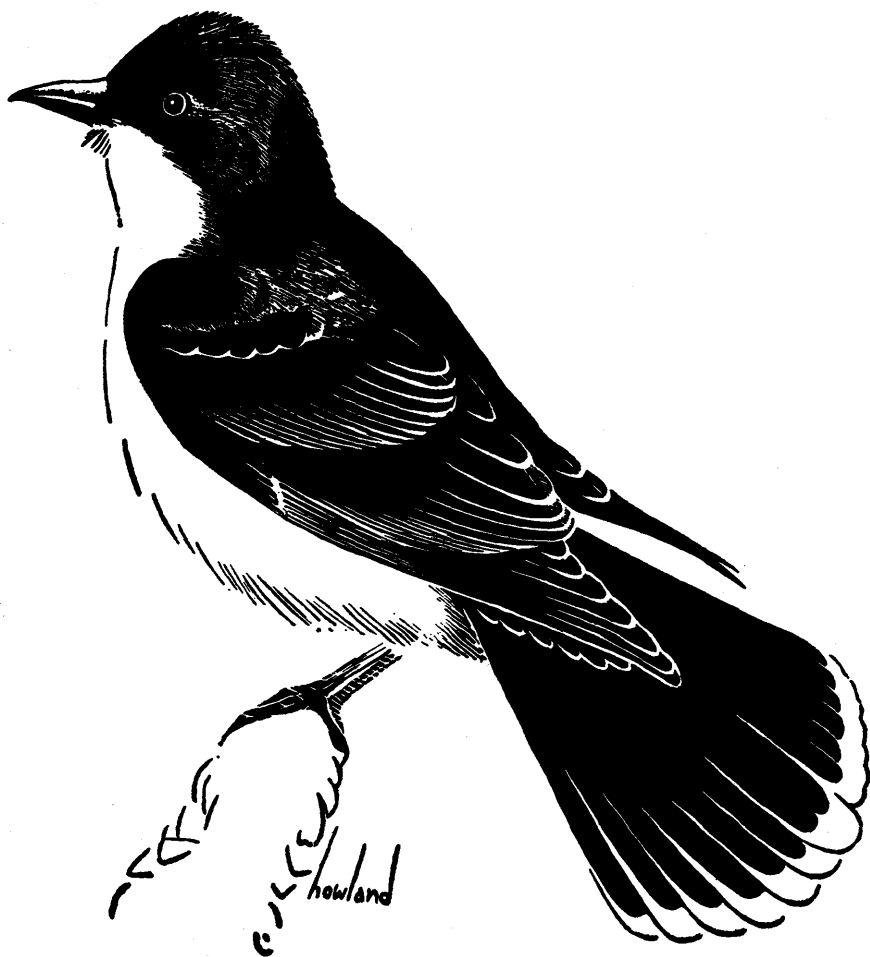


The **KINGBIRD**



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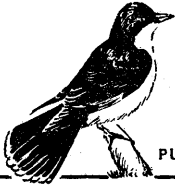
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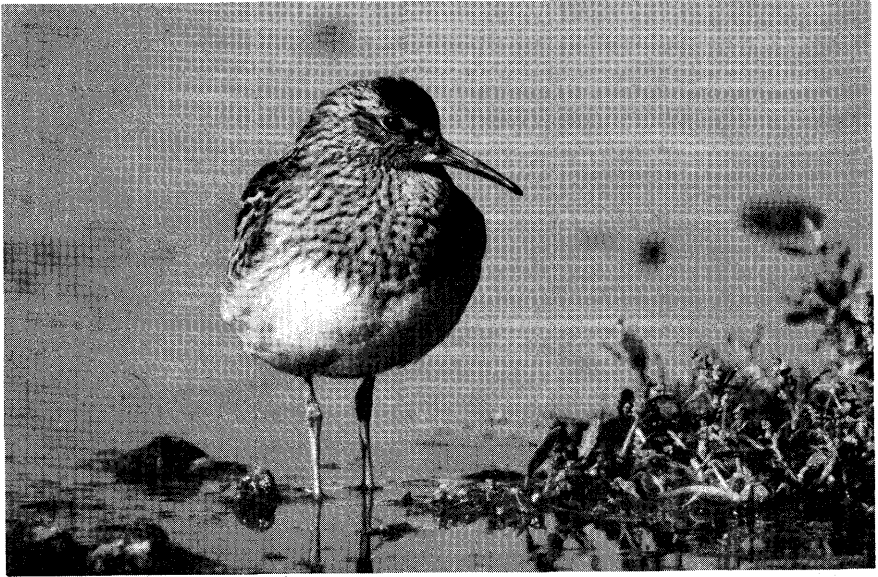
Co-Editors – Emanuel Levine and John Farrand, Jr.

Highlights of the Season

Editor – Robert Spahn

Circulation Manager – Constance N. Wilkins

Cover Design – Douglas L. Howland



Tom Davis

Juv. Pectoral Sandpiper
25 September 1983

JBWR

THE 1983 FALL SHOREBIRD SEASON AT JAMAICA BAY WILDLIFE REFUGE

THOMAS H. DAVIS

Thirty-five species of shorebirds were noted at Jamaica Bay Wildlife Refuge (JBWR), Queens Co., during the period 24 June-12 November 1983. I visited the refuge forty-seven times during this period and endeavored to census every species at least once a week, to note the arrival dates of adults and juveniles of 17 migrant species, and to add to my photographic collection.

I have previously published a description of my techniques, census areas, shorebird historical data, and National Park Service management policy in *The Kingbird* (32: 85-96, 1982; also see 33: 94-102, 1983). This year for the first time I was able to extend my survey into early November, to document the tail end of several species' migration. Table 1 presents this year's census data, Table 2 notes the arrival dates of adults and juveniles, plus a 5-year summary of their arrival dates, and Table 3 summarizes my 1981-83 surveys.

SELECTED SPECIES ACCOUNTS

Black-bellied Plover: This year's peak count of 1,127 birds 3 September was nearly 50% higher than previous years' maxima. Numbers of roosting birds declined less drastically this year in late September to mid-October, probably owing to the infrequent occurrence of Peregrine Falcons.

Lesser Golden-Plover: This species continues an upward trend, with 68 birds on 11 dates (vs. 33 birds on 14 dates in 1982 and 19 birds on eight dates in 1981).

Semipalmated Plover: This year's peak count of 1,203 birds 18 August was over 50% higher than previous years' maxima.

American Oystercatcher: Numbers appeared to have stabilized this year, possibly owing to limited undisturbed breeding habitat in Jamaica Bay.

American Avocet: not recorded this fall for the first time since 1976.

Solitary Sandpiper: A bird present 17-23 July was an adult; all other fall birds have been juveniles.

Willet: A total of 83 birds on 33 dates reflects a still-increasing local breeding population (63 birds on 28 dates in 1982 and nine birds on eight dates in 1981).

Hudsonian Godwit: The season total was eight or nine individuals.

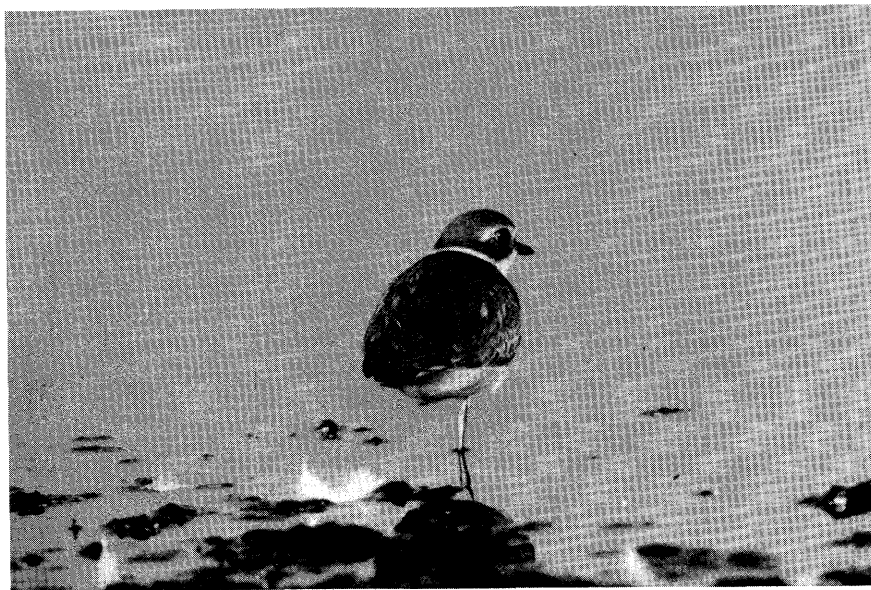
Marbled Godwit: The season total was two individuals.

Red Knot: This species continues an upward trend, with peak counts increasing by 50% each year; this year's maximum was 736 birds 9

August. Also impressive was the number of juvenile birds noted from mid-September into early November, far exceeding the last two years' totals.

Ruddy Turnstone: This species continues an upward trend, with peak counts increasing by 100% each year, this year's maximum was 235 birds 18 August.

Sanderling: Sanderlings principally visit the East Pond to roost, with little foraging activity taking place. They favor a sandy spit along the west side of the pond, opposite a small brushy island near the north end. Each year their numbers have plummeted in mid-September. I formerly attributed this decline to disturbance from raptors. I now suspect that a carpet of short grass emerging at this time causes the birds to shift their roost to a beach east of the IND railroad tracks, where their molted plumage blends more evenly against a sandy background.



Tom Davis

Juv. Semipalmated Sandpiper
11 September 1983

JBWR

Semipalmated/Western Sandpiper: The difference between these species' molt schedules continues to impress me. Of the small number of juvenile Semipalmateds present late October-early

November all were heavily worn, but none exhibited obvious body molt. Adult Semipalmateds observed in the first half of September showed considerable body molt, but none were seen in full winter plumage. An adult Western on 22 August was in full winter plumage, most juveniles exhibited obvious body molt after mid-September, and the lone bird on 8 November was in first-winter plumage.

Little Stint: An adult in worn breeding plumage was observed and photographed 17-22 July. Details of this first New York State report will appear in a future issue of *The Kingbird*.

Baird's Sandpiper: The season total was one individual.

Pectoral Sandpiper: A below-average season except for a large influx of juveniles the weekend of 24-25 September. The total of 42 birds 24 September nearly tripled the previous high count of 15 on 2 October 1982.

Sharp-tailed Sandpiper: An adult in worn breeding plumage 16 July at the East Pond was probably the same individual present here 18-24 July 1981 (see T. H. Davis, 1981, *Kingbird* 31: 198-201); details to NYS Avian Records Committee.

Curlew Sandpiper: Two worn, molting adults were noted, 17 July-6 August and 22-23 July.

Stilt Sandpiper: I have no ready explanation for the 5-year 28-day spread of juvenile arrival dates cited in Table 2. In most species the first juvenile is represented by one or two individuals, and greater numbers do not appear for a week or two following. Following seeing the first juvenile stilt this year on 7 August, I did not see another for over a week; perhaps I missed these earliest individuals in other years. Regardless of the arrival date, peak numbers of juvenile Stilts pass through JBWR 1-10 September (see Table 3).

Buff-breasted Sandpiper: The season total was one individual.

Ruff: A molting adult was observed at the East Pond 30 August (H. McGuinness, T. Stiles).

Short-billed Dowitcher: A lingering molting juvenile was observed to 29 October; my previous late date was 11 October 1982.

Long-billed Dowitcher: The first juvenile was noted 8 October, despite determined searching the previous two weekends; juveniles of this species are the last to arrive each year at JBWR.

Wilson's Phalarope: The season total was 10-12 individuals.

Red-necked Phalarope: The season total was two individuals.

9446 85 Road, Woodhaven, New York 11421

Table 1. JBWR 1983 Fall Shorebird Censuses
(all counts were taken at high tide)

	<u>6/24</u>	<u>6/25</u>	<u>7/1</u>	<u>7/9</u>	<u>7/10</u>	<u>7/16</u>	<u>7/17</u>	<u>7/20</u>	<u>7/23</u>
Plover, Black-bellied				2		1	(2)	1	2
Lesser Golden-Semipalmated				7	5	35	40	✓	60
* Killdeer	5	5	2	26	19	20	20	✓	4
* American Oystercatcher	8	4		4	11	3	4	2	1
Yellowlegs, Greater	3	1		15	13	93	60	✓	70
Lesser			2	6	3	10	10	✓	25
Sandpiper, Solitary							1		(1)
* Willet		4		1			1		1
* Sandpiper, Spotted				7	5	2	4	✓	3
Whimbrel									1
Godwit, Hudsonian									1
Marbled					(1)				
Ruddy Turnstone								(1)	12
Red Knot							1	10	12
Sanderling						1	2	4	15
Sandpiper, Semipalmated	2	1		8	30	395	480	✓	600
Western							1	2	1
Little Stint							1	1	
Sandpiper, Least				55	20	105	100	✓	40
White-rumped									(2)
Baird's									
Pectoral						1	(2)		(1)
Sharp-tailed						1			
Dunlin							1	1	1
Sandpiper, Curlew							1	1	2
Stilt								2	6
Buff-breasted									
Ruff									
Dowitcher, Short-billed			40	676	340	738	634	✓	400
Long-billed									2
Common Snipe									
* American Woodcock									
Phalarope, Wilson's									
Red-necked									
No. Species	4	5	3	11	10	13	19	18	24
No. Individuals	18	15	44	807	447	1405	1365		1263
Coverage: East Pond			c	abcd	abcd	abcd	abcd	abc	abcd
West Pond	e	e		ef	e				

* = breeds locally () = reported by others ✓ = numbers not counted

Table 1. JBWR 1983 Fall Shorebird Censuses
(all counts were taken at high tide)

	<u>7/30</u>	<u>7/31</u>	<u>8/6</u>	<u>8/9</u>	<u>8/10</u>	<u>8/12</u>	<u>8/13</u>	<u>8/14</u>	<u>8/16</u>
Plover, Black-bellied	14	10	116	220	✓	260	✓	✓	✓
Lesser Golden-Semipalmated	250	✓	620	876	✓	865	✓	✓	✓
* Killdeer	8	✓	4	4	7	4	3	3	11
* American Oystercatcher	2	3	10	1	11	9	17	8	5
Yellowlegs, Greater	176	✓	210	200	✓	168	✓	✓	✓
Lesser	45	✓	55	73	✓	25	✓	✓	✓
Sandpiper, Solitary									
* Willet	(1)		1	1	1	(1)	1	1	2
* Sandpiper, Spotted	4	3	2	2	1	4	2		2
Whimbrel									
Godwit, Hudsonian				1	2	2	2	2	1
Marbled									
Ruddy Turnstone	37	48	125	60	177	180	130	✓	125
Red Knot	200	✓	600	736	✓	620	✓	✓	340
Sanderling	9	85	310	50	80	25	75	✓	260
Sandpiper, Semipalmated	1745	✓	1550	2220	✓	2235	✓	✓	✓
Western	2					1	2	(1)	
Little Stint									
Sandpiper, Least	73	✓	95	28	✓	34	38	✓	✓
White-rumped	1	2	(1)	3	4	2	4	2	3
Baird's									
Pectoral	3	1						(2)	
Sharp-tailed									
Dunlin				1	1	2	1	1	1
Sandpiper, Curlew	1	1	1						
Stilt	9	✓	6	10	11	23	22	35	✓
Buff-breasted									
Ruff									
Dowitcher, Short-billed	355	✓	340	410	✓	145	150	✓	180
Long-billed	3	2	6	9	5	6	12	✓	10
Common Snipe									
* American Woodcock									
Phalarope, Wilson's							(1)	2	
Red-necked									
No. Species	20	19	19	19	19	20	21	21	19
No. Individuals	2938		4053	4905		4611			
Coverage: East Pond	abcd	abd	abcd	abcd	abcd	abcd	abcd	abcd	abcd
West Pond									

* = breeds locally () = reported by others ✓ = numbers not counted

Table 1. JBWR 1983 Fall Shorebird Censuses
(all counts were taken at high tide)

	8/17	8/18	8/21	8/22	8/23	8/24	8/26	8/27	9/3
Plover, Black-bellied	✓	670	✓	480	✓	✓	✓		1127
Lesser Golden-Semipalmated	✓	1203	✓	865	✓	✓	✓	✓	190
* Killdeer	✓	6	3	4	3	4	4	7	5
* American Oystercatcher	4	16	2	10	1		15	10	10
Yellowlegs, Greater	✓	332	✓	304	✓	✓	✓	✓	480
Lesser	✓	75	✓	83	✓	✓	✓	✓	64
Sandpiper, Solitary									(1)
* Willet	1	5	4	6	2	2	2	3	6
* Sandpiper, Spotted	2	2		5	2	1	2		1
Whimbrel		1				1		2	
Godwit, Hudsonian		1	1	1	2	1	2	2	4
Marbled									1
Ruddy Turnstone	✓	235	✓	50	✓	75	✓	✓	35
Red Knot	✓	650	✓	250	400	✓	✓	✓	136
Sanderling	✓	266	✓	12	3	3	✓	✓	210
Sandpiper, Semipalmated	✓	1730	✓	1305	✓	✓	✓	✓	310
Western			1	9	6	6	24	✓	6
Little Stint									
Sandpiper, Least	✓	35	✓	58	✓	✓	✓	✓	43
White-rumped	1	2	2	8	4	6	6	6	7
Baird's									
Pectoral	3	1	1				7		(1)
Sharp-tailed									
Dunlin	1	2		1	1	2	2	1	2
Sandpiper, Curlew									
Stilt	✓	6	✓	12	8	6	✓	✓	15
Buff-breasted									
Ruff							see text		
Dowitcher, Short-billed	✓	175	✓	95	✓	✓	✓	✓	50
Long-billed	✓	18		17	2	3	1	1	14
Common Snipe									
* American Woodcock									
Phalarope, Wilson's	2	1	1	4	1		3	3	
Red-necked									1
No. Species	20	22	19	21	22	21	22	21	24
No. Individuals		5432		3579					2719
Coverage: East Pond	abd	abcd	ab	abcd	bc	bc	abcd	abcd	abc
West Pond		e						e	e

* = breeds locally () = reported by others ✓ = numbers not counted

Table 1. JBWR 1983 Fall Shorebird Censuses
(all counts were taken at high tide)

	9/4	9/5	9/10	9/11	9/17	9/18	9/20	9/24	9/25	10/1
Plover, Black-bellied	✓	✓	860	✓	350	✓	✓	585	✓	260
Lesser Golden-Semipalmated	✓	✓	135	✓	58	✓	110	66	✓	18
* Killdeer	1		11	2	6	3	3	1	2	3
* American Oystercatcher	13	1	3	2	4			4	4	
Yellowlegs, Greater	✓	✓	176	✓	142	✓	✓	13	✓	22
Lesser	✓	✓	66	✓	50	✓	✓	33	✓	10
Sandpiper, Solitary			1							
* Willet	4		1	1	5	2	3	4	4	3
* Sandpiper, Spotted	1	2	(1)	1	(2)	(1)	1		(1)	
Whimbrel				(1)		5		6		
Godwit, Hudsonian	3	2	1	1					1	1
Marbled			1	1	1		1	1		
Ruddy Turnstone	✓	✓	25	✓	22	✓	18	8	8	8
Red Knot	✓	✓	60	112	80	✓	125	92	✓	40
Sanderling	60		8	3	3	5	2			
Sandpiper, Semipalmated	✓	✓	575	✓	374	✓	190	348	✓	95
Western	5	3	17	6	24	✓	1	5	2	2
Little Stint										
Sandpiper, Least	✓	✓	40	✓	34	✓	35	34	✓	12
White-rumped	4	6	9	5	5	6	3	6	4	3
Baird's			1	1						
Pectoral			3	1	7	6	11	42	39	1
Sharp-tailed										
Dunlin	1	2	1	1	3	7	3	32	36	90
Sandpiper, Curlew										
Stilt	14	2	27	✓	35	✓	12	10	(10)	3
Buff-breasted				(1)	1	(1)				
Ruff										
Dowitcher, Short-billed	✓	✓	44	✓	48	✓	✓	42	✓	20
Long-billed	4	3	18	✓	6	✓	4			
Common Snipe	1									
* American Woodcock									1	
Phalarope, Wilson's				1	5	2				
Red-necked	1	2	2	1						
No. Species	22	19	26	28	24	23	21	20	21	17
No. Individuals			2088		1274			1343		591
Coverage: East Pond	abd	bcd	abcd	bc	abcd	bc	bc	abc	bcd	bcd
West Pond					e	e	e	e	e	ef

* = breeds locally () = reported by others ✓ = numbers not counted

Table 1. JBWR 1983 Fall Shorebird Censuses
(all counts were taken at high tide)

	10/2	10/8	10/14	10/15	10/23	10/29	10/30	11/5	11/8	11/12
Plover, Black-bellied	292	420	80	190	510	250	✓	520	710	22
Lesser Golden-Semipalmated	3	13			1			1		
* Killdeer	7	1	1				3	1	1	
* American Oystercatcher	(1)									
Yellowlegs, Greater	16	38	1	5	140	15	57	125	79	8
Lesser	18	8			8	1				
Sandpiper, Solitary										
* Willet	4	3	2							
* Sandpiper, Spotted										
Whimbrel										
Godwit, Hudsonian										
Marbled										
Ruddy Turnstone	6	2		1	4	3	1	7	10	
Red Knot	40	45		20	104	25	8	75	115	32
Sanderling	3	6		4	1	1	15	10	90	1
Sandpiper, Semipalmated	80	10		2	8	6	8	4	4	
Western	2								1	
Little Stint										
Sandpiper, Least	10	5			1					
White-rumped	10		6	1	6		2	1	5	1
Baird's										
Pectoral	1	10		8	2	2	3	1	2	
Sharp-tailed										
Dunlin	80	445	42	70	1497	600	✓	950	1950	138
Sandpiper, Curlew										
Stilt	2				1					
Buff-breasted										
Ruff										
Dowitcher, Short-billed	18	5		1		1				
Long-billed		3						5	14	
Common Snipe								1		
* American Woodcock										
Phalarope, Wilson's										
Red-necked										
No. Species	18	16	6	10	13	10	10	13	12	6
No. Individuals	593	1017	132	302	2283	904		1701	2981	202
Coverage: East Pond	abcd	bcd	bcd	bcd	abcd	abcd	abcd	abcd	abcd	abcd
West Pond					e		e			

* = breeds locally () = reported by others ✓ = numbers not counted

Table 2. 1983 Arrival Dates of Adults and Juveniles Plus Five Year Span of Arrival and Average Arrival Dates

	1983		Adults		Juveniles	
	1st ad	1st juv.	5 yr. span of arr. dates (yrs. noted)	aver. arr. date	5 yr. span of arr. dates (yrs. noted)	aver. arr. date
Plover, Black-bellied	late July	(8/30)	late July*		8/30-9/11 (3)	Sept. 2
Lesser Golden-	8/23	9/10	8/14-25 (4)	Aug. 21	9/1-11 (3)	Sept. 7
Semipalmated	7/9	8/22	7/9-11 (3)	July 10	8/11-22 (4)	Aug. 18
Yellowlegs, Greater	(6/22)	8/7	6/22-30 (3)	June 27	8/7-15 (3)	Aug. 13
Lesser	7/1	8/6	6/26-7/1 (4)	June 29	8/1-9 (5)	Aug. 5
Ruddy Turnstone	(7/20)	8/21	7/20-23 (3)	July 22	8/21-28 (3)	Aug. 24
Red Knot	7/17	8/22	7/17-22 (3)	July 19	8/18-22 (3)	Aug. 21
Sanderling	7/16	8/26	7/16-22 (3)	July 19	8/23-28 (3)	Aug. 26
Sandpiper, Semipalmated	6/25	8/9	6/25-7/10 (4)	July 1	8/9-15 (4)	Aug. 12
Western	(7/12)	8/12	7/12-24 (3)	July 16	8/12-22 (3)	Aug. 17
Least	late June	8/6	6/26-28 (3)	June 27	7/26-8/8 (4)	Aug. 3
White-rumped	(7/21)	9/18	7/18-31 (3)	July 23	9/13-10/2 (4)	Sept. 20
Pectoral	7/16	(8/26)	7/11-16 (3)	July 15	8/22-29 (3)	Aug. 26
Dunlin	7/12	9/18	earliest 7/12**		9/5-18 (4)	Sept. 13
Stilt Sandpiper	7/20	8/7	7/12-20 (3)	July 16	7/26-8/22 (5)	Aug. 12
Dowitcher, Short-billed	7/1	8/9	6/26-7/3 (4)	June 29	8/8-15 (5)	Aug. 10
Long-billed	7/23	10/8	7/18-23 (3)	July 21	9/26-10/8 (3)	Oct. 2

* difficult to determine, lingering non-breeding birds present every summer.

** only scattered adults before the 2nd week of September.

**Table 3. Summary of Shorebird Surveys
1981-83 at Jamaica Bay Wildlife Refuge, New York**

	<u>June</u> <u>21-30</u>	<u>July</u> <u>1-10</u>	<u>July</u> <u>11-20</u>	<u>July</u> <u>21-31</u>	<u>August</u> <u>1-10</u>
No. Visits in Period	4	10	10	10	9
Plover, Black-bellied	1-1	1-2	5-1.4	9-10	9-75
Lesser Golden-Semipalmated		2-6	10-20	10-222	9-530
*Killdeer	4-7	10-11	10-13	10-12	9-8.6
*American Oystercatcher	3-4.3	6-4.8	8-7.4	9-6.3	6-8.5
American Avocet					
Yellowlegs, Greater	3-2.7	8-12	10-34	10-97	9-128
Lesser	1-4	9-12	10-28	10-44	9-62
Solitary Sandpiper			1-1	1-1	
*Willet	2-2.5	1-1	4-1.2	5-2.2	6-1
*Sandpiper, Spotted	1-2	7-4.1	10-4.7	10-4.6	9-3.3
Upland					1-2
Whimbrel			1-1	2-1	
Godwit, Hudsonian			4-1.5	8-2	8-2.3
Marbled		1-1		1-1	
Ruddy Turnstone			1-1	10-17	9-58
Red Knot			4-4.3	10-104	9-272
Sanderling			5-11	10-61	9-111
Sandpiper, Semipalmated	2-1.5	4-14	10-198	10-996	9-1548
Western			5-2.2	9-2.2	7-1.9
Little Stint			2-1		
Sandpiper, Least	2-3	6-16	10-86	10-79	9-62
White-rumped			1-1	4-1.5	9-4.4
Baird's					
Pectoral			7-2.7	10-2.9	5-2.4
Sharp-tailed			3-1		
Dunlin			2-1	1-1	3-1
Sandpiper, Curlew			2-1	7-1.1	6-1.2
Stilt			5-4.2	10-6.9	9-14
Buff-breasted					
Ruff		1-1	1-1		
Dowitcher, Short-billed	1-3	9-164	10-485	10-637	9-460
Long-billed			2-6	10-3.3	9-11
Common Snipe					1-1
*American Woodcock	1-1	2-1			
Phalarope, Wilson's				2-1	2-1
Red-necked					
Total Species in Period	11	14	27	26	25
Average Species/Visit	5.2	6.8	14.3	19.8	20.0
Av. Birds/Visit Censused	19	200	894	2400	3351

* = breeds locally

visits noted in period — average/visit censused

**Table 3. Summary of Shorebird Surveys
1981-83 at Jamaica Bay Wildlife Refuge, New York**

	August 11-20	August 21-31	Sept. 1-10	Sept. 11-20	Sept. 21-30
No. Visits in Period	10	12	11	10	8
Plover, Black-bellied	10-353	12-552	11-503	10-249	6-206
Lesser Golden- Semipalmated	1-1	3-1.3	5-1.4	9-6.6	7-5.3
*Killdeer	10-782	12-669	11-215	10-75	8-38
*American Oystercatcher	10-5.7	12-4.9	10-7.7	10-7	8-9.6
American Avocet	8-13	10-6.5	9-4.3	5-6.2	3-3
Yellowlegs, Greater		2-1	2-1	4-1	2-1
Lesser	10-182	12-288	11-257	10-268	8-64
Solitary Sandpiper	10-42	12-42	11-30	10-24	8-21
*Willet		1-1	3-1	4-1.3	
*Sandpiper, Spotted Upland	8-1.8	10-2.3	7-3.4	7-3.9	5-3.6
Whimbrel	9-3.2	8-2.5	11-1.3	8-1.3	5-1
Godwit, Hudsonian	1-1				
Marbled	3-1.7	4-1.3		4-2.8	2-3.5
Ruddy Turnstone	8-2.8	9-2	8-2.8	8-1.1	6-1.7
Red Knot		1-1	9-1.3	9-1.2	5-1
Sanderling	10-107	12-44	11-18	8-9.2	4-9
Sandpiper, Semipalmated	10-387	12-213	11-54	7-76	4-73
Western	10-125	12-96	10-92	10-2.4	3-1.3
Little Stint	10-1432	12-1109	11-374	10-241	8-147
Sandpiper, Least	5-1.2	12-6.8	11-9.3	9-6	6-1.8
White-rumped					
Baird's	10-51	12-54	11-42	10-34	8-27
Pectoral	10-3.9	12-10	10-19	8-6	8-3.1
Sharp-tailed		2-1	2-1	4-1	1-1
Dunlin	5-1.6	7-4.2	8-2.5	10-4.8	8-15
Sandpiper, Curlew					
Stilt	7-1.3	6-1.5	10-1.2	10-25	8-29
Buff-breasted	2-2	1-1			
Ruff	10-17	12-13	11-23	10-12	8-8.1
Dowitcher, Short-billed			2-1	4-1	
Long-billed	10-209	12-114	11-56	10-37	8-22
Common Snipe	10-14	11-8.1	11-9.5	9-3.6	5-7.8
*American Woodcock		1-1	1-1		1-1
Phalarope, Wilson's		1-1	2-1	1-1	1-1
Red-necked	6-1.3	9-1.9	1-1	4-2.5	
Total Species in Period		2-2	7-1.7	1-1	
Average Species/Visit	26	32	31	31	28
Av. Birds/Visit Censused	20.3	21.3	22.5	23.4	19.2
	3736	3266	1735	1106	524

* = breeds locally

visits noted in period — average/visit censused

**Table 3. Summary of Shorebird Surveys
1981-83 at Jamaica Bay Wildlife Refuge, New York**

No. Visits in Period	October	October	October	Maxima	
	1-10	11-20	21-31	No.	Date(s)
Plover, Black-bellied	8-170	9-72	7-258	1127	9/ 3/83
Lesser Golden-Semipalmated	4-2	3-1.3	1-3	21	9/11/83
*Killdeer	8-8.3	8-12	5-5.2	1203	8/18/83
*American Oystercatcher	2-1.5			26	7/ 9/83
American Avocet	3-1	2-1		25	8/14/82
Yellowlegs, Greater	8-74	9-96	7-69	1	15x, 8/28-10/12
Lesser	8-15	7-16	6-7.5	519	9/ 6/82
Solitary Sandpiper				102	8/ 1/82
*Willet	6-2.2	4-1.3	4-1	1	10x, 7/17-9/19
*Sandpiper, Spotted		2-1	2-1	6	8/22/83, 9/3/83
Upland				8	7/18/82
Whimbrel				2	8/ 2/81
Godwit, Hudsonian	5-1.8	6-2	3-2	6	9/24/83
Marbled	3-1	4-1.8	1-2	8	8/15/81
Ruddy Turnstone	7-2.9	3-1.7	4-2.3	2	9x, 9/4-10/25
Red Knot	5-25	5-6.8	6-25	235	8/18/83
Sanderling	3-3.7	4-6.8	6-27	736	8/ 9/83
Sandpiper, Semipalmated	8-82	8-35	7-11	310	8/ 6/83
Western	5-1.6	6-2.2	2-3	2235	8/12/83
Little Stint				24	8/26/83, 9/17/83
Sandpiper, Least	8-9.4	4-2	2-1	1	7/17-22/83
White-rumped	6-6.2	9-4.4	6-5.2	315	7/18/82
Baird's	2-1	1-1		58	9/ 7/81
Pectoral	8-6.9	6-4.2	5-2.4	1	12x, 8/22-10/11
Sharp-tailed				42	9/24/83
Dunlin	8-109	9-87	7-779	1	7/18-24/81, 7/16/83
Sandpiper, Curlew				1950	11/ 8/83
Stilt	7-12	7-7.3	5-2.6	2	4x, 7/23-8/16
Buff-breasted				59	9/ 6/81
Ruff				1	6x, 9/5-18
Dowitcher, Short-billed	6-15	2-3	1-1	1	7/10/82, 7/19/81
Long-billed	4-5.8	7-6.3	4-6.5	805	8/ 1/82
Common Snipe	1-1		1-1	22	3x, 8/2-30
*American Woodcock		1-2	1-1	1	6x, 8/1-11/5
Phalarope, Wilson's	1-1			2	10/17/81
Red-necked				5	9/17/83
				3	8/29/82
Total Species in Period	26	25	24		
Average Species/Visit	17.8	14.6	14.0	28	9/11/83
Av. Birds/Visit Censused	540	346	1201	5432	8/18/83

* = breeds locally

visits noted in period — average/visit censused

FEEDING STRATEGIES AMONG SYMPATRIC PASSERINES IN WINTER

PETER CAPAINOLA

Abstract

Five bird feeders offering various types of food were observed during a five-day period in winter to determine food preferences of American Tree Sparrows (*Spizella arborea*), American Goldfinches (*Carduelis tristis*), and Evening Grosbeaks (*Coccothraustes vespertinus*). Quantification of visiting frequencies of each species to each food type revealed a significant preference of a specific food type on the part of each of the three species. The goldfinches and grosbeaks preferred sunflower seeds, while tree sparrows visited millet feeders with higher frequency. It was determined that competition avoidance can be present among sympatric species on the basis of differences in food selection, or in a possible temporal cycling of foraging for the same food type.

Introduction

Geis (1980) measured relative attractiveness of various seeds used to feed wild birds. He determined that feeding preferences among various species were strikingly different. Harrison (1979) substantiated the findings of Geis in a similar study that encompassed a broader geographical range. Certain passerines exhibit feeding preferences on the basis of microhabitats (Morse 1970). Ricklefs (1973) discussed the ecological parameter of competition avoidance as the mechanism influencing the foraging behavior of Morse's (1970) warblers (Parulidae). More recently, Morse (1980) investigated foraging, nesting and territorial behavior of two sympatric warblers.

The objectives of this study were to quantify intrafamilial food selection among sympatric birds on winter territories, and to measure degrees of euryphagy and stenophagy among three species of seed-eating birds.

Methods and Materials

Observation was conducted from 20-25 January 1981, at feeder stations on Butterville Road near New Paltz, Ulster County. Five square wooden feeding trays measuring 20 x 20 cm were placed on top of poles 1.2 m in height. The supported feeders were positioned at intervals of 2.5 m along the edge of an open field comprised of vegetation no higher than 1 meter. Five food types: sunflower seed, millet seed, corn, bread, and suet were placed separately in each tray and rotated on a daily basis to avoid sample biasing. Visits to the feeders by American Tree Sparrows (*Spizella arborea*), American Goldfinches (*Carduelis tristis*), and Evening Grosbeaks (*Coccothraustes vespertinus*) were ob-

served and tallied until each species had accrued 20 visits for each position of the feeders, totalling 100 visits for each species during the five-day study period. One individual perching on a feeder and pecking at the tray constituted one visit. Birds were identified by species using field glasses from a distance of 36 m, and identification verified by field characteristics described by Peterson (1980) and Robbins *et al.* (1966).

Data were compiled and analyzed using chi-square (X^2) and 2×2 contingency tables (Bailey 1972) to determine significance of food preferences among the three species. Significance was fixed at $p < .05$.

Results

Total numbers of visits to each food type by each species are illustrated in Table 1. American Tree Sparrows visited the millet feeder with a significantly greater frequency than any other food type ($X^2 = 50.0$; $p < .001$). American Goldfinches and Evening Grosbeaks preferred sunflower seeds to the other available food types ($X^2 = 109.52$; $p < .001$; $X^2 = 46.08$; $p < .001$, respectively). Comparison of preferences of the two latter species for sunflower seeds did not vary significantly ($X^2 = 1.41$; $p > .05$), indicating that both goldfinches and grosbeaks prefer the same food type during foraging.

Discussion

Competition avoidance between tree sparrows and other seed-eaters may be attributed to the distinct differences in patterns of food selection among the various species. Although all three species visited the millet feeder, the high frequency of visits by tree sparrows (Table 1) suggests that this species has no significant competition for this specific food item. Avoidance of competition for food in goldfinches and grosbeaks cannot be explained by differences in food preferences, since both species visited the sunflower feeder with the greatest frequency (Table 1). All three species exhibited a high degree of stenophagy as indicated by the relatively high values of chi-square during statistical analysis of the data. This eliminates the possibility that of the two species preferring the same food type, one was utilizing a broader food base to avoid direct competition with the other species. The two possible mechanisms functioning to reduce or eliminate direct competition between the goldfinches and grosbeaks may be the temporal cycling of feeding patterns and the saturation of feeding territories with abundant food. Although observations of the diurnal cycling of visits to the feeders by various species were not recorded, it appeared that grosbeaks frequented the feeders in greater numbers during early morning hours soon after sunrise, and tapered off during mid-morning and later morning hours. Goldfinches appeared to start feeding later than the grosbeaks, reaching their greatest numbers around mid-day. The disparity between the apparent densities of the two species at different times of

the day may indicate that the goldfinches and grosbeaks are to some extent avoiding direct competition for sunflower seeds by staggering their feeding cycles during the day.

Saturating the feeding territory with large quantities of preferred food items may reduce competitive behavior, such as agonistic encounters when different species feed together. Reduction of the quantities of food types at each feeder may shift the pattern found in this study, forcing one or more species to use a wider food base to avoid interspecific competition. Further investigation of feeding cycles and of food *vs.* population density is required before it can be determined that either of these hypothesized mechanisms is operating to reduce competition among these species, and is beyond the scope of this study.

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200 Franklin Street, Patchogue, New York 11772

**Table 1. Frequencies of visits to five food types
by three species of seed-eating birds.**

	Sunflower Seeds	Suet	Corn	Bread	Millet
American Tree Sparrow	0	0	9	16	75
Evening Grosbeak	74	0	1	1	14
American Goldfinch	81	0	9	4	6

CHARACTERISTICS OF A GREAT BLACK-BACKED GULL COLONY ON LAKE ONTARIO, NEW YORK, 1981-1983

D. V. CHIP WESELOH

From three to five pairs of Great Black-backed Gulls (*Larus marinus*) nested annually on Little Galloo Island, Lake Ontario, New York, from 1981 to 1983. These represent the first annually reoccurring multiple nestings of this species on the Great Lakes. In 1981 and 1982 clutches were initiated on 19 and 22 April, respectively, and early phenology was similar to that of Herring Gulls and Black-crowned Night-Herons. Clutch size ($X = 2.8$) and egg measurements ($X = 78.7 \times 53.4$ mm) were comparable to those of other Great Black-backed Gull populations. The Great Black-backed Gulls nested among both Ring-billed and Herring Gulls. Most pairs nested on an elevated cobblestone beach ridge on the west end of the island.

In a recent review of the status of the Great Black-backed Gull (*Larus marinus*) in the Great Lakes, Angrehn *et al.* (1979) documented ten nestings between 1954 and 1979. The nestings occurred on three different islands in Lake Huron and Lake Ontario and had a maximum frequency of one nesting per year (Angrehn *et al.* 1979, Peck and James 1983). In 1981, four pairs of Great Black-backed Gulls were found nesting on a single island, Little Galloo Island, in eastern Lake Ontario in New York (Blokpoel and Weseloh 1982). The latter nestings not only represented the first by this species in the U.S. waters of the Great Lakes, but also the first occurrence of multiple nesting (more than one per year) by this species on any island on the Great Lakes. In 1982 and 1983 I visited Little Galloo Island (Figure 1) to assess populations of Herring Gulls (*L. argentatus*) and Double-crested Cormorants (*Phalacrocorax auritus*) and to search for continued nesting by Great Black-backed Gulls. In this paper I report on the continued nesting of small numbers of Great Black-backed Gulls on Little Galloo Island and present data from 1981-1983 on their population size, nesting phenology, nest site characteristics and egg measurements.

During 1981-83, I visited Little Galloo Island on 14 occasions: 1981-23 April, 7, 11, 12 & 27 May, 8 June and 24 July; 1982-20 & 27 April, 13 & 14 May and 23 July; 1983-18 May and 16 July. On each visit I first scanned the island (with binoculars) for Great Black-backed Gulls present on the island. I then examined any suspected territories, recorded the contents of all known nests and measured all Great Black-backed Gull eggs found. On visits in July, other duties prevented me from making specific searches for these gulls.

The results of my surveys are presented in Table 1. From three to

five pairs of Great Black-backed Gulls nested on Little Galloo Island annually between 1981 and 1983. Their early nesting phenology was similar to that of other "early" nesting species on the island, e.g., Herring Gulls and Black-crowned Night-Herons (*Nycticorax nycticorax*). On 23 April 1981 Herring Gulls, Great Black-backed Gulls and Black-crowned Night-Herons had 57%, 25% and 17% completed clutches, respectively. On 27 April 1982 the two gull species showed 24% and 20% clutch completion, respectively. Clutch initiation for Great Black-backed Gulls in those years would have been 19 and 22 April, respectively. These data show close agreement with a clutch initiation date of 24 April determined for a colony of this species on the coast of Maine (Butler and Janes-Butler 1982). They are slightly later than the 13 April clutch initiation date for Great Black-backed Gulls in Rhode Island (Erwin 1971). Mean clutch size as reported in the present study (2.8), is similar to that determined on the Atlantic Coast - 2.8 in Maine (Butler and Janes-Butler 1982) and 3.0 in Rhode Island (Erwin 1971).

My visitation schedule, especially in 1981 and 1982, allowed me to document fully only the early phenology of the Great Black-backed Gulls on Little Galloo Island. I was often not able to determine what percent of the eggs had hatched or if the young had fledged. On 27 May 1981, I observed one nest that contained only one egg; it was addled. A second nest had only two eggs, both eventually hatched. A third nest which contained three eggs in earlier visits held two mobile young, approximately four to seven days old (Blokpoel and Weseloh 1982). These incidents represent the only egg mortality and hatching of Great Black-backed Gulls I observed from 1981 to 1983 and I witnessed no fledging. However, I have no reason to believe that young Great Black-backed Gulls did not fledge each year.

In each year more than half the pairs of Great Black-backed Gulls nested on a cobblestone beach ridge on the west end of the island (Table 1). This ridge separated a low area, which often contained 2-4 cm of water in the spring, from Lake Ontario (see Figure 1, Area A). Other nestings occurred on grass covered areas, 160-200 m east of the cobblestone beach. In 1981 and 1982 one of the grass sites was at exactly the same location, i.e., against a partially buried 22-liter (5-gallon) can. In 1982, the second territory on grass (but without a nest) was located near a fenced Herring Gull study area. In 1983 this site was again occupied and a nest was present. The nests on the cobblestone ridge also appeared in the same general area each year. Hence, it appears that there may be a reasonable degree of nest-site fidelity among Great Black-backed Gulls nesting on Little Galloo Island.

Egg measurements are presented in Table 1. Mean length and width (78.7 x 53.4 mm) appear comparable to those given by Bent (1921) for

Great Black-backed Gulls from New England (77.9 x 54.2 mm). Except for greatest length, the extreme length and width measurements also are similar, *i.e.*, Little Galloo Island: 82.8 x 57.0 and 74.0 x 50.3; New England: 86.5 x 57.5 and 73.0 x 51.0 (Bent 1921). There were no significant differences in the length of eggs in the three years but the eggs in 1981 were significantly narrower than those in 1982 (Mann-Whitney test, $P < .01$). The mean weight (\pm S.D.) of three fresh Great Black-backed Gull eggs in 1982, all from one clutch, was 126.3 ± 2.5 gm.

Nesting neighbors of the Great Black-backed Gulls included both Herring Gulls and Ring-billed Gulls (*L. delawarensis*). On the cobblestone ridge (which measured approximately 10 x 50 m) there were approximately ten pairs of Herring Gulls nesting each year. The area near the fenced study area harbored approximately 30-40 pairs of Herring Gulls whereas the area near the 22-liter can contained only Ring-billed Gulls. In areas where Herring Gulls nested, the distance between a Great Black-backed Gull nest and the nearest Herring Gull nest was estimated to be similar to the distance between adjacent Herring Gull nests. However, in the area where Ring-billed Gulls nested, an area approximately 5 m in radius around the Great Black-backed Gull nests was devoid of Ring-billed Gulls. This figure is similar to the nearest neighbor distance of 6.7 m determined for Great Black-backed Gulls nesting in Maine (Butler and Janes-Butler 1982). Also, it is strikingly different from the nearest-neighbor distance of Ring-billed Gulls on Little Galloo Island (approximately 0.5 [-1.0] m, pers. obs.).

The review of Angrehn *et al.* (1979) included nest records up to 1979. Since that time, in addition to nestings on Little Galloo Island, known nestings of Great Black-backed Gulls on the Great Lakes occurred in 1981 and 1982: one pair on the Eastern Headland, Toronto, Lake Ontario (H. Blokpoel, pers. comm.); and in 1983: one pair with at least one chick on Snake Island, Kingston, Lake Ontario (Weir 1983, and D. V. Weseloh, pers. obs.). Hence, except at Little Galloo Island, the Great Black-backed Gull apparently still nests only sporadically on the Great Lakes, with most records on Lake Ontario.

Evidence suggests that the present small colony of Great Black-backed Gulls may have first nested on Little Galloo Island between 1977 and 1981. Scharf (1978) visited the island in 1976 and 1977, Ludwig (1974 and pers. comm.) visited the island in 1971 and Belknap (1950, 1955, 1961, 1968, 1979) made many earlier visits to it. None of these authors reported the presence of nesting or loafing Great Black-backed Gulls. The origin of the Great Black-backed Gulls nesting on Little Galloo Island is not known. However, Angrehn *et al.* (1979) present evidence from banding returns indicating that most Great Black-backed Gulls recovered in the Great Lakes area originated from colonies in the St. Lawrence River.

The Great Black-backed Gull is a marine species and the Great Lakes represent the western limit of its breeding range (A.O.U. 1984, Eagles and McCauley 1982). It is not known to be greatly or rapidly expanding its breeding range, although small colonies of recent origin are known from Lake Champlain on the New York-Vermont border (D. Kibbe, *in litt*). The factor(s) which may be limiting the Great Black-backed Gull's distribution in interior North America have not been assessed. The species may be sensitive to a freshwater environment during the breeding season, it may not be able to contend with the high numbers and densities of other breeding colonial waterbirds, *e.g.*, Ring-billed Gulls, or other factors may be at work.

In 1968 Ludwig (1968) predicted that the Great Black-backed Gull "seemed poised at the edge of the Great Lakes for an invasion." As Angrehn *et al.* (1979) have pointed out, and as the present report shows, the "invasion" has yet to occur. However, it appears that Great Black-backed Gulls have established their first, small but viable, breeding "colony" on the Great Lakes at Little Galloo Island, Lake Ontario. It will be interesting to see if their Great Lakes breeding population increases over the next several years as any surviving birds from the Little Galloo colony attain sexual maturity and return there (or elsewhere on the Great Lakes) to breed.

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Canadian Wildlife Service, Canada Centre for Inland Waters
P.O. Box 5050, Burlington, Ontario, L7R 4A6

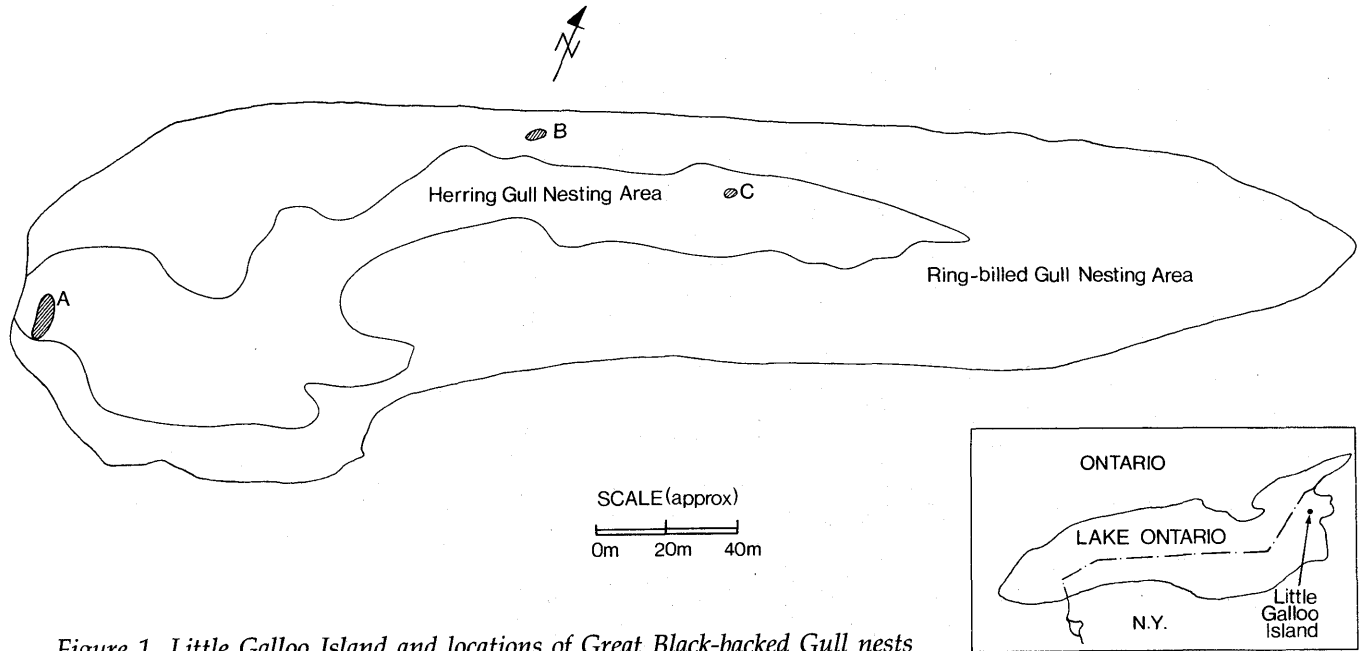


Figure 1. Little Galloo Island and locations of Great Black-backed Gull nests (diagonal shading), 1981-1983.
Herring Gull nesting area redrawn with modifications from Scharf (1978).

Table 1. Nest and Egg Characteristics of Great Black-backed Gulls, Little Galloo Island, 1981-1983.

Year	No. of Territories (nests if different)	Date of 1st known com- pleted clutch	Mean clutch size	No. Eggs	Nesting/Territory substrate (N)	Egg Measurements: Mean Length & Width + S.D. (N)
1981	4	23 April	2.3	9	Cobblestone (3) grass (1)	78.1±2.3×51.3±1.0* (7)
1982	6 (5)	26 April	3.0	15	Cobblestone (3) grass (2)	78.9±1.9×54.1±2.2* (15)
1983	3	18 May [↓]	3.0	9	Cobblestone (2) grass (1)	78.7±2.6×53.8±2.9 (9)
Overall	13 (12)		2.8	33		78.7±2.2×53.4±2.3 (31)

* Significantly different from one another, Mann-Whitney Test $P < 0.01$.

[↓] In 1983 all three nests were complete by the time of my first visit on 18 May.

FEDERATION OF NEW YORK STATE BIRD CLUBS 36th ANNUAL MEETING

The 36th Annual Meeting of the Federation of New York State Bird Clubs was held Friday, 7 October, and Saturday, 8 October, in Fredonia. The Lake Erie Bird Club acted as host club.

The Chairman, Morgan Jones, convened the meeting at 2:40 p.m. Friday, 7 October 1983. Roll call was taken. Nineteen member clubs were represented. The minutes of the 35th Annual Meeting were accepted as published in *The Kingbird* Vol. XXXIII, No. 3, Summer, 1983.

Membership: A membership report, sent in by Membership Chairperson Myrna Hemmerick, was distributed. At this date 651 members are paid up, with several months still to go before our years end. Report accepted and filed.

It was moved, seconded and unanimously passed that the Chenango Bird Club be accepted into the Federation.

Treasurer's Report was distributed by John Forness, Treasurer. A comparison sheet with 1982 was also circulated. Special attention was called to a \$500 donation from Mrs. Harold Mitchell in honor of her husband who passed away this year. The Executive Committee is still working on just how to use it. Report accepted and filed.

The Kingbird. Morgan Jones announced that Co-editor E. Levine reported a healthy backlog of good articles. Despite rising costs the Executive Committee has agreed that the quality of the material presented by *The Kingbird* is of first importance and the editors have been authorized to continue using space as needed. Report accepted.

Breeding Bird Atlas. Gordon Meade reported sending out proposals to 25 corporations, most of which were rejected. However, Rochester Gas and Electric had donated \$500, Consolidated Edison \$500, Niagara Mohawk \$1,000 with promise of equal donation next year, Lewis Kibler of Jamestown \$250, and Joe Taylor \$3,000 this year and next year to be used as the FNYSBC's share of Janet Carroll's salary. Hudson River Foundation has recently asked for 15 copies of the proposal, a hopeful sign. The value of the contribution of the DEC was stressed. It accounts for such major items as data storage, computer range maps for species, most of Janet Carroll's salary and payment of 5 "blockbusters." Also \$7,000 has been freed from "Return a Gift to Wildlife" funds to be used over a six month period. Gordon was thanked for the excellence of the service he is performing as chairman of this project.

Lillian C. Stoner Award. There are two recipients this year: Lois Chapman of Allegany Co. Bird Club and David Gagney of Jamestown.

John J. Elliott Award goes to Norma and Bill Siebenheller for their article on the first nesting of Blue Grosbeak in N.Y.S., *The Kingbird* Vol. XXXII No. 4, Fall 1982.

Nominating Committee, consisting of M. Borko, Chairman, A. Jones and M. A. Sunderlin, presented the following slate of officers for the coming year: President, Charles R. Smith; Vice President, Harriet T. Marsi; Treasurer, William

Vaughan; Corresponding Secretary, Constance Wilkins; Recording Secretary, Berna Weismann. It was moved, seconded and unanimously passed that the Secretary cast one ballot for the acceptance of this slate.

1984 Annual Meeting will be hosted by the Cayuga Bird Club and The Laboratory of Ornithology, Cornell University, in Ithaca. 1985 Annual Meeting: The North Country Bird Club in Watertown is expressing interest.

New Business: R. Sloss asked the group to consider adjusting our fiscal year to correspond with the fall annual meeting. Harold Smith spoke of the Walter Benning Scholarship Fund being promoted by The Eaton Birding Society. Awards are to be made to graduate students working in ornithology. The fund will be administered by the Laboratory of Ornithology, Cornell University. Before any awards can be made, \$5,000 must be raised. At present \$4,177 has been raised. Individual donations are welcome.

The meeting temporarily adjourned to reconvene, Saturday, 8 October, at 10:30 a.m. in Jewett Hall, SUNY Fredonia, M. Jones presiding.

The Auditing Committee consisting of R. Sloss and S. Dempsey reported books of the Federation in order. Report accepted.

Bibliography Report as presented by A. Benton accepted.

Waterfowl Report accepted as delivered to incoming President Charles Smith.

Breeding Bird Atlas. Janet Carroll reported that the processing procedure was progressing steadily. Over 1,100 "green sheets" have been worked through to date representing only four regions. Janet Carroll and C. Smith attended the International Conference on Bird Censusing held in England this fall. Many European countries were represented. Sessions on use of the data after the Atlas is compiled were especially useful to her.

Words from DEC: Eugene McCaffrey. Breeding Bird Atlas: a recent contract with Cornell Laboratory of Ornithology, DEC and The Federation has brought Janet Carroll's salary up to a professional level. Eagle Return Program: This ran into a severe snag. Twenty-two birds had been brought to the Adirondacks to be hacked in two towers. In one cage, fowl pox developed and several birds were taken back to Cornell. Eventually 16 birds were released. One of these was recovered later, dead of anemia. Testing for the source of this anemia is being conducted. Six birds are still at Delmar. Hemlock Lake Nest: two young placed in nest, banded; Perk's Lake nest: two young of the nesting pair were banded and radioed. One bird, taking to the air, flew 85 miles to the St. Lawrence in one hour. Many seem to zero in on some of the swamps prepared for wildlife by DEC. A "soft release" method is used opening the cage at night and permitting the birds to emerge on their own. Peregrine Falcon: the NYC nestings will be reported on in detail at the Paper Session. Bob Miller: **Return a Gift to Wildlife** raised close to \$1,800,000. Five percent contributed. Average contribution was less than \$5.00. Estimates had been for less so DEC has only \$800,000 to use before April 1. Allocation has been decided as follows: Endangered Species, \$147,000; Public Information Booklets, \$120,000; Biological Survey of Streams and Lakes, \$75,000; Analysis of contaminants, \$60,000; Public Use Facilities, \$50,000; Master Habitat Data Bank, \$20,000; Marine Mammals Training, \$5,000;

Breeding Bird Atlas, \$7,000; Workshop for Wildlife Rehabilitation, \$5,000; Agricultural Crop Damage Publications, \$24,000; Land Acquisition (habitat of Indiana Bat), \$55,000; Improved Habitat Management of State Wildlife Management Areas, \$20,000; Additional Wildlife Staff NYC, \$110,000. Remainder to promote Return a Gift to Wildlife for next year when they expect \$2,500,000. Money must be spent by 4 April. Certificate not yet received so no funds as yet.

Meeting adjourned.

Respectfully submitted,
Harriet Marsi, Sec'y.

At 5 p.m. at the conclusion of the Paper Session Ron Dodson addressed the group. He stressed the importance of writing our Governor urging him to sign the Budget Certificate immediately. Ron also urged the group to start lobbying now for next year's share of these funds.

At the Annual Dinner the Nominating Committee for 1984 was selected, consisting of Morgan Jones, Chairman, Steve Dempsey and Bill Lee. An Auditing Committee consisting of Allan Klonick and Harold Smith was selected and approved. The following resolutions were passed unanimously:

WHEREAS the location of the 36th Annual Meeting of the Federation of New York State Bird Clubs was in doubt less than ten months prior to the date of the meeting; and WHEREAS, the little Lake Erie Bird Club enthusiastically volunteered to host the meeting; and WHEREAS, the meeting and associated activities have proceeded in an efficient, effective and enjoyable manner,

It is resolved by the Federation of New York State Bird Clubs to extend their sincere and profound thanks to the Lake Erie Bird Club for their outstanding efforts in the Federation's behalf.

WHEREAS economically sound management of New York State's natural resources requires basic knowledge of where those resources are found, and WHEREAS the Federation of New York State Bird Clubs entered into an agreement with DEC in 1981 to conduct a faunal survey of the breeding birds of New York State, and WHEREAS more than 1,200 volunteers have already contributed tens of thousands of hours of labor toward completion of a breeding bird atlas for New York State, and WHEREAS the 1984 field season is deemed critical to completion of the New York State breeding bird atlas project,

Therefore, be it resolved that the Federation of New York State Bird Clubs, assembled at its annual meeting at Fredonia, NY, on 8 October, 1983, *strongly urges* DEC Commissioner Henry Williams to increase current funding levels by at least \$25,000 during fiscal year 1984/85 to assure adequate completion of the 1984 field session and be it further resolved that the Commissioner take the necessary steps to assure proper funding levels for the breeding bird atlas project until the field work is completed and the results are published in final form.

NOTES AND OBSERVATIONS

Northern Shrike-Blue Jay Interplay: A regular visitor at Amity Lake from 8-27 January 1984, a Northern Shrike (*Lanius excubitor*) usually appeared with a noisily protesting flock of seven to 18 Blue Jays (*Cyanocitta cristata*). At other times the sudden disappearance or "freezing" of small birds at the feeder betrayed its presence. Slightly smaller than the Blue Jays and with no crest, the bird was light gray above with a dusky-white faintly barred breast and a black eye mask ending at the hooked bill. When I was in the field near Amity Lake on 25 January, 18 screaming Blue Jays followed the shrike as it flew up to perch near the top of a 35-foot White Ash about 75 feet from me. All but one of the jays flew on past, but one lit near the shrike which began calling a musical soft *Zree-zree-zree*, each note individually descending. Although the jays quieted down, the shrike continued its song(?), changing it at times to a short musical *chilrrr*, ascending at the end, or a lovely watery chuckling. As I watched using 7 x 50 binoculars, it suddenly flew to my left about 50 feet to perch ten feet up in a big hawthorn where the single Blue Jay immediately followed to a branch two feet above it. Here the shrike fanned its tail, displaying the white outer feathers, and bowed repeatedly, still "singing" and sometimes adding a thin, short, descending "Meow" to its repertoire. The jay, too, began to bow and fan its tail showing its outer white tail feathers, but insofar as I could determine, making no call. The interplay continued about three minutes before both flew away out of sight. Although the significance of this mutual showing off escapes me, it was a pretty sight.

Vivian Mills Pitzrick, Amity Lake, Belmont, New York 14813

HIGHLIGHTS OF THE WINTER SEASON

ROBERT SPAHN

Reviewing past highlights, it appears that the weather for most seasons can be termed unusual in some sense to the extent of modifying bird populations. This season was no exception. The winter started relatively warm, with many half hardies lingering through the Christmas count period, but then temperatures plunged to record lows through late December and much of January, with several regions reporting suspected high avian mortality. Precipitation was generally average to well above average in December, below in January, then average to above in February. The two week thaw in mid to late February affected all regions, bringing in early spring migrants or, in the case of Region 9, causing wintering waterfowl to depart early. The season ended with a major storm bringing heavy snow to western and northern areas and mush to sleet and rain farther east and south. Note the comment in Region 7 that this was one of the cleaner storms, "a snowfall only four times as acid as it should be." All in all, it was probably a relatively typical winter on a long range scale.

Much of the data assembled for this season's reports comes from Christmas Bird Counts (CBC's) and the state waterfowl count. In both cases we have long term comparable data against which to judge the results. In scanning the reports you will find a mix of record highs and lows varying from region to region or even among counts in a single region. Many of the highs are among the waterfowl and are well distributed across the state. This certainly reflects the warm, open weather of early December. With even a casual study of the regional reports, we are reminded of the tremendous difference between birding on the coast and elsewhere in the state. Region 10 once again reported more species than all of the others combined. Region 9 shows some similarity, but is only a shadow of the coastal giant. Lake Ontario provides its neighboring regions about two-thirds of the species total of the coast, while land-locked regions drop to two-thirds of that, and the Adirondack birders have the toughest bird-finding time of all, compensated by the presence of species most of us can view only by visiting there on vacations. Many of the half hardies asterisked and written up in detail for CBC's in Regions 1-8 are found in tens in Region 9 and multitudes on the Region 10 CBC's.

From the data amassed in the regional reports we can pull some general trends and contrasts. First, many of the "winter species" were absent or present only in low numbers; winter finches, while all recorded except Hoary Redpoll, did not meet hopes for an invasion

following last year's sparse reports—maybe next year?; Snowy Owls were generally few; Rough-legged Hawks were average to low in all but Regions 3 & 4, where the meadow vole population was very high; irruptives were generally scarce; and Lapland Longspurs and Snow Buntings were present, but certainly not widespread in large flocks. Waterfowl were typically good, with scattered very high counts including: 1,600 Tundra Swans in Region 1 on 23 February; 1,775 Snow Geese on 25 February in Region 5, three times the previous high; and 10,480 Common Mergansers in Region 1 on 17 December. The pseudo-Spring of mid-February started migrants on their way, with early waterfowl moving in large numbers, flocks of blackbirds and crows on the move, hawk flights at both Braddock Bay and Derby Hill, Killdeer arriving, and American Woodcock displaying in several regions.

Scanning back through the reports in more detail one can, as usual, find numerous interesting observations and regional contrasts for individual species. I'll provide a sample of these to stir you to further reading. Horned Grebes staged a massive invasion, with large numbers observed in fallouts from storms and on CBC's upstate in December, then as huge concentrations on the coast—740 on 4 February and 2,000+, a new state high, on 19 February, both off Montauk in Region 10. Red-necked Grebes also built to the highest coastal count in 50 years at 100+ on 18 February in Region 10. Among the waterfowl reports we find a repeat of a periodic disaster when fog envelops Niagara Falls. On the night of 15-16 January, with many ducks present above the falls, some 2,000+ were swept over, more than 650 of these apparently perishing. Barrow's Goldeneye, normally considered a rarity, was found in six regions (1, 5, 6, 7, 9, & 10) this winter. Turkey Vultures continue their dramatic increases of recent years with Regions 2, 3, 5, 6, 9 & 10 all reporting them this season when a few years ago a single winter report was an event. Shorebirds were down a bit from last year at 14 species, but American Oystercatcher set a new late date with three present on 10 January in Region 10. An exciting find at any time of the year, two Black Rails on 11 December in Region 10 added a new bird to the list for this season. Two Parasitic Jaegers on 17 December in Region 10 is a new late date. Lesser Black-backed Gull is now regular, with reports in five regions this season, a first record though for Region 6. Its larger cousin, the Great Black-backed Gull, was reported in record numbers in Region 10, with 13,500 on 17 December. Following the large movement of Black-legged Kittiwakes on Lake Ontario last Fall, it is perhaps not surprising that the lakeshore regions all had singles lingering into December. In contrast, note the peak count in Region 10 of 1,380 on 17 December.

Another good find on a CBC in Region 10 was the first record of a

Forster's Tern in the state in the winter in nearly 60 years. The major event of the north country was the large invasion of Great Gray Owls in Regions 6 & 7, with a couple of strays south to Region 10. Surprisingly, this was attended by far less fanfare than the 1979 invasion; probably because most of the rabid listers "got their life bird" in 1979? This season, several upstate regions report the disappearance of old colonies of resident Red-headed Woodpeckers, probably associated with a very poor acorn crop following last summer's heat and drought. Reading the Region 10 report, we may have found where many went in a very high count of 22. You can still find your seasonal parrot fix in Region 9's report, though only a Maroon-bellied Conure this time. Varied Thrush, another rarity, turned up in three regions (3, 4, & 10) this winter. The Water Pipit is considered rare inland at this season, yet it occurred in five inland regions associated with CBC's or the early spring in February. Loggerhead Shrikes were reported more widely than has been typical of recent spring and summer reports, appearing in Regions 1, 2, 9 & 10. Nine warbler species were typical of winter, most appearing in Region 10, but winter occurrences of a Magnolia Warbler in Region 4 from 13 to 18 December and a Prairie Warbler in Region 9 on 16 December are extremely unusual. Another rarity of the past extending its foothold in New York is Boat-tailed Grackle, recently added as a breeder, now with 12 reported in Region 10 on 17 January. Finally, for those who don't read the regional reports in detail, let me call your attention to a request in the Region 7 report for input to two books in progress on birds of two Adirondack counties.

Among the half hardies, sparrows are probably the most abundantly reported both for numbers of species and individuals. Among these, Chipping Sparrow is normally relatively rare at this season and here provides an opportunity to point out an increasing nightmare for the regional editors. This season they were reported in six regions, typically in singles or several reports of singles in the cases of Regions 9 & 10. Hopefully, some of these were not American Tree Sparrows sighted by inexperienced observers. The tremendous growth in numbers of observers has been both a boon and a curse to regional editors. The increase in reporters should improve our picture of bird distributions, but the increase in inexperienced observers and second and third hand reports from observers of unknown ability does complicate the editors' lives. This dilemma was flagged by Mike Peterson for the case of the Great Gray Owl records for Region 7. The extreme responses are to accept everything or to reject anything without "sufficient" documentation; sufficient depending on level of rarity and ease of identification. Any suggestions from readers? Editors vary in experience. Some regions filter all records through regional records committees.

To finish on a lighter note we return to many reader's starting point and consider the rarities. This season most are rare by virtue of date or are locally rare. Among those of special note not discussed above are: a very rare wintering, immature Broad-winged Hawk, photographed, in Region 2; a Boreal Owl in Region 5; a Greater White-fronted Goose in Region 9; and a Gyrfalcon in Region 10. However, the B.O.T.S. Award for the season must go to the White-eyed Vireos found in Region 5 on 18 December and Region 10 on 17 December, unprecedented for New York at this season, though populations do winter in the south in this country, so that vagrancy in the early, warm part of winter isn't a total shock.

716 High Tower Way, Webster, New York 14580

REGION 1 – NIAGARA FRONTIER

JOSEPH F. THILL

With the exception of an abnormally warm 14-day period in February, it was a cold and snowy winter on the Niagara Frontier. A record 52 inches of snow was recorded at the Greater Buffalo International Airport in December, which was also the seventh coldest in 114 years of meteorological record keeping. The snow squalls which beset the area during the last few days of November continued into the first week of December, and a heavy snowfall on the 16th was followed by bitter cold weather which gripped the region until the end of the month. Record low thermometer readings were registered on 20 December (-7° F), 21st (-8° F), and 26th (-3° F). During the height of the squall activity in the last ten days of the month, many reports were received at the Buffalo Museum of Science concerning Horned Grebes forced down by the high winds and zero visibility in blowing snow, and landing with ice-caked wings on highways and other cleared surfaces, apparently mistaking them for open water. January was a very cold month with more record low temperatures on the 16th (-10° F) at Buffalo and on 21 January when readings between -25° F and -30° F were recorded in several localities in the Southern Tier counties. Snowfall at Buffalo in January measured only 13.4 inches for the month and a flow of warm gulf air in early February reversed the weather pattern, melting the snow cover and bringing many local streams and rivers to flood crest. In the 15-day period between 9 and 24 February, two record high temperatures of 61° F on the 13th and 62° F on the 23rd were recorded before the jet stream, which had been far north of its usual track, capriciously reversed itself again on the 25th. A deep low pressure system accompanied by high winds and heavy snow moved into the region on 27 February. 15 inches of snow brought by this system combined with heavy

squalls over Lake Erie and Lake Ontario to dump between 24 and 30 inches of snow on Buffalo and other communities along the Erie and Ontario plains to end the period on a decidedly wintry note.

Highlights of the season include weather-related avian mortality in December and January and the migratory activity induced by the "pseudo-spring" weather in February. In addition to the grebe mortality noted heretofore, the advent of a severe new outbreak of Arctic air in our area on 15 January plunged the overnight temperature to -8° F at Niagara Falls, causing a dense fog to form above the Horseshoe Falls. As the result of the zero visibility caused by the fog, an estimated 2,000 ducks were swept over the Falls, where their plight was discovered the following morning. Most of the ducks were Common Mergansers with a few Red-breasted Mergansers, Common Goldeneyes, and Canvasbacks. Many of these birds were uninjured and managed to fly out of the gorge during the day, but approximately 650 ducks, still alive, were left sitting on the ice bridge or swimming in a narrow lead of open water at the base of the Falls. These hapless creatures apparently perished from their injuries and exposure to the bitter cold weather. By 20 January only 190 Common Mergansers, three Common Goldeneyes and a Canvasback could be seen huddled forlornly on the ice.

The arrival of the first spring migrants coincided with the advent of unseasonably warm weather in February. Don Clark reported 13 Mallards arriving at his sanctuary in Cattaraugus County on 13 February and migrating grackles and blackbird flocks were here by the 17th. On 19 February migrating flocks of Canada Geese were seen or heard in every county in western New York. Steve Eaton reports that the ice went out of the Allegheny River at Olean on 13 February and by the 18th all of the creeks and runs were open. The first Tundra Swans made their appearance on 20 February, a prelude to the enormous flight passing through Region 1 on the 23rd, which Bob Sundell estimated to have exceeded 1,600 swans in Chautauqua County. The first Killdeers also appeared on the 19th as did a few Snow Geese of both color phases. The euphoric reaction of local birdwatchers to this bounty was rudely dashed by the return of severe cold and heavy snow on 27 and 28 February.

Otherwise, the highlights of the winter of 1983-84 in Region 1 were mostly negatives. There was no significant winter finch flight; there were virtually no records of Common Redpolls, Pine Grosbeaks or Lapland Longspurs and only a few Pine Siskins were seen at feeders. These feeders probably are the reason for the increasing number of records of both Sharp-shinned and Cooper's Hawks wintering in the area, as well as the increase of White-throated Sparrow which is now one of our most common winter visitors.

Contributors: Organizations - Allegany County Christmas Count (ACCC), Buffalo Audubon Christmas Count (BACC), Buffalo Ornithological Society Christmas Count (BOSCC), Cattaraugus Bird Club Christmas Count (CBCCC), Fredonia Audubon Christmas Count (FACC), Jamestown Audubon Christmas Count (JACC).

Contributors: Robert Andrie, Tim Baird, Maxine Barber, Wavel Barber, Allen Benton, Jim Bowser, Nancy Bowser, William Bogacki (WBo), Elizabeth Brooks, Lois Buck, William Burch, Doris Burton, Lou Burton, Richard Byron, Bruce Chilton, Donald Clark, David Cooper (DCo), Dan Cordosi (DCor), Willie D'Anna (WDA), Dave Disher, Stephen Eaton,

Donald Endres, Jeanine Flory, David Gagne, Joanne Goetz, Joe Gula (JGul), Greg Harper, Tom Harper, Paul Hess, Morgan Jones, Walter Klabunde, Clarence Klingensmith, Robert Klips, Judy Kumler, Phil Kumler, Alice McKale, Bill McKale, Terry Mahoney (TMah), Judy Mosher, Terry Mosher, Grace O'Dell, Katherine Palmer, Vivian Pitzrick, Betsy Potter, Frances Rew, Arthur Rosche, Olga Rosche, Art Schaffner, Paul Sieracki, Robert Sundell, Joseph Thill, Tom Welch, Peter Yoerg, Mike Zebehayz.

LOONS-DUCKS: The open waters of Dunkirk Harbor proved to be an oasis on the icebound south shore of Lake Erie this winter with most of the waterfowl and gulls in the area concentrated there in Dec. and Jan. On 18 Jan a rare and irregular winter visitor, a Red-throated Loon, was seen there (TM, BC). Only two reports of Com. Loons during the period, four on Chautauqua L on 10 Dec (RS, DCor, DG) and one in Dunkirk Harbor 5 Jan (TM). Large flight of Horned Grebes in Dec: 38 at Point Gratiot near Dunkirk 6 Dec (TM); 162 on Chautauqua L 10 Dec (RS, DG, DCor) and one in Dunkirk Harbor 5 Jan (TM). Two records in Jan; three 1 Jan and four 15 Jan, both in Dunkirk Harbor (FR). Only four reports of Pied-billed Grebe: one on Allegheny R at Olean all month of Dec (SE); one in Dunkirk Harbor 21 Dec (AS, TM); one in Allegany State Park 4 Dec (TB) and four in Dunkirk Harbor 13 Jan (FR). Up to seven Double-crested Cormorants wintered in Dunkirk Harbor in Dec with one to three still there in Jan (TM); fewer Great Blue Herons than usual this winter; one in Allegany State Park 18 Dec (TB) and five on Grand Island on that date (BOSCC); two in Town of Aurora 1 Jan (BOSCC) and one in Buffalo 4 Feb (PH). One imm Mute Swan reported from Dunkirk Harbor between 6 and 15 Jan (FR). Tundra Swan: 54 over Alfred 1 Dec, apparently remnant from big flight in Nov (EB); one in Dunkirk Harbor 9 Jan (JK); one at Amity L. in Allegany Co. 1 Feb (VP); eight first spring migrants on Iroquois NWR 19 Feb (DE) and during big flight day on the 23rd, 275 at Mayville (TM), 450 over Amity L. (VP, CK), 175 over Hamburg (MZ) and 170 over Falconer (RS). Canada Goose: big wintering population on the Niagara R.; record high count of 1,079 birds 18 Dec (BOSCC); 100 over Hume Twp. in Allegany Co. on 19 Dec (KP); 50 over Andover 9 Jan (EB) and eight wintering at Farmersville Sta. in Cattaraugus Co. during entire period (DC). First spring migrants in region 19 Feb including 147 birds at Allegany State Park (TB), 500 at Allegany Twp. 21 Feb (SE), and 18,000 at Iroquois NWR on 24 Feb. Snow Goose: one in Dunkirk Harbor, 16-24 Feb (TM, FR); two Allegany Twp. Cattaraugus Co. 23 Feb (SE); four Iroquois NWR 23 Feb (DE); two Wales Twp. Erie Co. 24 Feb (OR). Wood Duck: one record of two birds, presumably migrants, Randolph Twp. 26 Feb (FR). Green-winged Teal: flock of five at Niagara Falls 18 Dec part of annual winter group there (BOSCC). No. Pintail: 27 on Niagara R 18 Dec annual wintering flock (BOSCC); first spring migrants: 25 at Iroquois NWR 19 Feb (DE). Gadwall: fewer winter records than usual; up to 21 in Dunkirk Harbor 23-30 Dec (FR, LB); seven in Dunkirk Harbor 24 Feb (TM). Am. Wigeon: 60 on Niagara R 18 Dec (BOSCC); first spring migrants, six at Iroquois NWR 21 Feb (DE). Canvasback: wintering in large numbers on Niagara R; maximum count of 4,543 18 Dec (BOSCC). Redhead: larger than average wintering population on Niagara R; maximum count of 269 18 Dec (BOSCC). Ring-necked Duck: four reports of wintering birds; five Allegany State Park 11 Dec (TB); four at Riverside Marsh, Jamestown, 18 Dec (JACC); six at Dunkirk Harbor 23 Dec (FR, LB); one in Niagara R 2 Jan (AM, WM). Greater Scaup: wintering in large numbers in lower Niagara R and L Ontario; maximum count of 1,745 18 Dec (BOSCC); 150 in Dunkirk Harbor 25 Dec (JGul). Lesser Scaup: a few records of single wintering birds on the Niagara R; nine 18 Dec (BOSCC), two 6 Jan (JT, RA). **HARLEQUIN DUCK:** adult male seen at Niagara Falls from 29 Jan to 15 Feb (WB, MB, GO, RA). Oldsquaw: wintering flocks of 1,000 to 2,000 birds on Niagara R and L Ontario at Youngstown. Black Scoter: one record of eight birds in Buffalo Harbor 10 Dec (RK). White-winged Scoter: wintering in small numbers on Niagara R and Dunkirk Harbor; 16 on Niagara R 6 Jan (JT, RA); four in Dunkirk Harbor 15 Jan (FR); five on Niagara R 18 Jan (WDA, BF); four in Dunkirk Harbor 10 Feb (TM). Com. Goldeneye: wintering in large numbers on Niagara R and L Ontario; maximum count on river, 3,664 18 Dec (BOSCC).

Barrow's Goldeneye: adult male at Niagara Falls seen by many observers during period; believed to be eighth season as winter visitor. Bufflehead: wintering in average numbers on Niagara R; maximum count of 547 birds 18 Dec (BOSCC). Hooded Merganser: regular winter visitor in small numbers; one on Red House L, Allegany State Park 4 Dec (TB); 38 on Niagara R 18 Dec (BOSCC); one on Allegheny R 17 Dec (CBCCC); 80 at Riverside Marsh, Jamestown 18 Dec (JACC). Com. Merganser: most common wintering duck in region with 10,480 recorded on Niagara R 18 Dec (BOSCC); flocks of 230 and 80 at Allegany State Park 4 and 18 Dec (TB); 350 in Dunkirk Harbor on 22 Jan (JGul); first spring migrants, 20 in Allegany Twp 21 Feb (SE). Red-breasted Merganser: wintering on Niagara R and L Ontario in average numbers; maximum count 209 18 Dec (BOSCC). Ruddy Duck: one record of single bird on Niagara R 15 Dec (RK).

HAWKS-ALCIDS: There were many single records of No. Harriers in Region 1 this winter as numbers continue to increase as permanent breeding residents. Both Cooper's Hawk and Sharp-shinned Hawk frequent visitors at feeders during severe cold periods. One record of wintering Red-shouldered Hawk: a bird at Orangeville in Wyoming Co. on 22 Jan (RA). The Red-tailed Hawk continues to maintain its status as our most common raptor; maximum count 46 on 18 Dec (BOSCC). There were only a few reports of Rough-legged Hawks in the region and no Bald Eagle sightings. Am. Coot: several winter records; 34 in Dunkirk Harbor 21 Dec (AS, TM); 29 in Dunkirk Harbor 31 Dec (FACC); two in Niagara R 2 Jan (AM, BM). Killdeer: two in Dunkirk Harbor 2-9 Dec (FR, TM); first spring migrant Silver Creek 14 Feb (TW). Purple Sandpiper: six at Niagara Falls 18 Dec (BOSCC). Dunlin: one at Niagara Falls 18 Dec (BOSCC). Com. Snipe: one wintering bird Williamsville, Erie Co 16 Jan (PY). Red Phalarope: one in Dunkirk Harbor 3-17 Dec (TM, JM, PK, TMah). Little Gull: present in less than average numbers for second consecutive winter; three Lewiston 5 Feb (RFA). Bonaparte's Gull: most left area with onset of severe cold weather in Dec; 400 Dunkirk Harbor 21 Dec (AS, TM). Iceland Gull: four Niagara Falls 25 Dec (RK, PS); one Dunkirk Harbor 30 Dec (FR, LB); two Niagara Falls 10 Dec (WDA, BP). Glaucous Gull: six at Niagara Falls 18 Dec (BOSCC); three Niagara Falls 25 Dec (RK, PS); three Niagara Falls 7 Jan (FR); eight Lower Niagara R 7 Jan (RA). **BLACK-LEGGED KITTIWAKE:** one at Niagara Falls (imm bird) 25 Dec (RK, PS).

PIGEONS-WOODPECKERS: Great Horned Owl: 27 Aurora Twp. 1 Jan (BACC). Snowy Owl: virtually absent from region this winter; one Darien Center 15 Dec (TH); one Wheatfield Twp. Niagara Co. 16 Feb (WB). Short-eared Owl: two Pomfret Twp. 20 Dec (TM, BC); two Wheatfield Twp. 12 Jan (WDA), two Sheldon Twp. 22 Feb (MZ). No. Saw-whet Owl: one record for season: one Jamestown 3 Dec (RS, DG). Red-headed Woodpecker: conspicuous by its absence; no records from Niagara Co. locations where it is a permanent resident. Red-bellied Woodpecker: many records; maximum count 24 on 17 Dec (ACCC). Yellow-bellied Sapsucker: two birds, one female adult and one imm, Lewiston Twp. 1-31 Jan (WK). No. Flicker: very high winter population; maximum count 41 on 18 Dec (BOSCC).

FLYCATCHERS-STARLINGS: Horned Lark (*Eremophila alpestris alpestris*) two reports of this northern subspecies; 33 at Cassadaga in Chautauqua Co 16 Dec (FR, LB); four Jamestown 2 Jan (RS, DD). Com. Raven: three records of this rare corvid by reliable observers; one in Ward Twp., Allegany Co 7 Jan (EB); two at Allegany State Park one 22 Jan and one 19 Feb (TB). Black-capped Chickadee: large wintering population in Southern Tier counties; maximum count 782 Chautauqua Co 18 Dec (JACC). **BOREAL CHICKADEE:** one visiting feeder in Belmont from 11 Jan to 26 Feb (DB, LB). Red-breasted Nuthatch: larger than average numbers of wintering birds this season. Carolina Wren: holding its own in spite of severe winter; one reported all month of Dec in Alfred (EB); one at Jamestown 18 Dec (JACC); one at Canadaway Creek Nature Sanctuary in Chautauqua Co 31 Dec (FACC); one at Orchard Park 5 Feb (RA, RB) and one at Fredonia 14 Feb (TM, MJ). Winter Wren: unusual in winter! One on Grand Island 11 Feb (GO). Golden-crowned Kinglet: average numbers for wintering birds in Southern Tier counties. E. Bluebird: one

report of wintering bird seen at Orchard Park 22 Jan and again 9 Feb (GO). Am. Robin: some increase in numbers of wintering birds over last winter but still below average for last ten years. Gray Catbird: one record, Chautauqua Co 18 Dec (JACC). No. Mockingbird: several records for viable population in northern Niagara Co; three Chautauqua Co 31 Dec (JACC). Brown Thrasher: one wintering bird Portland Twp 1-31 Jan (TM). Water Pipit: one record, Dunkirk Harbor 9 Dec (FR, LB). No. Shrike: many records from all sections in region. Loggerhead Shrike: one most unusual winter record, Aurora Twp 1 Jan (WBo, BACC).

VIREOS-WARBLEDERS: Yellow-rumped Warbler: six reported in Chautauqua Co 31 Dec (FACC) and one at Fredonia 9 Feb, two at same location 12 and 16 Feb (JG).

TANAGERS-WEAVERS: As noted, the severe winter weather in Dec and Jan failed to precipitate an irruption of northern finches in our region. The wintering White-throated Sparrow population continues to increase, apparently as a function of the increase in popularity of bird feeding stations, and it usually outnumbered the Song Sparrow by a big ratio at these sites. Rufous-sided Towhee: much lower than average: one record at Chautauqua Co 18 Dec (JACC) and one at Fredonia 24 Jan (JG). Am. Tree Sparrow: wintering in average numbers; maximum count 438 18 Dec (BOSCC). Chipping Sparrow: one wintering bird Chautauqua Co 18 Dec (JACC). Swamp Sparrow: two Chautauqua Co 18 Dec (JACC) and one Williamsville, Erie Co 23 Jan (PY); one at Fredonia 6 Jan (TM). Fox Sparrow: one wintering bird Olean 17 Dec (CCBC). Song Sparrow: average number of wintering birds; maximum count 26 on 18 Dec (BOSCC). White-throated Sparrow: common winter visitor; maximum count 231 Erie Co 18 Dec (BOSCC). White-crowned Sparrow: one bird all winter at feeder in Belmont (DB, LB); seven Chautauqua Co 31 Dec (FACC); one at Niagara Falls 16 Feb (WDA). Dark-eyed Junco: higher than average wintering flocks in Southern Tier counties; one adult male, apparently of the race *Junco hyemalis oregonus* was seen at a feeder in Kennedy in Chautauqua Co 21 Feb (RS). Lapland Longspur: few reports; three in Chautauqua Co 31 Dec (FACC); one in Cambria Twp. Niagara Co 31 Dec (DC) and six in Pomfret Twp. 26 Feb (AB, NB). Snow Bunting: present in average numbers; maximum counts 500 Wyoming Co 22 Jan (RA) and 1,200 East Shelby, Orleans Co 12 Feb (DE). Red-winged Blackbird: small flocks and single birds reported wintering in average numbers in region; first spring migrants five Wheatfield Twp. 16 Feb (WDA, BP); 5,300 Town of Hamburg 23 Feb (MZ). E. Meadowlark: first spring migrants two Stockton Twp 18 Feb (TM); nine Town of Hamburg 23 Feb (FR). Rusty Blackbird: two wintering birds, Chautauqua Co 31 Dec (FACC); first spring migrants one Pomfret Twp. 17 Feb and three Portland Twp. 18 Feb (FR). Com. Grackle: a few reports of single wintering birds appearing at feeders; first spring migrants, 200 Pomfret Twp. 17 Feb (TM); 500 Town of Hamburg 23 Feb (MZ). Brown-headed Cowbird: two wintering flocks reported from region: 15-50 birds, Dec and Jan Kenmore (JT) and 10-45 birds Dec and Jan Eggertsville (AM, BM); first spring migrants 18 Sheridan Twp. Chautauqua Co. 18 Feb (TM, RS); 48 Town of Hamburg 23 Feb (FR). Pine Grosbeak: only one report: four Olean 17 Dec (CBCCC). House Finch: many reports as this species continues to increase in our region; maximum count 292 18 Dec (JACC). Com. Redpoll: virtually absent this winter; six reported in Chautauqua Co 31 Dec (FACC) and one at feeder in Silver Creek 18 Feb (SC). Pine Siskin: only a few records for season; one Depew 9 Dec (WB, MB); four at Dewittville 10 Dec (RS, DC, DG); one at Darien Center, 1-8 Jan (TH); one at Amity L in Allegany Co 24 Feb (VP). Evening Grosbeak: present in good numbers in Southern Tier counties all winter; maximum count 173 Chautauqua Co. 31 Dec (FACC); maximum count at individual feeder 50-150 Wales Twp. Jan and Feb (OR, AR).

36 Allegany Avenue, Kenmore, New York 14217

REGION 2 – GENESEE

KEVIN C. GRIFFITH

The winter season was marked by a series of contrasting conditions, with significant variations throughout the period. Early December experienced normal to above normal temperatures, but the second half felt the crunch of a frigid, cold spell. Fortunately it held off long enough to prevent the complete freezing of some of the smaller water bodies for the Christmas Bird Counts. The average monthly temperature was 25° F which represented a 4° below normal reading. Measurable precipitation was 4.47" which was nearly two inches above normal. Rain dominated early December while snowfall dominated the latter half. Total snow accumulation was a near normal 19.6".

January continued the fluctuation patterns with some very cold days and some milder days. The coldness managed to override the mildness for a below average reading of 20.4° F. No major weather systems were experienced, but snow fell on the majority of the days and provided a nearly continuous ground cover. Snowfall amounted to 23.4" which was only a deviation of .1" from the norm. Measurable precipitation was a slightly below normal 1.62".

February epitomized the season with the most contrasting conditions of the season. Early February was near normal, but by the end of the second week temperatures had reached the 40's and didn't stop climbing until readings in the 60's had been attained. Just as thoughts of an early spring were engraving themselves on people's minds, the worst blizzard in two years struck the region. I'm not sure if anyone was able to give an accurate picture of avian life during the last three days, because it was nearly impossible to get out and travel. When all was said and done, February snowfall levels were at 27.8" which represented a total of 5.5" above normal. Measurable precipitation was up only .65" at 2.97", and the warm days compensated for the cold terminus to the month and recorded an average of 33.2° F. This reading was nearly 9° above normal, putting the finishing touches on the seasonal variations.

The conditions provided for some interesting observations on the season. Horned Grebes were up in numbers, continuing that positive trend. Waterfowl variety was excellent early in the season, while numbers themselves were average. Later in the season the variety decreased and the number of individuals increased for the recorded species. The recovery of Lake Ontario's fish population may reflect upon the healthy populations of diving ducks wintering in the region. The warm spell also brought about an early influx of waterfowl. Many species were arriving ahead of the normal schedule. Red-breasted Mergansers were in greater abundance than normal on the lake. Usually at this time of the year they are outnumbered by the Commons. While this still held true, the Red-breasted numbers were much closer to those of the Common than in recent years. The warming trend in late February also brought early hawk flights over the Braddock Bay Hawk Lookout. The lack of severity during most of the season fostered the wintering of populations of Killdeer and Virginia Rails. The early December mildness may also have contributed to the recording of Com. Snipe and Am.

Woodcock on the Rochester Christmas Bird Count (hereafter RCBC). Gull numbers were good with slightly higher numbers of wintering Little Gulls, which stayed later than normal. White-winged gulls were reported regularly, an upswing from recent years. Short-eared Owl numbers were higher than those of the last few years. The traditional haunts exhibited good numbers. This is generally an indication of increased rodent populations. The fall trend for Bohemian Waxwings carried on into the winter season. Numbers were quite good and the frequency of reports was very good. No. Shrikes put in a good showing with more than a dozen separate birds reported during the last few days of January. The winter food crop was not in great surplus, but winter conditions did allow for a few half-hardies early in the season. The wintering population of White-throated Sparrows was once again good, and a few White-crowned sparrows wintered in the region again. Dark-eyed Juncos were in good supply. The fields of the west lakeshore drew above average numbers of Lapland Longspurs and Snow Buntings. The warm days of February brought early concentrations of blackbirds. Pine Grosbeaks, while not in great numbers, lingered on during the season; and House Finches were as prominent as ever.

Great Blue Herons were not as predictable as in some years. With such dominant ice covering this was to be expected. Ring-necked Pheasants were less than plentiful, showing a continuation of recent trends. In contrast to recent winters, Snowy Owl reports were down. One previously stable group of Red-headed Woodpeckers, in the Nations Road area near Avon, appears to have either shifted locations or dissipated; this makes it much tougher to locate the species in our region. Swamp Sparrows were sparse. The anticipated "finch" winter never materialized. Crossbills and redpolls were nonexistent during the majority of the season. Pine Siskins were few in number. Again, optimistically, we can look at the negative side as being less intense than the positive side. This trend in itself is refreshing.

Rarities: Broad-winged Hawk, Lesser Black-backed Gull.

Abbreviations: B-Braddock Bay; C-Charlotte; CL-Conesus Lake; D-Durand-Eastman Park and adjacent Lake Ontario; EL-east lakeshore; G-Greece; H-Hamlin Beach State Park and vicinity; I-Irondequoit Bay; L-Letchworth State Park; M-Mendon Ponds; N-Nations Road, Avon; R-Rochester; RS-Russell Station; S-Sodus Bay; W-Webster; WL-west lakeshore.

Contributors: Betty Baker, Doug Bassett, Peg Beckman, L. Beidleman, Nancy Boudrie, Tina Bowman, Carolyn Cass, Roberta Childres, Julie Claffey, Anne Clarridge, Paul Cowan, Jerry Czech, Steve Daniel, Mike Davids, Gertrude Davis, Dale Dillavou, Kathy Disney, Frank & Bob Dobson, Kay & Jim Doris, Warren Ferris, John & Ailien Foster, Dick Garnham, Kevin Griffith, Ralph & Georgia Guenther, Ezra Hale, Øivind Jensen, Al & Bea Kemnitzer, James Lenhard, David Levy, Walt Listman, Warren Lloyd, Hayward Madden, Robert & Margaret McKinney, Laura & Neil Moon, K. Murphy, Richard O'Hara, Bernie Olin, Patty Reister, Marge Schmale, Dominic Sherony, Jeanne Skelly, Robert & Susan Spahn, C. Spencer, Paul & Jeff Spindler, Ann Stear, Harriet Stride, Allan, Dan, David & Brian Strong, Mary Ann Sunderlin, William Symonds, Steve Taylor, Tom, Mike & Joanne Tetlow, Don & Donna Travers, Paul Weld, A. Wray and Peter Zachmann.

LOONS-DUCKS: In keeping with the pattern of recent years, loons again were reported during the winter season with sightings in each month. Red-throated Loon: max six R 18 Dec (RCBC). Com. Loon: a few on the lake. Grebes continued to be seen throughout the

period. Numbers were good in the fall and some birds remained in the area. Pied-billed Grebe: reports from Dec and Jan. Horned Grebe: max 60 CL 26 Dec, good winter total. Red-necked Grebe: one H 10 Dec (WS), one WL 7 Jan (MD), and two WL 21 Feb (PR). Double-crested Cormorants held on into the early part of the season with sightings through Dec, last report one RS 20 Jan. Great Blue Herons were reported each month. Tundra Swan: moved in early, nine G 19 Feb. Mute Swan: one S all season, one WL many sightings, origins unknown. Snow Goose: one B 24 Feb. Canada Goose: 300 B 19 Feb. Brant: four B 18 Dec (R & SS, KD). Duck populations were not consistent throughout. Puddle ducks were good early in the season, faded during the middle and returned in the latter part. Diving duck numbers in general were down, but some species were higher in number than usual. Wood Duck: one Honeoye L 10 Jan, three WL 15 Jan, not a regular winter visitor. Green-winged Teal: one W 29 Jan, one B 18 Feb, early migrant. No. Pintail: one Pultneyville 5 Jan, two B 13 Feb, early migrants. Blue-winged Teal: one CL 11 Dec, late. Gadwall: tarried along the lakeshore, 25 RCBC 18 Dec. Am. Wigeon: one-two W 1, 15 Jan, uncommon in winter. Ring-necked Duck: early this year, Harlequin Duck: one-four B 1-10 Dec (mob), good number; one S 1 Jan (DD, MD). Oldsquaw: good numbers out on the lake. Black Scoter: 1 R 18 Dec (RCBC). Surf Scoter: one EL 11 Feb, female (DD, KG). White-winged Scoter: present thru the season. Com. Goldeneye: present throughout the season, but numbers slightly lower than recent years. Bufflehead: numbers about normal. Hooded Merganser: 35 on Letchworth-Silver Lake Christmas Bird Count (hereafter LCBC), 13 on RCBC. Com. Merganser: about average numbers. Red-breasted Merganser: numbers up slightly for winter.

HAWKS-ALCIDS: One rather interesting surprise was a Turkey Vulture, one Henrietta 22 Jan (KM). Bald Eagle reports were good with two adults in Dec, two adults in Jan and up to five sightings of immes in Feb. Some of the sightings were of migrating birds. No. Harrier: good numbers thru the season. Accipiters were in good supply with Cooper's Hawk being the most numerous, but Sharp-shinned and Goshawks could be found. **BROAD-WINGED HAWK:** the unprecedented report of an imm at L in Feb (DB) was a major find. It seems most interesting that a bird that normally winters south of the U.S. would winter in the region. They have nested in the area, but what prompted this individual to remain or migrate only this far? Good photographs of the bird were secured. Rough-legged Hawk: a few wintered here. Am. Kestrel: good winter populations. Merlin: one Silver L 17 Dec (MD), one R 7 Jan (MD, KG, RS). Ring-necked Pheasant: 26 Richmond 2 Jan (RG). Wild Turkey: Christmas Count totals were down, but up to 30 were seen regularly at L. Virginia Rail: up to three were seen at M, a traditional wintering location. Am. Coot: max 300 CL 11 Dec, until lake froze. While this is not normally a shorebird season, there were some interesting sightings. Killdeer: seven reports in Dec; one B 13 Feb, first migrant. Com. Snipe: one G 18 Dec (KG), one Penfield 1 Jan (JL, A, D, D & BS), one Spencerport 15 Jan (WS). Am. Woodcock: one W 16 Dec (DS), one G 18 Dec (KG), and one Victor 23 Feb, this seemed to be a large number of sightings for the season with the Feb bird most likely a migrant. Gull populations were good along the lakeshore with some good white-winged gull observations. Little Gull: max 15 D 18 Dec (RCBC), four to nine D 1-18 (mob), stayed later than usual, two B 19 Feb (MD, ST). Bonaparte's Gull: max 606 R 18 Dec (RCBC). Iceland Gull: one imm from Dec, 11 reports from Jan, and one in Feb. Glaucous Gull: one Dec sighting, five in Jan and up to nine reports for Feb, mostly imm. **LESSER BLACK-BACKED GULL:** one adult RS 5 Jan (DD, KG), carefully studied bird in direct size comparison with Ring-billed and Herring Gulls. Great Black-backed Gull: very good winter population. Black-legged Kittiwake: one D 16 Dec (CC), uncommon winter bird.

PIGEONS-WOODPECKERS: Snowy Owl: one S thru the period, two G thru the period, both G birds returned to nearly the same locations as birds reported last year. Barred Owl: two CL 26 Dec Little Lakes Christmas Bird Count (hereafter LLCBC). Long-eared Owl: one WL 12 Feb (RO), only report. Short-eared Owl: good populations in the N area with

a max of 25, other reports along the lakeshores. No. Saw-whet Owl: one Victor 10-11 Jan (RS), picking off rodents below a feeder at night. Red-headed Woodpecker: numbers down, previous stronghold appears vacated, imm along WL. Yellow-bellied Sapsucker: winter reports up, one imm Lima 17 Dec, two adults W. Rush Dec (AW), one L 11 Jan (DB), one I 23 Jan (L & NM).

FLYCATCHER-STARLINGS: Horned Lark: many flocks in and around area fields. Tufted Titmouse: max 74 R 18 Dec (RCBC). Red-breasted Nuthatch: max 9 R 18 Dec (RCBC), meager winter total. Brown Creeper: a number of winter reports. Carolina Wren: doing well, many reports. Winter Wren: one D 3 Dec (RS), late. Ruby-crowned Kinglet: uncommon in winter, but two reports, one B 18 Dec; one W 25 Feb. Golden-crowned Kinglet: max 12 R 18 Dec (RCBC). E. Bluebird: max 13 LCBC. Hermit Thrush: few wintering reports. Am. Robin: found regularly all season. No. Mockingbird: still hanging on, reports up. Brown Thrasher: one Pittsford 22 Jan (MT), uncommon winter bird. Water Pipit: one 26 Richmond (LLCBC), late sighting; two B 12 Feb, migrating birds. Bohemian Waxwing: continuation of fall influx, max 30 G 12 Dec (WL), reports from each month of the season. Cedar Waxwing: max 900 W 21 Jan. No. Shrike: many reports, max 6 WL 29 Jan (WS). Loggerhead Shrike: one S 29 Jan (M & JT), early migrant.

VIREOS-WARBLEDERS: Yellow-rumped Warbler: one R Dec (RCBC), one WL 25 Feb, other reports from traditional wintering locale, Mendon.

TANAGERS-WEAVERS: An uncommon winter visitor was Rufous-sided Towhee: one Honeoye Falls 13 Dec (RG), one EL 28 Dec (RO). Am. Tree Sparrow: good totals this season. Chipping Sparrow: one R 18 Dec (RCBC), uncommon winter sighting. Field Sparrow: two R 18 (RCBC). Song Sparrow: a number of wintering individuals. White-throated Sparrow: good seasonal totals continuing recent trend. White-crowned Sparrow: one Point Breeze 2 Jan, one Livonia 30 Jan, uncommon in winter. Dark-eyed Junco: quite numerous. Longspurs and buntings could be found in a number of locations. Lapland Longspur: max 120 WL 21 Jan. Snow Bunting: max 5000 N 29 Jan. Red-winged Blackbird: some in region thru the season, began staking territory early. E. Meadowlark: three-four N 7-29 Jan; one G 23 Feb, first migrant. Rusty Blackbird: three R 27 Dec, one R 29 Dec, and one R 7 Jan. No. Oriole: one Avon 1-31 Dec (LB), uncommon wintering species. Pine Grosbeak: good numbers for a "non-finch" winter, max 12 W Dec and Jan. House Finch: numbers still expanding. Com. Redpoll: one Richmond 18 Dec (FD), one G 14-15 Feb (FD), not a very good year. Pine Siskin: reported throughout the season, numbers low. Am. Goldfinch: present, but numbers slightly down. Evening Grosbeak: decent totals away from the lakeshore.

61 Grandview Lane, Rochester, New York 14612

REGION 3 – FINGER LAKES

DICK CLEMENTS

This winter period certainly provided a variety of temperatures and precipitation. Above normal temperatures in early December lulled us into thoughts of a mild winter. Precipitation averaged around 4.5 inches, mostly in the form of rain. Unfortunately, the Siberian Express moved in the latter part of the month, dropping overnight temperatures to -20 degrees and daytime temperatures barely climbing above zero.

January brought below normal precipitation as well as more of the Express with more record low temperatures. February was the month to get even with your utility company as temperatures averaged seven degrees above normal. Heavy rains in mid-month produced some minor local flooding. Balmy weather stimulated heavy Canada Goose migration the second half of the month when temperatures hit above 60 degrees. A winter storm hit the last days of February when a mixture of freezing rain, sleet and snow fell on our area. Total accumulation was only a few inches, nothing compared to the horrendous amounts received in other areas. Snow cover was thin as usual throughout the period. One wonders when our turn for a snowy winter will come.

Bird observations were often done out of dedication rather than enjoyment. The bitter weather no doubt was the cause of the increase in waterfowl species and numbers as the ponds and lakes froze over in the north. Frozen shallow water also caused birds to congregate on our lakes. Montezuma National Wildlife Refuge's December duck count was two species, less than a thousand birds, compared to 12 species and around 200,000 birds (mostly Mallards) in 1983. We enjoyed healthy populations of Snow Buntings, Horned Larks and American Tree Sparrows. The cold did not deter American Robins, Eastern Bluebirds and Carolina Wrens as they were well represented.

Christmas Bird Counts produced some interesting results. Ithaca had record numbers for 18 species. Elmira had two firsts but also record lows for three species. Schuyler County had one first with high counts for three species. The composite total was 84 species for the five Christmas counts. After reading reports from Seneca Falls and Watkins Glen concerning decreased House Finch numbers, one might conclude that the population is leveling off. Ithaca shoots that theory down with a total of 1,878 birds on the Christmas count, more than double last year's number. Your editor's feeders in Pine City swelled to over 200, creating too much noise for the Northern Cardinals to feed in peace.

The Horned Grebe wins the "most popular bird" award not only by its record numbers throughout our region but also because two were rescued. John and Karen Confer brought a downed bird into their home on 27 December. Through tender loving care, including lots of force-fed smelt, the revitalized bird was released on Cayuga Lake on 31 December. On 28 December another bird was found frozen in the ice on the Chemung River in Elmira. Lana Andrus of the Chemung County Humane Society cared for the bird and eventually gave it to the Seneca Wildlife Rehabilitation Center. Congratulations to those who cared and may others learn by your example.

The Payment in Kind (PIK) Program whereby farmers are compensated for leaving potential grain fields unplanted has resulted in more weedy fields in the Southern Tier. The program is short-termed but may already be responsible for the lower numbers of wintering icterids, the shift of Wild Turkey populations and increase in the number of sparrows in our area.

Our only real rarity was a male Varied Thrush. This is only the second sighting for our region. The bird was located north of Ithaca at the home of Bill Cogshall. Dorothy McIlroy and other observers report that the bird was keeping some interesting company, namely a flock of 50 American Robins, several species of sparrows, a Red-bellied Woodpecker and occasionally a Sharp-shinned Hawk.

Seasonal negatives have to include the absence of crossbills, and Pine Grosbeaks, the almost nonexistent Common Redpolls and Pine Siskins, and no Snowy Owl reports.

Best wishes for a speedy return to normal go out to Walter Benning, your previous Region 3 editor, who was injured in a home accident. We hope Walt can get birding again, especially before the shorebirds pass through Montezuma.

Abbreviations: CC-Christmas Count; Co-County; ECC-Elmira Christmas Count; ICC-Ithaca Christmas Count; Cay-Cayuga; L-Lake; max-maximum; MNWR-Montezuma National Wildlife Refuge; Sen-Seneca; WFC-Waterfowl Count (14 Jan.).

Contributors and compilers: W. E. Benning, Jack Brubaker (Watkins Glen), Dick Clements, John Confer, John Corcoran (Geneva), Vernon A. Dewey (Montezuma), Bernice Hilfiker, Wilifred Howard, Herbert & Polly Keating (Seneca Falls), Malcolm Lerch (Penn Yan), Dorothy McIlroy (Ithaca), Mary Welles (Elmira).

LOONS-DUCKS: Com. Loon: notably absent on Cay L all winter (J. Confer); max number reported was five Watkins Glen 27 Dec with an additional report from Keuka L. Pied-billed Grebe: above normal in Geneva; five ICC. Horned Grebe: an incredible 116 on WFC at Keuka L; 20 ICC, previous high was two; five ECC, first report ever; 36 Watkins Glen 25 Dec. Red-necked Grebe: three Myers Point 19 Feb; one Hammondsport seen in Jan and Feb. Great Blue Heron: never before absent ECC; wintered thru in Ithaca, Watkins Glen and Penn Yan. Tundra Swan: present thru Keuka L; 25 Seneca Falls 20 Feb; three Ithaca reports; Geneva mid-Feb. Snow Goose: occasional thru Ithaca; 2,500 MNWR 27 Feb. Canada Goose: the usual thousands wintering around Cay L; big flight days occurred between 15 Feb and 22 Feb in our region. Wood Duck: two Ithaca WFC; one Watkins Glen Dec. Green-winged Teal: two reports Ithaca Dec and Jan. Am. Black Duck: 1,395 total for Ithaca, Penn Yan and Elmira WFC. No. Pintail: 20 Queen Catherine Marsh 20 Feb; scattered reports in Ithaca; 2,000 MNWR 24 Feb. Gadwall: max 68 Ithaca WFC. Am. Wigeon: 16 Ithaca WFC; present thru Sen L. Canvasback: 574 Ithaca and Penn Yan WFCs. Redhead: 542 ICC, new high; 4,517 Ithaca WFC; 2,214 Penn Yan WFC. Ring-necked Duck: small numbers present on Cay, Sen and Keuka Ls. Greater Scaup: first ever ECC; 80 Watkins Glen 8 Feb; present thru Cay L. Lesser Scaup: 107 ICC. Oldsquaw: four Ithaca 26 Jan only report. White-winged Scoter: two Sheldrake 29 Jan; four Watkins Glen Feb; small numbers Keuka L in Jan and Feb. Com. Goldeneye: 234 Ithaca WFC; 30 Elmira 18 Jan. Hooded Merganser: most numerous merganser on Penn Yan WFC. Com. Merganser: 115 ICC new high; 21 ECC. Red-breasted Merganser: scarce thru in all areas. Ruddy Duck: present Ithaca only in Dec.

HAWKS-ALCIDS: Turkey Vulture: one Elmira 18 Feb-early. Bald Eagle: an imm Watkins Glen area on the Schuyler CC. No. Harrier: fairly regular in Tompkins, Schuyler Co. but scarce in other areas. Sharp-shinned Hawk: eight ICC, new high. Cooper's Hawk: generally

considered more conspicuous than Sharp-shinned. No. Goshawk: one Ithaca 28 Jan. Red-shouldered Hawk: one Ithaca 19 Jan. Red-tailed Hawk: 49 ICC; two ECC, lowest count ever. Rough-legged Hawk: 19 ICC, new high; present but in small numbers in all other areas. Merlin: one 2 Jan just outside ECC circle. Ring-necked Pheasant: scarce except in Phelps and Seneca Falls areas where as many as 11 were seen at one time. Wild Turkey: 29 ICC, new high; doing well all over. Am. Coot: 62 Schuyler CC, new high; 312 Penn Yan WFC; good numbers Cay L. Killdeer: two ICC. Am. Woodcock: two Ithaca area during Feb warm spell, one eventually found dying, the other's fate unknown. Bonaparte's Gull: found on Sen L in both Geneva and Watkins Glen in Dec. Iceland Gull: one ICC; one Watkins Glen 9 Feb. Glaucous Gull: one Van Cleef L Seneca Falls 22 Dec; two ICC. Great Black-backed Gull: 35 ICC, new high.

PIGEONS-WOODPECKERS: E. Screech-Owl: 11 ICC, new high; doing well in reporting areas. Great Horned Owl: returned to last year's nest in both Phelps and near Camp Ditmer; good numbers on CCs. Barred Owl: one thru Geneva; one east of MNWR 30 Jan. Short-eared Owl: Ithaca area, Penn Yan and Geneva but in small numbers. Belted Kingfisher: ten ICC, new high; two ECC, new low. Red-headed Woodpecker: one Tompkins Co 7 Feb. Red-bellied Woodpecker: 27 ICC; 6 Schuyler CC; various locations Elmira thru. Yellow-bellied Sapsucker: wintered thru in Ithaca; Dec thru Jan Elmira feeder. Downy Woodpecker and Hairy Woodpecker: populations seem to be stable. No. Flicker: wintered thru Ithaca, Watkins Glen. Pileated Woodpecker: 18 ICC, new high.

FLYCATCHERS-STARLINGS: Horned Lark: an up year; 341 ICC; 300 Watkins Glen 1 Jan; 100 Elmira 15 Jan. Blue Jay: low numbers on both field and feeder observations. Fish Crow: two ICC. Tufted Titmouse: increasing in Schuyler Co. 28 CC. Red-breasted Nuthatch: regular but not a large incursion year. White-breasted Nuthatch: 214 ICC; 31 Schuyler CC. Carolina Wren: regular Queen Catherine Marsh: three singing at once, five in one day Ithaca; additional report from Elmira. Winter Wren: one sighting ECC only report. Golden-crowned Kinglet: 14 ICC; 12 ECC; found regularly in both areas thru. Ruby-crowned Kinglet: one ICC. E. Bluebird: regular in Watkins Glen thru with a max of ten 21 Jan; 11 wintering Lodi Point; small flock Elmira early Feb. **VARIED THRUSH:** one North Lansing 22 Jan (C. Smith *et al.*) last sighting unknown. Am. Robin: wintered thru with flocks of 100 in Watkins Glen and Penn Yan; 71 ICC. No. Mockingbird: doing extremely well in Ithaca and Elmira; 58 ICC, new high. Water Pipit: Cornell Campus 12 Feb. Cedar Waxwing: irregular thru. No. Shrike: one Waterloo area 17 Dec; four ICC.

VIREOS-WARBLEDERS: Yellow-rumped Warbler: two Phelps area 16 Feb. Com. Yellow-throat: Queen Catherine Marsh 27 Feb.

TANAGERS-WEAVERS: No. Cardinal: 418 ICC, new high; 15 max at Pine City feeder. Am. Tree Sparrow: more than usual from reporting areas mostly staying in fields and no great numbers at feeders; flocks of hundreds in Phelps and Elmira. **CHIPPING SPARROW:** ICC. Field Sparrow: several seen Queen Catherine Marsh thru; four ICC and ECC. Fox Sparrow: one Elmira at feeder in Dec and Jan. Song Sparrow: 103 ICC, new high mostly at Cass Park; 13 Schuyler CC. Swamp Sparrow: two Schuyler CC; three ICC. White-throated Sparrow: numbers up from previous years' counts; 139 ICC; 75 Schuyler CC. White-crowned Sparrow: wintered thru in Elmira and Phelps. Lapland Longspur: one Schuyler CC; two reports Ithaca late Jan. Snow Bunting: a good year for sightings; flocks varied from a few to 2,000-3,000 in Ithaca area in Jan; two perched on utility wires in Phelps; 150 Elmira 15 Jan. Red-winged Blackbird: 22 Schuyler CC; scarce otherwise. E. Meadowlark: a few birds in Ithaca, Elmira, and Penn Yan. Rusty Blackbird: two Elmira briefly visiting feeder during Dec snow squall; Ithaca 18 Feb. Com. Grackle and Brown-headed Cowbird: very scarce until late Feb. Purple Finch: regular Queen Catherine Marsh thru. Com. Redpoll: only one bird at feeder at Elmira in Feb. Pine Siskin: six ICC, last report. Am. Goldfinch: flock of 75-100 Seneca Falls Jan; numbers down otherwise. Evening Grosbeak: present but in reduced numbers. House Sparrow: ubiquitous and multitudinous.

989 Mountain View Drive, Pine City, New York 14871

REGION 4 - SUSQUEHANNA

HARRIET MARSI

December in Region 4 started out in normal fashion with temperatures in the high 20's and low 30's. Precipitation was light until 11 thru 14 December when 4.2" of rain deluged area streams and rivers, saturating ground not yet frozen, filling ponds, swales and low spots. Then, before water levels were able to recede, the mercury plummeted. For the next two weeks ICE was the name of the game as the area endured one of the coldest Decembers on record. Driveways, parking lots, even lawns became unplanned skating rinks. On the night of 24 December winds from the North Pole measuring 15 to 25 mph carried Dasher, Dancer, Prancer, etc. along "like the down of a thistle." Temperatures on 25 December ranged from 4° to -2°. Birders whose Christmas Count fell early in the period took serious precautions against frostbite.

Those whose Christmas Count dates fell early in January were more fortunate. The record cold retreated with the Old Year, allowing warmer air from the southwest to welcome in the New. January temperatures settled in the twenties with a cold snap on the 11th and 12th and another trip to the deep freeze on 21 January (9° high, -9° low). The January thaw arrived in time to bring temperatures during the last week of the month into the mid-thirties and higher. However, the accumulated 1.59" of precipitation never really covered the ground. The trend toward normalcy continued until 10 February when winds aloft suddenly did an about face and for two weeks the area enjoyed a delightful preview of spring. The usual cold Arctic air was replaced by warm moist breezes from the Gulf, a watery warmth that produced some rain but, more significantly, melted all the ice that had been locked in the ground since December. Once more area rivers and streams rose to flood levels, which eventually crested and subsided as the temperatures continued to mount. On 23 February a record 56° and on 24 February a record 63° served as a fitting finale to this vernal interlude. On 25 February the temperatures dropped 15 degrees in one hour. A cold sleet-laden front moved sluggishly in. Traveler's advisories were issued. Despite large amounts of snow all around and a storm watch which continued to month's end, Region 4 consistently got off more easily than others. On 29 February unmarried ladies chasing unattached males had only to contend with a bit of ice underfoot.

Bird behavior was predictable. The December ice concentrated water birds on large reservoirs or open river waters. Loitering migrants, caught off guard, were sizeably represented on Christmas Counts. Most didn't make it through January. Some southerners struggling to establish a northern foothold suffered setbacks. Mockingbird reports petered out as the period advanced and there were only two reports of Carolina Wrens after January. Grouse and turkey reports were low. The open fields provided protective coloring but the very wet spring may also have curtailed successful nesting. Feeder reports were disappointing. A poor year for winter finches, there were only a few reports of Common Redpolls and Pine Siskins. Evening Grosbeaks in small flocks put in intermittent appearances. Sparrows preferred to forage in the open fields.

Hawks on the other hand showed up in goodly numbers. One reporter - a farmer - attributed this to a high population of meadow voles. "All winter I have seen them as I spread manure. Last week (Feb) when the snow melted I cleared flood-strewn debris from a meadow and under the debris piles were scores of voles." (DM). In any event, one Cooper's Hawk lunched regularly Jan and Feb on Binghamton Courthouse Rock Doves. An observer (PM) commented, "He usually shows up in the late morning or mid-afternoon . . . approaches from the wooded hills on Binghamton's south side, heads straight down Exchange St., takes a left at Hawley, courses over the jailhouse and makes a surprise attack flying over the Courthouse Dome." Pigeon pandemonium!! The February warmth brought in many reports of early returns of such species as Canada Geese, Red-wings, Common Grackles and American Robins.

There were three rarities during the period. A Boreal Chickadee spent the winter at a suet feeder in Owego (BC), a Varied Thrush was reported in Delaware-Otsego area (CWr), and a Magnolia Warbler in Endwell 15-18 Dec (JS).

Observers: C/J Baldwin, H. Barnes, J/R Barnes, W. Bartlett, J. Becker, D/J Bell, L. Bemont, R. Bennett, L. Bingley, B. Bozdos, R. Breidinger, W. Breidinger, D. Burgin, F. Burnes, L. Carey, S. Carey, A. Carpenter, J. Chase, L/M Clark, B. Cormier, C. Covey, K. Crane, R. Daigle, A/M Davis, J. Davis, L. Dean, J. Dillon, M. Dobinsky, J. Doig, S. Dorber, J. Dostader, G. Dropp, R. Eckhardt, A. Este, E/P Getkin, S. Hartman, H. Hoffman, E/G Holway, M. Horak, C. Howard, C. Hurtgam, R/R Ilse, P. Keith, H. Kingery, E/G Kirch, J. Koenig, M. Lafayette, C/J Lehman, F. Linaberry, E. Longton, D. Lowe, H. Marsi, R. Marsi, A. Mason, W. Maxim, L. McDowell, S. McPherson, E. Mead, D. Messineo, J. Miller, S. Miller, M. Miller, P. Miller, B. Monroe, S. Moran, M. Musci, L. Nettleton, B. New, F. O'Leary, R. Parker, P. Petokas, M/M H. Pierce, S. Paston, D. Rider, J. Robert, H. Robison, C. Ryder, J/R Saunders, H/J Schultes, J. Sedlacek, M/R Sheffield, S. Smith, K/L Stalter, S. Stamos, W. Stupke, W. Toner, G. Wade, B. Webster, D. Wheat, A. Whitaker, C. Whitcomb, G. White, C. Wilkins, B/T Wilson, K. Wilson, D. Windson, C. Wright, I. Wright, C. Yates.

Abbreviations: CBC-Chenango Bird Club; CCBC-Cortland County Bird Club; DOAS-Delaware-Otsego Audubon Society; NCBC-Naturalists Club of Broome County; TBC-Tioga Bird Club; CC after any of the above means Christmas Count; CR-Cannonsville Reservoir; OPM-Oneonta, Portlandville, Milford; PR-Pepacton Reservoir; REEC-Rogers Environmental Education Center; WPR-Whitney Point Reservoir.

LOONS-DUCKS: Horned Grebe: four reports, all Dec; two Broome Co (A/MD, RS), one Cortland Co (PP); one TBC. Great Blue Heron: eight reports; four Dec; two Broome Co (A/MD, JS), one CBCCC, one Tioga Co (RB, D/JB); three Jan; one Cortland Co (WB); two Otselic (possibly same bird) (DM); one Feb Tioga Co (RB, RE). Tundra Swan: two reports; one 18/19 Feb of three birds in a flooded field near Greene (Chu); one 20 Feb of a small flock flying north over PA/NY border, Vestal (BB, JS). Snow Goose: one report 23 Feb of small flock flying over Apalachin (PG). Canada Goose: four Dec reports, last 25 Dec Broome Co (J/RS); many Feb reports, earliest 9 Feb Binghamton (CL). Green-winged Teal: two birds seen by several 12/14 Jan near CR. Am. Black Duck: two major centers, one of approx 30 mixed in with Mallards in Susquehanna and Chenango R near Binghamton, one of over 100 at CR. Mallard: regular thru but in reduced numbers. Canvasback: two reports; one 12 Jan West Branch Delaware R (SD), one Feb Tioga Co (RB, RE). Greater Scaup: three reports: one 10 Dec WPR (RM); one 22 Jan Norwich (JL), one 28 Jan Norwich (JL). Com. Goldeneye: one Dec report; Tioga Co (RE); several Jan/Feb reports, all Susquehanna R, Tioga Co, except one 28 Jan Chenango R Norwich (JL). Com. Merganser: three Dec reports, two Broome, one Tioga Cos; several Jan/Feb reports all Broome-Tioga Cos except one of

five birds 2 Jan Wells Bridge (MD). Red-breasted Merganser: two birds, 16 Jan, Lounsberry (GK, HM).

HAWKS-ALCIDS: Osprey: two reports; one 14 thru 20 Jan Delhi (SC); one Feb Newark Valley (LD); unusual during this period. Bald Eagle: many reports Jan/Feb all from CR, PR, largest number six. No. Harrier: three Dec reports; one 17 Dec CBCCC; one 17 Dec DOASCC; one Dec Tioga Co (LBI); one Jan report, one 1 Jan TBC. Sharp-shinned Hawk: several reports thru; good numbers. Cooper's Hawk: several reports thru; good numbers. No. Goshawk: only one report; 2 Dec Apalachin (GW). Red-tailed Hawk: regular thru; one pair, Otselic "19 Feb and on, courting around nests" (DM). Rough-legged Hawk: regular thru; good numbers "maybe due to high population of meadow voles" (DM). Am. Kestrel: regular thru although on low side. Ring-necked Pheasant: four reports; two Broome Co (SD), one Chenango Co (DM), one Tioga Co (LD). Ruffed Grouse: regular thru but in low numbers - connected with heavy rains during spring nesting season? Wild Turkey: regular thru but in low numbers - see Ruffed Grouse. No. Bobwhite: one report of five 17 Dec (CBCCC). Am. Coot: one report 31 Dec Cortland Co (WB). Killdeer: one Dec report, 31 Dec (CCBCCC); several Feb reports, earliest 16 Feb, Endicott (JS). Com. Snipe: one report of one bird 15 Dec Sherburne "at a location where they breed" (BWe). Am. Woodcock: one report 17 Feb Broome Co (JDa); very early. Ring-billed Gull: last large flock 100 4 Dec Vestal (FL, HM), a few later in Dec up to 1 Jan; first sizeable spring flock 40 27 Feb WPR (RM). Herring Gull: a few flocks of 25 as late as 26 Dec (NCBCCC) and 1 Jan (TBCCC); first returns two 20 Feb Oneonta (KW).

PIGEONS-WOODPECKERS: Rock Dove: common thru. Mourning Dove: common thru. E. Screech-Owl: sparsely scattered thru except in Norwich and Otselic where energetic owl hunts using tapes (JL, DM) yielded very good numbers. Great Horned Owl: scattered thru, especially good numbers reported from Norwich and Otselic; see E. Screech-Owl. Snowy Owl: one Dec, found dead and turned in to REEC; one 7 Dec Gilbertsville (reported to RD); three reports of a bird near Windsor - all in Feb, probably same bird (BB, FL, RM). Barred Owl: seven reports; one 16 Dec CBCCC; two 26 Dec NCBCCC; two 18 Feb Conklin (HB); one 24 Feb and one 26 Feb, both Otselic but different birds (DM), "answered tapes." Long-eared Owl: one, first week in Jan, Otselic, "found dead by a hunter" (DM). Belted Kingfisher: sparsely scattered thru. Red-headed Woodpecker: one seen twice in Jan and once in Feb, Delhi (DBu). Red-bellied Woodpecker: several all period Tioga Co; one or two occasionally in Chenango Co; one "all period" Smyrna (A/RI). Downy Woodpecker: common thru. Hairy Woodpecker: common thru. No. Flicker: one 26 Dec NCBCCC; two 1 Jan TBCCC; one all Feb Chenango Bridge (JBec); one Feb Tioga Co (D/JB, LBI). Pileated Woodpecker: two Broome Co reports, one 11 Dec (MS), one 27 Dec (RM); two Tioga Co reports, three 1 Jan TBCCC one Feb (D/JB, CY, LBI), two Chenango Co reports, one 17 Dec (CBCCC), one 25 Feb (JL).

FLYCATCHERS-STARLINGS: Horned Lark: "a group" 31 Dec Cortland Co (CCBCCC); a flock all period Tioga Co. Blue Jay: common thru, but fewer in Broome/Tioga Co (gypsy moth connection?). Am. Crow: common thru. Black-capped Chickadee: common thru. **BOREAL CHICKADEE:** one Jan/Feb feeding at suet Owego (BC). Tufted Titmouse: regular thru, increasing in numbers especially in Broome and Tioga Cos. Red-breasted Nuthatch: scattered thru, "seem to be more numerous in Tioga Co" (JBel). White-breasted Nuthatch: common thru. Brown Creeper: sparsely scattered thru. Carolina Wren: 11 reports; nine Dec/1 Jan in Tioga, Cortland and Broome Cos; the two "all season birds" were, surprisingly, in the northern part of the region; one Cortland was fed peanut butter plastered to the inner walls of an inverted margarine tub, hung and equipped with a makeshift landing arrangement (CW_i); one Chenango Co was fed shelled and ground sunflower seeds mixed with ground suet (CW_r) (Carolina Wren's initials also happen to be CW). Winter Wren: one 26 Dec Broome Co (NCBCCC); one 31 Dec Cortland (WT); one 1 Jan Norwich (JL). Golden-crowned Kinglet: sparsely scattered thru. E. Bluebird: six 20 Dec Apalachin (SD).

Am. Robin: many Dec/early Jan reports, especially Broome, Chenango, Cortland and Tioga Cos; only one Jan report, Broome Co (CY); several Feb reports, earliest 17 Feb Endwell (FL). **VARIED THRUSH:** one 17 Dec DOASCC, also seen 18, 19, 20 Dec at feeder "very cold night Dec 20 - did not return" (CWr). No. Mockingbird: 13 Dec/early Jan reports mostly Broome and Tioga Cos, but also Oneonta, Chenango; one all-Jan report Otsego (HR); two "till about 20 Jan" Oneonta (IW); five Jan (no specific date) Broome Co (NCBC); one 17 Feb Broome Co (NCBC). Brown Thrasher: one Dec Tioga Co (D/JB). Cedar Waxwing: regular thru. No. Shrike: eight birds: one 3 Dec Cortland (JDox); three 17 Dec CBCCC; one Dec Tioga Co (TBC); one 20 Dec, one 17 Jan "at feeder," one 20 Jan "at feeder," all Otselic (DM). Eur. Starling: common thru; numbers markedly reduced in Broome Co; only 224 there on Christmas Count.

VIREOS-WARBLEDERS: MAGNOLIA WARBLER: one 15 thru 18 Dec, Endwell "eating suet and feeding on millet with Dark-eyed Juncos" (JS).

TANAGERS-WEAVERS: No. Cardinal: common thru. Rufous-sided Towhee: one 17 Dec Chenango Co (CBCCC); one 3 Jan Cortland (JC); one Dec thru 18 Jan Vestal (HM). Am. Tree Sparrow: common thru. Field Sparrow: one 17 Dec CBCCC, three 1 Jan TBCCC. Fox Sparrow: one 17 Dec CBCCC. Song Sparrow: smattering thru. White-throated Sparrow: scattered thru Broome, Chenango, Cortland and Tioga Cos. Dark-eyed Junco: common thru. Lapland Longspur: two 31 Dec CCBCCC (RD). Snow Bunting: 13 blocks reported; one Broome Co; four Chenango Co; one Cortland Co; three Delaware co; one OPM; three Tioga Co. Red-winged Blackbird: nine Dec birds, Chenango, Cortland, Delaware, Tioga; six Jan birds, Delaware, Tioga Cos; none in Feb till returning migrants, first 17 Feb (FL) Broome Co. E. Meadowlark; one 31 Dec CBCCC (RD). Rusty Blackbird: one flock, 26 Feb, Broome Co (JDi). Com. Grackle: two Dec reports, one Tioga (LD), one Broome Co (SP); two Jan reports, one Delaware Co (DR), one Broome Co (same as Dec bird), no further reports until 17 Feb Broome Co (FL), earliest of several. Brown-headed Cowbird: several Dec reports thru; one 30 Jan Otselic (DM); earliest of several Feb reports 17 Feb Vestal (BB, JS). No. Oriole: one Dec Tioga Co (C/JB). Pine Grosbeak: eight to ten 20 Dec "feeding on ash seeds" Otselic (DM); two 26 Dec NCBCCC; one 30 Jan Chenango Co (JL). Purple Finch: 16 17 Dec CBCCC; three 31 Dec CCBCCC, six 17 Dec DOASCC; Dec Tioga Co (C/JB); one 27 Dec Apalachin (E/PG); three 25 thru 28 Jan Delaware Co (DR); two 16 Feb Delaware Co (FB); sparse. House Finch: common thru with small numbers in Oneonta and Delhi. Com. Redpoll: one 26 Dec NCBCCC; two 17 Dec CBCCC; a few 3 Jan Cortland (JC); seven 1-4 Feb Delhi (JDoi); one Feb Tioga Co (JBel, LBi). Pine Siskin: six 1 Dec Endwell (JS); three 11 Dec Norwich (JL); Dec Tioga Co (D/JB); 30 Dec Vestal (SD); four to ten "often in Jan" Oneonta (KW), one 25 Jan (MD, KW); three to seven "almost daily" Feb Oneonta (KW); two Feb Tioga Co (JBel, LBi), 12/13 Feb NCBC. Am. Goldfinch: reported thru in all areas but with frequent comments such as "lower in number than last year" (DM). "Flocks smaller" (JL) "fewer than last year" (FL). Evening Grosbeak: present thru but in smaller flocks thinly and irregularly distributed. House Sparrow: common thru.

Box 1, Friendsville stage, Binghamton, New York 13903

REGION 5 - ONEIDA LAKE BASIN

PAUL A. DEBENEDICTIS

The winter 1983-84 came in like a lion and went out like a lion, showing its kittenish side only briefly during February. December and January both averaged 2-3 degrees colder than normal. December had about normal precipitation, much of it coming as ice and freezing rain immediately prior to the Christmas bird counts. Ground feeding birds were quickly restricted to feeders and protected areas, although a large variety of species survived into January. January was brutally cold and dry. Snowfall was only about two-thirds normal at the end of the month. Similar weather prevailed in early February, and then spring came, slowly but surely, until the entire snow pack had melted and Syracuse had experienced a high of 67° on 23 February. The period ended with an abrupt return of winter.

Normally mid-February is the dead of winter. This season these conditions held in mid-January. Waterfowl were scarce, but none of the expected species was absent. Many dabblers were unreported after the weekend of 18-19 January. Great Blue Herons and Belted Kingfishers, mostly singles, remained widespread through the season. Gull concentrations in the Oswego and Oswego River areas were in typical mid-winter composition and numbers by mid-January. Ring-billed Gull numbers held very well given the cool weather. Both Red-tailed and Rough-legged Hawks were seen in good numbers in central Oswego Co., where mouse populations were high. Snowy Owls were reported from two sites only, one for just a brief stay. Four Northern Saw-whet Owls are about three-and-a-half more than our mid-winter average, and one photographed near Oswego was discovered to be a Boreal Owl after the film was processed!! Northern Shrikes were present in good numbers after a slow start this fall. Winter finches were scarce. Most of the rarer species are enumerated below. House Finch populations continue to increase, and American Goldfinch was somewhat more numerous than average. Evening Grosbeak was considerably below its average for recent years on Ben Burt's feeder surveys.

Spring, part one, at the end of February, was marked by exceptionally warm weather and widespread arrivals of early migrants. Gerald Smith covered Derby Hill Bird Observatory for much of this period. He recorded about 180 raptors, nearly 1,300 Horned Larks, 20,000 American Crows, 2,000 European Starlings and about 7,000 icterids before the heat turned off. Elsewhere, geese arrived in numbers, including a new regional record max for Snow Goose in central Cayuga County. Most observers noted influxes of Canada Geese, Ring-billed Gulls, American Robins, icterids, and Eastern Bluebirds were widespread during this period.

The only great rarities reported were a Boreal Owl and a most unseasonal White-eyed Vireo. Our nearly annual Thayer's Gull was well documented this season. Several Bald Eagles were discovered, and a Black-legged Kittiwake on Oneida Lake is perhaps expected after last fall's influx. A single Boreal Chickadee and Bohemian Waxwing, remnants of last fall's flight, were noted. The only surprising miss of the season was Hermit Thrush. A total of 123 species plus one morph and one hybrid was reported.

Contributors: Lorraine L. Aust, Dorothy Crumb, Paul DeBenedictis, Robert L. Evans, John Hanyak, Lynn D. Hemink, Gene Huggins, Steven F. Kahl, Ruth Knight, Jeanne Lally, Gary Lee, Robert L. Long, Robert Post, Margaret S. Rusk, F. G. Scheider, Gerald A. Smith, Betty Starr, Magdalena Stooks, Gary Webb.

Abbreviations: arr-arrival; CBC-Christmas Bird Count; DH-Derby Hill, Oswego Co; FH-Fairhaven, Little Sodus Bay and vicinity, Cayuga Co; LOL-Lake Ontario littoral, Oswego Co; NYSARC-report submitted to New York State Avian Records Committee; Onon-Onondaga; ph-photographed; SP-Sandy Pond, Oswego Co; Syr-Syracuse.

LOONS-DUCKS: Red-throated Loon: last DH 15 Dec. Com. Loon: last Skaneateles L 14 Jan. Pied-billed Grebe: three Baldwinsville through mid-Jan, one Oswego 12 Feb. Horned Grebe: to five per day. Red-necked Grebe: last Oneida L 8 Dec. Double-crested Cormorant: one Oswego 9 Feb (FGS, JH) first mid-winter record since 1976. Great Blue Heron: singles widespread thru season. Mute Swan: one FH last seen 3 Dec. Snow Goose: arr 76 Snow, 464 Blue SFR 25 Feb; 1,775 Snow Geese, including 1,600 "Blue Geese" near Port Byron 26 Feb triples previous record max. Brant: last LOL 3 Dec. Canada Goose: mid-winter max 532 Skaneateles L mid-Jan; arr about 17 Feb, 16,000 SFR 25 Feb. Wood Duck: one Baldwinsville to 16 Jan. Green-winged Teal: last Oneida L 8 Dec. Am. Black Duck: arr widespread 17 Feb. Mallard: ditto. No. Pintail: two Eaton 14 Jan only mid-winter report; arr SFR 17 Feb. No. Shoveler: last 15 FH 15 Dec also a high count for recent years. Gadwall: last two Oswego 19 Jan, arr Syr 18 Feb. Am. Wigeon: last FH 15 Dec, arr Brewerton 16 Feb. Canvasback: mid-winter max 73 Skaneateles L, arr. ca. 17 Feb. Redhead: mid-winter max 84 Skaneateles L, arr ca. 17 Feb. Ring-necked Duck: two Baldwinsville thru 19 Jan, arr SFR 17 Feb. Greater Scaup: max 1,019 Oswego 29 Jan. Lesser Scaup: to ten/day Oswego. King Eider: two-three Oswego thru 18 Dec, female there 25 Feb. Oldsquaw: max 50 Oswego mid-Jan, low. Black Scoter: last LOL 13 Dec. Surf Scoter: single Oswego 22 Jan is a rare mid-winter record. White-winged Scoter: record max 112 Oswego 22 Jan, numerous all winter. Com. Goldeneye: max 280 Oswego mid-Jan low. Barrow's Goldeneye: female Oswego 9 Feb (FGS, JH). Bufflehead: max 75 Oswego mid-Jan. Hooded Merganser: last high counts 17 Dec, only one-two per day afterwards. Com. Merganser: max 1,380 Oswego 17 Jan. Red-breasted Merganser: max 71 Oswego 17 Jan. Ruddy Duck: last 31 Onon L 17 Dec.

HAWKS-ALCIDS: Turkey Vulture: arr DH 23 Feb. Bald Eagle: imm SP 3 Dec, one-two near Fulton 18 Jan-16 Feb, one Chittings Pond 24 Feb, one DH 23 Feb. No. Harrier: last DeWitt 8 Jan, arr DH 17 Feb. Cooper's Hawk: arr DH 23 Feb. No. Goshawk: six reported mid-winter, eight past DH after 17 Feb. Red-tailed Hawk: mid-winter max 29 Phoenix area, arr DH 17 Feb. Rough-legged Hawk: max 19 Phoenix area, arr DH 17 Feb. Am. Kestrel: mid-winter max four, low. Am. Coot: singles Syr 14 Jan, Baldwinsville mid-Jan. Killdeer: last Carpenter's Brook Fish Hatchery 14 Jan, arr DH 19 Feb. Com. Snipe: last Baldwinsville 19 Jan. Bonaparte's Gull: last Oswego 2 Jan. Ring-billed Gull: mid-winter max 4,000 Oswego. Herring Gull: mid-winter max 1,800 Oswego. **THAYER'S GULL**: imm Fulton 15/28 Jan (FGS, DWC, Barbara Spencer, ph, NYSARC). Iceland Gull: arr LOL 11 Dec, max 5 Oswego mid-Jan, none in Feb. Glaucous Gull: max 12 Oswego good showing, none in Feb. Great Black-backed Gull: max 400 Oswego. Black-legged Kittiwake: adult Sylvan Beach 5 Dec (LA) is one of the few regional reports away from Lake Ontario.

PIGEONS-WOODPECKERS: Snowy Owl: one near Peterboro all winter, single Syr airport irregularly 17 Dec to 19 Feb. Long-eared Owl: single FH 18 Feb. No. Saw-whet Owl: four singles during winter include one incarcerated after entering a Utica home in mid-Jan. **BOREAL OWL**: one photographed Snake Swamp 5-15 Feb (LH, NYSARC), is the fourth regional record. Red-bellied Woodpecker: one overwintered Rome (DC), very far east. Yellow-bellied Sapsucker: one Oswego CBC 18 Dec, one Chittenango after 21 Jan, very unusual in winter.

FLYCATCHERS-STARLINGS: Horned Lark: arr DH 17 Feb, nearly 1,300 passed by

during warm spell. Am. Crow: about 4,900 over DH after 17 Feb. Boreal Chickadee: one near Cazenovia 4-11 Feb (RK, JH) only report outside Adirondacks. Tufted Titmouse: widespread. Red-breasted Nuthatch: less than a half-dozen reported. Winter Wren: one Woodmans Pond to 14 Jan (MSR). Carolina Wren: two Dec reports only. E. Bluebird: about a dozen reports from five localities after 5 Feb. Am. Robin: mid-winter max 45 Otisco L 28 Jan, a few migrants after 17 Feb. Gray Catbird: one town of Onon 2 Jan (JH). Water Pipit: 15-20 Rome 24 Feb (DJC) record early by almost a month. Bohemian Waxwing: one Kirkville 25 Jan (JL). No. Shrike: one-three per day all season, very widespread. Eur. Starling: near 2,000 past DH after 17 Feb.

VIREOS-WARBLEDERS: **WHITE-EYED VIREO**: one Fulton 18 Dec (FGS, G. Ward, NYSARC) absolutely unexpected anywhere in New York at this time of year.

TANAGERS-WEAVERS: No. Cardinal: very numerous at feeders. Rufous-sided Towhee: one in Old Forge killed by dog in mid-Jan. Am. Tree Sparrow: max 50 per day. Field Sparrow: last Cazenovia 5 Jan. Swamp Sparrow: last SP 3 Dec. White-crowned Sparrow: imm Howland's Island 22 Jan, adult Carpenter's Pond Fish Hatchery 11 Feb, one at feeder in Wampsville in Feb. Lapland Longspur: several reports in Jan, max ten. Red-winged Blackbird: mid-winter max ten, arr 9 Feb Syr, 6,130 past DH after 17 Feb. E. Meadowlark: last Cazenovia 5 Jan. Rusty Blackbird: four overwintered DeWitt. Com. Grackle: very few overwinter, widespread arr 17 Feb, only a few past DH. Brown-headed Cowbird: very scarce mid-winter. Pine Grosbeak: scattered small flocks reported LOL, Holland Patent after mid-Jan. Purple Finch: only one reported outside CBC period. House Finch: almost every observer distant from Syracuse commented on how common they had become this winter. Red Crossbill: two Pratts Fall 23 Jan-2 Feb (DWC). Com. Redpoll: one Rome 4 Dec, then none until 6 Feb; five others reported. Pine Siskin: four reported through mid-Dec and one Holland Patent 11 Feb, only reports away from Adirondacks. Evening Grosbeak: subaverage numbers all season.

Educational Communications and Studies, Upstate Medical Center,
766 Irving Ave., Syracuse, New York 13210

REGION 6 - ST. LAWRENCE

KENNETH L. CROWELL and GERALD A. SMITH

With the exception of a dramatic incursion of Great Gray Owls, this was a dull winter for birders. Oddly, it was the coldest and snowiest in recent years. Much of this report is based on Christmas Bird Count reports, with a decided dearth of information for January and February. It was a winter when birding in the North Country may best have been done at the window by the feeder, but for those who ventured afield, rewards were found along Lake Ontario and the St. Lawrence River. A total of 88 species was reported in comparison with 93 for the same period in 1983. Temperatures averaged 3° F below normal for December while precipitation was 3.6 in. above normal. There was heavy rain 13-14 December and snow 28-30 December. During the last two weeks of the month temperatures were more than 10° below normal. The monthly high was 44° on the 16th followed by the extreme low of -24° on the 20th. Rough weather for Christmas Counts! In January temperatures were also below normal, but precipitation was normal. The period of 8-22 January was especially cold, with the heaviest snow on the 14-15th. Monthly extreme temperatures ranged from -29° to 40°F. We had March weather in February. The first two weeks were cold, with a monthly minimum temperature of -14° on the 2nd. The period 11-22 February was exceptionally warm with a monthly high of 61° the 14th. Heavy rains took the ice out of the rivers. The month ended with a blizzard during the last two days. Species counts for all three regional Christmas Counts were down 15-20%; with both Massena and Thousand Islands logging 55 while Watertown reported 43 species. Individuals were down as well. Massena totaled 9,653 on 27 December; Thousand Islands had 7,669 the 18th, and Watertown tallied 6,815 on 17 Dec.

On the positive side, there were good numbers of waterfowl, an increase in reports of Bald Eagle and Gray Partridge. In addition to the Great Gray Owl invasion there was a good Snowy Owl flight. Shrikes were up from last year. Both Northern Cardinal and Tufted Titmouse show increases. Other noteworthy sightings included Boreal Chickadee and Bohemian Waxwing. On the downside was the continued increase of the Canada Goose and large gull populations. Rough-legged Hawk numbers were only fair. For all the cold there was a dearth of winter finches. Does that reflect a good cone crop in boreal forests or our own frigid conditions? Not surprisingly, there were fewer half-hardies this year, fewer Song Sparrows and icterids, and no Northern Mockingbirds. Interesting birds out-of-season included Hooded Merganser, Turkey Vulture, Red-shouldered Hawk, Killdeer, Golden-crowned Kinglet, Northern Oriole and Field Sparrow.

For rarities, we had a first regional record for Lesser Black-backed Gull.

Abbreviations: Jeff. Co.-Jefferson County; MCC-Massena Christmas Count; MSPD-Moses Saunders Power Dam, Massena; St. Law. Co.-St. Lawrence County; SLR-St. Lawrence River; TICC-Thousand Islands Christmas Count; WCC-Watertown Christmas Count.

Contributors: Joanne Akerman, Marilyn Badger, Stewart Brown, R. Cerwonka, Lee B. Chamberlaine, K. Crowell, S. Coyne DeGhett, Michael Digiorgio, M. & E. Howard, Collins Kellogg, Lorena McLeod, Peter O'Shea, Gerald A. Smith, J. VanRiet, Robert Walker, James Winterbottom.

LOONS-DUCKS: Com. Loon: one each WCC and TICC. Great Blue Heron: six TICC is very high, could conceivably involve duplication; imm found dead Renshaw Bay Rd., Ellisburg 6 Jan (LMcL). Mute Swan: two with a flock of Canada Geese, Ellisburg 26 Jan (SS), a most unusual mid-winter record. Canada Goose: 770 WCC; 87 TICC; 67 MCC; 600 Pillar Pt, Jeff. Co. 11 Dec; 12 Watertown 24 Feb, probably spring migrants. This species continues to increase in frequency and abundance locally at all seasons; it is now to be expected year round in small numbers except during the most severe winters, when they are absent from late Dec to late Feb. Am. Black Duck: 67 MCC; 36 TICC, of which 55 were in Black R. Bay; 28 Robert Moses Power Dam 14 Jan; 5-15 per day in open water areas along the SLR thru. Mallard: 200 MCC; 115 TICC; 67 WCC; only scattered records of one to two per day in open water pools along the SLR; 50 RMPD 14 Jan. Gadwall: 25 SLR near Massena (JVR), a high count for so late in the season. Canvasback: four RMPD 14 Jan. Ring-necked Duck: one TICC; two 28 Dec RMPD (JVR). Greater Scaup: 1,098 TICC; 226 WCC; 5,000 Sherwins Bay, Jeff. Co. (RJW) 11 Dec; 500 Tibbetts Point, Lake Ontario, 15 Jan; small numbers, ten per day or less in open water pools along the SLR. Oldsquaw: two MCC; four TICC; one WCC; 30 Pillar Pt 11 Dec; 80 Stony Pt., Jeff. Co., 15 Jan. White-winged Scoter: 4 TICC. Com. Goldeneye: 1,400 MCC; 1,098 TICC; 100 WCC; 200 Sherwin's Bay 11 Dec; 100-220 per day Stony Pt.-Pt. Peninsula, Jeff. Co. Dec-Feb; 300-600 per day in open water pools along the SLR Dec-Feb. Barrow's Goldeneye: one MCC; one thru Feb RMPD; should now be considered rare but regular on the SLR east of the power dam in winter. Bufflehead: three MCC; 12 Sherwin's Bay 11 Dec; seven Star Pt. 15 Jan; thru season RMPD. Hooded Merganser: one MCC (JVR); two Dexter 13 Dec (RJW); rare in this region in winter. Com. Merganser: 4,000 MCC; 2,765 TICC; three WCC; 500-1,000 per day in open water pools along the SLR thru. The river is a major fall migration staging and wintering area for this species; they are often the most common waterfowl present. Red-breasted Merganser: three MCC.

HAWKS-ALCIDS: Turkey Vulture: one verified report of one WCC (Stewart Brown, Nick Leone); unverified reports of two TICC, and two feeding at Town Dump, Clare, in Jan (JW); this species is very rare in our area in winter and all reports require careful verification. Bald Eagle: frequency of sightings and total numbers definitely up along the SLR and northeastern Lake Ontario; SLR reports include: two to four per day Chippewa Pt. to Morristown thru; one to two per day near Ogdensburg thru; one Pollys Gut 28 Dec and 15 Jan, two TICC, max an extraordinary 7! (3 adults, 4 imm) feeding on a deer carcass near Big Island on 1 Jan (GAS); adult and imm near Sackets Harbor 11 Dec (RJW); adult feeding on a deer carcass along the Racquette R near Black Falls 2-5 Feb, an unusual inland report. No. Harrier: one to three per day thru period Pt. Peninsula, Jeff. Co., where they are regular in winter; no other confirmed winter reports; singles Henderson 17 Feb and Massena 18 Feb are probably early spring migrants. Sharp-shinned Hawk: three MCC; singles 17 Dec Pt. Peninsula; one Ellisburg 18 Dec one Watertown 8 Dec; at feeder in Canton thru. Cooper's Hawk: "pair" Henderson 21 Jan (LBC), only report. No. Goshawk: scattered reports of one to two per day thru, total 12 reports. Red-shouldered Hawk: one at suet feeder in Potsdam during two weeks in Jan, photos taken, (C. Horton *fide* JVR); another unverified report. This species is extremely rare at this season and all reports require full verification. Red-tailed Hawk: numbers up this winter in many areas: four MCC; two TICC; 12 WCC; six Chaumont area 4 Feb; one to four per day from all sections of region at lowlands including the fringe of the SLR, where this species is infrequent during many winters. Rough-legged Hawk: three MCC; eight WCC; five to ten per day Pt. Peninsula thru; two to six per day in other areas of western Jeff. Co.; less frequent

elsewhere. Am. Kestrel: one MCC; one TICC; five WCC. Scattered reports of one per day elsewhere thru. Gray Partridge: 13 MCC, 23 TICC, 63 WCC; one 23 Jan Brownville, Jeff. Co.; five thru Feb N of Massena; six S. Hammond, St. Law. Co. 31 Dec; seems to be doing well in many lowland areas of the region. Ring-necked Pheasant: three PRWMA 17 Dec; one female DOR Canton. Ruffed Grouse: 16 MCC; nine TICC. Am. Coot: four TICC; one Rensselaer Falls 22 Jan (JVR); most unusual in winter in this region. Killdeer: Canton during thaw late Feb. Ring-billed gull: 18 MCC; five TICC; 283 WCC; migrants by 5 Feb, in Massena area (JVR). Herring Gull: 600 MCC; 179 TICC; 38 WCC. Iceland Gull: 14 MCC; one to two per day western SLR in Jan and Feb. **LESSER BLACK-BACKED GULL**: adult near Big Island on the SLR 1 Jan, may be first regional record (GAS). Glaucous gull: ten MCC; one TICC; one to two per day in western SLR Jan and Feb. Great Black-backed Gull: 530 MCC; 101 TICC; 1 WCC; 50-100 per day in the western SLR Jan-Feb; this species now regularly outnumbers the Herring Gull in many parts of this region during winter.

PIGEONS-WOODPECKERS: Rock Dove: max 1,054 WCC. Mourning Dove: max 150 TICC. E. Screech-Owl: one calling 28 Dec Henderson (LC). Great Horned Owl: 20 reports: max six TICC. Snowy Owl: none on Christmas Counts; 12 reports 21 Dec thru 22 Feb. **GREAT GRAY OWL**: over 40 reports for as many as 30 individuals in St. Law. Co. with concentration in Massena-Potsdam area 31 Dec thru, but marked decline after mid-Feb thaw; eight reports for six individuals in Jeff. Co.; one Croghan, Lewis Co. 19 Jan. Long-eared Owl: one found dead Carthage 26 Dec (SB). Short-eared Owl: two 7 Jan and one 15 Jan Pt. Peninsula (RW). Belted Kingfisher: one TICC. Red-headed Woodpecker: one outer Massey St., Watertown 3 Jan (SB). Red-bellied Woodpecker: one TICC; two males Henderson thru; one Sandy Creek. Downy Woodpecker: 76 reported. Hairy Woodpecker: 56 reported. No. Flicker: one TICC. Pileated Woodpecker: only 7 reports.

FLYCATCHERS-STARLINGS: Horned Lark: max 177 WCC. Gray Jay: two on deer carcass above High Falls, Town of Fine 5 Dec. Blue Jay: abundant this year, two to eight at feeders; max 181 TICC. Am. Crow: 56 WCC; small numbers thru Jan; max 200 Canton 11 Feb. Com. Raven: three Star L 21 Jan; two Cranberry L 19 Feb (Po'S); seven at deer carcass near Blake Falls, Colton 3 Feb. Black-capped Chickadee: even more than last year; 43 banded at my feeder, 15-24 thru; max 380 MCC. **BOREAL CHICKADEE**: two Potsdam 10 Feb thru (JA). Tufted Titmouse: increased numbers and distribution in Jeff. Co.; two at feeder in Henderson thru (LC); two thru Dec (LMcC); four WCC at feeder (LG); two Adams Cove 12-16 Dec (LG); two Elm St., Canton (JW). Red-breasted Nuthatch: one MCC only one on counts; reports of one and two from Canton, one Massena. White-breasted Nuthatch: max 37 TICC; 11 others from seven regular observers. Brown Creeper: none. Golden-crowned Kinglet: one MCC. Am. Robin: 2 MCC, 1 WCC, 20 Potsdam 4 Jan. **BOHEMIAN WAXWING**: 1 Robt. Moses State Park 11 Dec (JVR); 11 TICC; one with 11 Cedar Waxwings Stony Pt., Henderson 7 Jan (LC); five 21 Feb, two 21 Feb Watertown (RW). Cedar Waxwing: only two flocks during period (LC); 9 MCC; none WCC, TICC; 75 on 21 Feb and 50 Watertown 28 Feb. No. Shrike: three TICC; 11 others for Jeff. Co.; 7 MCC, 5 other reports for St. Law. Co. Eur. Starling: max 1,810 WCC.

VIREOS-WARBLERS: none.

TANAGERS-WEAVERS: No. Cardinal: 21 WCC; 8 TICC; 13 MCC, far more than in the past; one to two pairs Dry Hill, Watertown thru; 3 pairs Massena thru (MB); three thru, max seven Canton 1 Dec (MEH); one to two Potsdam 10 Dec thru 26 Jan (SCDeG); four males, two females Lisbon; also reported from Waddington and Dekalb. Am. Tree Sparrow: 200 WCC; 207 TICC; max 11 at feeders. Field Sparrow: one MCC. Song Sparrow: one TICC; one feeder at Pillar Pt., Brownville 11 Dec. White-throated Sparrow: 200 WCC; one MCC. Dark-eyed Junco: max 22 WCC; Watertown thru Feb. Lapland Longspur: "in area" week of WCC. Snow Bunting: 2,000 Sherwin's Bay 11 Dec (RW); on all CC and smaller numbers throughout region thru period. Red-winged Blackbird: three TICC; four MCC; one Parishville thru Jan; returning flocks 20-24 Feb, very early. E. Meadowlark: one TICC.

Rusty Blackbird: one at feeder, Pillar Pt. 11 Dec (RW); one Potsdam 9 and 14 Feb (SCDeG). Com. Grackle: two Pillar Pt. 11 Dec; eight WCC. Brown-headed Cowbird: 12 MCC; ten Mannsville 17 Dec. No. Oriole: one Colton in Feb (JW). Pine Grosbeak: 73 MCC; none WCC, TICC; 44 others in seven reports, few and far between. Purple Finch: 16 WCC; five TICC; three Canton early Dec; three Massena thru. House Finch: 31 WCC, down from last year; one Canton early Dec (MEH). Com. Redpoll: four MCC; none WCC, TICC; max 60 Rensselaer Falls 22 Jan; a few other reports. Pine Siskin: 14 MCC; none WCC, TICC; 14 Massena 19, 21 Jan; 15 Potsdam and 20, 31 Jan, 1, 19, 20 Feb; three other reports. Am. Goldfinch: max 48 TICC; flocks of up to 18 at feeders thru. Evening Grosbeak: max 658 MCC; otherwise spotty, some report lots at feeders thru, others had few.

Dept. of Biology, St. Lawrence University, Canton, New York 13617

REGION 7 - ADIRONDACK-CHAMPLAIN

JOHN M. C. PETERSON

This winter's flight of Great Gray Owls illustrates both the wider appeal of birds and the changing nature of avian records. Not only are many more observers submitting records, but they are also gathering and passing along increased numbers of secondhand sight records. Many of these newer observers and most of their network are unknown to the editor, and at the same time few of them see *The Kingbird*. In the era when taxidermists and collectors supplied information on northern owls, there was little doubt about accurate identification (although a study skin of a Boreal Owl in the Middlebury College collection was originally mislabeled as a Northern Saw-Whet Owl). Every effort is made to obtain details of rarities, yet the fact remains that of *eight* Great Gray Owls reported in the region this winter, only three were actually seen by observers of known reliability. Most, if not all, of the others are undoubtedly correct, but the lingering uncertainty, especially with secondhand, verbal records, draws attention to a problem that increases along with the widening interest in birds.

The winter season from December through February was the sixth coldest on record nationwide, the coldest in 53 years, with fuel requirements 2% higher than normal. Yet within the Adirondack-Champlain Region, fuel needs were actually 7% lower than average. By early December, seasonal snowfall at Newcomb had reached 9 inches, while Piseco had a foot. Mid-month saw heavy rains, with 24/hour totals of 1.7" at Ray Brook on 13 December and 2.0" at Elizabethtown 14 December. By 16 December, after almost four inches of rain had fallen, Lake Champlain had risen to 99.88', or over five feet higher than a year earlier. Each inch added to the lake level represents 149,750,000,000 gallons of water. Many of the usual feeding and resting areas for waterfowl and gulls had been largely abandoned by the morning of the Ferrisburg and Plattsburgh Christmas Bird Counts (FCBC and PCBC) on 17 December. Happily, the ground

was bare or only covered with about 1½ inches with snow. Temperatures dropped to -22° in the Tri-Lakes 20 December and -19° at Ray Brook 21 December, followed by a snowstorm to welcome winter on the 22nd. There were some 4 to 24 inches on the ground during the Elizabethtown count (ECBC) on 26 December, and 8 inches to a foot for the 30 December Saranac Lake count (SLCBC). In spite of high waters, snow, and temperatures down to five below, eighty observers took part in the counts.

On 12 January the mercury dropped to -20° at Plattsburgh, -21° at Elizabethtown, and -22° at Ray Brook. The mid-point of a normal degree-day season, the theoretical ½-woodpile mark, came on 22 January, with the remaining firewood at Newcomb being rapidly consumed by a -33° F Siberian Express. Winds hit 40+ m.p.h. on 26 Jan. The first day of February hit Newcomb with -25°. Unofficial overnight temperatures approaching the forty below mark were reported during this period, helping to maintain the reputation of the mid-January NYS Waterfowl Count as the nadir of the entire birding year, Bald Eagle and Barrow's Goldeneye notwithstanding. Finally, just in time for the annual Gorp & Glogg Expedition up the Chubb River on 11 February, a great thaw set in, with eastern chipmunks out on 20 February and the temperature a balmy 49° in Plattsburgh on 23 February. The month ended with a more expected 6° at Ray Brook on 27 February, followed by a snowfall only 4 times as acid as it should be, one of the cleaner storms. A total of 96 species were reported, five more than last year's milder winter produced.

Thomas Dudones (30 Ampersand Avenue, Saranac Lake, NY 12983) of High Peaks Audubon is working on a manuscript of *Birds of Franklin County, New York*. Mark Gretch (P.O. Box 748, Champlain, NY 12919) of Northern Adirondack Audubon is preparing a supplement to Warren's *Birds of Clinton County* (1979). Any contributions to these works-in-progress would be greatly appreciated and should be directed to the appropriate author.

Contributors and initialed observers: Merry Baker, Thomas Barber, Sharon Bissell, Helen & Robert Booth, Beverly Brown, Geoffrey Carleton, Ann & Walter Chapman, J. Chapman, Dewey & Joan Clark, Janet Cooper, Phil Cox, Jim Cunningham, Charlotte Daley, Charlie Delehanty, Thomas Dudones, Gregory Furness, Emily Geddes, John Gillen, Dan Greenwood, Jennifer & Mark Gretch, Thomas Hale, Helen Jock, Elsbeth Johnson, Hal Klein, William Krueger, Gary Lee, William Lee, J. Littlefield, Norman Mason, Larry Master, Louise Meisenheimer, Sue Millar, Victoria Morey, Dan Nickerson, Antoinette O'Bryan, Terry O'Connell, Chet Orzack, John Parke, John Peterson, F. Rose, Jerry Rosenband, John Russell, David & Kathy Rutkowski, Carole Slatkin, Armand Vaillancourt, Phil Walker, Hollis White, Robert Yunick, and all of the Christmas Bird Counters.

LOONS-DUCKS: Six Com. Loons were reported on CBC's, four on the NYS side of the Ferrisburg (VT/NY) circle and another two on the Plattsburgh count. North West Bay had 20 Horned Grebes by 3 Dec, max 36 FCBC. A Red-necked Grebe was also found on the Ferrisburg count, while another located during the Saranac L count was later learned to have been an iced-up bird released on the Saranac R by the NYSDEC. Last Great Blue Herons were at NW Bay 17 Dec and Ausable Pt 18 Dec. An imm MUTE SWAN, perhaps the same bird seen earlier in Vermont waters, was on NW Bay from 26 Dec (GC) to 28 Dec (TB); this represents a first record for Essex Co. Canada Geese wintered on LaChute R where there were up to 22 present, and lingered on Whallon's Bay in large numbers, max 366 FCBC; three arrivals were resting on the ice of Racquette Pd near open water

23-24 Feb, and another was heard at Rouses Pt 25 Feb. Six Am. Black Ducks wintered at Bartlett Carry (FR); 23 were found on the waterfowl count. A Gadwall was at Ausable Pt 18 Dec (BB, TO). Canvasbacks included three on the PCBC, one at NW Bay 28 Dec (TB), and a pair at Rouses Pt 25 Feb (MG). Ring-necked Duck: one Saranac R (SLCBC). Greater Scaup: 405 PCBC, subadult male at Essex 15 Jan NYSWC. Com. Goldeneye: max 405 PCBC; one on a tiny pond with an opening for domestic ducks provided a new species for the ECBC; four arrived Tupper L 27 Feb (CD). An adult male Barrow's Goldeneye was at Port Kent 14 Jan (MG, TO). Bufflehead: max 16 FCBC. Hooded Merganser: max 23 Tupper L 1 Dec (CD). Com. Merganser: max 269 NYSWC.

HAWKS-ALCIDS: Bald Eagles were reported from the Champlain district between 26 Dec-22 Feb by many observers, with four locations and perhaps five or more eagles involved: adult Ausable Pt (MG, TO, and many others), imm Crown Pt (GF), both adult and imm Whallon's Bay (J. Parke), and an inland adult Westport (ECBC, EG). No. Harrier was reported from Chazy Landing and Westport in Dec. Sharp-shinned Hawks were spotted at Elizabethtown, Tupper L, and Westport; max 3 PCBC. The most frequently reported accipiter was Cooper's Hawk, with sightings at Bear Swamp Rd., Champlain, Chazy, Chubb R, Elizabethtown, Miner, and Plattsburgh. No. Goshawk was found near The Glen and Willsboro. Red-tailed Hawk: max 1 ECBC. Rough-legged Hawk: max 3 PCBC. Only a few Am. Kestrels were reported, with sightings in eastern Essex and northern Franklin Cos. Good numbers of Gray Partridge were noted in northern Clinton Co. Ring-necked Pheasant: max 3 SLCBC. Ruffed Grouse was drumming at 10:30 p.m. on 15 Dec near Elizabethtown, max 7 PCBC. The Killdeer at Cumberland Head on the PCBC and Am. Woodcock during count week on the ECBC were unexpected. Bonaparte's Gull: max 38 FCBC. Ring-billed Gull: max 267 PCBC. Herring Gull: max 65 PCBC. Lesser Black-backed Gull: one Willsboro Pt NYSWC (TB, EJ, JP). Glaucous Gull: one Cadyville and later Dock & Coal PCBC (BB, TO). Great Black-backed Gull: 4 FCBC and 12 PCBC on the same day; same max 16 recorded on NYSWC along Clinton and Essex Co. shorelines.

PIGEONS-WOODPECKERS: Rock Dove: max 550 PCBC, from a city where there are still no Atlas records. Mourning Dove: max 67 PCBC. An E. Screech-Owl was calling near Wadhams at dawn on the ECBC. Several Great Horned Owls started off the final season of the NYS Breeding Bird Atlas at Chilson, Paradox, and Tupper L, while the ECBC and PCBC teams found five each. A Snowy Owl was reported from Westport. Barred Owls began giving the slow, high hoots near Paradox 7 Jan. **GREAT GRAY OWLS** were reported from Brushton, Chazy, Cumberland Head, Ray Brook, Westport, and Wilmington, and at least two of those present on the St. Regis Indian Reservation were seen inside Franklin Co.; one wonders how many may have gone unrecorded along the border district between Hogansburg and Rouses Pt, an area not visited by birders, but with good habitat and near known concentrations. A No. Saw-whet Owl replied to a Barred Owl tape on the ECBC, a second was found perching in a hemlock near Paradox 21-22 Jan and gave snoring calls at mobbing Blue Jays before seeking the solitude of dense conifers to escape mobbing Black-capped Chickadees, and a third visited Tupper L feeders from 6-10 Feb (CD, AV). A Belted Kingfisher was still along LaChute R 4 Feb (JC). A **RED-BELLIED WOODPECKER** started visiting a Ticonderoga feeder 20 Jan and it later appeared that a pair was present (AO); this represents a first record for the Region. A Three-toed and two Black-backed Woodpeckers were found on the SLCBC.

FLYCATCHERS-STARLINGS: Four Gray Jays were also noted on the SLCBC. The 552 Am. Crows on the PCBC suggest nearby roosting. Com. Raven: max 7 ECBC, and reports of mated pairs near Elizabethtown, Newcomb, and Paradox. Two Boreal Chickadees visited a Newcomb feeder for the third consecutive winter (AC, WC), while Tufted Titmice returned to a Crown Point feeder (GF). A suet feeder at Tupper L attracted a Ruby-crowned Kinglet from 6-16 Dec (CD). Am. Robin: max 10 Westport 4 Jan (TB). The PCBC recorded two No. Mockingbirds and a Brown Thrasher. Bohemian Waxwings were reported from

L Alice and Westport, with max 38 on the PCBC. Meanwhile, the only Cedar Waxwings were at Westport in early Dec (GC). Individual No. Shrikes turned up on the FCBC, PCBC, near Moira and Westport, and in the vicinity of feeders at Cadyville and Elizabethtown. Still not recorded in several Plattsburgh Atlas blocks, perhaps a few of the 457 Eur. Starlings found wintering there on the PCBC will remain to nest.

TANAGERS-WEAVERS: No. Cardinal: max 35 PCBC. Am. Tree Sparrow: max 72 ECBC. Two Field Sparrows were at Westport 27 Dec, during the ECBC count period (JR, CS). Song Sparrow: four visited a Crown Point feeder in Dec (GF); max five PCBC. White-throated Sparrow: max 9 PCBC. Less expected was the White-crowned Sparrow at Ticonderoga 17 Feb (JC). Dark-eyed Juncos wintered at Crown Pt, Elizabethtown, and Tupper L feeders, max 41 ECBC. Snow Bunting numbers were improved over last winter, with reports from three CBCs, as well as Newcomb and Whallonsburg, and a max 200+ near Westport 28 Dec (TB). The usual few Red-winged Blackbirds wintered, then the mid-Feb thaw brought the return of mostly male flocks from the south. There were 60 at Ticonderoga 22 Feb (JC), a max of about 1,000 in northern Clinton Co. 25 Feb (MG), and territorial males scattered about. Even Newcomb had 10-15 at a feeder 28 Feb (WC) and Tupper L had up to 44 by 29 Feb (CD). These false harbingers disappeared with the return of cold weather. An E. Meadowlark showed up near a Cadyville feeder from 7 Jan (TO). A few Com. Grackles also wintered, with max 3 SLCBC and returning birds showing up in northern Clinton Co. and Tupper L on 25 Feb. The adult male No. Oriole near Keeseville stayed at least through 3 Dec (JG); this constitutes the second Essex Co. winter record. Pine Grosbeaks were probably more abundant this winter than the eight reports indicate, with a max 61 on the SLCBC. Purple Finch was virtually absent, with only one on the FCBC, three on the ECBC, none on SLCBC, and the max 37 tallied on the PCBC were overshadowed by (and hopefully not confused with) the 91 House Finches on the same day in Plattsburgh. A single Red Crossbill visited a Clinton Co. feeder 9-11 Dec (LM), while small numbers were heard near Elizabethtown and Paradox. A "Probable-Pair" of the early-nesting White-winged Crossbill was seen on the 26 Dec ECBC in spruce-balsam habitat on the west end of Wells Hill Rd. (TB), while the only other report came from Chubb R (LM). A light flight of Com. Redpolls passed through during Dec with max 40 FCBC; the last were a small flock of about 10 in an alder swamp near Paradox 25 Jan (MB). Pine Siskins were widely reported, but erratic, appearing to decline somewhat in Jan-Feb; max 45 ECBC. Am. Goldfinches showed a similar pattern, with a max 158 PCBC. Daily flocks of from 10 to 100 Evening Grosbeaks visited most feeders, but numbers were somewhat reduced from last winter; max 1,026 tallied in Elizabethtown, Lewis, New Russia, and Wadhams during the ECBC. House Sparrow: none was noted among the record 53 species, 5,408 individuals on the PCBC, an area where Atlas records are also lacking; max 119 SLCBC.

Corrigendum: Delete "Com. Nighthawk arr Newcomb 25 Apr," *Kingbird* Vol. 33: p 212. Discovery Farm, R.D. 1, Elizabethtown, New York 12932

REGION 8 - HUDSON-MOHAWK

PETER FEINBERG

The winter season for the region was marked by high species diversity and an unusually low population density. This was probably due to the relatively mild local weather conditions and large wild food crop, allowing individuals to scatter about the area without concentrating at local feeders or protective habitats.

December was cold, average temperatures were ten degrees lower than last year. Precipitation was higher than normal and mostly fell as rain. Despite the cold weather many birders turned out for local Christmas Bird counts. Species numbers were high and individual numbers were low, a pattern which set the scene for the rest of the winter season. Six count reports were received with Greene County reporting an all time high of 78 species and the Alan Devoe Bird Club reporting their third highest count in 26 years with 61 species. The most notable Christmas count species were Tundra Swan (ADCBC), Merlin (GCCBC), Fish Crow (SCCBC), Boreal Chickadee (SRCBC), Water Pipit (SRCBC), and Red Crossbill (SCCBC). Also noted were unusually high numbers of Eastern Bluebirds.

January was also cold and it snowed over 11 days. The hard freeze and snow arrived during the second and third weeks of the month with the highest cumulative monthly snowfall reported at 31 inches. Weather data is courtesy of Bob Kovachik, WTEN News.

February was warmer than normal and most of the precipitation fell as rain. A large wild food crop and mild weather left feeders unattended. Individual numbers were so low in fact that one reporter, an active bird feeder for many years, called the winter a real drought, a disaster.

Above all the winter season was disappointingly quiet. The Colonie landfill was the only regional area which stayed productive throughout. Herring, Ring-billed, and Great Black-backed Gulls were reported in high and constant numbers; frequent reports of Iceland and Glaucous Gulls were received; and reports of Thayer's and Lesser Black-backed Gulls top off the list.

This year brings to a close the New York State Avian Atlas Project. There is still time to watch for fledglings and confirm another species in your block. Good Atlasing!

Contributors: Ken Able, V. Austen, Douglas Ayers, Jr., Arlene & Tom Brown, Bob Budliger, William Cleveland, Bill Cook, Jack & Juanita Cook, Mike Crevier, Kate Dunham, Peter Feinberg, Barbara & Hugo Gardina, Frank Giacone, Elisabeth Grace, Richard Guthrie, Philip Ingalls, Mike Kuhrt, William Lee, Elaine Mansell, Al Mapes, Maurice C. Noyes, Brian Post, Edgar Reilly, Alice Ross, Linda & Scott Terrill, Marion & Bill Ulmer, and Robert Yunick.

Abbreviations: ADCBC-Alan Devoe Bird Club Christmas Bird Count, 17 Dec 61 sp.; SCCBC-Schenectady County Christmas Bird Count, 17 Dec 64 sp.; CCBC-Cobleskill Christmas Bird Count, 17 Dec 52 sp.; GCCBC-Greene County Christmas Bird Count, 21 Dec 78 sp.; SRCBC-Southern Rensselaer Christmas Bird Count, 26 Dec 56 sp.; and FPCBC-Fort Plains Christmas Bird Count, 31 Dec 43 sp.

LOONS-DUCKS: Com. Loon: one SCCBC. Pied-billed Grebe: one GCCBC. Horned Grebe: one Saratoga Springs 28 Dec. Red-necked Grebe: one Mohawk R 27 Nov; one Hudson Falls 15 Jan. Great Blue Heron: one Ghent 8 Dec; one SCCBC; one Mohawk R 14 Feb. **TUNDRA SWAN:** one adult ADCBC. Snow Goose: three CCBC; six GCCBC; and one Schroon L 10 Jan. Canada Goose: abundant thru; max 1,700 ADCBC; Berne 1 Jan (KA), flying S. (by calls) at six p.m. - nocturnal migration in Jan; and Coxsackie 23 Feb (RG), first migrants. Wood Duck: one ADCBC; SCCBC; GCCBC; and one Cohoes 22 Jan. Green-winged Teal: one GCCBC (BC). No. Pintail: 15 GCCBC. Gadwall: two Cohoes 5 Feb. Am. Wigeon: one GCCBC; and ten Embough Bay 10 Dec. Canvasback: 200 New Baltimore 2 Dec; one ADCBC; two Embough 10 Dec; eight GCCBC; and 16 Hudson 29 Feb. Redhead: max 12 Cohoes 7, 14, 22 Jan. Scaup sp: one GCCBC. Com. Goldeneye: two ADCBC; one Copake L 13 Dec; 13 GCCBC; and three New Baltimore 12 Feb. Bufflehead: max two Cohoes 14, 22 Jan. Hooded Merganser: one Duck Count 15 Jan; and four New Baltimore 12 Feb. Com. Merganser: reports thru.

HAWKS-ALCIDS: Bald Eagle: one adult and one imm Hoosick R 11 Feb.-No. Harrier: four ADCBC; one CCBC; two SCCBC; one Hudson 9 Jan; five Coxsackie Flats 11 Feb; and one Ghent 27, 29 Feb. Sharp-shinned Hawk: reports thru. Cooper's Hawk: reports thru. No. Goshawk: reports thru; max three ADCBC. Red-shouldered Hawk: one GCCBC; and one SRCBC. Rough-legged Hawk: max 12 Coxsackie Flats 11 Feb, low year. Merlin: one Becraft Mt 8 Jan (KD & EG); and one Bethlehem 16 Jan (AM). Ring-necked Pheasant: one ADCBC; four CCBC; four SRCBC; and three Ballston L 3-6 Jan. Ruffed Grouse: six ADCBC; six CCBC; and 14 SRCBC. Wild Turkey: reports thru; max 30 Hillsdale 26 Jan. **SANDHILL CRANE:** one Cairo 14 Jan (BP); and one Albany 1 Feb (PF); one New Scotland 3, 4 Feb, probably same bird as above. Killdeer: two Coxsackie 23 Feb, first arrivals. **THAYER'S GULL:** one Colonie 8, 13 Jan (LT, ST, & KA), first winter bird; one Colonie 11 Feb (ST); and one Colonie 18 Feb (ST). Iceland Gull: many reports; max seven Colonie 8-14 Jan, includes two adult *kumlieni* (KA). **LESSER BLACK-BACKED GULL:** one Crescent 27 Nov (KA); one Crescent 23, 24 Feb (KA & ST). Glaucous Gull: reports thru; max seven Cohoes Falls 13 Jan.

PIGEONS-WOODPECKERS: Snowy Owl: only one reported Albany 27 Dec (PF). Barred Owl: one ADCBC; one SRCBC; and one Embough 28 Dec. Long-eared Owl: two Athens 7 Jan; and two Saratoga 23-30 Jan. Short-eared Owl: Coxsackie Flats 12 Dec thru 11 Feb. 13 max 7 Jan; one FPCBC; and one Ghent 3-10 Dec and 1 Jan. No. Saw-whet Owl: one Amsterdam 21 Jan, road kill. Belted Kingfisher: reports thru. Red-headed Woodpecker: one ADCBC; one Ghent 2 Jan; and one wintering thru Coxsackie Flats. Red-bellied Woodpecker: one GCCBC; one thru Montgomery Co. feeder; and one thru Voorheesville. Yellow-bellied Sapsucker: one ADCBC; one SCCBC; one GCCBC; and one Greenport 23 Dec. No. Flicker: reports thru; nine max ADCBC.

FLYCATCHERS-STARLINGS: Horned Lark: reports thru; 380 max GCCBC. Fish Crow: one SCCBC; and one Albany 24 Feb (ST). Com. Raven: one border Warren-Essex Co. 2 Jan; one Clifton Pk 3 Jan; two Gore Mt 10 Jan; and one Guelderland Center 20 Jan. **BOREAL CHICKADEE:** one Albany 28 Nov; and one SRCBC. Red-breasted Nuthatch: reports thru; 15 max SRCBC. White-breasted Nuthatch: reports thru; 93 max SRCBC. Brown Creeper: reports thru; 14 max GCCBC. Carolina Wren: two Catskill 10-21 Dec; three GCCBC; two Coxsackie Flats 12 Feb; and two Catskill 18 Feb. Winter Wren: only one reported SRCBC. Golden-crowned Kinglet: two Columbia Co thru 31 Dec; four SRCBC; one FPCBC; 10-15 Thacher Pk 15 Jan; and one Five Rivers Env. Ed. Center 23 Jan. Ruby-crowned Kinglet: two Castleton 1, 2 Dec; and one Cohoes 17, 18 Jan. E. Bluebird: 14 reports thru; 7 ADCBC; 17 GCCBC; and 11 SRCBC. Hermit Thrush: one Schenectady 21 Dec thru 28 Jan; one Chatham 5 Jan; one Glenville 14 Jan; and one Scotia 14 Jan. Gray Catbird: one GCCBC; one West Sand L 24 Feb; and two SRCBC. **WATER PIPIT:** one SRCBC (RG). Cedar Waxwing: reported on all CBCs. 66 max SRCBC. No. Shrike: one Berne 16 Dec; one CCBC; one Columbia Co 27, 28 Dec; one Coxsackie Flats 12 Feb; and one Athens 18 Feb.

VIREOS-WARBLEDERS: Yellow-rumped Warbler: one Columbia Co 3 Dec; and two GCCBC. Com. Yellowthroat: one GCCBC.

TANAGERS-WEAVERS: No. Cardinal: reports thru; 127 max SRCBC. Rufous-sided Towhee: eight Old Chatham 2-19 Jan; and one Clarksville 22, 23 Feb. Field Sparrow: one Columbia Co 8 Dec; one Ghent 1-30 Jan; and one Five Rivers 16 Jan. **VESPER SPARROW**: one SCCBC. Savannah Sparrow: one SRCBC; and one FPCBC. Fox Sparrow: three CCBC. Song Sparrow: reports thru; 17 max SRCBC. White-throated Sparrow: reports thru, 24 max SRCBC. White-crowned Sparrow: two FPCBC; one Ghent 26, 28-31 Jan and 5 Feb. Lapland Longspur: only one report Amsterdam 18 Jan. Snow Bunting: reports thru; 300 max Cocksackie Flats 11 Feb. Red-winged Blackbird: reports thru; flock Cocksackie Flats 12 Feb, first spring arrivals. E. Meadowlark: one CCBC; 20 GCCBC; two FPCBC; one Old Chatham 8 Jan; one Castleton 25, 27 Jan; and one Castleton 7 Feb. **YELLOW-HEADED BLACKBIRD**: one male Fonda 28 Feb (FG). Rusty Blackbird: one Ghent 29 Dec and 3, 8 Jan. Com. Grackle: reports thru. Brown-headed Cowbird: reports thru; 103 max SRCBC. Pine Grosbeak: seven CCBC; Old Chatham 8 Jan; 10-15 Partridge Run 22 Jan; and ten Malden Bridge 23 Jan. Purple Finch: reports thru; 93 max FPCBC. Red Crossbill: one SCCBC; and two Stillwataer 25 Feb (AR). Com. Redpoll: one Altamont 12, 31 Dec; and seven CCBC. Pine Siskin: reports thru; 20 max Altamont 20 Jan thru 9 Feb. Am. Goldfinch: reports thru. Evening Grosbeak: reports thru; 492 max SRCBC.

Remember Dial-A-Bird for Hudson-Mohawk area bird news at 518-377-9600.
306 Hudson Ave., Albany, New York 12210

REGION 9 - DELAWARE-HUDSON

EDWARD D. TREACY

The general consensus was "a lousy season in almost every way." The weather, although not too cold for too long, was generally raw and damp with too many dark and cloudy days. And, to add insult to injury, many of the species to be expected failed to appear. Rarities which are needed to quicken the pulse during the dismal winter days failed to show, and with the exception of one or two individuals, the longed for winter finches did not come south. After a season like this we deserve a decent spring.

The year 1983 ended one of the wettest on record with more than 80 inches of precipitation (45 being average). December helped this record with at least one good rain each week for a total of nine inches (three inches is average). About one inch of snow fell on 2, 3 December and 23 December saw two inches more. Each week of January had some snow, and four inches on 5 February was the only snow for that month. It did rain at least once in each of the remaining weeks of February. Mid-December temperatures dropped to the mid-20's F., and lakes and streams which were open for most Christmas Counts were frozen by the Waterfowl Count 15 January. Moderating temperatures in February had the lower Hudson open by 5 February, and the upper river open by 20 February.

As happened last year an open river meant the passage of waterfowl; they left early. By March the greater number had moved thru, and local breeders were already paired and looking for nest sites. Hawks were about in good numbers, with record quantities of Red-tails observed in the trees along the super highways. Once again, accipiters were stalking many of the feeders in the area, and the wintering Bald Eagles were well observed along the Hudson and around the Sullivan reservoirs. The late freeze and early thaw had some Killdeer, snipe and woodcock remaining thru the period, and migrants returning before the end of February. Landfill areas had thousands of gulls; but white-wings were few and far between, especially the Glaucous. Owls were well reported, and Rockland still has some of its parrots. Red-bellied Woodpeckers are now reported more frequently than Pileateds. January snows tended to concentrate at the ground feeders, but with the warming trend in February they dispersed and were hard to find. As mentioned, northern finches failed to show; and with the appearance of one or two here or there, weary birders hoped for a late showing before the season's end. It was a showing that never came. Oh well, better luck next year.

Rarities were few, but included Greater White-fronted Goose, Barrow's Goldeneye, Peregrine Falcon, Lesser Black-backed Gull, Pine Warbler, Prairie Warbler, Yellow-breasted Chat, and Chipping Sparrow.

Contributors and observers cited: John Askildsen, Al Brayton, Robert F. Deed, Stan DeOrsey, Jan & Francis Fitzpatrick, Jack Focht, Valerie Freer, Ken McDermott, Frank Murphy, Frank Nicoletti, Ralph O'Dell, Eleanor Pink, Brian Schiefer, Robert Slechta, Selden Spencer, Robert Terwilliger, John Tramontano, Ed Treacy, Otis Waterman, Berna Weissman.

Abbreviations: Ashokan-Ashokan Res; CB-Cornwall Bay; CP-Croton Point; MC-Marshlands Conservancy, Rye; PL-Playland, Rye; FWC-Federation Waterfowl Count 14-22 Jan. Christmas Counts cited: BCC-John Burroughs Count, Ulster, 17 Dec; BMCC-Bear Mountain, 4 Jan; BWCC-Bronx-Westchester, 26 Dec; GSCC-Greenwich-Stamford, 18 Dec (incl. E. Westchester); MCC-Mearns Count, 17 Dec (E. Orange); PeCC-Peekskill Count, 17 Dec; PuCC-Putnam Count, 30 Dec; RCC-Rockland Count, 18 Dec; SCC-Sullivan Count, 31 Dec; WCC-Waterman Count, 30 Dec (Dutchess Co). The first four or five letters of each county.

LOONS DUCKS: Red-throated Loon: only reported at Rye, four at PL 3 Dec, and one at MC 10 Dec. Com. Loon: many more than usual, probably due to late freeze and early thaw. Two on PeCC at CP; another at Ashokan 8 Jan; one at Rye BWCC. RCC had two on L DeForest, the third time for that count in 36 years. Pied-billed Grebe: also more than usual, one Ashokan 14 Jan and another CB 25 Feb. An extraordinary 15 on PeCC. Horned Grebe: one Ashokan 7 Jan. Two reports of birds stranded on dry ground, one at Wurtsboro 27 Dec and the other at Pine Plains 23 Jan. The former was successfully released, the latter's fate is unknown. Three on MCC were the first in five years, nine were at Ashokan on JBCC. Double-crested Cormorant: last at Rye's Milton Pt 4 Dec. Great Blue Heron: singles each month in Dutch. One on WCC was new to that count. PL was a haven for them thru Dec with 45 on 26 Dec. Mute Swan: continues to increase, 49 near Cold Spring 30 Dec, inc to 72 by 22 Jan. The latter brought the FWC total to 110, up from last year's high of 78. RCC had its lowest count of eight since 1971. **GREATER WHITE-FRONTED GOOSE:** the twosome of Dot Fleury and Mary Yegella struck again 26 Jan with the second bird in as many years on the same pond in Amenia as last year's record. Snow Goose: an imm blue morph at Dobb's Ferry, 7, 8 Dec, six on Tamarack L, Dutch 2 Dec, two adults and eight imm on Ryder Pd, Dutch 10 Dec. Three Millbrook School 1 Jan, and one imm at Millerton 24 Feb. Brant: two flew over Piermont Pier on RCC and were new to that list,

now at 143. Canada Goose: the 2,123 on FWC was less than half last year's total, but still high. The 2,885 on RCC was a new high for that count. Migrants returning from 11 Feb on. Wood Duck: missed on FWC for the first time in 13 years. PeCC had a count of six. Green-winged Teal: a female at Rockland from 28 Jan thru period, two others in Dutch during Jan and Feb. Am. Black Duck: wintered in better than usual numbers thru region, max 250 at Rondout Res. 30 Dec. Mallard: also excellent numbers, max 50 Rondout 4 Jan. No. Pintail: more than usual, one on FWC was the first in four years, one Rockland L 28 Jan thru period. Two apparently mated pairs were at 6½ Station Sanct., Goshen 29 Feb, another male at Rondout Res from 23 Dec-8 Jan. A pair at Vanderburgh Cove 22 Feb and from six to eight were at L Walton, Dutch 29 Feb. A male was on Mongaup - Rio Res from 23 Dec-8 Jan. No. Shoveler: RCC had a high of nine. Previous high was three in 1978. Gadwall: many reports. The two on FWC was down to normal from the high of 22 last year, PeCC reported 14; and RCC had 19, a new high for that count. Am. Wigeon: two apparently mated pairs were at 6½ Station Sanct., Goshen 29 Feb. Canvasback: once again excellent numbers on Hudson. Numbers moved north with the thaw of early Feb. RFD had a max of about 1,000 south of Stony Pt Pk on 10 Feb. FM had about 2,000 on the east side of the Hudson from Kingston on 10 Dec. At least this many were at Esopus Pt on 18, 19 Feb. Redhead: FWC had a new high with seven at CP, previous high was three in 1980. RCC had six for the seventh time on that count. Not reported since 1956. A single male was with 300 Canvasbacks at Kingston Pt on 11 Dec. Scaup: only three on FWC. Missed some years, but numbers usually better. Ring-necked Duck: only 17 on FWC, much better than the one of last year, but still low. Oldsquaw: only inland report of one female Rondout Res 30 Dec and again 4 Jan. White-winged Scoter: one male at CP 17 Dec. Com. Goldeneye: the 209 on FWC was about five times the average. **BARROW'S GOLDENEYE**: a single female at Esopus Pt 19 Feb was well observed at close range, and all field marks noted (FM, RT). Bufflehead: 36 on FWC was better than average. Hooded Merganser: FWC had only one this year after 11 last year. 20 were at Deans Bridge, Muscote Res 27 Dec, nine on PeCC and eight on PuCC. Westchester has always been good for this species in winter. Com. Merganser: 1,700 on BMCC; almost all of them on the Hudson off Con Ed's Indian Pt plant. Numbers continued there thru FWC when more than 6,778 were counted. Red-breasted Merganser: unreported for four years on FWC. Ruddy Duck: after last year's "feast" of 201 on FWC came this year's "famine" of only two; RCC had 328.

HAWKS-ALCIDS: Turkey Vulture: more winter reports than usual, found in all the southern counties thru period; migrants returning by mid-Feb. Two on WCC were the first for that count in 26 years. Bald Eagle: continues to winter in good numbers especially in the Sullivan Co. reservoirs where the DEC found 19 adults and 12 imms. Two adults and four imms were found regularly in the vicinity of Iona I on the Hudson. On Sullivan Audubon's eagle count of 27 Jan a total of 25 were observed at the reservoirs and along the Delaware. No. Harrier: three obs at Galeville Airport 10 Dec. Sharp-shinned Hawk: too many to mention, most working feeders in the eastern part of the region. Cooper's Hawk: also in good numbers and working feeders. RCC had one, their first in 20 years. No. Goshawk: one at Bedford took a grouse on 6 Dec. One near Newburgh on MCC and another near Middletown 17 Jan. Dutch had one Dec record and two in Jan. Red-shouldered Hawk: one wintered in the Saugerties area; another was at the Rye Nature Center 10 Dec. Red-tailed Hawk: up to ten frequented CP with five being obs in the same tree on PeCC. MCC had 57, WCC had 65. Rough-legged Hawk: usual few wintered, four at Galeville Airport 18 Feb. Am. Kestrel: numbers good in Oran with 32 on MCC. Rockland numbers report poor with only seven on RCC. That count had 11 in 1980 and 23 in 1976. All other Christmas Counts were equally low. Merlin: one unexpectedly flashed by MC on 26 Dec. **PEREGRINE FALCON**: one CP 8 Dec, still there 7 Jan. Another obs taking one of the thousands of starlings that roost under the east end of the Tappan Zee Bridge on 4 Feb (Harry Darrow). Ring-necked Pheasant: almost gone from Rock, RCC had only one. Num-

bers better in Dutch where seven were obs at Clinton Corners 17 Jan, and 11 others reported from various locations in the Co. Wild Turkey: 41 at Narrowsburgh 3 Jan; four at Bogg Hollow, Dutch 30 Dec; and up to 27 obs along Rt. 83 in Dutch from 20-28 Jan. At least nine reports from Dutch dur Feb. Clapper Rail: one at MC 5 Feb. Virginia Rail: one and possibly two were at MC 10 Dec. No details on a Sora found there the same date. A Virginia Rail was also reported on the PeCC. Am. Coot: 78 on FWC was a continuation of high numbers for the past five of those counts. Killdeer: many reports of wintering birds; 25 on MCC was very high. Several reports of birds returning to breeding territories by third week of Feb. Greater Yellowlegs: one remained at PL until 26 Dec. Purple Sandpiper: max 130 Milton Pt 19 Feb. Com. Snipe: one at Rye 26 Dec and three near Stanfordsville, Dutch in early Feb. Am. Woodcock: more reports than usual; one remained at MC until 31 Dec. Courtship display was well under way thru much of the region by last week of Feb. **LAUGHING GULL**: a single bird lingered at PL thru mid-Dec. Another was at Danskammer on 10 Dec. Bonaparte's Gull: one at Newburgh on MCC. Ring-billed Gull: 1,428 on MCC was double their previous high. Herring Gull: more than 7,000 were at CP on PeCC; attracted to the landfill. **ICELAND GULL**: six in sight at one time at CP on 14 Dec and four were there 18 Feb, all subadults. Two at Town of Montgomery landfill 18 Feb were well away from the Hudson. **LESSER BLACK-BACKED GULL**: for the fourth consecutive winter a single bird was at Mamaroneck's Harbor I. Pk thru the period. An adult and one second winter bird were at CP 14 Dec. RT describes what could only be an adult Lesser Black-back at Ashokan 20 Feb. Record was not confirmed.

PIGEONS-WOODPECKERS: Mourning Dove: obs gathering nesting material at Dobb's Ferry 8 Feb; incubating there by 24 Feb. Numbers high on almost all Christmas Counts. JBCC had 407; MCC 532; PeCC 335; PuCC 186; WCC 399. RCC had the only low count with 177 compared with 418 in 1980. Maroon-bellied Conure: four on RCC were on the same Piermont hillside where five were found last year. E. Screech-Owl: an excellent count of 24 on PeCC, 16 of which were found in the Bedford/Katonah/Chappaqua area. Great Horned Owl: good numbers in Dutch with nine in Jan; 12 were on the PeCC, and another 12 on the PuCC. Barred Owl: seems to be decreasing as Great Horned increases. Most Christmas Counts had none or one or two at the most. A very active pair obs thru Feb in the S P'kpsie area. Long-eared Owl: one on GSCC in the Bedford area of West, no other reports. Short-eared Owl: at least four found regularly at Galeville Airport thru period. No. Saw-Whet Owl: one road kill found in the Town of Saugerties 10 Feb; one in Putnam Valley during late Jan was very much alive. Belted Kingfisher: open water provided a very good year; seven on MCC and 17 on PeCC. RCC had a record high of 19. Red-headed Woodpecker: one at a feeder in Frost Valley, Sull during mid-Feb. An adult and imm spent the winter at Blue Chip Farm, Wallkill. Red-bellied Woodpecker: reports outnumber those of the Pileated by two to one. GSCC had 31 (16 at feeders) compared to 13 Pileateds. Although many were in Conn, a good number were in West. RCC had nine compared to four Pileateds (topped their previous high of seven in 1977). MCC had six compared to three Pileateds. Yellow-bellied Sapsucker: one spent Jan at Verbank, and another Jan-15 Feb at Rhinebeck. One was at Cold Spring on 30 Dec. Downy Woodpecker: high on all Christmas Counts. 113 on MCC; 137 on PuCC; 116 on RCC. No. Flicker: 14 on MCC was high, numbers reported low in Dutch during Feb.

FLYCATCHERS-STARLINGS: **EASTERN PHOEBE**: one on PuCC in Cold Spring. Horned Lark: low in most areas except Dutch where flocks of 100-500 were reported during Jan in Verbank and Red Hook. Numbers dispersed after snow cover left in early Feb. Blue Jay: wintering numbers good with 457 on MCC; 339 on PeCC. Am. Crow: Middletown roost had slightly above average count of 10,000 by mid-Jan. More than 5,000 were found on and off during Jan on the Hudson ice off Marist College, P'kpsie. Fish Crow: obs regularly now thru length of Hudson in the region. Added to the BMCC this year; 35 on RCC; started with seven in 1979, and inc to 17 in 1982. Seems to be spreading inland in

Rock where a number were reported from Nanuet. Black-capped Chickadee: numbers good; 101 were banded at Forestburgh, Sull on 7 Jan. GSCC had a record 2,589 many of which had to be in West. PeCC had 541 and PuCC had 588. Red-breasted Nuthatch: many reports of one or two at feeders. Max seven banded 7 Jan at Forestburgh, with three more untrapped. A pair obs daily at Stissing, Dutch during Jan. Brown Creeper: 10 on MCC was well above average. Obs singing at Ashokan 25 Feb, and the same near New Hamburg in Dutch. Carolina Wren: numbers up especially in the Hudson Valley. 14 on GSCC was a new record for that count. Winter Wren: very few; one Orr's Mills 16 Jan, and another at Lock Ada, Sull 1 Jan. Two in Rye 26 Dec, four on PECC and three on PuCC were exc. Golden-crowned Kinglet: 19 on RCC was the highest since 41 in 1973; 36 on BMCC. E. Bluebird: numbers exc. east of the Hudson where nest box programs aid them. 84 on the GSCC, none of which was on the coast; 42 on PeCC and 16 on PuCC. Six were obs huddled on top of each other at a Mt. Kisco feeder in an apparent attempt to conserve heat. Hermit Thrush: good numbers. 20 on GSCC and seven more in Rye on BWCC. Many reports of individuals thru period. Am. Robin: 419 on MCC was high. Most other counts only had a few to a few dozen. Gray Catbird: the usual few scattered reports, max were 11 on GSCC. No. Mockingbird: numbers good but less than usual. RCC had 88, back to the level of ten years ago. They had 170 in 1976. GSCC had 215. Water Pipit: ten landed in Purchase on 3 Dec, another was at MC 26 Dec. No. Shrike: more than usual, but still not a shrike winter. One at Bedford from 18 Nov was last seen on PeCC. One nailed a House Finch at Middletown on 3 Dec. Another was in Dutch 27 Dec and again 24 Feb. Loggerhead Shrike: one in Purchase 1 Dec was believed to be the same bird obs there 10 Nov. One wintered at Galeville Airport thru 4 Mar.

VIREOS-WARBLEDERS: Yellow-rumped Warbler: three on MCC were the only report for Oran, eight on PuCC and two on PeCC. 31 on RCC was excellent but far less than the 89 of 1982. **PINE WARBLER:** one at an Orr's Mills feeder from 17 Dec thru period. Another was at a Mahopac feeder from 23 Nov thru 5 Dec. **PRAIRIE WARBLER:** FM found what appeared to be an adult female at Kingston Pt 10 Dec. **YELLOW-BREASTED CHAT:** one at PL 25 Dec could not be found the following day for the BWCC.

TANAGERS-WEAVERS: No. Cardinal: max a total of 19 birds at a Wurtsboro feeder in Jan. Rufous-sided Towhee: at least four birds reported at various locations in Dutch thru period; four were on PeCC and one on PuCC. Three others were at a Chappaqua feeder. Am. Tree Sparrow: 34 on RCC was a record low; previous low was 40 in 1978. Other counts seemed normal. **CHIPPING SPARROW:** two on PeCC and one was at Chappaqua 4, 5 Dec. Three on RCC where they appeared once before in 1974. Field Sparrow: better than usual. One along the Mine Rd, USMA 26 Jan; from four to six spent the month of Jan at Millbrook School; one was at Red Hook 17 Jan; 43 were on the GSCC, and 33 on the PeCC. Five more on the PuCC. Vesper Sparrow: three on RCC was the sixth time for that count. Fox Sparrow: many reports of one or two esp around feeders. Migrants appeared 27 Feb thru much of the region. GSCC had a remarkable 42; 34 of which were at feeders. Four were on PeCC and two on the PuCC. Song Sparrow: PeCC had a whopping 223 with 60 on PuCC; GSCC had 484; RCC had 75 which was their lowest since 1954. Swamp Sparrow: three at CP on PeCC. 18 on GSCC and eight more were in the Rye area on 26 Dec. White-crowned Sparrow: six on MCC. Three others wintered at a feeder in Amenia. Dark-eyed Junco: numbers normal. One "Oregon" was at a Chappaqua feeder thru late Jan. Lapland Longspur: seven at Red Hook from 17-26 Jan. Snow Bunting: many reports of a few birds. Max 1,000 on McGhee Hill and 500 on Fraleigh Hill in Dutch during Jan. Smaller numbers scattered thru that Co. thru Feb. Red-winged Blackbird: usually in good numbers in the southern part only. This year in good numbers thruout. Migrants were on schedule during President's Weekend. E. Meadowlark: manure piles at Blue Chip Farm, Wallkill supported about a dozen. Dutch reported its best year recently with 10-20 at Pleasant Valley and several others scattered thru the Co. Rusty Blackbird: 16 on PeCC; 3-6 regularly at Pleasant Valley thru Dec; 20-25 at Dutchess Airport in Feb. Several reports

of single birds elsewhere. Brown-headed Cowbird: 20 at CP 17 Dec inc to 60 by 21 Feb. Dutch had the most they've had in recent years with 60 thru Jan at Millbrook School and 10-15 all month at Hyde Park. Pine Grosbeak: one at Ashokan 14 Jan, and an amazing 12 in a yard at South Salem 29 Nov. One on PuCC; two at a Mahopac feeder and one at Carmel 22 Jan. Purple Finch: numbers very low. 42 on MCC was the highest count. Mary Yegella had 16 during Feb in Dutch. Nine were on the PuCC, and two on the PeCC. Ten frequented a Chappaqua feeder thru the season. Eight on RCC was considered very low for there. House Finch: remarkably several feeders reported none. Numbers were reported down in Ulst, but in Sull a Monticello feeder was supporting more than 70 and a Liberty feeder had more than 81 in Jan. Numbers were well up in West, but the 135 on RCC was considered low. White-winged Crossbill: what appears to be the only report was a single male at Peter Derven's feeder in Nyack 22 Jan. Com. Redpoll: only reports were Dutch with six at Rockefeller Flats 15 Jan, and a single bird at a Pleasant Valley feeder on 15 Feb. Pine Siskin: exc numbers of last fall did not persist. About 50 at one feeder in Cold Spring 30 Dec and again 22 Jan. Dutch had the most with from 15-30 birds thru Jan at a Clinton Corners feeder. About the same numbers were at Moore's Mills and Stissing. Several other reports told of one or two birds on and off thru the period. Am. Goldfinch: at least six feeders in Dutch had 10 or more; 20 were at Clinton Corners and another 30 at Pleasant Valley during Jan. 95 on RCC was considered low. Evening Grosbeak: fall migrants failed to stay. Few reports and most of few birds; max was 70 at Hankins, Sull 1-7 Dec and 65 at Monticello 6 Jan.

Pellwood Lake, Highland Falls, New York 10928

REGION 10 - MARINE

JOSEPH A. DiCOSTANZO

The season started mildly with the first half of December having mostly above normal temperatures. The first weekend of the Christmas Bird Count season found temperatures within a couple of degrees of normal, but on the 19th they started to fall. The 20th averaged 14° F below normal. It warmed up briefly on the 22nd, but then dropped sharply to a low of 4° F on Christmas Day, 25° below normal. The late December cold spell brought the month's average to 1.0° below normal. The total rainfall of 9.77 inches was 5.96 in. above normal. January also was cool with the average for the month 1.6° below normal, but was drier than December with only 1.67 in. of rain, 1.54 in. below normal. February, however, particularly after the 10th, was much warmer than normal with the month's average 7.2° above normal. February's rainfall of 4.86 in. was 1.73 in. above normal. (All weather data for New York City.)

The winter season did produce some interesting birds, although many of the best birds, i.e. the Black Rails and the Great Gray Owls, were seen by only a handful of people. Others were seen by many, such as the wintering Harlequin Ducks and Razorbills and the biggest invasion of Red-necked Grebes in half a century. Most Christmas Bird Counts reported above normal species totals, with Montauk finally breaking its record of 130 that it had tied several times. Montauk-

135, Brooklyn-122, Central Suffolk and Southern Nassau-121, Captree-120, Smithtown-116, Queens-114, Orient-108, Bronx-Westchester-107, Northern Nassau-104, Quogue-Watermill-101 and Staten Island-87.

The mild early December weather resulted in good numbers of lingerers and half-hardies. Some at very late dates were: Little Blue Heron, Green-backed Heron, Black Rail, Semipalmated Plover, American Oystercatcher, Parasitic Jaeger, Forster's Tern, an *Empidonax* flycatcher, Tree Swallow, White-eyed Vireo, Nashville Warbler, Pine Warbler, Lincoln's Sparrow, Boat-tailed Grackle and Northern Oriole.

Species were reported in about normal numbers, although there were variations from place to place. Not reported in the main body of this report are: Red-throated and Com. Loons, Black-crowned Night-Heron, Mute Swan, Canada Goose, Mallard, No. Pintail, No. Shoveler, Gadwall, Am. Wigeon, Ring-necked Duck, Greater Scaup, Com. Goldeneye, Bufflehead, all three mergansers, No. Harrier, Sharp-shinned Hawk, Am. Kestrel, Ring-necked Pheasant, No. Bobwhite, Black-bellied Plover, Killdeer, Sanderling, Com. Snipe, Bonaparte's and Ring-billed Gulls, Rock and Mourning Doves, Belted Kingfisher, Horned Lark, Blue Jay, Carolina Wren, Golden-crowned and Ruby-crowned Kinglet, Am. Robin, Gray Catbird, No. Mockingbird, Brown Thrasher, Yellow-rumped Warbler, No. Cardinal, Am. Tree, Field, Fox, Song, and Swamp Sparrows, Snow Bunting, E. Meadowlark, House Finch and Am. Goldfinch. Including the above, 193 species plus four identifiable races are recorded in this report.

Rarities: Eared Grebe, Gyrfalcon, Black Rail, Forster's Tern, Great Gray Owl, Varied Thrush, White-eyed Vireo, and Western Tanager.

Dates of Christmas Bird Counts: Brooklyn, Montauk, Queens, Quogue-Watermill and Staten Island-17 Dec; Captree-18 Dec; Bronx-Westchester and Northern Nassau-26 Dec; Central Suffolk and Smithtown-27 Dec; Orient-30 Dec; Southern Nassau-2 Jan.

Abbreviations: CBC-Christmas Bird Count; LI-Long Island; SI-Staten Island; SP-State Park; RMSP-Robert Moses State Park; JBWR-Jamaica Bay Wildlife Refuge; mob-many observers.

Contributors and initialed observers: Robert Adamo, Jean Bourque, Ronald Bourque, Nancy Brundage, Thomas W. Burke, Irving Cantor, Ralph Cioffi, Thomas H. Davis, Stephen B. Dempsey, Joe DiCostanzo, Sandy Faison, Fran File, Rita Halbeisen, David Krauss, Anthony J. Lauro, Emanuel Levine, Hugh McGuinness, Robert O. Paxton, Gilbert S. Raynor, Arthur Richard, Hannah Richard, John Ruscica, Walton Sabin, Barbara Scherzer, Lore Schore, Walter Sedwitz, Ann Shaw, Norma Siebenheller, William Siebenheller, Richard Sloss, Tim Stiles, Paul Stoutenberg, Ben Trimble, Mathilde Weingartner, John Yrizary.

LOONS-DUCKS: The Brooklyn CBC reported a count record 34 Pied-billed Grebes but the species was normal elsewhere. Most counts reported average to above numbers of Horned Grebes, but this gave no indication of the Feb invasion that was to come, particularly in the vicinity of Montauk. On 4 Feb there were 740 birds at Montauk (TWB); by 19 Feb this had swelled to 2,000+ (JD, SF, AS), most of them visible from the Old Montauk Hghwy with some large rafts off Hither Hills SP. There were single Red-necked Grebes on the Captree and Orient CBCs, plus three on the Montauk and five on the Smithtown counts, but in late Jan and Feb the species staged its largest invasion of the Region in 50

years. Forty birds were at Ditch Plains at Montauk 14 Jan (GSR); this increased to 67 in the same vicinity on 11 Feb (THD) and to well over 100 in a one mile stretch of coast east of Ditch Plains on 18 Feb (JD, SF, AS). Probably part of the invasion, a single EARED GREBE was found at Montauk 18 Feb (A. Morris). Montauk reported only 460 No. Gannets this year compared to last year's record 1,300+. Several CBCs reported high numbers of Great Cormorants: Brooklyn 96, S. Nassau and Smithtown 12, but the highest was 114 at Montauk which was far from a record there. Double-crested Cormorants were also in good numbers with the species reported on virtually every count. S. Nassau's 13 Am. Bitterns ties their total of last year which had been the highest in eight years. Great Blue Herons were in good numbers on all counts with C. Suffolk once again having the highest number with 116. Great Egrets lingered late enough to be found on four counts, Brooklyn, Queens, N. and S. Nassau, but the latest was a bird at Hempstead Lk SP 6 Jan (SBD). Brooklyn and Queens had count records of 25 and 17 Snowy Egrets, respectively, but there was undoubted duplication between the two counts; the latest Snowy was one at Forge R, Moriches 12 Feb (J. McNeil). Brooklyn had their first ever count of Little Blue Heron, a species that is not often found on our local CBCs. In contrast, Tricolored Heron was not found lingering anywhere for the first time in several years. Smithtown did find a lingering Green-backed Heron and Queens found two Glossy Ibises. The late Nov movement of Tundra Swans resulted in the species appearing on more counts than normal, one each at Montauk, Orient and S. Nassau, and the four reported in the fall stayed at JBWR for the Queens CBC; three were at Wading R 7 Jan (JR). Snow Geese were found in small numbers on a number of counts, but the highest was Brooklyn with 254, most at JBWR. S. Nassau reported 29,000 Brant, a little less than last year's count record; that total included one "Black Brant" at Oceanside (DK, *et al.*). Wood Ducks did not linger in the same high numbers as last year but were found on the Bronx-West., Captree, C. Suffolk, N. Nassau, Queens, Quogue-Water and Smithtown CBCs. Both Montauk and Queens reported record numbers of Green-winged Teals, coincidentally, both 323 birds. S. Nassau had a record 13,298 Am. Black Ducks, but most other counts were near normal. Two counts reported Blue-winged Teal: Montauk and Smithtown, one each; lingering individuals were found at Quogue 21 Jan (JR) and East Hampton 9 Feb (RA). As last year, three CBCs found Eurasian Wigeon: Brooklyn-one, C. Suffolk-one and S. Nassau-three. Canvasbacks were in above normal numbers on most counts with Montauk's 256 a count record, as was their total of 414 Redheads. Redheads were about normal elsewhere. The male Tufted Duck reported in the Central Pk reservoir in the fall remained there throughout the season; a female Tufted was reported at Inwood Pk 5 Feb (WS). Montauk found a count record 626 Lesser Scaup, but the species was in normal numbers elsewhere. Nine Com. Eiders on the Montauk CBC was the highest number reported for the species all season. One to two adult male King Eiders were at Montauk thru most of the winter (mob). Four Harlequin Ducks on the Montauk CBC remained there the rest of the winter; six appeared at Jones Inlet in late Jan and also settled in, while a male appeared at Brighton Bch, Brooklyn for only 15-17 Jan (JB, RB). The Central Pk reservoir picked up some strays from the coast in early Dec when an Oldsquaw appeared 9-10 Dec and a Surf Scoter 1-4 Dec (mob). Most CBC's reported all three scoters in lower than normal numbers. Two Barrow's Goldeneyes were reported: a female 26 Dec at Montauk Pt (HM) and a male in Huntington Harbor 15 Jan (A. McKay, *et al.*). Several counts reported well above normal or count record numbers of Ruddy Ducks: Bronx-West-354, Montauk-204, Quogue-Water-662 and S. Nassau-188.

HAWKS-ALCIDS: A Turkey Vulture at Roslyn 3 Feb was a rare winter LI find (K. Bloomer). An imm Bald Eagle was at Manhasset 3 Jan (J. Bartlett, H. Roth). Cooper's Hawks were down from last winter's numbers with one each on the N. Nassau, Queens and Smithtown CBCs and two each on Brooklyn and S. Nassau. It was not a big year for No. Goshawk, with individuals found on the Captree and S. Nassau counts and three on Bronx-West, with a scattering of reports the rest of the winter. Single Red-shouldered

were reported on the Captree and N. Nassau CBCs and two on Brooklyn was quite good; Red-tails were in normal to above normal numbers on most counts; Rough-legs were scarce this winter with many counts missing them. It was a banner winter for Merlins with only the N. Nassau and Staten I. CBCs missing them and a total of 21 reported on LI counts. Peregrine Falcons were also widely found with singles on the Captree, Queens and N. and S. Nassau counts and three on the Brooklyn CBC; a bird raised by foster parents in Manahawken, NJ in 1982 was killed in a collision with an airplane at JFK Airport on 11 Jan (HR); another Peregrine frequented the Seatuck Refuge 18-23 Jan (RH). A gray phase **GYRFALCON** was found on Shelter I on the Orient CBC (GSR), details to NYSARC. Two Ruffed Grouse were found on the C. Suffolk count, normal for this area. The growth of the Wild Turkey flock at Connetquot R SP seems to have about leveled off with 45 there on the Captree CBC; 32 on Gardiner's I. on the Montauk CBC is about normal. Four fabulously lucky birders flushed two **BLACK RAILS** from saltmarsh grasses at Tobay 11 Dec, setting a new late record date for the state, breaking the old one by more than a month (C. Ward, A. Wollin, S. Schiff, R. Kurtz). Clapper Rails were on many LI counts with a high of five at S. Nassau; two were along Dune Rd 21 Jan (JR). The C. Suffolk and S. Nassau counts each had two Virginia Rails and Montauk one; one lingered at Calverton until 25 Jan (JR). A Com. Moorhen stayed late enough to be found on the Brooklyn CBC. Am. Coots continued to be reported in the same relatively low numbers of the last few years. Smithtown found four lingering Semipalmated Plovers. Three Am. Oystercatchers lingered at Floyd Bennett Field until 7 Jan (JB, RB). Queens found one Lesser along with 17 Greater Yellowlegs and Brooklyn found two Lessers; a Greater lingered at Shinnecock to 29 Jan (GSR). Orient found 30 and S. Nassau 17 Ruddy Turnstones; other than those, only scattered birds were seen. Three counts reported Red Knots: C. Suffolk-17, Montauk-four, and Smithtown-one; nowhere near last winter's numbers. 200 Purple Sandpipers was a good count at Jones Inlet 11 Feb (GSR, JR) but they were about normal on the CBCs. Most counts reported above average numbers of Dunlins, but none rivaled last year's nearly 3,800 on the S. Nassau CBC. The S. Nassau CBC found two Long-billed Dowitchers and Queens one. Warm weather in late Feb inspired one Am. Woodcock to start calling in Manorville on 24 Feb (GSR). Two counts, Montauk and Queens, found late lingering Parasitic Jaegers. Several counts set new records for Laughing Gulls, Montauk-73, Queens-23, Brooklyn-20 and Orient-7. A Little Gull was at Fire I Inlet 3 Dec (S. & K. Feustel); one was found on the Quogue-Water CBC and three were at Montauk Pt 7 Jan (TWB); one was still there 12 Feb (JD). Six Com. Black-headed Gulls were reported: two on the Brooklyn and one on the Captree CBCs, and singles at Montauk 26 Dec (HM), the Central Pk reservoir 6 Jan (DK), and at W. 12th St. in Manhattan on 12 Jan (TS). Brooklyn reported a count record 64,500 Herring Gulls and Queens 23,000, even with duplication and overlap these are very high counts; Staten I came in with its own spectacular count of 51,500. The "Kumlien's" Gull returned to the boardwalk restaurant on Jones Bch for the seventh winter and was counted again on the S. Nassau CBC; other counts with Icelands were Bronx-West, Brooklyn and Quogue-Water with one each and Montauk with two; two to three were at Montauk Pt all winter (mob). Montauk tied its count record with two Lesser Black-backed Gulls. Montauk also had the only Glaucous Gull found on the local CBCs; a second year imm was at Montauk Pt on 19 Feb (JD, SF). Along with their large Herring Gull counts; Brooklyn reported a count record 13,500 Great Black-backed Gulls; Queens had 4,361 and Staten I 6,208. Following 1,380 Black-legged Kittiwakes on the Montauk CBC there were good numbers of kittiwakes at Montauk all winter; the Queens and S. Nassau CBCs each had single birds, rare finds for those counts. The Captree CBC had a **FORSTER'S TERN** (AJL), a bird that was long overdue for an LI count. The Montauk CBC had three unidentified alcids. A Com. Murre was reported on the Orient CBC and a Razorbill was found at Tobay on the S. Nassau CBC (TWB). A Razorbill was seen at Montauk intermittently 14 Jan-18 Feb (mob).

PIGEONS-WOODPECKERS: Six counts found Com. Barn-Owls: S. Nassau-five; Brooklyn-four; Queens-three; Smithtown-two and Captree and Staten I one each. All CBCs reported E. Screech-Owls in normal to above normal numbers with the highest being Smithtown with 29. The Brooklyn CBC had its first ever Great Horned Owl. It was not a good winter for Snowy Owls with only the Queens and Quogue-Water CBCs finding singles; other singles were at Smith's Pt 9 Dec (J. McNeil), Shinnecock 21 Jan (J. Clinton) and the West End, Jones Bch in Feb (mob). One of the finds of the season was the one to two **GREAT GRAY OWLS** seen on the north shore this winter; the first sighting was in upper Brookville 25 Jan (RC, A. Bell); this bird was seen very irregularly thru 25 Feb; the same or another individual was seen at Ft. Salonga 29 Jan (T. Caggiano, E. Mudge), at Huntington 30 Jan (B. Kolodnicki) and at Caumsett SP 1 Feb (M. Hemmerick). The max Long-eared Owl report was eight on the Montauk CBC. Short-eared Owls were widely reported on the CBCs with the highest on the Brooklyn count with 20, at least eight of which were at JBWR. There was a veritable explosion of Red-headed Woodpeckers in the region this winter; 22 were reported on the LI CBCs with Queens leading with nine; eight birds wintered in Forest Pk alone (mob). Red-bellied Woodpeckers were also widely reported with the high going to the N. Nassau CBC with 14. Yellow-bellied Sapsuckers lingered in amazing numbers with 23 reported on the LI counts, 11 of these on the Queens CBC. Most counts reported normal to above normal numbers of Downy and Hairy Woodpeckers and No. Flickers, with both Montauk and Orient setting count records for flickers with 323 and 248, respectively.

FLYCATCHERS-STARLINGS: An *Empidonax* flycatcher (sp?) was found on Gardiner's I on the Montauk CBC (P. Bernath). An E. Phoebe on the Brooklyn count was the only one reported. The mild early Dec weather resulted in lingering Tree Swallows being picked up by three counts; Montauk had seven and Brooklyn and Captree each had five. Com. Crows were in well above normal numbers on most counts, with the prize going to Staten I with an amazing 12,276. 45 Fish Crows at Owls Head Pk, Brooklyn 7 Jan (JY) was a high winter count, but the species was about normal on the CBCs. Black-capped Chickadees were in above average numbers on many counts, with 719 at Montauk a count record. Tufted Titmouse continues its increase on LI, particularly the eastern end with Montauk and Orient setting new count highs for the second year in a row with 18 and 89, respectively. After a good fall flight, Red-breasted Nuthatches were in good numbers on the local counts with Brooklyn and Montauk setting count records of 63 and 92, respectively. White-breasted Nuthatches were also reported in good numbers. Brown Creepers were in normal to above normal numbers. Winter Wrens were very widespread with a total of 15 reported on the LI counts, with Montauk and N. Nassau tying for top honors with four each; in addition Bronx-West had three and Staten I one; one lingered at Yaphank till 7 Jan (JR). Three CBCs found lingering Marsh Wrens: Captree-one; and Brooklyn and Orient-one each. In contrast to last winter when no E. Bluebirds were reported, 36 were found on LI counts this year, with Montauk leading everyone with a count record 22; another four were on the Staten I CBC. A Swainson's Thrush was reported on the N. Nassau CBC, but no details were received. Hermit Thrushes lingered in above normal numbers with the high being 30 on the Montauk CBC, a count record, followed closely by N. Nassau with 29 and Bronx-West with 27; one was at JBWR 11 Feb (GSR). A male **VARIED THRUSH** was at Forest Pk 7-11 Jan (G. Dadone, W. Reilly, THD). Three counts had Water Pipits: S. Nassau-ten; Bronx-West-seven; and Montauk-four; two were at Robert Moses SP on 13 Jan (JD, AS, P. Cane). Several counts had good numbers of Cedar Waxwings: N. Nassau-84; Bronx-West-79; Orient-18; Brooklyn-17; Staten I-16; and Montauk-six. Two No. Shrikes were reported: the Captree and C. Suffolk CBCs each had one. Two Loggerhead Shrikes were also reported: Muttontown Preserve 15-16 Dec (A. Lindberg, B. Paterson) and Calverton 18 Dec (RA).

VIREOS-WARBLEDERS: A **WHITE-EYED VIREO** found on the Staten I CBC (NS, WS) is a new late record for the state by nearly a month. The Staten I count had two and Montauk

one Orange-crowned Warbler. The Brooklyn CBC found lingering Nashville Warbler in Prospect Pk. Late lingering Pine Warblers were found on four counts: C. Suffolk had three and Captree, Montauk and Quogue-Water each had one. Palm Warblers were found in their usual one and twos on most LI CBCs. A total of eight Com. Yellowthroats were found on the LI counts with Montauk having nearly half of them with three birds. The single Yellow-breasted Chat reported was at a feeder in Seacliff till 24 Dec (A. Bell).

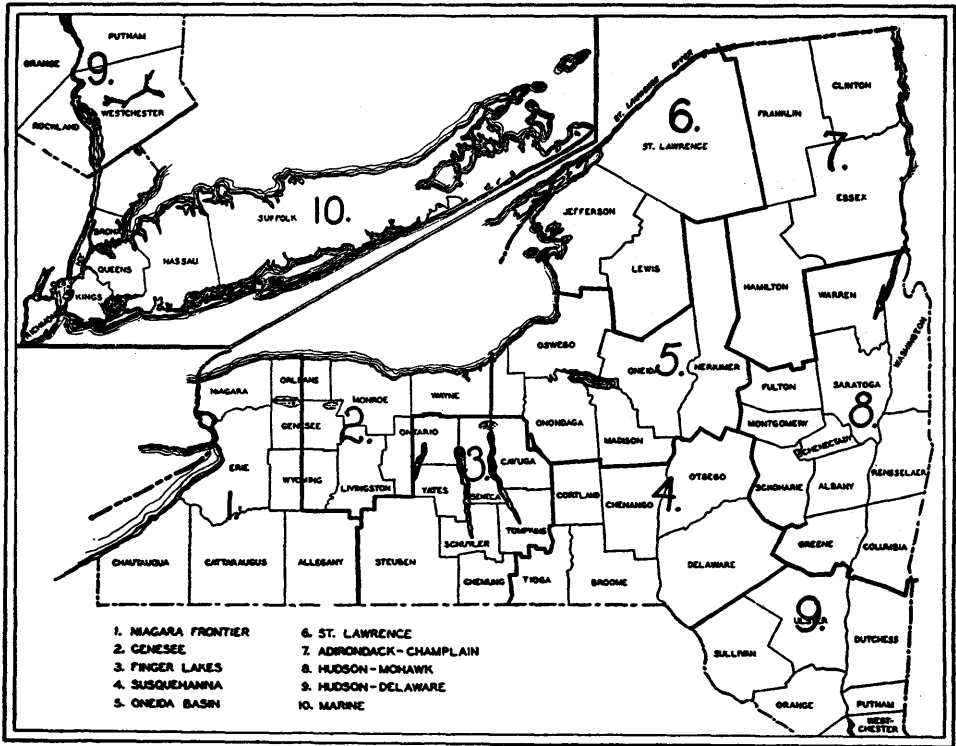
TANAGERS-WEAVERS: A **WESTERN TANAGER** was found at Montauk 9 Dec (P. Gillen). A Dickcissel was on the Smithtown CBC. Rufous-sided Towhees were in average to above average numbers on most counts. Smithtown reported two Chipping Sparrows and Brooklyn, Captree and C. Suffolk each reported one. Single Vesper Sparrows were on the C. Suffolk, N. Nassau and Queens CBCs. The "Ipswich" (*princeps*) race of the Savannah Sparrow was reported on most counts with Queens leading with four. 14 Sharp-tailed Sparrows were reported on LI counts with S. Nassau leading with six. C. Suffolk had the only Seaside Sparrows with two birds. A late Lincoln's Sparrow was found at Marine Pk on the Brooklyn CBC (TS). White-throated Sparrows were reported in above average numbers on many counts. C. Suffolk had the only two White-crowned Sparrows for the counts; one was still at Westhampton 21 Jan (JR). Dark-eyed Juncos were also reported in above average numbers. Lapland Longspurs were only sparsely reported this winter with one on the Brooklyn CBC; three at Smith's Pt 16 Dec (GSR), one still there 3 Jan (JR) and one at Calverton 12 Jan (RA). Red-winged Blackbirds were in above normal numbers on most counts. Rusty Blackbirds were reported in their usual small numbers on most counts. Boat-tailed Grackle only recently established itself as a breeder in this region and it is now showing up as a winter bird with two on the Queens CBC and even more astounding 12 birds in Broad Channel, south of JBWR on 17 Jan (AR, HR); one was at JBWR 23 Jan (SBD). This year's big Com. Grackle roost was found on the Orient CBC with 2,035 on that count. Brown-headed Cowbirds were reported in small numbers on most counts except for Brooklyn which reported 227. N. Nassau had a No. Oriole for the fourth year in a row, but it was joined this year by Montauk and Orient each with one each and surpassed by Smithtown which had four; one was at a feeder in Roslyn Heights 7-14 Jan (F. Shapiro) and one was in Westbury from 16 Jan to late Feb (E. & J. Taylor). Good numbers of Purple Finch were found on the Bronx-West-31, N. Nassau-23, and Montauk-20 counts, elsewhere they were only in small numbers. No Crossbills were reported. Quogue-Water was the only CBC with a Com. Redpoll with a single bird; one was at a feeder in Glen Cove on 31 Dec and 5 Jan (A. & J. Gehde). Pine Siskins were reported in small numbers on virtually all counts. Evening Grosbeaks were also widely reported in small numbers with C. Suffolk-91 and Montauk-48, the leaders.

Great Gull Island Project, A.M.N.H.,
Central Park West at 79th St., New York, New York 10024

LETTERS TO THE EDITORS

Letters may be of a general nature as long as they pertain to New York State ornithology, or may be of a specific nature with reference to something that has appeared in *The Kingbird*. The editors reserve the right *not* to accept a letter for publication, or to edit a letter in accordance with space requirements. All letters received will be acknowledged. Your participation is invited.

REPORTING REGIONS



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

REPORTING DEADLINES

Winter Season: December, January, February
Deadline is March 7

Spring Season: March, April, May
Deadline is June 7

Summer Season: June, July, August
Deadline is September 7

Fall Season: September, October, November
Deadline is December 7

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