fide RO) and cottagers reported two birds were present there off and on all winter; this is probably the same pair which nests locally, although rumors are heard of another nest east of CL. Marsh Hawks were noted occasionally near BB (WCL) and Sparrow Hawks were present in good numbers all winter. Counts of 20 and 14 on CC were representative numbers.

Pheasants seem to be holding quite steady since the stocking program of the state has been dropped. Only 1 Ruffed Grouse was noted on the LLCC this year. No Turkey reports probably only means that coverage of suitable areas southeast of Rochester is poor.

Coot appear to be enjoying a population explosion; they were common everywhere until ice forced them out in early winter with a peak of 500 on Con L December 25 (WCL). A single Dunlin was noted on the RCC and another at SB December 28 (WCL). Only a few Killdeer were reported in the early March flights along LO, but a few individuals may have wintered successfully also. Woodcock was the only other shorebird noted before April this year.

About a dozen reports of Glaucous Gulls represent a good number for this region. Iceland Gull was less common with only 3 or 4 observed all winter, but this is still better than some recent years. Great Black-backed Gulls were better too, with many present where last year only a few were seen. Sometimes gulls in general seemed scarce, but this was probably due to severe ice conditions in mid-winter, since they became common again when open water again appeared. It is interesting to note the ratio of Herring to Ring-billed Gulls; on the RCC it was 1:3; by February this was reversed, although Ring-bills certainly winter here in much greater numbers than they did 15 or 20 years ago. Bonaparte's Gulls stayed late with several January reports including 85 at IB on January 12 (AK). 1 to 3 Little Gulls were noted with these late Bonaparte's Gulls by m. o.b.; the last report was January 11 (AK et al). Even more unusual were 2 Black-legged Kittiwake at MB on December 4 (WCL); these were migrating birds.

Worth noting are the Mourning Dove totals of 363 and 238 on the RCC and LLCC; these birds are now so common and widely distributed in winter that they are no longer noteworthy except for the large numbers involved, for example at one feeder as many as 61 were counted (GD).

Owls were well represented locally. An encouraging 23 Screech Owls on RCC is much higher than several recent years. Snowy Owls were regular in some places, but numbers were not spectacular; most observers recorded 1 to 3 per day along the lakeshore especially at BB; in addition, 2 were at the Monroe County airport (RA) and scattered birds elsewhere; the two CC totaled 6 birds. A single Long-eared Owl was near MP on January 1 (J&AF); another was at HL on March 11 (AS) and a third was observed near RP on March 18 (GP et al). Short-eared Owls wintered both in Mendon and near Honeoye Falls with maximums of 7 and 12 at each location (m. o.b.); none were noted from lakeshore marshes, however, A Saw-whet Owl was discovered near RP on March 25 (WCL et al). The really outstanding Owl, however, was a Boreal Owl picked up dead but in good condition on Chase Road, Hamlin and given to NM on February 26; the skin has been preserved; there are 2 previous sight records for this region in recent years.

GOATSUCKERS—STARLINGS: Kingfishers were reported every month this winter, but migrants had not appeared even at the end of March. Flickers were very common again with a combined total of 63 birds on the two CC, Pileated, Red-bellied and Red-headed Woodpeckers were all recorded every month this winter with an interesting report of 2 Pileated on February 16 from near DEP (E&M Barnitz); also unusual was a single Pileated at HBP on March 19 (WCL); they are not usually noted on the flat open country of the West *Lakeshore*. The best count of Red-headed was 8 on February 27, Nations Road, Geneseo (J&RA). The last Yellow-bellied Sapsucker was a RCC record on December 19.

Horned Larks were widely observed in good numbers all winter. Some years they are quite scarce for a few weeks from late December to late January or early February. Our CC totals for Crow are now sad compared to a few years ago; it is hard to account for the decrease, but 15,000 birds formerly has now been reduced to less than 1/10 that number; do other regions note the same decline? few Crows have yet moved along the lakeshore either.

Red-breasted Nuthatches have been scarce or absent since fall; even in DEP and HBP very few have been seen this winter. A single Winter Wren was in DEP on

February 6 (GOS), otherwise absent after January 1. Carolina Wren is unreported to date.

Two Catbirds attempted to winter in DEP but were last noted on January 2 (PW). A Brown Thrasher was seen in the same place in mid-December but not afterwards (JD). Robins were again numerous with 51 and 72 noted on the CC. Hermit Thrush was also seen on both counts with a good total of 5 birds; 1 of these was still present in DEP on February 2 (PW). Bluebirds were noteworthy with reports of 1 — 8 birds in 5 separate locations.

Golden-crowned Kinglets seemed rather scarce, but Cedar Waxwings were common as usual. 6 Pipit were seen in Clarkson on the early date of March 23 (R. Clark et al). Northern Shrike seemed rather widely distributed in the early weeks of winter but scarce after February 1.

VIREOS—WARBLERS: The only species noted in this group were Myrtle Warblers and Ovenbird. A group of 8 Myrtles were seen at MP on January 4 (GP) and 6 were still there on March 25 (J. Dille). The Ovenbird remained at a feeder in Irondequoit from December 1 — 4 (L&NM); this is the latest date for the species of which I am aware.

BLACKBIRDS—SPARROWS: Eastern Meadowlark was reported every month from several different places and in numbers ranging from 1 to 6 birds; very few migrants were noted, however, until the very end of March. Similarly all the common blackbird species — Redwing, Rusty, Grackle and Cowbird — were reported quite frequently this winter. Rusty Blackbirds and Grackles were in small numbers, i.e., 1 to 8 birds, and Cowbirds seemed less common than recent winters. Only Redwings were frequent as migrants until the last of March when Grackles were beginning to appear more frequently in the flocks flying east along the lakeshore and elsewhere.

A well-marked male Dickcissel appeared in Webster on January 9 and remained until the 27th (RK); it was seen by m. ob. during this period.

To many people, the finches were the outstanding feature this winter. Several species appeared frequently at feeders, sometimes in rather large numbers, and attracted widespread notice. In most places Evening Grosbeaks were not really common, and they were less regular than in some recent winters; nevertheless, they were well-reported with the best count being 125 at HBP on January 8 (B&GP); the LLCC total of 251 was also good. Purple Finches, while nowhere in really large numbers, were more frequent than usual, especially in the last half of winter; it was almost like 20–30 years ago when this bird seemed much more regular during winter in our parks.

The House Finch which nested on St Paul Blvd last summer is still being reported there (RL); so far it has not become established at any other place in this region so far as we know. Pine Grosbeak appeared first on the LLCC January 2, 7 birds, and subsequently 3 times at scattered locations; the best count was 9 at HBP on March 11 (GP), but there were also 8 at BB on February 12 (J&JT et al) and 1 on January 3 in DEP (RJ&MC). Goldfinches were widespread and common even at feeders within the city.

Pine Siskins after a heavy fall flight remained in good numbers until February when they became more infrequent and irregular; in March, however, they began to appear again and were frequently noted at feeders sometimes along with Redpolls and Goldfinches; numbers were not large after the end of December when 135 were noted on RCC.

When Siskins dropped off, the Redpoll came on strong; with the cold of February and March, they moved in from more remote sections; it is fascinating to find that only 6 appeared on RCC December 19 but 1,284 were in the hills south of the lake plain on January 2; at the same time 75 were in MP on December 23 (GP); by

January 10 they were in the city and subsequently seen everywhere in good numbers; these birds were still appearing at feeders at the end of March.

White-winged Crossbill appeared frequently this winter; the best December count was 24 at HBP (M&TT); counts steadily diminished then until only 1 and 2 birds at a time were being noted in February and March. The Red Crossbill seemed to increase in mid-winter and reached a peak with a count of 100 in Webster on February 2 (J&TM).

The only Towhee report came from Honeoye Falls, 1 bird on February 6 (RJ). Juncos stayed in very good numbers, perhaps because the early winter was light and open; the count of 676 on RCC seems particularly high. 1 Oregon Junco was noted at BANS on January 3 and January 4 (GP). Tree Sparrows were also abundant with very good numbers on both CC and elsewhere.

A very unusual Chipping Sparrow was well observed at a feeder in Honeoye Falls on February 1 (RJ) along with Tree Sparrows and other species. 1 even more unusual Harris' Sparrow was with a large flock of other sparrows at Lakeville, N.Y. on the LLCC (R. Clark et al); this is only about the 4th record for the species here. A single Field Sparrow came to a feeder in Fairport on February 11 (BL).

Several wintering White-crowned and White-throated Sparrows were observed, usually at feeders where they are no longer really unusual; most noteworthy perhaps were 7 White-crowned Sparrows all through March at Walworth (JE). A single Fox Sparrow was seen at Con L January 16 (J&RA). Swamp Sparrows were unreported all winter except on the CC in very small numbers. Song Sparrows had begun to sing and were quite conspicuous by early March in spite of cold weather and were widespread by late March.

While Snow Bunting were rather uncommon in early winter, they became much more frequent, or at least more frequently observed, after the snow became deeper in mid-February; a flock of 400 near CL on February 21 seemed noteworthy (RO) until some 2000 were located in Hamlin on March 18 (B&GP). A few Lapland Longspurs were with this large flock, but otherwise Longspurs seemed very scarce all winter.

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REGION 3 — FINGER LAKES

DOROTHY MCILROY AND SALLY HOYT SPOFFORD

December and most of January were mild, temperatures averaging 3 to 5 degrees above normal. There was moderate snowfall, but little snow cover stayed on the ground. In late January came an abrupt drop in temperature accompanied by heavy snowfall, one of the heaviest on record in the Ithaca area between Jan. 25 and March 2. There was less snow north of Ithaca. March temperatures averaged 2 to 3 degrees below normal. Snowfall was normal, but it was March 30 before there was much bare ground. Montezuma Refuge did not freeze over completely until Dec. 21, when most waterfowl left. The pools were still 50 percent frozen as of April 1.

Although few Canada Geese stayed in the Refuge, an unprecedented 20,000 wintered in the Cayuga Lake Basin. Only 9,277 were counted on the Waterfowl Count (previous high 258 in 1967) Jan. 16, perhaps because a sudden temperature drop that blanketed the lake with steam, coupled with a high wind, made it impossible most of the day to see birds out on the lake. Partially offsetting this, frozen ground and no snow made access to the lake shores easier than usual. High winds

blew many cornfields free of snow, so that most of these geese stayed on, to be joined by the returning thousands in March. Major flights were noted March 12, 20 and 21. By the end of March there were 50,000 geese at Montezuma Refuge and at least another 50,000 on Cayuga Lake. A most unusual accident occurred during a heavy thunderstorm on March 12, when lightning struck a flock of Canada Geese flying near Horseheads. Some were seen to fall into a field about 2 miles north of the Chemung County airport. State troopers were called, came with conservation officers and picked up 11 geese, some with burned plumage and some with holes through the bodies. The birds were sent to the Dept. of Environmental Conservation Laboratory at Delmar for study.

With some birds lingering late because of the mild, open weather and a good winter finch year, Christmas Counts set new records for numbers of species. Evening Grosbeaks and Common Redpolls were common. Pine Siskins were almost as widespread, in smaller numbers. A few Pine Grosbeaks and Red Crossbills were reported in the Ithaca and Geneva areas. White-winged Crossbills were present in small numbers in most of the Region. Four January Catbird reports and larger numbers of Robins than usual reflect the mild season. There were late records of Virginia and Sora Rails, Common Snipe and Grasshopper Sparrow. A Lesser Black-backed Gull visited Ithaca again this winter (same one?). An encouraging sign was more winter Bluebird records than in several years.

Rarities included Boreal Chickadee, Bohemian Waxwing, Dickcissel, Hoary Redpoll and Oregon Junco.

Abbreviations: Cay—Cayuga; CC—Audubon Christmas Count Jan 1; L—Lake; MNWR—Montezuma National Wildlife Refuge; Sen—Seneca; SWS—Sapsucker Woods Sanctuary; WG—Watkins Glen; WFC—Waterfowl Count Jan 16.

Area compilers and observers: BA—Betty Ammerman; WEB—Walter Benning; RB—Robert Blye; MB—Mollie Briant; JB—Jack Brubaker; MC—Mildred Comar; FG—Frank Guthrie, Keuka; WG—William Groesbeck, Hornell; WH—Wilfred Howard; DK—Douglas Kibbe; RL—R. Llewellyn; DM—Dorothy McIlroy; DP—David Peakall; MP—Martin Phillips, MNWR manager; ER—Esther Ruggles; BS—Betty Strath; JT—James Tate, Ithaca; JW—Jayson Walker; MW—Mary Welles, Elmira.

LOONS—DUCKS: Common Loon: none on WFC, perhaps because of steam-covered lakes and high wind; 3 Jan 23 Cay L and 8 Feb 6. Red-necked Grebe: 1 Mar 16 Frontenac Pt Cay L (DK). Horned Grebe: 39 on WFC, low, perhaps because of poor visibility. Pied-billed Grebe: 26 on WFC, down from last year but still higher than usual. Great Blue Heron: several records; up to 10 wintered on Clyde R n. of MNWR; general arrival Mar 31 at Bently Creek heronry near Elmira (WH). American Bittern: 1 MNWR on CC "may have been a bird restored to health and released in same general area just before Thanksgiving" (MP). Whistling Swan: very few reported; first, Mar 15 Cay L. Canada Goose: 8,000 came into MNWR late Jan after numbers had dwindled to 600, but did not stay long; 10,981 was an all-time high for WFC (see introductory comments). At MNWR first Snow and Blue Geese were reported Mar 17; by Mar 31 there were 500 Snows and 2500 Blues, a new record high for Blues; unusual were 20 Snow Geese seen Mar 18 in a field south of Odessa (Guinan, McCann). Brant: 1 on WFC Keuka, unusual. Changes noted on WFC: Mallard (4005) up, Gadwall (65) and Am. Widgeon (44) highest numbers on record, Redhead (9844) up, Canvasback (650) and Scaup (569) down, Buffhead (265) high. "Winter" ducks were scarce and late at Elmira, e.g. Common Merganser first seen Mar 27. White-winged Scoter: 3 Jan 30 Sen L (WEB); 2 Feb 3 Cay L (DK). Ruddy Duck: missed on WFC; 3 Jan 30 Sen L (WEB).

HAWKS—OWLS: Turkey Vulture: 1 Mar 25 Trumansburg (RB,RL). Goshawk:

five sightings Ithaca area; 1 MNWR on CC; 1 Feb 17 on Horseheads (Knapp); 1 Mar 19 Caton (Stasch). Sharp-shinned Hawk: several Ithaca and WG. Cooper's Hawk: 3 on Ithaca CC, 5 other Ithaca reports; several seen around WG feeders; 3 on Geneva CC. Red-tailed Hawk: good numbers everywhere; 38 on Ithaca CC, high; 62 MNWR on CC (part of this CC area is in Region 5). Red-shouldered Hawk: 3 Ithaca reports, unusual—2 Dec 5, 2 on Ithaca CC, 1 week of Feb 21. Broad-winged Hawk: 1 Mar 21 Harris Hill, Elmira (WH), early. Rough-legged Hawk: regular but scattered reports; only large numbers were in Sen County where WEB saw 6 over one field Jan 30 and BS reported 7 Jan 16 at Sampson State Pk. Marsh Hawk: a few winter records— Ithaca, WG, Elmira, Waterloo. Osprey: first, 1 Mar 26 Canoga (MC). Sparrow Hawk: good numbers everywhere; 11 Geneva CC, 23 Ithaca CC. Bald Eagle: 1 adult returned Mar 14 to MNWR, 1 imm Mar 27.

Ruffed Grouse: 15 on Ithaca CC, highest since 1965. Ring-necked Pheasant: continued high in Ithaca area, 144 on CC. Turkey: max 32, Dec 10 Midline Rd e of Ithaca, more wary and harder to see. Virginia Rail: 1 Jan 17 near Ithaca (C. deMayo), late date. Sora: 1 Dec 17 Ithaca (P. Allen), also late. Coot: 759 on WFC, down from last year's very high count; 225 on Ithaca CC was high. Killdeer: first Mar 1 Ithaca. American Woodcock: first, 1 Mar 9 Ithaca. Common Snipe: 2 on Ithaca CC, flushed by JT's dog; 1 Jan 29 Dryden (P. Kelsey). Upland Plover: 2 Mar 23 Ithaca (L. Pearsall). Greater Yellowlegs: first Mar 22 Ithaca (DP).

Gull population at Ithaca was back to normal after last winter's low count. Lesser Black-backed Gull: reported irregularly Jan 1—Mar 19 at Stewart Pk, Ithaca. Bonaparte's Gull: first, 2 Mar 25 Ithaca. Great Horned Owl: 14 on Ithaca CC, high; 3 nests located MNWR in late Mar. Snowy Owl: probably 4 or 5 individuals reported near Ithaca, including one seen several times in the city being harassed by crows, none stayed long in any location; 1 Dec 7 s of Auburn; 1 Christmas to Jan 12 near Fayette (MP). Barred Owl: only report, Feb 9 near Freeville, Long-eared Owl: only 1 Mar 25 near Ithaca (RB,RL). Short-eared Owl: present Dec into Mar Sen County, principally at Watts Rd quarry s of Waterloo (WEB), max 35 Mar 12 (R. Foxall). Saw-whet Owl: 2 Mar 12 SWS stayed several days D. Mueller).

GOATSUCKERS—STARLING: Belted Kingfisher: fewer than usual wintered WG; a few Hornell; 5 on Ithaca CC. Yellow-shafted Flicker: 16 on Ithaca CC, about 5x usual number, numbers decreased in late Jan. Red-bellied Woodpecker: reported seven locations Cay Basin, three of them new. Red-headed Woodpecker: four winter records—1 imm Dec to Mar Elmira (R. Fox); 1 Jan 6 Dryden (Alexander); 1 Jan 11 Groton (Gould); 1 Jan 23 near Canoga. Yellow-bellied Sapsucker: 2 wintered Ithaca; 1 in Feb Reading Center. Downy Woodpecker: 155 on Ithaca CC, highest count ever. Eastern Phoebe: first, 1 Mar 11 near Ithaca (P. Craig). Blue Jay: 324 on Ithaca CC continued the high numbers of past two winters. Common Crow: 1243 on Ithaca CC, highest ever. Black-capped Chickadee: down in numbers at Keuka feeders (FG), but 747 on Ithaca CC, like last year's count, was about 2x previous count numbers. *BOREAL CHICKADEE*: 1 mid-Dec to mid-Jan Elmira (L. Andrus). Tufted Titmouse: 28 on Ithaca CC, highest number yet. Red-breasted Nuthatch: very few this winter. Winter Wren: scarce, only five reports—1 WG, rest Cay Basin. Carolina Wren: three locations Ithaca area; 1 King Ferry; four locations WG. Mockingbird: 7 on Ithaca CC (4 last year). Catbird: 1 each, Jan 7 Ithaca, Jan 10 King Ferry, Jan 29 Dryden, Jan 31 near Burdett. Brown Thrasher: 1 each, Jan 1 Trumansburg, Jan 5—Mar 3 Waterloo (JW), Feb 6 and Mar 10 Ithaca, Jan 22 and Mar 6 Elmira (WH).

Robin: several reports of larger numbers than usual—68 WG on CC, 40 Feb 10 WG; 151 Geneva CC; 30 Feb 12 Waterloo; largest number was a flock of 100–200 that came in Jan 4 near Auburn, no report on how long they stayed. Hermit Thrush: last, Dec 29 WG; first Mar 20 Dryden (DP). Eastern Bluebird: more winter reports

than in recent years in Ithaca and WG, reported regularly Jan and Feb, largest numbers—9 on Ithaca CC (first time on count), 8 Jan 12 Jacksonville, 7 Jan 1 Lodi, 5 or 6 Feb 29 Troy Rd Ithaca, 8 to 10 Mar 10 Bath. *BOHEMIAN WAXWING*: two reports of these with the large flocks of Cedar Waxwings—3 Jan 30 Caroline Center (R. Tilford), 1 Mar 8 Cornell Campus (P. Trail). Northern Shrike: two reports WG; 3 on Ithaca CC and three other sightings Ithaca area; four reports Geneva-Waterloo area. Loggerhead Shrike: 1 Mar 22 near Ithaca (RB).

VIREOS—SPARROWS: Myrtle Warbler: only two reports—2 on Ithaca CC, 1 in Feb near Clyde feeding on suet (fide WEB). Eastern Meadowlark: 44 on Ithaca CC, more than 2x previous high count; none Elmira CC, usually several. Red-winged Blackbird: few wintered, big influx of these and Common Grackles Mar 2. Rusty Blackbird: first Mar 6 Ithaca (T. Merrill). Baltimore Oriole: 2 for several weeks mid-Dec into Jan Ithaca (E. Phelps); male Dec 14 s of Ithaca (E. Hardy); male Jan into early Feb Etna (Spofford); first year male Mar 2 Elmira (WH); female about Mar 15 W Elmira and a male there Mar 20 (Guinan). Brown-headed Cowbird: numerous flocks of about 100 reported Keuka area, normal elsewhere.

Cardinal: 157 on Ithaca CC, down from 1970 CC but still 2x any earlier year; very few at Hornell. *DICKCISSEL*: adult male for a week in early Dec Ithaca, last seen Dec 11 (Sapakie); imm male Mar 20 on Elmira (ER,WH). Evening Grosbeak: big flight year, flocks everywhere; 699 on Ithaca CC, more than 2x any previous count. Purple Finch: very few, none Elmira until Feb. House Finch: at several Elmira feeders, max 6 at one feeder; none seen anywhere else. Pine Grosbeak: four Ithaca reports, max 10 to 12 Jan 30 Dryden (Huson); two Keuka reports in Mar; 2 on Geneva CC. *HOARY REDPOLL*: 1 Feb 22 Elmira, well observed by WH at her feeder. Common Redpoll: big flight year, present everywhere; 792 on Ithaca CC; largest flock, 500 Feb 8 near Trumansburg (DP); with the redpolls in Elmira were two partial albinos—one all white except for red cap and some faint streaking down center of back into tail, seen by several people Mar 7–12; the second very light in color with a white collar (ER,WH). Pine Siskin: also present throughout area, generally in fewer numbers than the redpolls; 41 on Ithaca CC; in Keuka “present in greater numbers than in any other year of our recording (since 1946)” but no figures given; plentiful Feb and Mar Bath (BA). American Goldfinch: also present everywhere in good numbers; 358 on Ithaca CC, highest ever. Red Crossbill: only reports—2 on Geneva CC; 14 Mar 18 Ithaca (Roscoe). White-winged Crossbill: reports of small numbers, usually 3 to 6, at Keuka, WG, Ithaca, Elmira; max 18 Jan 27 W Elmira. Rufous-sided Towhee: a few reports Ithaca, Union Springs, and Hornell.

Savannah Sparrow: last, Dec 17 Dryden (DP). *GRASSHOPPER SPARROW*: two Ithaca reports—1 Jan 1 on Ithaca CC (N. Cutright) and 1 Jan 13 about a mile and a half away (MB,DM), possibly same bird. Vesper Sparrow: 1 Dec 23 Dryden (DP). With the Slate-colored Juncos at a feeder near Elmira Mar 11 and 13 was one “with symmetrical white patches in both wings and more white in the tail (D. Long); the other juncos drove it away whenever possible.” *OREGON JUNCO*: 1 first week Mar near Keuka (C. Davis, M. Lerch). Chipping Sparrow: 1 with drooping wing, but able to fly, Dec 14 through Jan at Ithaca feeder (MB). Field Sparrow: 4 winter reports, max 3 Feb 12 Meyers (J. Patterson); none Elmira CC, usually 5 or more. White-crowned Sparrow: 1 on Ithaca CC; 1 into Feb Odessa (BS). Fox Sparrow: first, Feb 26 Trumansburg, scattered reports until general appearance last week of Mar. Swamp Sparrow: 1 on Ithaca CC. Song Sparrow: usual few wintered; 43 on Ithaca CC, high. Lapland Longspur: only 3 reports. Snow Bunting: fair numbers in Dec, 651 on Ithaca CC; numbers dwindled as winter progressed, small flocks of up to 50 reported during Mar snows; none in Hornell all winter in spite of searching.

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REGION 4 — SUSQUEHANNA

LESLIE E. BEMONT

It was an open and relatively mild winter until February 19 when a 24 inch snowfall arrived. More than half the snow was gone 10 days later but spring progressed rather slowly after that.

In spite of the thin snow cover, winter raptors were not particularly plentiful and northern winter raptors were almost absent. Instead it was a winter finch year. All species of winter finches were represented but it was primarily Evening Grosbeaks, redpolls, Pine Siskins and goldfinches that put on the real show. Except for goldfinches even these species were scarce before New Year's Day.

Rarities included a wintering Baltimore Oriole, a wintering Hermit Thrush, a Brewer's Blackbird and a Varied Thrush. The appearance of Monk Parakeet in the Region was cause for mixed feelings.

Abbreviations: BCC—Jan 1 Binghamton Christmas Count; Bing—Binghamton; OCC—Dec 26 Owego Christmas Count.

Observers: LC—Mrs. Lynn Clark; GC—Gail Cordenman; AMD—Anna and Marilyn Davis; MD—Mary Dobinsky; WH—Mrs. Wayne Hartman; LH—Louise Hover; DML—Dwight and Margaret Lynch; HM—Harriet Marsi; BRP—Bob and Rita Pantle; MS—Mary Sheffield; EW—Elizabeth Washburn; DW—Don Weber; RSW—Ruth and Sally White; KW—Kathryn Wilson; IW—Irene Wright.

LOONS—DUCKS: Common Loon: 2 Mar 26 Cannonsville Reservoir (WH). Pied-billed Grebe: Jan 15 East Delhi (LC); 1 Jan 28 Oneonta (Donald Huntington). Great Blue Heron: 1 OCC; 1 BCC; 1 Jan 9 and Feb 25 Newark Valley (LH, DML); 1 Feb 9 Sherburne (RSW). Whistling Swan: Mar 26 Lounsberry (GC). Canada Goose: 6 wintered along Susquehanna River at Lounsberry; 1 BCC; 100 Jan 5 over Vestal Center (EW); migrants Mar 1. Pintail: Mar 31 Chenango Bridge (AMD). Green-winged Teal: Mar 31 Chenango Bridge (AMD). Blue-winged Teal: Mar 31 Chenango Bridge (AMD). American Widgeon: 2 or 3 Mar 19 Nichols (MS, EW); several areas Mar 26 and 31. Wood Duck: 2 Mar 25 Port Crane (AMD); 2 Mar 25 Oneonta (MD, IW, KW). Redhead: 2 Mar 19 Nichols (MS, EW). Ring-necked Duck: Mar 26 Lounsberry (GC). Canvasback; Feb 27 Lounsberry (DML, et. al.); 5 later reports, more than in recent years. Scaup (Sp?): 1 Mar 18 Walton (WH), the first of 4 Mar reports. Bufflehead: 1 Mar 21 Chenango Bridge (AMD), the only report. Hooded Merganser: 2 Jan 15 Bing (HM, EW); migrants Mar 22. Red-breasted Merganser: Jan 8 Owego (DML); migrants Mar 19 Lounsberry (MS, EW); 3 later reports.

HAWKS—OWLS: Goshawk: 1 OCC: 1 Dec 19 Choconut Center (MS); 1 Chenango Forks Jan 1 (Paul Kalka); 1 at Candor Dec 19 and regularly thru Feb (DW). Sharp-shinned Hawk: 4 Dec, 1 Feb and 1 Mar reports. Cooper's Hawk: 2 OCC; reported from Newark Valley (LH, DML), Candor (BRP) and Choconut Center (Robert Sheffield). Red-tailed Hawk: 3 OCC; 4 BCC. Red-shouldered Hawk: 1 Mar 10 Oxford (Anne Stratton), hanging around feeder; 2 Mar 19 Oneonta (MD, KW). Rough-legged Hawk: 1 OCC; 1 Mar 6 Cannonsville (WH); the only reports. Bald Eagle: 1 Feb 6 and for about 6 weeks Oneonta area MD, KW, et al.); 1 Feb 27 Walton and 1 Mar 19 Cannonsville (WH); an immature Feb 27 Lounsberry (DML) and again Feb 28 (LH, Evelyn Williams). Marsh Hawk: Feb 5 Vestal (Elva Hawken); Mar 26 at Apalachin (GC) and Choconut Center (MS). Sparrow Hawk: 6 OCC; 12 BCC. Bob-white: 2 OCC at Candor where seen regularly during Dec (DW). Turkey: Dec 1 Delhi area (LC); 5 Dec 5 Bear Spring Park (WH); Jan 17 thru 21 "tracks every day," 1 bird seen Dec 18 (DML); in Feb 2 flocks in Candor area (DW). Killdeer: 1 BCC; Jan 9 Flemingville in Tioga County (LH);

migrants Feb 25. American Woodcock: Mar 21 Choconut Center (MS). Mourning Dove: 2 OCC; 54 BCC; 36 Jan 3 Sherburne (RSW); 50 Jan 29 Owego (DML); numerous other reports. Monk Parakeet: 2 Feb 11 Conklin, near Bing (EW, HM), had already been present a couple of weeks, field note submitted. Screech Owl: 7 individual reports and regularly heard at Owego during Feb. Great Horned Owl: 3 OCC; 11 BCC; numerous other reports. Barred Owl: Dec 11 Vestal (John and Ruth Fuller); 2 BCC.

GOATSUCKERS—STARLING: Belted Kingfisher: 1 OCC; 8 BCC; reported all winter. Yellow-shafted Flicker: Feb 27 Lounsbury (DML); 3 Mar records from other areas. Pileated Woodpecker: 1 BCC. Red-headed Woodpecker: Jan 23 and 30, Feb 27 in same area of Owego (DML, LH). Eastern Phoebe: Mar 21 Chenango Forks (AMD). Horned Lark: none before Jan 23 Owego (DML, LH), numerous thereafter; visiting feeders Feb 20 and 22, after the big snow, Candor (BRP). Tufted Titmouse: 3 OCC; 21 BCC; regular at quite a few feeders in Bing area all winter. Red-breasted Nuthatch: 1 OCC; 28 BCC; numerous other reports. Caroline Wren: recorded at Owego (Mildred White) and two places in Oneonta (IW, E. Manning). Mockingbird: 1 OCC; 5 BCC; also reported from Delhi (Mrs. Fred Rose, LC), Walton (WH) and Norwich (RSW). Brown Thrasher: 1 Jan 27 south of Tully (Beverley Schneider). Robin: 1 BCC; migrants Feb 26 Candor (BRP). Varied Thrush: 1 in Oneonta area Dec 18 (Mrs. Clifford Harrer, IW, KW, et. al.), and still there Mar 31 — on a regular 3 meal a day schedule at a ground feeder, roosting in a tall spruce tree at night. Hermit Thrush: 1 Dec 3, Feb 6 and intermittently to Mar 16 Oneonta (E. and A. Vermilya), feeds on ground and always returns to 5 foot yew tree. Eastern Bluebird: Mar 1 Walton (WH); regular at Candor after Mar 21 (BRP). Ruby-crowned Kinglet: 2 BCC. Cedar Waxwing: 49 OCC; 20 BCC; numerous reports of quite large flocks. Northern Shrike: 1 Dec 8 Norwich (RSW); 5 other reports. Starling: 1204 OCC; 2867 BCC.

VIREOS—SPARROWS: Meadowlark: 27 Jan 3 and 12 Feb 9 Sherburne (RSW); several other smaller wintering flocks reported; migrants Mar 1. Redwinged Blackbird: few wintering birds; migrants Mar 1. Baltimore Oriole: 1 Dec 7 and thru Jan Oneonta (Applebaugh, Martin, Putnam, Decker, et. al.). Brewer's Blackbird: 1 Mar 4, 6 and 7 Vestal (Marian Vanderlip), good description. Common Grackle: 1 BCC; a few others wintering at Cannonsville (WH), Delhi (LC) and Owego; migrants Mar 1. Brown-headed Cowbird: OCC 3; BCC 3; almost no other winter records; migrants Feb 26, in numbers Mar 1. Cardinal: 53 OCC; 125 BCC. Evening Grosbeak: 149 OCC; 580 BCC; increasing during Dec and in great numbers the rest of the period. Purple Finch: 14 OCC; 6 BCC; regular reports but numbers stayed small. House Finch: 4 BCC; left for winter, but 2 Mar 27 and 7 Mar 31 at Endwell (Florence Linaberry); 1 Mar 29 and 30 Oneonta (MD). Pine Grosbeak: 1 BCC; quite numerous reports but almost all the sizeable flocks were seen in Delaware or Otsego Counties, 1 to 6 at a time being the rule in the western part of the Region. Common Redpoll: 229 BCC; first reported Dec 26 Delhi (LC), large flocks from about Jan 15 and very common thru Feb and Mar. Pine Siskin: 17 OCC; 77 BCC; numbers never as large, but never-the-less substantial, and their increase paralleled those of the redpolls. American Goldfinch: 82 OCC; 466 BCC; common all winter, although numbers varied drastically from feeder to feeder. Red Crossbill: 5 or more Feb 23 Oneonta (P. McCoy); 1 seen Mar 16 and banded Mar 23 (GC); the only reports. White-winged Crossbill: Jan 15 Delhi (LC), the first of the period; reported fairly often but never more than 6 at a time — several reports at feeders and at Vestal 3 were lured into banding traps with pine cones (GC). Rufous-sided Towhee: wintering birds at Delhi (LC), Walton (WH) and Bing (Lloyd Chilson); Mar 8 Apalachin (HM, et. al.). Slate-colored Junco: 77 OCC; 206 BCC. Tree Sparrow: 180 OCC; 418 BCC. Chipping Sparrow: 1 Mar 25 Candor (BRP). Field Sparrow: 2

OCC; 1 Jan 8 Oneonta (IW); 3 Chenango Forks Feb 12 thru Mar 23 (AMD). White-crowned Sparrow: 1 OCC. White-throated Sparrow: 3 OCC; 3 BCC; single birds at several feeders all winter. Fox Sparrow: 1 OCC; 1 Jan 1 Newark Valley (Warren and Louise Dean); migrants Mar 3. Song Sparrow: 8 OCC; 29 BCC. Snow Bunting: 180 BCC; fairly frequent reports, the last Mar 15 Walton (WH).

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REGION 5 — ONEIDA LAKE BASIN

M. S. RUSK AND C. G. SPIES

There were few cold snaps during the warm open December, January, and early February, and 1972's moderate blizzard didn't fall until February 19-20, so there was little snow accumulation before late February. Because the early weeks of 1972 were so unwintery, the bird-listers for the first time saw the regional year list reach 100 before the end of January,—by January 15. The half-hardies which helped to produce this list can be divided into three groups: great rarities—Phoebe and especially Bobolink; the more normal half-hardies like White-crowned and White-throated Sparrow that occurred in higher numbers than usual; and some half-hardies that occurred in relatively low numbers, perhaps because they were widely dispersed in the great amount of available habitat—e.g. Killdeer, Mourning Dove, Belted Kingfisher, Golden-crowned Kinglet, Rusty Blackbird, Field Sparrow. (Is dispersal the reason why the sometime Onondaga Lake icterid roost held a grand total of 1 Redwinged Blackbird and 8 Brown-headed Cowbirds this winter?) The usual February attrition of half-hardies occurred later and to a lesser degree than most years; Winter Wren and Myrtle Warbler demonstrate this neatly.

In contrast with the abundance of half-hardy passerines, there were no wintering Blue-winged Teal, American Widgeon, nor Shoveler, and low numbers of Pintail and (1) Green-winged Teal (though Hooded Merganser and American Coot were high). One former source of wintering dabblers is no more—the factory is no longer discharging hot water into the pond at Sherrill. Thus, only 22 species were noted on the Waterfowl Census. More important, the total number of individuals on the census, which has been dropping steadily since the 1961 high, was 5035, the lowest ever. This is accounted for in part by the decline of Black Duck (Mallard: Black ratio now 11:1) and partly by still-low Aythya numbers.

Another general negative is the raptor situation. 75-mile hawk surveys turned up high numbers of Red-tailed Hawk, and there were more reports than usual of the "half-hardy" Marsh Hawk; nevertheless, Rough-legged Hawk numbers were unaccountably low and there was no Accipiter incursion. Except for Snowy Owl, there was no detectable owl immigration, and Northern Shrike numbers were only mediocre.

The year list was also augmented by 6 western rarities: an exciting first regional Varied Thrush, the first two Black-headed Grosbeaks, the second-ever Harris' Sparrow, and semper desiderate Bohemian Waxwing, Dickcissel, and Oregon Junco. Besides the above-mentioned rarities (not forgetting Bobolink), Barrow's Goldeneye, Harlequin Duck, and Hoary Redpoll were recorded in the period.

Abbreviations: Adir—Adirondack; CC—National Audubon Society Christmas Count (HIGMA figures are for ¼ of the Montezuma count circle); FH—Fair Haven Beach State Park, Little Sodus Bay, and vicinity; HIGMA—Howland Island State Game Management Area near Port Byron; HS—hawk survey, made over a pre-planned route of approximately 75 miles through primarily open country off major highways; NPT—northwest quarter of Pompey Twp; Ont—Ontario; PSS—Peter

Scott Swamp, Sixmile Creek, and vicinity near Phoenix; SOO—Seneca R, Oneida R, Oswego R, Oswego harbor areas; SP—North Pond, South Pond, and the sand dunes on L Ont near Sandy Pond; Syr—Syracuse; WFC—Waterfowl Census Jan 15–23.

Observers: B. Barnum, V. Billings, A. Carter, M. & G. Church, D. Crumb, P. DeBenedictis, F. Dittrich, C. & E. Farnham, E. Freeborn, K. Hanson, F. LaFrance, G. Maxwell, B. & S. Peebles, T. Riley, M. Rusk, F. Scheider, M. & B. Schneider, G. Smith, C. Spies, R. Sutliff, E. & J. VanDresar, C. & R. Wernick.

The editors' thanks to Paul DeBenedictis, Fred LaFrance, Fritz Scheider, Gerry Smith, and Dick Sutliff for their help with the compilation of this report.

Corrigenda: *Kingbird* XXII: 1, January 1972; Region 5 report — p. 41, Black-bellied Plover: arr Aug 3, 1 Oneida L; . . . dep Nov 14, 1 Oneida L; p. 42, Stilt Sandpiper: . . . and no Oct imm; Great Black-backed Gull: arr Sep 18, 1 Oneida L; Belted Kingfisher: max 11 Sep 5 along 8 mi of L Ont shore — good; p. 44, Bay-breasted Warbler: . . . dep Oct 5, 1 SSSP.

LOONS—DUCKS: Common Loon: dep Jan 1, 2 Oswego. Red-necked Grebe: dep Dec 2, 2 L Ont — early and only report. Horned Grebe: max 3 WFC — again very low. Pied-billed Grebe: max 6 WFC. Great Blue Heron: dep Dec 4, 1 SP; 6–10 wintering birds with at least 2 persisting into Mar. Canada Goose: max 1005 Jan 1 HIGMA CC — late for so many; at Dart L near Big Moose dep was around Dec 21, but 3 wintered there; 6 through winter in Syr and 1 Feb 1–27 SOO.

Mallard: max 1520 WFC and 50 Dart L; record high numbers concentrated almost entirely at just 3 sites — Rand Tract pond in Syr (500), Seneca R at Baldwinsville (575), and Oneida R at Brewerton (430) — all supported by artificial food sources. Black Duck: max 113 WFC — record low. Gadwall: dep Dec 16, 2 Syr area; max 31 WFC — record high. Pintail: dep Dec 31, 1 Dart L; max 5 WFC with none SOO because of unusually high water. Green-winged Teal: dep Dec 9, 2 Oswego; 1 male Jan 31–Mar 20 on a small pond adjacent to a high school in Syr was always with a Mallard pair. Blue-winged Teal: dep Dec 29, 1 near Rome (VanDresar) very late. American Widgeon: dep Dec 21, 4 Oneida L. Wood Duck: dep Dec 23, 1 L Ont; 3 on WFC.

Redhead: dep Dec 21, 2 Oneida L; max 83 WFC — best count since 1966 but by no means really good. Ring-necked Duck: dep Dec 11, 3 FH; 2 on WFC. Canvasback: dep and fall max Dec 21, 400 Oneida L — low; max 31 WFC — low. Greater Scaup: max 1586 WFC — lowest ever noted, and 2625 Jan 30, SOO, FH — still poor. Lesser Scaup: 60 Dec 1 Eaton area is particularly noteworthy since winter max in SOO was only 6. Common Goldeneye: fall max 460 Dec 2 L Ont; winter max 1033 WFC is comparable with past 4 years, which have been somewhat low. *BARROW'S GOLDENEYE*: 1 male Jan 22–23 L Ont at Oswego and 1 male Mar 30 L Ont at DH (both Schneider et al). Buffhead: max 106 WFC. Oldsquaw: max 253 WFC. *HARLEQUIN DUCK*: 1 female Mar 5 FH (Dittrich), 9th regional record. White-winged Scoter: max 42 WFC and 73 Feb 12 L Ont are very good. Surf Scoter: 1 Dec 18 Syr CC — only report. Common Scoter: 1–6 through Feb 17 L Ont areas — better than average. Ruddy Duck: dep Dec 11, 1 FH; max 2 WFC. Hooded Merganser: max 22 Dec 21 Oneida L and 11 WFC with some persisting through winter. Common Merganser: winter max 86 WFC — very low; 200 Feb 17 L Ont and 1090 Mar 5 Oswego were probably migrants. Red-breasted Merganser: max 60 WFC is low but better than average of past 11 years.

HAWKS—OWLS: Goshawk: 7 sites in Adir and low-country areas — low. Sharp-shinned Hawk: 11 sites, 1 in Eaton area and the rest low-country including 6 sites in S Syr. Cooper's Hawk: 8 sites, 1 in Eaton area and the rest low-country — poor. Red-tailed Hawk: max 34 Oneida CC — good, and 32 Syr CC — average; 19 Feb 8 Oneida L HS, 9 Feb 6 and 8 Feb 12 SE Onon HS, and 12 Jan 15 between Oswego

and FH are good counts. Red-shouldered Hawk: 1 ad Jan 31 near Pompey Center (LaFrance) only report. Rough-legged Hawk: max 8 Jan 29 near Bridgeport (Farnham) is the only decent count; 3 Feb 8 Oneida L HS, and 3 Feb 8 and 4 Feb 12 SE Onon HS are poor by comparison, especially in view of Red-tailed Hawk numbers. Bald Eagle: 1 Jan 3-17 Dart L and 1 imm Feb 17 L Ont — only winter reports. Marsh Hawk: 4 in Dec and 4 in Jan from low-country and S highlands locations — more than in recent winters. Sparrow Hawk: one Feb 8 Oneida L HS and only 4 Feb 6 and 3 Feb 12 SE Onon HS — very low; but 17 Oneida CC.

Ruffed Grouse: widely reported with 1-6 per day; most common in Holland Patent and Eaton areas. Ring-necked Pheasant: scarce — max 31 Syr CC and other max 10s in Syr and Eaton areas. Virginia Rail: 1st noted Jan 1 PSS with 1 still alive and 5 found huddled together deal Jan 8. Sora: 1 alive and 1 dead Jan 8 PSS (W. Merritt) 1st winter record. American Coot: still 200 Dec 11 FH; winter max 24 WFC — highest ever — with half of these at areas with artificial food sources, especially Brewerton where they walked in the street eating bread with Mallard.

Killdeer: max 4 Jan 8 through winter DeWitt area — about average in comparison with recent years, but low considering the amount of available habitat. Common Snipe: 1-3 Jan 26-Feb 12 DeWitt area — very good. Dunlin: dep Dec 23, 1 FH (Spies) record late, previous record Dec 8, 1968. Red Phalarope: 1 Dec 9-12 Oswego, 1 Dec 19 Niagara Mohawk Visitors' Center on L Ont, 1 Dec 23 Ninemile Point E of Oswego — reflection of the excellent fall flight, since Dec reports are unusual.

Glaucous Gull: mostly reported from SOO with max 13 Feb 17 — good, and 1 was on the small Rand Tract pond in Syr Jan 19. Iceland Gull: mostly reported from SOO with max 10 Jan 30; also reported Jan 11, 1 Rand Tract. Great Black-backed Gull: max 334 Jan 16 SOO — more than last year but still not up to some counts from the early sixties. Herring Gull: max 3500 Jan 30 SOO — poor, only about $\frac{1}{3}$ to $\frac{1}{2}$ what it should be. Ring billed Gull: from about 5430 Dec 5 there was a steady and almost total emigration at Oswego with only 1 noted Feb 13, but with returning migrants up to 3000 there Mar 4. Bonaparte's Gull: dep Dec 16, 30 Oneida L — late for so many; 1 ad Jan 16 in the harbor at Oswego (Spies) is the 1st report later than Dec 21 (1969) or earlier than Mar 17. Rock Dove: max 244 Jan 29 Oriskany to Syr; some mortality due to severe cold noted among birds roosting in exposed buildings in Oswego, including on Mar 5 nestlings less than a week old. Mourning Dove: max 269 Oneida CC, with single party counts up to 75 per day in the same general area — good but not as large as some years.

Screech Owl: reported at 6 sites; — only half as many as last year. Great Horned Owl: reported at 22 sites — about as many as last year. Snowy Owl: at least 26 different birds reported, indicative of a large immigration, but there were very few Mar reports. Barred Owl: reported at only 3 sites — far fewer than last year. Long-eared Owl: 1 Feb 7 Ilion area and 1 Feb 28 NPT were only reports of this species, which has been very scarce for the past 6 years. Short-eared Owl: 1 Dec 31 Cottons near Clockville and 1 Jan 2 Cicero Swamp — only reports. Saw-whet Owl: 1 Mar 27 Kenwood near Sherrill is only report.

GOATSUCKERS—STARLING: Belted Kingfisher: max 10 Syr CC — highest ever; widespread but not numerous. Yellow-shafted Flicker: max 44 Syr CC — highest ever. Pileated Woodpecker: 1-4 per day with singles only in E areas except 5 Oneida CC. Red-bellied Woodpecker: max 13 HIGMA CC; reported at 9 other sites, all western except 1 Oneida CC. Red-headed Woodpecker: 1 imm Dec 5 FH may have been a very late migrant; 1 ad Dec 5-Mar 16 Nedrow area was the only wintering bird. Yellow-bellied Sapsucker: as last year there were more than the usual with 1 Syr CC, 1 Oneida CC, 1 Jan 30 Pratts Falls near Pompey Center, 1 imm mid-late Feb Manlius (fide FGS), and 1 Mar 10-15 Syr, the last possibly a

very early migrant. Hairy Woodpecker: max 56 Oneida CC; field counts up to 8 per day. Downy Woodpecker: max 131 Oneida CC; field counts up to 15 per day.

Easter Phoebe: 1 Jan 26 DeWitt (Spies, Rusk) and 1 Feb 21 Ilion (Hanson) are the 1st winter records. Horned Lark: max 11 Jan 21 New Hartford area. Blue Jay: max 210 Old Forge CC. Common Crow: a count of the Onon Hill roost found 1720 there Feb 23 (Smith); 8 on Old Forge CC and 4 Dec 21 through winter at Dart L were good, "... the first time anyone, in this vicinity, remembers crows staying all winter..." (Barnum). Black-capped Chickadee: max 649 Old Forge CC—very good; an average of 5.8 per feeder during the 1st week in Dec throughout the central New York area, "... the highest count in 11 years..." (B. P. Burt). Boreal Chickadee: 2 Dec 16-Jan 29, and possibly 1 of these Feb 6-26, at 2 sites near Bridgeport; only other report 2 Old Forge CC. Tufted Titmouse: 2 Oneida CC, 1 around Jan 6-Mar 16 Brewerton area, and 1 Feb 23 Camillus area—only reports.

White-breasted Nuthatch: max 134 Old Forge CC and field counts up to 15 per day—very good. Red-breasted Nuthatch: max 66 Old Forge CC and field counts up to 6 per day in some, but not all, favored non-Adir areas—very good. Brown Creeper: max 17 HIGMA CC—very low compared with past 5 years. Winter Wren: max 6 Syr CC; only 5 post-CC reports in 5 low-country sites Jan 22-Feb 7. Carolina Wren: 1 Sep 6-Jan 31 Kenwood; 1 Dec 24-Jan 21 Taunton area near Westvale; 2 1st week of Jan-Jan 25, and possibly 1 of the same birds Feb 12, at 2 sites in the DeWitt area—still more reports than usual. Mockingbird: 3 reported in DeWitt area; singles in Vernon, Oswego, Fulton, Fayetteville, Syr, and 2 sites near Jamesville. Catbird: 1 Jan 7-8 NPT—1st winter report since Dec 20, 1969. Brown Thrasher: 1 Jan 7 NPT and 1 up to last week of Jan Oneida (fide Scheider).

Robin: max 85 Jan 30 Smoky Hollow near Jamesville and 65 Jan 18 Makyes Rd in Onon Twp—record winter numbers; 38 Syr CC was highest ever for that CC. *VARIED THRUSH*: 1 male Feb 1 through period near Bridgeport (R. Hinkson) is the 1st regional record. Hermit Thrush: 12 individuals at 9 sites—never more than 3 per winter previously; last report was 1 Feb 27 near New Hartford. Eastern Bluebird: dep Dec 21, 3 males near S Onon (Smith) record late. Golden-crowned Kinglet: 2-4 on all CCs; max 8 Dec 13 NPT were probably late migrants since counts in Jan and Feb were only 1-3 per day. Ruby-crowned Kinglet: 1 Nov 26-Dec 5 Eaton, 1 Dec 12 Syr and possibly the same bird Jan 23 Nedrow, and 2 Feb 10 Oneida L vicinity—record number of reports. *BOHEMIAN WAXWING*: 1 Jan 7 NPT (Crumb) and 1 Feb 2 near Nedrow (Farnham)—better than average but not what might have been expected considering the records this past fall. Cedar Waxwing: max 352 Syr CC—highest ever; up to 150 per day in various places through Jan. Northern Shrike: 1-3 on all but Old Forge CC; max 3s through period with at least 9 different birds in Dec, 11 in Jan, 16 in Feb, and 7 in Mar—low. Starling: max 17,200 Syr CC, including 15,533 roosting on buildings downtown.

VIREOS—SPARROWS: Myrtle Warbler: 3 Jan 29 Nedrow area, down to 2 Feb 5-10, 1 Feb 21, and 0 Mar 25. House Sparrow: max 1685 Oneida CC. *BOBOLINK*: 1 early Dec-late Feb at feeder Galeville N of Syr, found dead Mar 23 or 24, said to have been a daily visitor and always with House Sparrow. Eastern Meadowlark: max 59 Oneida CC—high; some birds still persisted through Feb. Redwinged Blackbird: max 40 Syr CC—highest ever; single party counts of 1-12 per day through winter. Baltimore Oriole: 1 female Jan 9-14 NPT (A. Decker) is only confirmed report. Rusty Blackbird: wintering birds reported at 2 sites in DeWitt area with 5 Dec 16 falling to 2 Feb 12. Common Grackle: only CC reports were 4 Syr and 4 Oneida; 5 through winter at feeder in Morrisville; 8 Feb 1 Ionia near Memphis. Brown-headed Cowbird: on all CCs with max 14 Oneida; a wintering group in NPT went from 350 Dec 16 to 25 by Jan 13, this attrition hard to account for since birds had access to several feeders.

Cardinal: on all CCs with max 130 max 130 Syr — highest ever; a single party count of 42 Jan 23 from 5 places in Syr area shows how common this species has become. *BLACK-HEADED GROSBEAK*: 1 mid-Oct through winter period near Camillus (R. Largent) and 1 Dec 31 through period Oriskany (M. Stooks) are the 1st regional records; photos have been taken of both, but their age and sex are uncertain. *DICKISSEL*: 1–2 Dec 29-Apr 1 at various feeders on SW side of Syr (Farnham et al). Evening Grosbeak: max 392 Old Forge CC; counts of 100 per day through winter in all areas except Adir and L Ont shore which had fewer; feeders in central New York area averaged 20 or more per feeder in the 1st weeks of Jan and Feb (B. Burtt) a record for the 13 years of the feeder survey. Purple Finch: only CC reports were 2 Oswego and 1 HIGMA; max 25 Mar 4 Eaton; much scarcer elsewhere, though widespread. House Finch: 8 Jan 12 at feeder in Syr (D. Samson) and reported at 2 other nearby sites, but no evidence of expansion. Pine Grosbeak: only CC reports were 26 Old Forge and 5 HIGMA; max 60 Jan 18 Holland Patent, 50 Dec 7-Jan 24 Dart L; widespread except along L Ont shore. Common Redpoll: max 397 Oneida CC; max single-party count 300 Jan 3 NPT; best tally in the 13 years of feeder surveys was an average of more than 13 per feeder the 1st week of Mar (B. Burtt). *HOARY REDPOLL*: 2 Jan 14 NPT (Crumb), 1 Feb 6 Nedrow (Scheider) only reports and 1st since Mar 1966. Pine Siskin: max 110 Dec 1–7 Dart L, 95 Jan 28 DeWitt area, 50 Jan 10–Mar 31 Ilion, not at all record-breaking though widespread; feeders however averaged over 3 birds each the 1st week in Feb (B. Burtt) the best ever. American Goldfinch: max 133 Oneida CC; feeders went from average of more than 6 in Jan to more than 10 in Feb (B. Burtt). Red Crossbill: only CC report and season max 65 Old Forge; otherwise max 2s all winter, and not widespread. White-winged Crossbill: CC reports were 18 Old Forge, 12 Oneida, 5 Oswego; max 36 Jan 11 NPT and 12 Jan 1 Eaton area; more widespread than Red Crossbill.

Rufous-sided Towhee: at least 7 reports, in all months. Slate-colored Junco: CCs were 68 Oneida, 58 Syr, 47 Oswego, 8 HIGMA, 4 Old Forge — 1st ever on Old Forge; single-party counts up to 19 in Dec and 17 in Jan, greater numbers than usual, indicate mild weather, but counts of 11–13 in Feb in Syr indicate some hardiness. *OREGON JUNCO*: reported at 4 sites — Franklin Park near E Syr, Minetto, Highland Park near Fabius, and Syr — more than usual. Tree Sparrow: CCs were 700 Syr — highest ever, 519 Oneida, 328 Oswego, 117 HIGMA, 10 Old Forge; single-party counts of 130 in Jan and Feb from N Onon Co areas. Field Sparrow: dep Dec 8, 2 Holland Patent; CCs were 11 Syr, 2 HIGMA, 1 Oneida; also 2 Dec 15 through Jan New Hartford and 1 Jan 8 DeWitt — average number of reports. *HARRIS' SPARROW*: 1 male 1st week of Dec through period at feeder in Syr (Mrs. C. Fox) is the 2nd regional record. White-crowned Sparrow: 1 ad Warners, 2 imm Skaneateles, and single imms Fayetteville area, Pompey Center area, and Baldwinsville. White-throated Sparrow: max 79 Syr CC and 26 HIGMA CC; a single-party count of 38 Jan 23 Syr area is very good. Swamp Sparrow: only CCs were 10 Syr and 4 HIGMA; only others were 4 Dec 19 Eaton area; 2 from DeWitt area on Syr CC lasted at least until Jan 23, — unlike some other half-hardies, this species didn't persist very long at all. Song Sparrow: max 118 Syr CC — highest ever; best single-party count was 24 Jan 23 DeWitt area; became scarce in Feb. Lapland Longspur: 1 Dec 27 NPT and 4 singles from L Ont areas Dec 12-Feb 17 — more than usual. Snow Bunting: CC max 174 Oneida; low through winter but returning migrant counts of 100 Feb 6 Cedarville, 400 Feb 5 near Marcellus, 1500 Feb 2 Watervale area near Oran are good.

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REGION 6 — ST. LAWRENCE

FRANK A. CLINCH

December was mild and ducks and geese stayed later than usual. The Watertown Christmas count was taken December 18 during the closed season for waterfowl and this with the open water produced a record high count of ducks and geese. The Wellesley Island count under the same conditions failed to produce many ducks, —perhaps there was so much open water that ducks were hard to find. The latter half of the period saw plenty of snow in most places, and at the end of March most of the ground was still covered with snow. However, this made it easier to see birds like Robins and Meadowlarks that seek bare spots.

Individuals of several species of birds that do not usually remain here attempted to winter here and most of them seem to have survived. The migrants were a bit late in arriving here.

The rarity was the Sage Thrasher found by the Allens who made their own Christmas count in Massena December 27. It was last seen January 14.

Abbreviations: WCC—Watertown Christmas bird count, Watertown, December 18; WIC—Wellesley Island Christmas count, Wellesley Island in the St. Lawrence River, December 21; PRWMA—Perch River Wildlife Management Area.

Observers: DA—Judy and Douglass Allen; JB—John Belknap; RB—Richard Brouse; LC—Lee Chamberlaine; FC—Frank Clinch; NL—Nick Leone; TM—Theodore Mack and Stephen Everett; RW—Robert and June Walker.

LOONS—DUCKS: Horned Grebe: 2 Dec 10 Lake Ontario (JB). Great Blue Heron: Mar 28 Black Lake. Canada Goose: 764 WCC, 375 of them at PRWMA; geese are seldom seen on this count and the average of previous counts is less than one per count; geese began returning about Mar 19. Most of PRWMA was covered with ice and snow at the end of the month. Several hundred Canada Geese and ducks (Greater Scaup and Common Goldeneye) at Lakeview Mar 29. Several thousand ducks (Canvasback, Redhead, Greater Scaup, Black Duck and Mallard) in St. Lawrence River off Cape Vincent Dec 15–23 (LC). Mallard: 115 WCC; seen all winter where there was open water. Black Duck: 99 WCC; 14 WIC; seen all winter. American Widgeon: WCC 1 at PRWMA did not fly. Wood Duck: male at PRWMA was first Wood Duck on the Watertown Christmas count. Redhead: 4 WCC. Greater Scaup: 5,000 Dec 10 Black River Bay; 5,600 WCC; 300–350 Jan 5 Blind Bay. Lesser Scaup: 2 Jan 22 Fischer's Landing (NL). Common Goldeneye: 16 WCC; 9 WIC; 40 Jan 14 Massena; 43 Jan 22 Dexter to Tibbets Pt, and others throughout period. Oldsquaw: 23 WCC and throughout period. Ruddy Duck: 2 WCC. Hooded Merganser: 1 Massena (TM); also late Mar PRWMA. Common Merganser: estimates 500 Dec 27 at Massena, "way over 1,500" Jan 14 and 1,000 plus Feb 2.

HAWKS—OWLS: Goshawk Dec 25 and Jan 14 Massena; adult Jan 23 Watertown; immature Feb 20 and Mar 1 Watertown; 1 returned to Wellesley Island in mid-Mar where they have nested. Cooper's Hawk: Mar 25 and 31. Red-tailed Hawk: WCC 13; WIC none; 2 Jan 14 Massena and 1 Feb 2. Red-shouldered Hawk: Mar 25. Rough-legged Hawk: WCC 4; WIC 1; 6 Dec 25 at Massena, 4 Jan 14 and 1 there Feb 2; up to a dozen between Rts 81 and 37 (LC). Bald Eagle: Oak Point, 1 Feb 11 flying over St. Lawrence River. Gray Partridge: Dec 27 4 Massena; WCC none; 6 near Belleville and 6 near Henderson were in southern part of the range of this bird, and 5 Mar 9 at Edwardsville, St. Lawrence Co. near northern limit; these birds were generally scarce this winter. Woodcock: earliest Mar 25 Watertown. Common Snipe: Mar 19 in small stream near Henderson.

Glaucous Gull: 1 WCC; 1 or 2 Dec 24, Jan 2 and 14 Massena. Iceland Gull:

1 Dec 27 Massena (DA); 2 Jan 14 (TM). Great Black-backed Gull: WIC 6; 12 Dec 27 Massena and 20 there Feb 2. Herring Gull: Watertown and Massena in Dec. Ring-billed Gull: 37 Dec 27 Massena (DA). Mourning Dove: 2 Dec 5 near Watertown; 3 all winter at feeder in Watertown; 1 near Adams early Mar. Screech Owl: Mar 15 Mill Creek. Great Horned Owl: Watertown and Massena. Snowy Owl: scarce in many parts of region; 4 WCC; 2 Dec 27 Massena; 2 often seen on Route 177, Lewis Co; 1 Dec 10 Clayton; 1 Mar 9 Dexter; most common near Lake Ontario where 3 or 4 could be seen in one day at Pillar Pt or Point Peninsula; max 7 Dec 26 at Pillar Pt (RB). Barred Owl: Morristown. Saw-whet Owl: Feb 25 Watertown (Houghton).

GOATSUCKERS—STARLINGS: Belted Kingfisher: 1 WIC; 1 Jan 1 Pillar Pt (RB). Yellow-shafted Flicker: 1 seen frequently all winter in Watertown. Black-backed Three-toed Woodpecker: at Joseph A. Blake, Jr. Wildlife Sanctuary near Watertown, 2 Jan 14, 1 Mar 11 and 19, on tamarack trees (FC). Common Raven: Mar 2 William Stumpf farm, Town of Cape Vincent, Jefferson Co. (W. Mosentean). Crow: WCC 77, a high count; 3 frequently in Watertown all winter; 2 Jan 13 Hammond. Boreal Chickadee: 1 Mar 26 Wanakena (DA). Mockingbird: 1 near Watertown seen about once a week all winter (P. Biggers). *SAGE THRASHER* Dec 27 Massena (DA); last seen Jan 14. Robin: an unusually large numbers of reports of Robins all winter, especially around Watertown. Golden-crowned Kinglet: Dec 29 Massena. Bohemian Waxwing: 1 Watertown Jan 20-22 (RW). Cedar Waxwing: 60 Mar 1 Watertown; flocks 5 to 30 late Jan to late Mar. Northern Shrike: 1 WCC; about normal Dec-Jan, rather scarce later.

BEACBIRDS—SPARROWS: Meadowlark: more common than most winters, 1 Dec 18 Black River; 1 Jan 21 Wellesley Island; 3 Theresa Feb 25; 3 to 15 seen in Jan and Feb near Brownville; several small flocks, total about 40 birds Mar 25. Redwinged Blackbird: WCC 3; first Mar 1. Common Grackle: began returning about Mar 21. Brown-headed Cowbird: 3 WCC; 3 WIC; 5 Mar 24. Evening Grosbeak: common all winter, greatest numbers at feeders between Jan 15 and about Mar 15; 800 banded in one location Jan 14 to Mar 31, but many more were never banded (FC). Purple Finch: very few seen. Pine Grosbeak: first Dec 27 Gouverneur and Dec 29 Massena, last Mar 28; from 5 to 19 daily in Feb Town of Montague, Lewis Co; several others reported in small numbers in Jan and Feb. Common Redpoll: 19 WCC; 260 WIC; very large numbers at feeders, especially after mid-Feb. Pine Siskin: small to good numbers at some feeders the latter part of period. American Goldfinch: at several feeders. White-winged Crossbill: Dec 29 Massena (DA). Slate-colored Junco: WCC 6, also 2 or 3 at feeders during winter. White-throated Sparrow: WCC 3; also 20 at feeder Jan 3 near Watertown which is unusual at this time of year; 2 at another feeder all winter. Song Sparrow: WCC 5; 2 or 3 all winter; increase in numbers starting about Mar 23. Snow Bunting: about average numbers.

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REGION 7 — ADIRONDACK-CHAMPLAIN

THEODORE D. MACK

This was a mild winter for snow depth and cold. December usually has several severely cold days, but a record high average of 21.4 degrees was recorded in Ray Brook. January had the highest average high recording in 14 years, 19.1. The coldest day was 33.5 below on February 23 which is unusually late for severe cold according to Bob Kampf, the weather observer. Winds over 20 MPH were recorded on at least 7 days, once reaching 65 MPH in gusts.

This was a good northern finch and Snowy Owl year. It was also a good year for the usual feeder birds, quite a change from the previous winter. Most water stayed frozen as usual so waterfowl were scarce.

Observers: GTC—Greenleaf T. Chase; SE—Stephen Everett; RM—Robert McKinney; RAM—Ruth A. Meier; TM—Ted Mack; WR—William Rutherford.

Abbreviations: L—lake; LP—Lake Placid; P—pond; Pltsg—Plattsburg; PS—Paul Smiths; Pt—point; SL—Saranac Lake; TL—Tupper Lake.

LOONS—DUCKS: Black Duck: 1 Jan 15 Pltsg (SE, TM). American Goldeneye: 10 Jan 15 Pltsg (SE, TM).

HAWKS—OWLS: Goshawk: 1 Jan 9 Black P, PS (WR). Rough-legged Hawk: 2 Jan 15 Mooers (SE, TM); 1 Feb 18 Witherbee (SE). Sparrow Hawk: 1 Jan 15 Rouses Pt (SE, TM). *BALD EAGLE*: 1 Feb 26 Mineville, soaring fairly high (C. A. Petty). Ruffed Grouse: 1 Dec 11 PS (TM); 4 Jan 26 Franklin Falls (TM). Great Black-backed Gull: 1 Jan 15 Chazy Landing (SE, TM). Herring Gull: 1 Jan 15 Pltsg (SE, TM); 2 Mar 1 PS (SE). Ring-billed Gull: 1 Mar PS (SE). Snowy Owl: 1 Dec 10 TL (GTC); 2 Feb 7 Big Chazy River (GTC); 1 Mar 1 Crown Pt (GTC). Great Horned Owl: 1 Jan L Clear (TM). Barred Owl: 1 Jan 8 L Clear (TM); 1 Mar 27 Indian L (RM). Saw-whet Owl: 1 Mar 18 PS (WR).

GOATSUCKERS—STARLING: Hairy Woodpecker: 1 Jan 3 LP (SE). Horned Lark: 25 Jan 15 Pltsg (SE, TM); first migrants—8 Mar 1 PS (SE); 10 Mar 1 Ray Brook (GTC). Blue Jay: max at feeders—16 PS (WR); 16 TL (RAM). Common Raven: 1 seen for 10 days in mid Jan and again on Feb 25 Middle SL to Lower SL; wedge-shaped tail seen as it patrolled roads for dead birds (GTC). Common Crow: first probably not wintering at a dump—4 Mar 1 PS (SE). Black-capped Chickadee: max 50 Feb TL (RAM). White-breasted Nuthatch: 3 Mar 18 Indian L (RM); 1 thru winter TL (RAM). Red-breasted Nuthatch: a few at feeders. Brown Creeper: 1 Jan 22 Marcy Dam (TM). Golden-crowned Kinglet: a few in several areas thru winter. Starling: arrived TL Mar 3 (RAM).

VIREOS—SPARROWS: Redwinged Blackbird: 20 Jan 15 Pt au Rouche (SE, TM); first migrant—1 Mar 20 TL (RAM); 1 Mar 27 Indian L (RM). Brown-headed Cowbird: 150 Jan 15 Pt au Rouche (SE, TM). Evening Grosbeak: people with feeders went broke buying sunflower seed; max 150 TL (RAM). Purple Finch: one report—1 Feb 26 SL (GTC). Pine Grosbeak: widely reported—15 Jan 3 LP (SE); max 33 Jan 15 Redford to Rouses Pt (SE, TM); 15 Mar 27 Indian L (RM). Common Redpoll: fairly common all winter—max 150 TL (RAM). Pine Siskin: a few at feeders—max 20 Jan 15 Chazy Landing (SE, TM). American Goldfinch: stayed at feeders more than usual this winter. Red Crossbill: only report—small flock Mar 31 Childwold (RAM). White-winged Crossbill: only report—large flock Dec 14 Childwold (RAM). Slate-colored Junco: first—1 Mar 25 PS (TM); 1 Mar 25 TL (RAM). Tree Sparrow: a few at feeders all winter. Song Sparrow: 1 Jan 22 PS (TM); 1 Feb 18 PS (SE). Snow Bunting: 100 Jan 3 LP (SE).

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REGION 8 HUDSON-MOHAWK

RICHARD E. PHILION

The weather systems responsible for a mild November prevailed during the months of December and January and provided the region with unusual mid-winter conditions. The mean temperature for December was 30°, a +3.5° departure from normal. A high temperature of 55° was recorded on December 16 while the low for

the month was set on the 31st with a -1° reading. Most lakes and ponds had open water during the Christmas count period which accounted for the number and variety of waterfowl seen at that time.

No sustained cold weather developed during January but a record -14° was set on the 6th. Prevailing winds from the SSW pushed warm air into the region to set a record of 52 on the 13th. The monthly total of 8.5 inches of snowfall was modest by comparison with previous winters. Yet, Evening Grosbeaks, Common Redpolls, Pine Siskins and Goldfinches flooded the region by late January and at the same time many half-hardy species persisted in the area until colder weather arrived in mid-February.

February and March were above average in snowfall and 2.5° colder than normal.

Uncommon species recorded during the period were Whistling Swan, Bald Eagle, Iceland Gull, Monk Parakeet, Black-backed Three-toed Woodpecker, Boreal Chickadee, House Finch, Greater Redpoll, and Oregon Junco.

Abbreviations: ADBC—Alan Devoe Bird Club; CC—Christmas Count; Col. Co.—Columbia County; HMBC—Hudson-Mohawk Bird Club; HR—Hudson River; L7—Lock 7; LH—Lower Hudson; NWW—Niskayna Wide Waters; NYSWC—New York State Waterfowl Count; SCC—Schenectady Christmas Count; SCR—Stony Creek Reservoir; SL—Saratoga Lake; SPA CC—Saratoga Christmas Count; SRCC; Southern Rensselaer Christmas Count; SS—Stockport Station; TCC—Troy Christmas Count; WSL—West Sand Lake.

Observers: DA—D. Allen; PC—P. Connor; JC—J. Cook; GE—G. Erlenback; MG—M. Gruett; MK—M. Kent; MM—M. Mickle; PM—P. Miller; BHS—G. Bartlett, B. Havens, R. Seguim; BRS—B. R. Segium; WBS—W. B. Sabin; LT—L. Thomas; RPY—R. P. Yunik.

LOONS—DUCKS: Red-throated Loon: 1 Mar 26 NWW (BHS). Red-necked Grebe: 1 Dec 18 SPA CC. Horned Grebe: 3 reports in Dec; 1fm 2 Dec 23 SL (BHS). Pied-billed Grebe: fsm 24 Mar 18 Lake Lonely Outlet (BHS); 2 Mar 26 NWW (BHS). Great Blue Heron: fsm 1 Feb 10 Glenville (MF); 1 Mar 26 HR (HMBC). *WHISTLING SWAN*: 1 Mar 31 SS (DA). Canada Goose: max 165 Dec 2 Col Co (ADBC) 4 Dec 26 SRCC; several March reports, fsm 12 Mar 15 Mohawk River (DA). Snow Goose: 1 Mar 26 NWW (BHS). Mallard: total of 40 from regional CC reports; max 185 Jan 16 NYSWC HR; fsm 40 Mar 13 LH (DA). Black Duck: total of 108 from regional CC reports; max 650 Jan 16 NYSWC HR; fsm 150 Mar 13 LH (DA). Gadwall: fsm 7 Mar 13 LH (DA); 1 Mar 18 HMBC. Pintail: late report 2 Jan 16 NYSWC HR; fsm 8 Mar 13 LH (DA); max 60 Mar 18 HMBC. Green-winged Teal: 3 March reports, fsm 4 Mar 13 LH (DA). Blue-winged Teal: fsm 3 Mar 26 Stony Pt (PC); 10 Mar 31 Vosburgh Marsh (DA). American Widgeon: fsm 1 Mar 11 HR (T & A Brown); 1 Mar 18 HMBC. Wood Duck: fsm 10 Mar 13 LH (DA); 2 other reports Mar 26. Redhead: 1 Mar 19 Stony Pt (PC). Ring-necked Duck: fsm 6 Mar 18 HMBC; 10 Mar 26 SCR (BHS). Canvasback: 2 Dec 5 & 12 SL (BHS); several Mar reports, fsm 1 Mar 11 HR (T & A Brown); max 35 Mar 31 LH (DA). Greater Scaup: 25 Dec 11 & 19 Dec 12 SL (BHS) —field marks noted on this report. Scaup in general were reported in late Dec; fsm 4 Mar 18 HMBC. Common Goldeneye: max 70 SPA CC; 21 Jan 16 NYSWC HR; fsm Mar 11 HR (T&A Brown). Buffhead: 30 Dec 5 SL (BHS); 5 Dec 18 SPA CC; fsm Mar 11 HR (T&A Brown). Oldsquaw: 3 December reports; 5 Dec 12 SL (BHS). White-winged Scoter: 5 Dec 5 & 7 Dec 12 SL (BHS); 4 Dec 18 SPA CC. Surf Scoter: 1 Dec 18 Old Pond Chatham (MM). Ruddy Duck: 1 Dec 5 & Dec 12 SL (BHS). Hooded Merganser: fsm 2 Mar 18 HMBC; several reports on March 26. Common Merganser: total of 62 from CC reports; last 2 Jan 16 NYSWC HR; fsm 2 Mar 13 LH (DA). Red-breasted Merganser: 3 Mar 18 HMBC; 4 Mar 26 NWW (BHS).

HAWKS—OWLS: Turkey Vulture: fsm 2 Mar 19 NWW (BHS). Goshawk: 2 Jan 2 TCC; 1 February report Spencertown (fide Wayne Trimn); 3 March reports, last 1 Mar 20 Berne (MK). Sharp-shinned Hawk: 1 Dec 26 SRCC; 1 Jan 2 TCC; 4 other reports Jan thru Mar. Cooper's Hawk: 1 December report ADBC. Red-tailed Hawk: total of 44 thru CC period; 4 Mar 26 HR (HMBC). Red-shouldered Hawk: 1 Dec 26 SRCC; 1 Feb 2 Rotterdam (DA); 1 Mar 19 Stony Pt (PC). Rough-legged Hawk: total of 14 over CC period; scattered reports thru period. **BALD EAGLE:** 1 mature Dec 5 Sacanda Res. (Steve Wadsworth). Marsh Hawk: 1 in March ADBC; 1 Mar 19 E. Greenbush (PC). Sparrow Hawk: total of 43 from CC reports; 7 Mar 26 Schodack Ctr (PC). Ruffed Grouse: total of 30 from CC reports. Bobwhite: 3 Jan 16 Muetzeskill (R. Dodd). Ring-necked Pheasant: total of 44 from CC reports. American Coot: 6 Dec 18 SPA CC; 6 Dec 12 NWW (BHS). Killdeer: 2 Dec 26 SRCC; fsm 1 Mar 18 HMBC. American Woodcock: 1 Mar 16 East Berne, road kill (fide WBS). Common Snipe: 1 Dec 19 SCC; 1 Mar 31 Schodack Ctr. (PC). **ICELAND GULL:** 1 Dec 9 Mohawk River (DA) & 1 Dec 12 SL (BHS) both immature. Great Black-backed Gull: fsm 3 Mar 13 LH (DA); 12 Mar 18 HMBC. Herring Gull: max 102 Dec 26 SRCC. Ring-billed Gull: total of 95 on CC reports. Mourning Dove: total of 526 from CC reports. Screech Owl: 1 Jan 2 TCC; 1 Feb 12 Schodack Ctr. (PC). Great Horned Owl: total of 7 from CC reports also thru period. Snowy Owl: 1 Dec 15 Albany (PC); 1 Dec 26 SRCC; 1 Jan 1 West Mt. (MK). Long-eared Owl: 1 Dec 1 Schodack Landing (JC); 1 Dec 26 SRCC. **MONK PARAKEET:** 1 thru Jan and Feb attended feeder and traveled in company of Mourning Doves Glenville (fide Marion Ford); origin of bird uncertain but suspect a local escapee (WBS).

GOATSUCKERS—STARLING: Belted Kingfisher: total of 8 from CC reports, scattered reports thru period. Yellow-shafted Flicker: total of 9 from CC reports; seen Jan and Feb ADBC. Pileated Woodpecker: total of 3 from 2 CC reports. Yellow-bellied Sapsucker: 1 Dec 4 L 7 (BHS); thru Jan and Feb Mariaville (DA). **BLACK-BACKED THREE-TOED WOODPECKER:** 1 Mar 4 ADBC Sanctuary first time reported by ADBC member (G. Woodward & E. Reilly). Eastern Phoebe: fsm 1 Mar 4 Malden Bridge (G. Woodward). Horned Lark: total of 105 from CC reports; generally reported as being scarce thru period; max 50 Mar 5 L 7 (BHS). **BOREAL CHICKADEE:** 1 arr mid Nov seen thru period at feeder WSL (J. Chenette). Tufted Titmouse: total of 74 from CC reports. Red-breasted Nuthatch: scarce thru period, total of 8 from CC reports. Winter Wren: 1 Dec 18 ADBC; wintered Jan thru Mar at Collins Lake (DA). Brown Creeper: total of 15 from CC's. Mockingbird: no apparent increase over last year based on CC totals. Catbird: 1 Dec 19 SCC; 1 Dec 26 SRCC; evidence of a mild December. Brown Thrasher: apparently wintered in several locations; 3 Jan 4 Rotterdam (DA); thru Feb in Spencertown and Ghent (GE&PM). Robin: unusually common for the period; 33 from CC reports; large flocks reported Jan, Feb, and Mar. Hermit Thrush: 1 Jan 2 TCC. Eastern Bluebird: 2 Dec thru mid Feb in Rotterdam (DA); a Feb report from Col Co (ADBC); fsm 4 Mar 1 Chatham (MM). Golden-crowned Kinglet: scarce thru period; 2 Dec 19 SCC. Ruby-crowned Kinglet: no reports. Cedar Waxwing: total of 29 from CC reports; wintered in Rotterdam (DA); fsm 2 flocks Mar 12 L 7 (BHS). Northern Shrike: fewer reports than last year; 1 Dec 11 SCR (BHS); 1 Dec 18 SPA CC; Shrike reported Dec 29 Meutzskill Rd (JC). Migrant Shrike: 1 Mar 25 Mechanicville (BRS). Starling: abundant as usual.

VIREOS—SPARROWS: Myrtle Warbler: 1 Dec 19 SCC. Pine Warbler: 1 well documented seen at feeder Mar 31 E Greenbush (MG). Palm Warbler: 1 Jan 2 Castleton (JC); only 1 other Jan record for region. Eastern Meadowlark: total of 20 from CC reports; 2 reports in Feb. Redwinged Blackbird: total of 9 from CC reports; fsm 75 Mar 2 Schodack (PC). Rusty Blackbird: 2 Dec 26 SRCC; fsm 30 Mar 18 Schodack Ctr (PC). Common Grackle: CC total of 8; wintered locally;

large flocks Mar 18 HMBC. Brown-headed Cowbird: max 325 Dec 18 ADBC CC; hundreds Mar 8 Rensselaer (PC). Evening Grosbeak: abundant thru period; total of 1146 from CC's; Purple Finch: total of 26 from CC's. *HOUSE FINCH*: continuing to increase over region; CC totals 15; 2 Jan 20 thru Feb Loudonville (MF); thru period in Scotia and Schenectady (DA). Pine Grosbeak: more numerous than in recent years; 59 from CC's; 75 Jan 20 Thacher Park (MK); large flocks reported in Feb ADBC. Common Redpoll: unusually abundant at feeder stations in Jan thru Mar; CC totals 175; max 250 Jan 5 Sacandoga Res (DA). *GREATER REDPOLL*: 1 Mar 25 Schenectady; this rare subspecies from Greenland was observed and banded in the company of Common Redpolls. It's overall measurements were in agreement with known data (Forbush) especially the dimension and profile of the bill. (RPY); last reported in region 8 in 1947. Pine Siskin: total of 10 from CC's yet considered abundant thru period at feeder stations. American Goldfinch: abundant. Red Crossbill: only 1 report 12 Jan 22 thru Mar 4 Schodack Center (PC). White-winged Crossbill: 1 Dec 26 SRCC; 2 Jan 22 Schodack Center (PC); 1 Mar 18 Saratoga (BHS). Rufous-sided Towhee: 1 thru Dec Spencertown (PM). Savannah Sparrow: 1 Dec 4 Meadowdale (BHS). Slate-colored Junco: abundant thru period. *OREGON JUNCO*: 3 Dec 19 SCC; 1 seen periodically from Dec 19 thru Mar 20 Albany (LT). Tree Sparrow: CC total of 1426. Field Sparrow: 1 Dec 1-10-27 Chatham (B & H Tullar); 1 Feb report from ADBC. White-crowned Sparrow: 1 Dec 18 thru Mar 26 Mechanicville (BRS); 1 Jan 9 L 7 (BHS). White-throated Sparrow: high CC total of 99; wintered in Col Co ADBC. Fox Sparrow: 1 Dec 29 Ghent (GE); 6 Jan 2 TCC; fsm 1 Mar 10 Mechanicville (BHS). Song Sparrow: CC total of 134 higher than usual. Snow Bunting: flock of 25 Dec 4 Col Co (JC); 60 Jan 2 TCC; generally considered scarce this year.

Edgewood Drive Averill Park, N.Y. 12018

REGION 9 — DELAWARE-HUDSON

EDWARD D. TREACY

The mild weather of last fall continued well into the winter season. December was relatively warm with less than the usual amount of snow. January was more normal in temperature, but with much less snow or any precipitation for that matter. February had its cold moments, but nothing spectacular. Snow was perhaps slightly above normal. Lakes were slow to freeze, and for the entire month of December would skim over at night only to melt the next day. A good hard freeze did not set in until well into January, and then the first half of March saw the ice depart, especially in the lowlands. March stayed consistently cold, with very few warm days.

Gene Brown, of the Cockland Audubon Society mentioned that this was the first winter in memory when we had every northern finch that we could expect to see; even the purple finch was more numerous than it has been in recent years. The small amount of snow favored hawk activity; and the mild weather may well have influenced some of our migrants to remain with us well beyond their usual dates, and survive at that. Spring migration started on time, and perhaps a bit before for some species. Most of the above observations will be born out by the text of the report.

Your reporter wishes to extend his thanks to Frank and Ruth Steffens who have contributed their records to this column since its beginning. They have recently retired and moved to Arizona to enjoy all those hummingbirds. They will be sorely missed.

Area Compilers: William Howe, Central Westchester; Robert F. Deed, Rockland Jack Orth, Bear Mt. Pk. and Wawarsing; Al Merritt, Cornwall; Dr. John Tramon-

tano, Western Orange; Martin Borko, Sullivan; Fred Hough, Ulster; Otis Waterman and Eleanor Pink, Dutchess.

Observers cited: AA—Anthony Amos; GB—Gene Brown; EB—Enid Butler; FG—Florence Girmond; WH—William Howe; AJ—Alice Jones; M,J,K—Mary and Jim Key; A,BM—Al and Barbara Merritt; VP—Vivian Parkhurst; EP—Eleanor Pink; B,TS—Bill and Trixie Strauss; MVW—Marion Van Wagner.

Abbreviations: BMCC—Bear Mountain Christmas Count, Jan 2; BCC—Burroughs Natural History Society Christmas Count, Dec 26; MCC—Mearns Bird Club Christmas Count, Dec 26; RCC—Rockland Audubon Society Christmas Count, Dec 18; WCC—Waterman Bird Club Christmas Count, Jan 2; SCC—Sullivan Audubon Society Christmas Count, Jan 1.

LOONS—DUCKS: Loons: none reported. Red-necked Grebe: 1, Rhinebeck, Mar 26 (J,MK). Pied-billed Grebe: more winter reports than usual. Cormorant: 1, probably Double-crested, Dec 13, on Hudson off Dutch (AJ). Great Blue Heron: a few more than usual thru winter. 5 returned to Tamarack Sw., Dutch, Mar 19. Inc. to 12 by end of month (FG). American Bittern: 1, Piermont Marsh, Jan 3 (AA). 1, Croton Pt. Mar 31 (WH). Mute Swan: good winter numbers in Rock until ice drove them to Hudson R. 2, Iona Is Mar 19, and 3 at Cornwall Mar 18. Canada Goose: more reported than usual. Excellent migrant numbers in Mar. Residents on most lakes by end of period. Max 1,200+ over Amenia, Dutch, Jan 7, and again on Jan 24. (B,TS). Brant: a flock of 100+ over Hamptonburgh Oran Dec 31 (Frank and Ruth Steffens). Mallard, Black Duck: former continue to outnumber the latter by almost 3 to 1 thru period. Good numbers for both. Gadwall: 2, Rockland L. Feb 4; increased to 9 by Mar 19. Previous early date was Mar 30. Pintail: never common. 1, Croton Pt. Mar 23. A male and 2 females at Piermont Pier on unusual date of Jan 14 (AA). Numbers up in late Mar, esp in Dutch. Green-winged Teal—unusual record of 1 on Rockland L Dec 26 (GB). Migrants reported in West and Rock on Mar 19. First report in Dutch Mar 29. Late for there. Blue-winged Teal: 2, Mar 8, Stormville, Dutch; very early (EB). American Widgeon: usual few reports in winter in Dutch. Wood Duck: more than usual. 7, in Blooming Grove, Oran Dec 26 (MCC). Redhead: 1, Dec 29, Sylvan L (AJ). Another Mar 16, near Staatsburgh (M,J,K). Ring-necked Duck: winters regularly in West, but rare elsewhere. 2 Rockland L, Feb 4. Migrants are in usual numbers in mid-Mar. Canvasback: more than usual. Numbers up esp in Mar. A good number of 68 on BMCC. A single bird on Mongaup Res Feb 27 in very unusual for Sull. Greater Scaup: first, 12, Mar 16 (M,J,K). Peak Mar 29 with 200 on Hudson in Dutch. Lesser Scaup: 9, Mar 16 on Hudson off Dutch. Common Goldeneye: numbers seem down slightly. Buffhead: seems to inc in numbers each year. Max 150, Rock L. mid-Mar. Ruddy Duck: winters regularly on lower Hudson Max 180 Croton Pt. Mar 31. Hooded Merganser: usual wintering birds. Migrants arr on time and in expected numbers. Reported lower in Dutch. Common Merganser: numbers normal to lower. Generally late in leaving area. Red-breasted Merganser: more than usual. Good numbers dur Mar. Reported on both the RCC and the MCC. An unusual number of 20 Dec 18 on Hudson in Dutch. (EP).

HAWKS—OWLS: Turkey Vulture: first, 12, Queensboro, Bear Mt. Pk. Mar 2. Numbers good thru end of period. Goshawk: many more than usual. 1, Pleasantville Dec 19, and again Mar 5. 3 Ulst records dur Jan. 1, near Kripplebush lingered into Feb. 1, Black Rock Forest, Cornwall Dec 29; and 1, Feb 9 near Meyers Corners, Dutch. Sharp-shinned Hawk: sev thru season. Usually hunting about bird feeders. Cooper's Hawk: in much the same locations and circumstances as the previous species. Red-tailed Hawk: usual numbers to better in most areas. Down somewhat in Dutch. Red-shouldered Hawk: more than usual, with several reports each month and many in Mar. Rough-legged Hawk: numbers not as good as last year, but still

excellent. Reported from all areas with several wintering in the vicinity of Galeville Airport, Ulst. *GOLDEN EAGLE*: one near Briarcliff, Dutch Feb 9 (VP). Same area reported in winters of 1969 and '70. Bald Eagle: only 1 or 2 reports from Hudson Highlands of single birds. Best records from Sull where as many as 7 were reported in the vicinity of Mongaup, Rio and Rondout Reservoirs. Most were imm. Marsh Hawk: a few winter reports with sev dur Mar. Sparrow Hawk: 1, hunting at a bird feeder in Cornwall Mar 18 (A,BM). Ruffed Grouse: few reports, scarce. Bobwhite: ab 15 reported in Dutch thru period. Common Gallinule: 1, L Tappan, Blauvelt, on remarkable date of Feb 10 (Emily Paulson). Coot: usual few winter birds, but numbers lower than usual dur Mar in Dutch. Killdeer: usual winter birds. Also lower than expected dur Mar. Woodcock: phenomenal influx in early Mar. As many as 30, Mar 2 in southern Dutch. (B. Serra) 14 more the same day in South Millbrook (Howard Roeller). Common Snipe: 2 wintering reports; excellent migrant numbers dur Mar. *DUNLIN*: 1, Croton Pt, Mar 19 (WH). *GLAUCOUS GULL*: 1, Croton Pt. Feb 6-25 (WH). Another Mar 7, Wappingers Cr., Dutch (MVW). Another on Hudson near New Hamburg, Mar 18. *ICELAND GULL*: 1, Croton Pt. from Jan 21 thru period. 2 there Feb 6. Another at Tomahawk L. Oran Jan 1. Ring-billed Gull: usual winter numbers. Excellent movement up Hudson dur Mar. Bonaparte's Gull: 4, Croton Pt, Dec 12. Flocks of 25 and 19 at Piermont Pier on Jan 12 and 14 respectively (AA). Mourning Dove: excellent numbers of last winter continue thru this. More than 400 reported on BCC. Screech Owl: a few more than the few winter reports. Great Horned Owl: breeding in Popolopen Gorge, and at the Glen in Cornwall. Another heard almost daily thru season in Dutch. Snowy Owl: a good flight year. Reported in cent. West. and at Middletown, Oran. 2 reports from Dutch dur Jan and 1 on RCC. Barred Owl: 1, Dec 21, Canoe Hill, Dutch. Another all month of Dec at Hudson River State Hosp. Dutch. 1, Mar 1 at Yankee L. Sull. Long-eared Owl: all reports Dutch. As many as 20 at the home of Mr. and Mrs. Valentine Beuche in Wappingers Falls from Dec thru rest of period. Short-eared Owl: a few found wintering in the vicinity of Galeville Airport, Ulst where they were so common a few winters ago. 1, Dec 17, Amenia. Another Piermont Pier Jan 17 (AA). Saw-whet Owl: 1, Croton Pt. Feb 21, 22 (George Smalls). Another at Palisades Dec 16 (AA).

GOATSUCKERS—STARLING: Flicker: more than usual. Pileated Woodpecker: seems to hold its own, but numbers quite low. Max of 8 on BCC. Red-bellied Woodpecker: many more than usual. At least one or two birds reported from all counties. Red-headed Woodpecker: usual few winter birds. Numbers seem down from previous years. Yellow-bellied Sapsucker: only reports West, Ulst and Dutch. Phoebe: arr most areas Mar 20-23. Numbers good by end of month: Common Crow: numbers normal. Fish Crow: 1 wintered Croton Pt. 3 there Mar 11 and inc to 8 by Mar 31. 2 at Cornwall from Mar 21 to end of month. 1 or two thru Feb and Mar at Vassar Coll. 2, Vanderburgh Cove Mar 18-25. Red-breasted Nuthatch: excellent numbers. Too many reports to list. House Wren: 1 at Howells on the extreme date of Mar 30 (Peg Moon). Winter Wren: well reported esp in Dutch. Carolina Wren: an excellent winter. Population has rebuilt since last big kill of a few winters ago. Mockingbird: continues to increase, but slightly. RCC had 46. Catbird: many winter reports. *BROWN THRASHER*: very rarely reported in winter. 1, Fort Montgomery Feb 26 thru Mar 5. 1, Goshen, Dec 26, MCC. 1, New Paltz, Feb 4, 6. 1, Highland Hosp. Beacon, Feb 25. Robin: many winter reports. Excellent numbers dur Mar migration. Wood Thrush: 1, Nov 20, Monticello (Ken Niven). Hermit Thrush: 1, Westmoreland Sanct. Dec 19. Another Cornwall Dec 5. 2, Dutch last week of Feb. Mar movement good. Eastern Bluebird: good numbers thru season. Flocks of 10-20 reported from Dutch dur Jan and Feb. Kinglets: excellent numbers for both species. Lower in Mar. Pipit: only Mar record, 1, Mar 19, Central Valley, Oran. Cedar

Waxwing: only a few reported. Northern Shrike: 1, Mt. Kisco, Dec 19-24. 2, Ulster: 1, Clove Valley Jan 1 and another Accord Jan 20. 1, Fishkill, Dec 26; 1, Wappingers Falls, Mar 8. Loggerhead Shrike: 1, Croton Pt Mar 23, 25. 1, Bashakill, Mar 28. 2 Jan reports in Dutch and 3 there in Feb. Starling: more than 1,000 roosting at a location in Poughkeepsie in Dec.

VIREOS—SPARROWS: Myrtle Warbler: no longer the winter resident in Rock that they were a few years ago, largely due to succession in habitat. 8 birds in Dutch dur Feb. Meadowlark: about 175 at Salt Point, Dutch dur Jan. Red-winged Blackbird: more wintering than usual. Migrants in excellent numbers by first week in Mar. 1, a partial albino, returned for fifth year to feeder of Mrs. Homer Williams in Poughkeepsie. *BALTIMORE ORIOLE*: more reports than usual. 1, Hawthorne Dec 26. 4 at various locations in Dutch in Jan, and 1 thru Feb. Rusty Blackbird: good winter reports. Migrants well represented thru Mar. Common Grackle: arr most areas last week of Feb numbers excellent thru Mar. Cowbird: large numbers in several locales, but low in others. Cardinal: normal to better. Dickcissel: 1, Dec 8, in Pleasant Valley (MVW). Northern Finches: all species well represented. Too many reports to list. All species in good numbers including Purple Finch. Common Redpolls reported by the hundreds in most areas in Mar. Siskins in excellent numbers thru end of seasons. One interesting report of House Finch diminishing in numbers. Believed driven from feeders by aggressive Siskins. One report of House Finch nesting in Dutch by Mar 24. Both species of Crossbill well represented, but numbers lower than expected. Rufous-sided Towhee: more wintering than usual in all areas. Savannah Sparrow: 9, Eastview, West, Feb 5. More than 75 near New Paltz on Feb 27 an unusual concentration for that time of year. 4 to 6 reported thru season at feeders in Dutch. Vesper Sparrow: 1, Eastview, West. Feb 21. 1, Dutch, Dec 20; and 3 reports there dur Jan. *OREGON JUNCO*: 1, Mar 15, near Bonticou, Ulst. (June Polatsekenear), fide R. Pyle. Tree Sparrow: numbers lower than usual but still good. Chipping Sparrow: arr Rock Mar 23. White-crowned Sparrow: spent entire season at feeder of (B,T,S) in Amenia, Dutch. White-thr. Sparrow: small flocks in most areas thru entire season. Fox Sparrow: a few winter reports but excellent numbers from first week of Mar thru end. *LINCOLN SPARROW*: first seen Jan 10 at Amenia. Remained thru Feb 23 (B,T,S). Swamp Sparrow: all reports Dutch. 4 in Dec and 1 in Jan. Lapland Longspur: 6, MCC, Goshen 1, (no date) Kingston, first record for Ulst. As many as 3 reported twice near Red Hood in early Dec. 2 there on WCC. Snow Bunting: 2, Croton Pt. Dec 12; 15, Wurtsboro, Oct 18; 2, Ridgebury, Oran Dec 9; Dutch, Dec 7; about 50 in Dutch Dec 5. Also reported from Ulst.

Spring reports due June 5.

Pellwood Lake, Highland Falls, New York 10928

REGION 10 — MARINE

THOMAS H. DAVIS AND LEE MORGAN

Detailed information was made available from only six of the twelve Christmas Counts uonducted locally this year. The relatively warm weather — with no freeze-overs preceding the counts — continued into January. Mainly this factor, perhaps, but also a light "winter finch" flight, and ever-increasing observer interest, pushed several counts species totals to new highs. Foremost (as usual) was Captree (abbreviated CaCC) on Dec. 19, with a new State high of 144 species. Except for several inexplicable "misses" (Glaucous Gull, Palm Warbler), this year's total might have reached the mystical 150 mark; in fact, at least eight additional species were

found in the count circle during January. Following Captree were Montauk (MkCC), Dec. 18, 130 spp. (new high); Southern Nassau County (SNCC), Jan. 2, 129 spp. (new high); Northern Nassau County (NNCC), Dec. 26, 103 spp.; Smithtown (SmCC), Dec. 26, 102 spp. (new high); and Brooklyn (BkCC), Dec. 26, 94 spp. All told, these six counts totaled an amazing 173 species.

Most of the specific details concerning the above counts appear within the main body of this report, but several species deserve special comment. Mockingbird: populations "exploded" this year with new highs reported for all six counts, noteworthy totals being NNCC — 189, and CaCC — 117. Rufous-sided Towhee: wintering increases of this species have largely gone overlooked in recent years, but it was hardly possible to ignore this year's high wintering population, particularly outstanding totals being CaCC — 102, and MkCC — 8. Carolina Wren: numbers of this species fluctuate according to the severity of the winter, but over the last several years they have been increasing. Distribution however, is rather erratic. This year CaCC listed 4, NNCC 5, and SmCC 16, while the Gardiner's Island party of MkCC found the astounding total of 41!

Overall, the season could be termed mild, with only about 12 inches of snowfall, and no prolonged cold spells. Affected in particular, were wading birds. From the count period through January, observers recorded 10 of New York State's 12 breeding herons. Fourteen species of shorebirds were reported in the same period, notably Semipalmated and Piping Plovers, and Least and Western Sandpipers. Affected adversely (from the observer's point of view) were "white-winged" gulls. In contrast to last winter's high totals, both Iceland and Glaucous Gulls were lacking this year, and reported almost entirely from garbage dumps. One of your editors (TD) surveyed six large metropolitan area dumps during January and February, estimating a total population of approximately 92 — 115,000 Herring Gulls. "White-wing" totals were a meager 6 Glaucous (2 adult and 4 second year birds), and 8 Iceland (one adult, 3 second year, and 4 first year birds).

If the reader notices a subtle increase in the "mob" listings for particularly uncommon species, it is because the NY Rare Bird Alert spreads the word so rapidly. For those of you who wish to hear the latest avian news, and what's been seen where, dial 516-485-2170 and listen to a six minute recording.

Rarities included in this report are Tufted Ducks, Barrow's Goldeneye, Gyrfalcon, Lesser Black-backed Gull, Black Guillemot, and Black-headed Grosbeak. High counts were recorded for Gannet and White-winged Crossbill. Aside from herons and shorebirds, unseasonal reports include Common Tern and Nashville Warbler.

Observers frequently cited: AB—Al Bell; RC—Robert Claremont; BC—Barbara Conolly; TD—Thomas Davis; AD—Aline Dove; OD—Orville Dunning; DF—Davis Finch; MH—Myrna Hemmerick; TL—Tom Love; DP—Dennis Puleston; GR—Gilbert Raynor; BS—Barbara Spencer; LW—Leroy Wilcox; AW—Al Wollin.

Other abbreviations: JBWR—Jamaica Bay Wildlife Refuge; Jones—Jones Beach State Park.

LOONS—DUCKS: Gannet: 820, Jan 2, (SNCC) — mainly by Ryan boat party, highest Regional count. Green Heron: Dec 19, (CaCC); Dec 19, Queens CC; Jan 18, Georgica Pond (BC,BS) — 45h Jan occurrence. Little Blue Heron: 3 imm, Jan 10, Lawrence Marsh (TD) — 2nd Jan occurrence. Common Egret: Dec 26, Oyster Bay (mob). Snowy Egret: 8, Jan 2, (SNCC); two remained at JBWR to Jan 12 (TD); Feb 14, Freeport (TD) — first Feb occurrence. Yellow-crowned Night-Heron: 6 (one adult) through Jan at Setauket (MH) — occasionally winters. Least Bittern: Jan 17-24, Brookhaven (DE) — "in cattail swamp," casual at this season. Glossy Ibis: Jan 2, Lawrence Marsh (J. Bull) — first Jan record; arr Mar 19 at Mecox (C. McKeever) — over the last 7 years, ibis have consistently arrived during mid/late March.

Whistling Swan: 10 wintered at Mecox Bay (mob); 2 wintered at Montauk (mob). Pink-footed Goose: a bird present in Babylon through the winter was almost certainly an escape. Blue Goose: one wintered at Shinnecock Inlet with Brant (mob). European Teal: drake, Dec 18, Gardiner's Island (MkCC); drake, Jan 8 through period at Belmont Lake State Park (mob). European Widgeon: 4-5 drakes reported from scattered Long Island locales. TUFTED DUCK: pair, Jan 8 through period,

Belmont Lake State Park (mob); drake, Dec 27-Jan 4, Southaven (DP, et al) — still another wintered at Bay Head, N.J. The validity of these reports is in question. Some observers would rationalize the occurrence of "wild" birds due to an increase in European populations. Tufted Ducks, however, are "the most commonly bred European *Anatid* in U.S. collections." (Richard Ryan). *BARROW'S GOLDEN-EYE*: female, Feb 12, Montauk Point (DF,TD) — seen with Commons, both sitting and flying, all yellow bill and smaller wing patch noted; casual in the area, last reported in 1966.

HAWKS—OWLS: Harris' Hawk: an adult present in the Rye area through the winter (mob) was probably an escape, although its plumage showed no signs of captivity, and it was not banded *GYRFALCON*: "light gray-phase bird," Jan 15, Hook Pond (DP, GR, et al). Pigeon Hawk: 5 Jan-Feb reports were received (one an adult), all from coastal areas. Semipalmated Plover: Jan 22, Tobay Pond (TD, B. Broadbrooks); Feb 6, Jones (AW) — 3rd and 4th midwinter reports. Piping Plover: 2, Jan 17, Jones (TD) — very rare at this season. Black-bellied Plover: max 63, Jan 2, SNCC — very high winter count. Least Sandpiper: 2, Dec 18, Gardiner's Island (MkCC) — only the 3rd Dec report. Semipalmated Sandpiper: Dec 19, (CaCC); 5, Jan 2 (SNCC) — rare at this season but more frequently reported in recent years, probably due to intensive Christmas Count coverage. Western Sandpiper: Jan 2, Jones (M. and G. Kelinbaum) — 2nd Jan record.

LESSER BLACK-BACKED GULL: adult, Jan 30, Pelham Bay Park garbage dump (TD) — "seen in flightsize, mantle color, primary pattern seen in direct comparison to Herring Gulls, but legs not seen." Black-headed Gull: adult wintered, Jones Inlet — Long Beach sewer outlet (mob); sub-adult, Jan 6-Feb 12, Montauk Harbor (mob). Little Gull: an adult and an imm were noted frequently at both Fire Island and Jones inlets from late Jan through period (mob). Forster's Tern: Dec 11, Shinnecock Inlet (AB,AD,OD) — extremely late. Common Tern: Jan 1, Jones (AW) — "seen close, call heard," first Jan record.

Thick-billed Murre: far better than average, 7 separate sightings reported — 4 from Montauk Point from Dec 11 to Feb 5 (3); also seen on Jan 15 at Oak Beach (S. Stepinoff, TD,TL), Westhampton Beach (LW), and Center Moriches (LW). **BLACK GUILLEMOT**: 3, Dec 11, Montauk Point (mob); Jan 15, Montauk Point (K. O'Hare) — very rare here. Snowy Owl: 4, Nov 28, Captree State Park, and western Fire Island (P. Buckley); 4-5, Dec 5, west end of Jones (C. Ward, et al); numbers declined after mid-Dec, although CaCC and MkCC each listed 4 individuals.

GOATSUCKERS—STARLING: Red-bellied Woodpecker: individuals wintered at Oakdale, E. Islip, and Matinecock. Shrikes: both a Loggerhead and an adult Northern occupied the same territory through the winter at Heckscher State Park (mob). The only other Northern reports were one each on the Manhattan and SmCC's.

VIREOS—WARBLERS: Nashville Warbler: Jan 2, Loop Causeway near Point Lookout (H. Pembleton, S. Dempsey) — 3rd Jan record. Pine Warbler: Dec 18, (MkCC). Palm Warbler: rare this year, only midwinter report was one at Captree State Park, Jan 26 (mob). Yellowthroat: 2, Dec 18, (MkCC); Dec 19 (CaCC). Yellow-breasted Chat: Jan 6, Montauk (BC,BS); Jan 16, Glen Cove (F. McDonough).

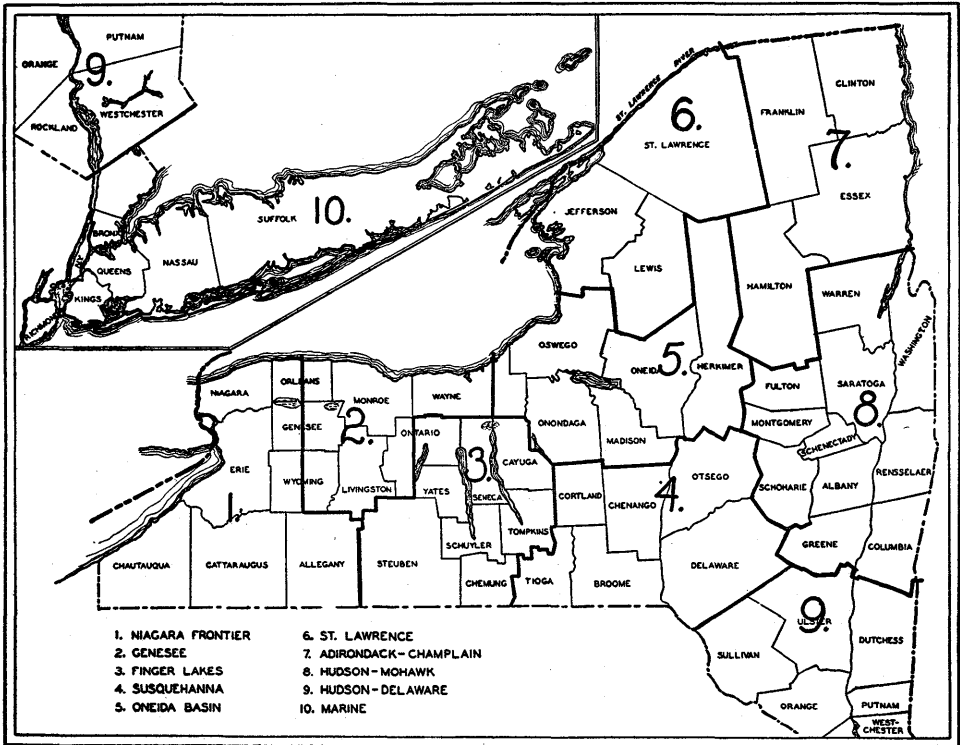
BLACKBIRDS—SPARROWS: Black-headed Grosbeak: Dec 18-27, Hastings (Campbells, J. Moyle, et al). Common Redpoll: a large late winter flight barely made the coast — max 200, Feb 24, E. Marion (DP). White-winged Crossbill: max 250 plus, Feb 11, Fire Island State Park (DF,TD) — highest Regional count. Grasshopper Sparrow: Jan 2, Mitchell Field (M. Wheta, et al) — very rare at this season.

Note: Please submit Spring reports by June 8.

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For descriptions of Regions see Kingbird Vol. IV, Nos. 1 and 2

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