

The **KINGBIRD**



VOL. XXXVII, NO. 2

SPRING • 1987

FEDERATION OF NEW YORK STATE BIRD CLUBS, INC.

THE KINGBIRD (ISSN 0023-1606), published quarterly (Winter, Spring, Summer, Fall) is a publication of The Federation of New York State Bird Clubs, Inc., which has been organized to further the study of bird life and to disseminate knowledge thereof, to educate the public in the need of conserving natural resources and to encourage the establishment and maintenance of sanctuaries and protected areas. Individual member's dues are \$15.00 annually, of which \$8.00 is for *THE KINGBIRD* publication. Other membership classes are: Family Membership (\$20.00), Supporting Member (\$25.00), or Life Member (\$200.00) – payable over a four-year period in equal installments, if member so desires. Student membership is \$10.00. *THE KINGBIRD* institutional subscriptions: \$18.00 per year on calendar year basis only. Single copies: \$5.00. Memberships are on a calendar year basis. Applicants for Annual or Family Membership applying in the second half of the year may reduce payment by one-half.

APPLICATION FOR MEMBERSHIP should be sent to the chairman of the Membership Committee, Myrna Hemmerick, P.O. Box 2203, Setauket, NY 11733. Send CHANGES OF ADDRESS, order SINGLE COPIES, BACK NUMBERS, and REPLACEMENT COPIES (\$5.00 each) from the Circulation Manager, Constance N. Wilkins, 4000 West Road, Cortland, NY 13045. All amounts stated above are payable in U.S. funds only.

Publication office is 4000 West Road, Cortland, NY 13045.

Second class postage paid at Cortland, NY.



The KINGBIRD

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

Vol. XXXVII, No. 2

Spring, 1987

53-104

CONTENTS

Photographs of New York State Rarities
 48. Rock Wren in Chautauqua County:
 A First New York State Record Terrence P. Mahoney 55

Subspecies of the Red-Tailed Hawk in the Northeast
 Robert W. Dickerman and Kenneth C. Parkes 57

The Golden-winged Warbler: Competition with the
 Blue-winged Warbler and Habitat Selection in Portions
 of Southern, Central and Northern New York
 Michele H. Frech and John L. Confer 65

Notes and Observations
 Barred Owl at an Essex County Feeder Merry Baker 72
 Say's Phoebe in upstate New York Alan A. Mapes 73
 Common Redpolls excavating snow burrows and
 snow bathing Gregory Furness and John M. C. Peterson 74

Highlights of the Winter Season Robert Spahn 76

Regional Reports 79

Editor – Paul A. DeBenedictis

Highlights of the Season

Editor – Robert Spahn

Circulation Manager – Constance N. Wilkins



Rock Wren, Fredonia, New York
29 Nov-3 Dec 1986 *Allen Benton*

PHOTOGRAPHS OF NEW YORK STATE RARITIES
48. ROCK WREN IN CHAUTAUQUA COUNTY:
A FIRST NEW YORK STATE RECORD

TERRENCE P. MAHONEY

In the early afternoon of 29 Nov. 1986, I was attracted by a lively small bird that continually bobbed up and down on a rock in front of my neighbor's garage. Occasionally it would fly to the ground and pick at scats of my neighbor's dog, then return to a rock or cinder block and continue to bob.

I was viewing the bird from within my house at a distance sometimes as close as twenty-five feet while it foraged near the garage. With Canon 8x30 binoculars, I could see that it had a slightly decurved bill, light eyeline, grayish breast with slightly darker streaks leading down to a white belly, and a light wash of orange on its flanks. The bird's upper

parts were an overall grayish-brown, mottled with many fine black and white flecks. Later, when these flecks were viewed through an Optolyth telescope provided by Robert Sundell, they appeared the shape of raindrops, the pointed end being black and the rest white.

The bird's tail ended with a buffy mark which had a black stripe before it, a feature not always visible. Unlike other wrens, this bird at no time cocked its tail while I was watching.

My immediate reaction, since I had never seen a Rock Wren before, was that this possibly might be a Carolina Wren which had not reached adult plumage. The Carolina Wren is the only wren likely to be seen here at that time of year. However, examination of the *Master Guide to Birding* convinced me that this must be a Rock Wren, despite the fact that its normal winter range is in the southwest United States. I phoned Allen Benton, who came over and confirmed my identification. He also took numerous color photographs which, taken together, show all of the field marks.

Fortunately, the Rock Wren stayed behind my neighbor's house for five days. Late on 3 Dec. 1986 the first real snowstorm of the winter struck, and the bird was not seen after that. During those five days, the bird was seen by about 30 birders from western New York and was photographed by several.

The diagnostic features which I observed and which separate this species from all other wrens are fine dusky streaking on breast, orange flank feathers (Canyon Wren also has orange flanks, but has a white throat and breast), buffy tail tip with black sub-terminal band, faint whitish eyebrow, and habit of sitting on rocks and bobbing.

Rock Wrens have been observed both east and west of New York in Ontario, Canada, and in Massachusetts. This is the first record from New York State. Able (1983) asked five active birders to list the next ten species likely to be found in New York; the Rock Wren was not included on any of the lists. It was remarkable that such a rare bird should make its appearance next to the home of the President of the Lake Erie Bird Club.

I am grateful to Allen H. Benton for assistance in the preparation of this paper, and for supplying the photograph which accompanies it.

Literature Cited

- Able, Kenneth P., 1983, Trends in the state list of New York birds. *Kingbird*, 33(1): 6-12.
104 Clinton St., Fredonia, NY 14063

SUBSPECIES OF THE RED-TAILED HAWK IN THE NORTHEAST

ROBERT W. DICKERMAN and KENNETH C. PARKES

The heavily streaked, richly colored population of the Red-tailed Hawk (*Buteo jamaicensis*) nesting in the spruce-fir belt of Canada from the Peace River Delta of Alberta east to Nova Scotia was named *Buteo jamaicensis abieticola* by Todd (1950). Parkes (1952) recognized the subspecies, and in his unpublished thesis "The Birds of New York State and Their Taxonomy" he listed by museum number and locality the specimens he had identified as *abieticola* in the collections of the American Museum of Natural History (AMNH), Cornell University (CU), and the National Museum of Natural History (USNM). However, the taxonomy of the U.S. and Canadian populations has been confused, and *abieticola* has not received general recognition. The most recent author to mention it, Godfrey (1986), stated that he had seen insufficient material to evaluate its validity.

Peters (1931) was misled by certain heavily pigmented eastern specimens (*i.e.*, those later to be named *abieticola* by Todd), believing them to be the same as the richly colored but finely streaked western populations generally called *calurus*. He therefore considered *calurus* to be a synonym of the eastern *borealis*. Bull (1974), who (as noted earlier; Dickerman 1986) had Parkes's thesis available during the preparation of "Birds of New York State," wrote that two distinct races occur in New York, "the large race *borealis*" and "the race *calurus* (darker and more heavily marked below than *borealis*, also much more variable and highly polymorphic)." Although a large series of true *calurus* was available to him in the AMNH, Bull misunderstood the characters of that subspecies. To dispose quickly of size, Todd (1950) specifically stated that *abieticola* does not differ in size from *borealis*, and comparison of his measurements of the former with those of *borealis* given by Friedmann (1950:239) bears this out. Friedmann's measurements of *calurus* (1950:247) suggest that this race averages slightly larger than *borealis*, the opposite of what Bull indicated. As for color, the dark ventral markings of true *calurus* (except on the thighs) are little if any heavier than in *borealis*. Furthermore, *abieticola*, which is more heavily marked on the underparts, is not "highly polymorphic" and is no more variable individually than is *borealis*.

Bull went on to say that "At least 13 specimens of *calurus* have been taken within the state, chiefly in late fall of various years. Most of these [were] examined by the writer . . . and were listed by Parkes (1952) who, however, used the name *abieticola* (a synonym of *calurus*)." Bull gave no reference for this synonymy. Later, in the revision of volume

1 of the "Check-list of Birds of the World", Amadon (unlike Peters) recognized *calurus*, and inserted *abieticola* with a query (?) in its synonymy (in Stresemann and Amadon 1979).

Recently, while identifying a specimen of Red-tailed Hawk from New Mexico, Dickerman undertook to reidentify the four cases of specimens of this species in the AMNH, and to rearrange them into an acceptable order. In the process, he searched for the specimens identified by Parkes as *abieticola*, and for specimens from New York and elsewhere in the northeast that might correctly be assigned to *calurus*. In brief, he found all but one of the specimens examined by Parkes some 35 years earlier, and found additional specimens of *abieticola* from New York, New Jersey, and elsewhere, as detailed below. He found none from the northeast that could be identified as *calurus*. We therefore decided to reevaluate records from New York and other northeastern states and provinces. Todd did not compare *abieticola* with *calurus* in his original description, but later (1963:220) published such a comparison made for him by Parkes. The present paper is probably the first to give comparative characters for all three subspecies.

The three races on which we are focusing are *borealis* (Gmelin), 1788, type locality "Carolina"; *calurus* Cassin, 1856, type locality vicinity of Fort Webster, New Mexico, and *abieticola* Todd, 1950, type locality Sainte Margaret Falls ([2 miles] above Clarke City), Quebec, on the north shore of the Gulf of St. Lawrence. Specimens in predefinitive plumages, as already indicated by Todd, are more difficult to identify; only exceptionally well-marked individuals of *abieticola* are listed below.

This paper is based largely on the Red-tailed Hawk specimens in the AMNH and CU (the two largest series of specimens from New York), and in Carnegie Museum of Natural History (CM), where the type series of *abieticola* is housed. Additional specimens were examined by Dickerman in the National Museum of Canada (NMC) and the USNM. Specimens of *abieticola* listed by Todd in his original description are not cited here.

Buteo jamaicensis borealis (Gmelin)

This is the most common soaring hawk in most parts of eastern North America. It is characterized in definitive (= adult) plumage by its generally pale (white or near white) ventral coloration, with a broken belly-band of fine dark streaks. The throat usually is pure white or lightly streaked, occasionally heavily streaked with black. The thighs ("flags") usually are unmarked, at most only weakly barred with cinnamon. The (unfaded) tail is dark reddish brown, normally with only a single sub-terminal band of black, occasionally with a few additional black markings. This is the breeding subspecies throughout the eastern United States except for the Florida Peninsula, home of the resident subspecies *umbrinus* Bangs.

Buteo jamaicensis abieticola Todd

This is the breeding race of the spruce-fir belt of Canada west to Alberta. In the definitive plumage, it differs from both *borealis* and the western subspecies characterized below in having bold, dusky to black streaking on the feathers of the belly-band. The throat is never pure white as in many *borealis*, and may be so heavily streaked as to appear almost solid black (see photograph in Todd 1950). The ground color of the underparts of *abieticola* averages more richly colored (buffy) than in *borealis*, overlapping somewhat with the palest individuals of *calurus*; most "normal" (i.e., not erythristic or melanic) individuals of the latter race have underparts that are distinctly orange-buff. The westernmost specimens of *abieticola*, as one might expect in an area of intergradation with *calurus*, are the most deeply colored ventrally. The thighs of *abieticola* may be immaculate or barred (the latter similarly more prevalent in western examples), but the barring is sepia rather than the reddish brown of *calurus*. The tail is dark reddish brown as in *borealis* with, in most examples, only a single black subterminal band. Todd (1950) stated that the black tail band is wider in *abieticola*, but specimens we have examined show that this is only an average difference, with extensive overlap. Specimens of *abieticola* in predefinitive ("immature") plumage often may be identified as such by the greatly increased area of blackish ventral streaking, in some instances forming almost a solid band.

Buteo jamaicensis calurus Cassin

This subspecies has a wide range in western North America, from the interior of British Columbia south to Baja California and east to the Great Plains. The borders of its range with respect to those of adjacent races have not been fully worked out: those not previously mentioned in this paper include *alascensis* (southwestern Alaska and coastal British Columbia), *harlani* (interior of Alaska, southwestern Yukon Territory [Mindell 1983] and northernmost British Columbia [Godfrey 1986]), *fuertesi* (southwestern Texas and adjacent Mexico to southern Arizona, possibly north to southernmost Utah), and *kriderii* (traditionally a whitish race of the northern and central Great Plains; Dickerman believes that its status as a discrete subspecies requires thorough study). The underparts of non-melanistic *calurus* are finely streaked as in *borealis*, but with a richer buff ground color that frequently is cross-banded with orange-buff, especially posteriorly. There is a high frequency of melanistic and erythristic individuals; in the latter, the redness often invades the dorsum. The throat, as in *abieticola*, is never pure white. The thighs are always barred, from faintly to heavily, with some shade of reddish brown. The tail generally is a paler red than in the eastern and northern populations as defined above, with additional black markings varying from flecks to complete cross-barring.

Table 1. Specimens of *abieticola* not listed by Todd (1950), taken outside of breeding range

NEW YORK				
AMNH	416818	Im.	Queens Co., St. Albans	24 Jan 1934
AMNH	65152	Im.	Queens Co., Seaford	10 Feb 1891
AMNH	168728	Ad.	Suffolk Co., Huntington	10 Feb 1922
AMNH	816385	Ad.	Dutchess Co., Poughkeepsie	19 Feb 1969
USNM	307938	Ad.	Orange Co., West Point	20 Mar 1927
CU	3825	Ad.	Cayuga Co., Auburn	4 Oct 1894
CU	960	Im.	Tompkins Co., Ithaca	23 Oct 1899
CU	968	Im.	Tioga Co., Owego	30 Oct 1925
CU	14831	Ad.	Tompkins Co., Newfield	— Nov 1943
CU	28546	Im.	Tompkins Co., Ithaca captured	— Nov 1956
CU	3824	Ad.	Cayuga Co., Cascade	1 Nov 1919
AMNH	352347	Ad.	Sussex Co., Branchville	3 Nov 1900
CU	966	Ad.	Westchester Co., Ossining	5 Nov 1921
AMNH	181123	Ad.	Sullivan Co., Glen Spey	10 Nov 1922
AMNH	129283	Ad.	Dutchess Co., Arthursburg ca.	26 Nov 1914
AMNH	352350	Im.	Westchester Co., Sing Sing	13 Dec 1889
AMNH	65154	Ad.	Suffolk Co., Coran	15 Dec 1813
NEW JERSEY				
AMNH	147510	Ad.	Sussex Co., Kittatinny Mts.	7 Oct 1918
AMNH	188714	Ad.	Sussex Co., Stag Lake	7 Oct 1925
USNM	309397	Ad.	Sussex Co., Andover	13 Nov 1926
PENNSYLVANIA				
CM	94930	Ad.	Allegheny Co., Emsworth	5 Apr 1924
CM	143855	Ad.	Somerset Co., Summit Twp.	18 Dec 1968
MARYLAND				
USNM	598208	Ad.	Dorchester Co. E. New Market	10 Mar 1980
USNM	598209	Im.	Dorchester Co., Cambridge	30 Nov 1980
IOWA				
AMNH	352423	Ad.	Henry Co., Hillsboro	12 Nov 1895

Discussion

Except for a series of nesting specimens from Alberta in the CNM (see below), the breeding range of *abieticola* has been poorly documented. Although New York State is generally considered to be well within the breeding range of *borealis*, we know of only two breeding specimens collected within the state. As *borealis* is, in general, associated with hardwood forests, it would be desirable to have at least a small sample of the breeding population of the Adirondacks, to see whether these birds show any approach to *abieticola* of the Canadian spruce-fir belt.

**Table 2. Specimens of *abieticola* not listed by Todd (1950),
from the breeding range**

NOVA SCOTIA			
NMC	59159	Im.	Hants Co., Avondale 4 Jan 1973
NMC	40001	Im.	Cape Breton Co., Baddeck 13 Jul 1954
NMC	34164	Ad.	Kings Co., Wolfville 11 Oct 1948
PRINCE EDWARD ISLAND			
NMC	28952	Ad.	Queens Co., Fredericton "summer" 1938
NMC	28953	Im.	nestling taken with above female
NEW BRUNSWICK			
NMC	17323	Im.	Gloucester Co., nr. Bathurst 25 Aug 1921 (recently fledged)
ONTARIO			
NMC	78933	Im.	Frontenac Co., Glenvale — Jul 1983 (large nestling or recently fledged)

In his search through several museum collections, Dickerman was unable to find any specimens of *calurus* from the northeastern states and provinces. Friedmann (1950:247) stated that this race was "accidental in western Pennsylvania and New Jersey (Andover)." Rand (1948) reported a specimen in the CNM taken at its nest on Prince Edward Island that he considered to be "inseparable from western *calurus*." Nevertheless, he stated that "it seems advisable to consider this specimen as an aberrant *borealis* rather than to say that *B. j. calurus* breeds on Prince Edward Island." Dickerman has examined the New Jersey specimen in the USNM and the Prince Edward Island specimen (plus its nestling, not mentioned by Rand) in the CNM, and identified all of these as *abieticola* (which had not yet been described when Friedmann and Rand published their records). The western Pennsylvania record was originally published by Todd (1940). The mounted specimen, collected near Racine, Beaver County, 18 November 1912, is CM 122330. It is a strange-looking bird. It has a normal, although somewhat dark, immature tail. The under tail coverts are broadly barred with a light color somewhat paler than the Pale Pinkish Buff (121D) of Smithe (1981) and a dark color between Raw Umber (223) and Mars Brown (223A). The lores and a few narrow streaks at the base of the bill are pale buff. These are the only discrete markings on the entire bird when the wings are folded (the inner webs of the remiges are barred). The dorsum, wing coverts, and outer webs of the remiges are virtually uniform, near Sepia (219 of Smithe 1981). The feathers of the nape and hindcrown are Sepia only at the tip, being white at the base with a narrow border of Cinnamon-Rufous (40 of Smithe 1975); when the feathers are slightly

disarranged, the nape and crown appear mottled. The feathers of the underparts are also Sepia at the tip; those of the upper breast grade basally into a somewhat paler and definitely more reddish color; those of the lower breast and abdomen have fully concealed lateral spots of pale buff. Todd (1940) quotes Friedmann as having told him that he had seen no bird to match this among 2000 specimens of *Buteo jamaicensis*. It somewhat resembles the photograph of "dark-phase" *calurus* in Farrand (1983:247), which, although not so labeled, is an immature bird. However, the pale bands of the tail are grayish brown, not rusty as in the photographed bird, and all of the upperparts are much more uniform, without conspicuous orange-buff edgings. The photographed bird also lacks the whitish lores and forehead streaks of the Pennsylvania specimen. The general Gestalt of the latter bird, except for the tail, is oddly like that of a tiny Golden Eagle!

In view of Friedmann's statement mentioned above, and the fact that, at least at CM, none of the numerous specimens collected subsequent to Friedmann's study resemble CM 122330, it is at least possible that this specimen represents a very rare color morph of *borealis* rather than a genuine *calurus* from the west. As there are no significant size differences between these races (and the specimen was not sexed), it will not be possible to attribute the Pennsylvania bird to any subspecies until a similarly colored specimen is found somewhere in the breeding season.

Notes on Intergradation

With the characters of the northern races of Red-tailed Hawk so poorly understood, it is not surprising that intergradation between the races is even less well documented. Authentic breeding specimens from critical areas are often lacking, so that intergradation frequently must be deduced from the characters of migrants. One of the few adequate series of breeding birds is that from Alberta, an area where no fewer than five subspecies meet, in the NMC. This important series, which Dickerman has examined, includes the westernmost specimens attributable to the range of *abieticola*. While some of this series are fairly typical of that subspecies, others show varying degrees of intergradation with *calurus*, *borealis*, *harlani*, and *kriderii*. Prior to the description of *abieticola* this series had been studied and reported on by Taverner (1927, 1936); the color plates in his first paper and the map in his second clearly show the importance of Alberta as a zone of intergradation. We have examined some migrants displaying such intergradation, such as CM 122832, Monterrey, Nuevo Leon, Mexico, 3 February 1938, and CM 124679, Red Rock, Grant Co., New Mexico, 5 December 1939; both of these appear to be *calurus-abieticola* intergrades. Wintering birds of this

kind would not be unexpected farther east. The Iowa specimen assigned to *abieticola* by Todd (1950), CM 23819, Hardin Co., 24 March 1905, although reasonably typical of that race in other ways, has a pale tail with traces of the blackish "marbling" characteristic of the dark north-western race *harlani*. An adult from Poland, Mahoning Co., Ohio, 9 February 1977 (CM 151576), is almost completely typical of *borealis* in body plumage, including immaculate thighs, except for slight cross-barring on the lower underparts. However, it has a pale, heavily barred tail like that of many specimens of *calurus*. Finally, an occasional migrant in the northeast is so whitish, with a concomitant reduction in reddish colors, that it would appear to represent intergradation with the very white form currently considered to be a prairie race *kriderii*; e.g., CM 152083 (immature), Buffalo Township, Butler Co., Pennsylvania, 4 February 1978. Although we have not discussed *harlani* and *kriderii* in this paper, it is not far-fetched to believe that individual migrant Red-tailed Hawks typical of these races may someday be reported in New York, particularly as *harlani* has been collected as far east as southwestern Pennsylvania (Todd 1940). Parkes has reexamined this specimen and believes it to be correctly identified.

Literature Cited

- Bull, John. 1974. *The Birds of New York*. Doubleday, New York. 655 pp.
- Dickerman, Robert W. 1986. A review of the Red Crossbill in New York State. Part 2. Identification of specimens from New York. *Kingbird* 36: 127-134.
- Farrand, John, Jr. (ed.). 1983. *The Audubon Society Master Guide to Birding*, vol. 1. Alfred A. Knopf, New York. 447 pp.
- Friedmann, Herbert. 1950. The birds of North and Middle America, Part XI. *U.S. Nat. Mus. Bull.* 50, part 11: 793 pp.
- Godfrey, W. Earl. 1986. *The Birds of Canada*, revised edition. Ottawa, Nat. Mus. Natural Sciences. 595 pp.
- Mindell, David P. 1983. Harlan's Hawk (*Buteo jamaicensis harlani*): a valid subspecies. *Auk* 100: 161-169.
- Parkes, Kenneth C. 1952. *The Birds of New York State and Their Taxonomy*. Unpubl. Ph.D. dissertation, Cornell University. 654 pp.
- Peters, James L. 1931. *Check-list of Birds of the World*, vol. 1. Cambridge, Harvard University Press. 345 pp.
- Rand, Austin L. 1948. Probability in subspecific identification of single specimens. *Auk* 65: 416-432.
- Smithe, Frank B. 1975. *Naturalist's Color Guide*. New York, Amer. Mus. Nat. Hist. Loose-leaf, unpagged.
- _____. 1981. *Naturalist's Color Guide*, Part III. New York, Amer. Mus. Nat. Hist. 37 pp. + looseleaf plates.

- Stresemann, Erwin, and Dean Amadon. 1979. Falconiformes. Pp. 271-425 in *Check-list of Birds of the World*, vol. 1, 2nd ed. Cambridge, Mus. Comparative Zool. 547 pp.
- Taverner, Percy A. 1927. A study of *Buteo borealis*, the Red-tailed Hawk, and its varieties in Canada. *Victoria Memorial Mus. Bull.* 48: 21 pp.
- _____. 1936. Taxonomic comments on Red-tailed Hawks. *Condor* 38: 66-71.
- Todd, W. E. Clyde. 1940. *Birds of Western Pennsylvania*. Pittsburgh, Univ. Pittsburgh Press. 710 pp.
- _____. 1950. A northern race of Red-tailed Hawk. *Annals Carnegie Mus.* 31: 289-296.
- _____. 1963. *Birds of the Labrador Peninsula and Adjacent Areas*. Toronto, Univ. Toronto Press. 819 pp.

American Museum of Natural History,
Central Park West at 79th St., New York, NY 10024, and
Carnegie Museum of Natural History,
4400 Forbes Ave., Pittsburgh, PA 15213

THE GOLDEN-WINGED WARBLER: COMPETITION WITH THE BLUE-WINGED WARBLER AND HABITAT SELECTION IN PORTIONS OF SOUTHERN, CENTRAL AND NORTHERN NEW YORK

MICHELE H. FRECH AND JOHN L. CONFER

Introduction

Of special concern is the decline in abundance or local extinction of the Golden-winged Warbler (*Vermivora chrysoptera*). Gill (1980), in a comprehensive historical survey of the eastern United States, reported that the Golden-winged Warbler has become locally extinct whenever Blue-winged Warblers (*V. pinus*) have expanded into the former's range. This raises the possibility that Blue-winged Warblers somehow cause the local extinction. Confer and Knapp (1979, 1981) observed that the Golden-winged Warbler nested only in early succession fields. They suggested that the decline of Golden-winged Warblers was partly due to extensive reforestation of fields in much of eastern United States. The present study was designed to determine the relative influence of habitat loss or competition with the Blue-winged as factors that contribute to localized decline or extinction of Golden-winged Warblers.

Our survey was conducted in several areas of New York. Golden-winged Warblers are expanding into northern New York, as revealed by a comparison of the range map in Bull (1974) and preliminary range maps from *The Atlas of the Breeding Birds of New York*. In an area northeast of Oneida Lake we found four Golden-winged Warblers but no Blue-winged Warblers in four days of survey. This northern population allowed us to assess habitat selection by Golden-winged Warblers without any influence of Blue-winged Warblers. In central New York near Ithaca and Syracuse, Golden-winged and Blue-winged Warblers co-occur and Golden-winged Warblers are declining (Confer and Knapp, 1979, 1981 and this survey). This area enabled us to assess habitat selection by the Golden-winged Warbler in the presence of a potential competitor for nesting habitat. The Atlas also revealed a southern population of Golden-winged Warblers in the Ramapo Mountains that has co-occurred with Blue-winged Warblers for nearly 100 years (Eaton 1914, Bull 1974). This area, which was unknown to Gill (1980), illustrates the unusual event of both prolonged persistence of Golden-winged Warbler in one area and also its prolonged co-existence with Blue-winged Warbler. We present an analysis of the abundance and nesting habitat of the Golden-winged Warbler in these three distinct areas.

If Blue-winged Warblers drive Golden-winged Warblers out of the latter's preferred nesting habitat, then the following should occur: in

northern New York, where virtually no Blue-winged Warblers occur, Golden-winged Warblers should be able to select nesting territories that have preferred characteristics. In central New York, where the Blue-winged Warbler is abundant, the Golden-winged Warbler should be displaced from nesting habitat with preferred characteristics. If such displacement occurs, and the appropriate habitat characteristics are measured, then differences in nesting habitat between northern and central territories should be detectable.

The presence of Golden-winged Warblers in the forested Ramapo Mountains is very interesting. Golden-winged Warblers have disappeared from other areas as reforestation became prevalent (Confer and Knapp 1979 and 1981, Gill 1980). We hypothesized that this uniquely prolonged occurrence of Golden-winged Warblers in a forested region could occur only if these birds used a habitat that differed from the early succession habitat used by birds in central New York (Confer and Knapp 1979, 1981). Furthermore, if competition with Blue-winged Warblers is the major factor that causes the decline of Golden-winged Warblers, we hypothesized that the unique co-occurrence of these two species could occur only if the two species used quite separate habitats.

Methods

This study began 12 May 1986 and continued with almost daily field trips through 29 June 1986. The location and dates for the field trips are as follows: Orange Co.—May 30, 31, June 1, 2, 27, 28; Tompkins Co.—May 12-17, 19, June 4, 5, 7, 13, 14, 20; Oswego Co.—May 20, 24, 25, 27, June 5, 6, 19. On most dates observations were made in the field for 4-6 hours in the morning around sunrise and for 2-4 hours in the evening around sunset. These are the times when the birds were most conspicuous. On some dates observations were made in one area in the morning and in another in the evening. M. Frech participated in all trips while J. Confer participated in about half.

Maps were drawn marking where the bird was seen during each visit. Three to seven visits were made to all territories except one in the northern region. This territory was located late in the breeding season and a singing bird which was acting territorial was observed for a long time on one morning only. Boundaries for a territory were based upon the maximum area used during the entire breeding season. In early June, after the birds stopped singing vigorously, characteristics of the vegetation in each territory were measured. Vegetation characteristics were measured along three to five transects for each territory. The transects were parallel and the same distance apart within a territory, but ranged from 40 to 90 feet apart in territories of different size. Vegetation measurements were made at twenty or more sites at equidistant intervals along the transects within each territory. To insure an

unbiased sample of each territory, a distance along each transect was randomly selected as the starting point. The vegetation density for herbs, shrubs and trees was determined at each site. The percent cover was rated on an integer scale from zero to three, where zero represented total absence of a vegetation category, one represented some cover up to 33% of the maximum density, two described cover between 33 and 66% of the maximum density, and three represented 66% or more of the maximum density cover.

Subjects

Although four male Golden-winged Warblers were located in the northern area, only two territories were mapped. This constitutes a small, preliminary sample. The small size was mostly due to the difficulty of spending sufficient time in the three distant regions during the four weeks in which the birds sing vigorously. In the central region, nine resident Golden-winged Warblers were located and six territories were studied well enough to be mapped. Of the six male Golden-winged Warblers found in the southern region, four were studied well enough for their territories to be mapped. In the northern area, two females were located and a nest with a nestling was discovered in one territory. The parents were gathering food for their young and gave a wonderful distraction display. Two of the Golden-winged Warblers found in the central region sang the Blue-winged Warbler song; neither showed any other sign of hybridization. Also in this region, we found a Golden-winged Warbler family (a father previously counted, a mother and a fledgling). These parents also performed a distraction display; the female was especially magnificent as she literally tumbled between our feet. In the southern area, one female was located.

Results and Discussion

The abundance of resident Golden-winged, Blue-winged and hybrids (that could be recognized by use of binoculars) found in our survey is summarized in Table 1. Golden-winged Warblers continue to decline in the Ithaca area (Table 2). Before 1942 all birds were Golden-winged Warblers as the Blue-winged Warbler had not yet arrived. By 1957-58 the Golden-winged Warbler represented only 31% of the total population while Blue-winged Warbler represented 52% and hybrids 17% (Short 1963). By 1976-78, the Golden-winged Warbler had declined to 15% of the total, while Blue-winged Warbler rose to 75% and the hybrids declined to 10% (Confer and Knapp 1979, 1981). In the current survey, the Golden-winged Warbler population has declined even further to 9%, while the Blue-winged Warbler population increased to 88% and the hybrid population continued to decline to an estimated frequency of 3%. None of the fields near Ithaca with nesting Golden-winged

Table 1. Territorial Golden-winged and Blue-winged Warblers and their hybrids observed in 1986 survey.

Area	Golden-winged n (%)	Blue-winged n (%)	Hybrids n (%)
Southern	7 (35)	13 (65)	0 (0)
Central			
Ithaca	3 (9)	28 (88)	1 (3)
Syracuse	7 (33)	11 (52)	3 (14)
Northern	6 (100)	0 (0)	0 (0)

Table 2. Territorial Golden-winged and Blue-winged Warblers and their hybrids in Ithaca, New York.

Date	Golden-winged n (%)	Blue-winged n (%)	Hybrids n (%)
pre-1942	(100)		
1957-1958 ¹	9 (31)	15 (52)	5 (17)
1976-1978 ²	16 (15)	82 (75)	11 (10)
1986 ³	3 (9)	28 (88)	1 (3)

¹ L. Short 1962

² Confer & Knapp 1978

³ This survey

Warblers during the 1976-78 survey had nesting Golden-winged Warblers this past summer, although Blue-winged Warbler still nested in these areas. Succession may have progressed past the vegetation stage that is suitable for Golden-winged Warbler in these fields.

We located no hybrids in the southern region (although they are occasionally found there), and hybrids were rare in the Ithaca area. Table 2 suggests a decline in hybrid frequency over time in the Ithaca area. Hybridization might become less frequent, as the duration of co-occurrence increases, if isolating mechanisms between these two species become enhanced.

One unusual feature common to ten out of twelve territories in all three regions of New York State was a large open area located within the territory (Table 3). The large, open areas were frequently mowed or sprayed due to the presence of electrical power lines, gas pipelines, lawns, or else they were denuded ground having dirt, rocks or a paved surface. In two of the southern territories, there were marshes which constituted a large open area. Several territories had two of the above-mentioned features.

Table 3. Large, open areas within territories of Golden-winged Warblers in three areas of New York.

Condition	Central			Northern
	Southern ¹	Ithaca	Syracuse	
Mowed or sprayed				
electric power line	1	2	1	2
gas pipeline		1		
lawn	1		2	1
Marsh	2			
Denuded surface				
dirt		1		1
rock			1	
paved	2			
Territories²				
with:without any	3:1	2:0	3:1	2:0

¹ Southern survey restricted to Ramapo Mountains

² Several territories had two of these features so that the sum of their occurrences is greater than the number of territories.

Table 4. Vegetation characteristics of Golden-winged Warbler territories in three areas of New York.

	Herbs		Shrubs		Trees	
	Mean Score	(S.E.)	Mean Score	(S.E.)	Mean Score	(S.E.)
Southern	1.9	(.11)	1.5	(.12)	1.3	(.13)
Central	2.4	(.06)	1.5	(.09)	.3	(.06)
Northern	2.7	(.08)	0.8	(.12)	.4	(.09)

Vegetation characteristics were similar within the territories of northern and central birds (Table 4). The densities of herbs and trees were indistinguishable. Northern territories had less shrub growth. A t-value, calculated by comparing the shrub values for all sites in northern vs. southern territories, was highly significant ($t = 3.77$, d.f. = 172, $p < 0.01$). However, by our impression, the northern region is far more open with less shrubby vegetation than the central area. We believe that the lower shrubbiness in northern territories does not indicate preference for areas with fewer shrubs but rather that there are fewer shrubs in this area. Tentatively, we suggest that the difference in amount of shrubs in central vs. northern territories did not result from the presence vs. absence of competition with Blue-winged Warblers. Further studies of this are anticipated. We believe that there is no change in habitat selectivity by Golden-winged Warblers between these two areas.

Habitat use in the southern region was quite distinctive. In the Ramapo Mountains, Golden-winged Warbler territories included a moderate amount of tree growth. While the territories always included shrubby and sometimes open areas, they often extended as much as 20 m into adjacent forests. A t-value, calculated by comparing the tree values for all sites in the southern vs. the central and northern territories, was highly significant ($t = 7.23$, d.f. = 210, $p < 0.01$). In fact, the minimum degree of tree growth in a southern territory was nearly twice as great as the maximum degree of tree growth in any central or northern territory (Table 4). By our knowledge of New York, the Golden-winged Warbler population in the Ramapo Mountains is unique in that it has maintained itself in the same area for a prolonged time and in its moderately extensive use of forest. The unusually prolonged occurrence in the same area probably results from the unusual adaptation by the Golden-winged Warbler to a later stage in plant succession. We believe that both the use of moderately forested territories and also the prolonged occurrence in the same area are unique to the Ramapo Mountains. The authors would be delighted to receive other information on this matter.

If competition between Golden-winged and Blue-winged Warblers has been a major factor contributing to the usual decline of the former, then the prolonged co-occurrence of these birds in the Ramapo Mountains might be due to the adaptation by each of these species to different habitats. If, on the other hand, these birds utilize similar and overlapping territories in the area of prolonged co-occurrence, this would show that for at least one region competition has not been so important.

In fact, in the Ramapo Mountains there was extensive overlap between Golden-winged and Blue-winged Warbler territories. Two of the four mapped territories for Golden-winged Warbler overlapped with

two Blue-winged Warbler territories each; one overlapped with one Blue-winged Warbler territory; and one had an adjacent Blue-winged Warbler territory. Of the three less well mapped Golden-winged Warbler territories, two overlapped with a total of four Blue-winged Warbler territories. In the Ramapo Mountains, Golden-winged Warblers used habitat that was similar to that used by Blue-winged Warblers in central New York (Confer and Knapp 1979, 1981). However, in central New York the two species generally used different habitats. Both the co-occurrence with Blue-winged Warblers for nearly 100 years and the similar and possibly convergent habitat selection by the two species suggests that competition between these species is not a major limiting factor for the Golden-winged Warbler in the Ramapo Mountains. The unusual attribute of Golden-winged Warblers that seems to be correlated with their prolonged existence in one area and with their prolonged co-existence with Blue-winged Warbler, appears to be the adaptation of this population to a nesting habitat with a greater degree of reforestation.

Acknowledgments

This work could not have been done without support from The Max McGraw Foundation and from the Clinton Ford Endowment of the Ithaca College Biology Department. Dorothy Crumb, Berna Weissman and Paul DeBenedictis provided help in locating nesting territories, which was greatly appreciated. In addition we would like to thank the Conenello family for their hospitality during one of our southern trips. Preliminary information from *An Atlas of the Breeding Birds of New York* prompted the formulation of the concept of this study. For this we are grateful to all who have worked on the Atlas.

Bibliography

- Bull, John. 1974. *Birds of New York State*. Doubleday Natural History Press. Garden City, NY.
- Confer, J. L. and K. Knapp. 1981. Golden-winged Warblers and Blue-winged Warblers: The relative success of a habitat specialist and a habitat generalist. *Auk* 98: 108-114.
- Confer, J. L. and K. Knapp. 1979. The changing proportion of Blue-winged and Golden-winged warblers in Tompkins County and their habitat selection. *Kingbird* 29: 8-14.
- Eaton, E. H. 1914. *Birds of New York*. Univ. State New York, New York State Museum Mem. 12.
- Gill, F. B. 1980. Historical aspects of secondary contact and hybridization between Blue-winged and Golden-winged Warblers. *Auk* 97: 1-18.
- Short, L. J. 1963. Hybridization of the wood warblers *Vermivora pinus* and *V. chrysoptera*. *Proc. 13th Intern. Ornithol. Congr.* 147-160.

Department of Biology, Ithaca College, Ithaca, NY 14850

NOTES AND OBSERVATIONS

Barred Owl at an Essex County Feeder: Shortly after daylight on the morning of 22 Jan 1987 I saw a Barred Owl sitting in a hemlock outside my cabin near Paradox, Essex County, looking in. It was about 20 feet away, a sleepy looking bird with half-shut eyes. Blue Jays lit nearby, some inches away, but none paid any attention. Black-capped Chickadees and Evening Grosbeaks also ignored him, although the birds were coming and going busily through the tree. How long he'd been there, I don't know.

The owl sat this way for about a half-hour; for all appearances, he looked half asleep. Suddenly, he launched out, sending screaming Blue Jays in all directions as he swooped past a table toward a big pine. I saw him at its base, on the ground, with spread wings. His head swiveled as he crouched, his body otherwise motionless. I thought he had a squirrel. But, no, it was a big chunk of suet that the Blue Jays had removed from the feeder the day before. The owl bit it a few times, then flew with the dangling piece of fat to a maple about 100 feet away, but within my view. Through binoculars, I was able to watch him eat. As a jay lit near him, the owl ripped pieces off the suet and wolfed them down. His eating manner reminded me of the way a dog gulps its food. The jay was silent, as near as I could tell from inside the cabin, but it hit the owl's left wing. The Barred Owl shrugged its shoulder and did so with each successive blow.

It took the owl about 15 minutes to eat, slowly, the five inch square piece of suet. He tore off each piece, too big to swallow easily, and so had to gulp and gulp before it went down. The Blue Jays (only a few of the approximately 35 around) hit him on the same spot on his left shoulder, at spaced intervals. The Barred Owl slowed eating near the end and spent more minutes staring into space with half-closed eyes; this is when the mobbing few jays screamed and hit him. One wonders if, somehow knowing he was full, they thought it possible to make him drop the rest of the suet. It is interesting to note that none of the jays bothered him before he pounced on the food.

A Blue Jay yelled, hit the Barred Owl on the wing, the owl shrugged and went on eating. When the suet was gone, a jay hit him twice more, then no more. The owl fluffed and shook out his feathers, then cleaned his bill by rubbing it along the branch, not sweeping crosswise as passerines do. He did this many, many times, then picked his talon clean, turned on the perch several times, and shook out. He then settled in to spend the morning on the perch, and no jays bothered him again. Later, he sat in the hemlock, then flew to a maple and spent the rest of the day there, where no jay bothered him. He did not appear to sleep, unless owls sleep with half-opened eyes. The coloring of his feathers was striking: rich shades of brown and buff, and those big eyes. He was gone at 5 p.m., but a little later was perched in a young beech near the cabin and remained there, looking in.

It is interesting that the suet had been on the ground all night and that the owl, as far as I know, paid no attention. Perhaps a Blue Jay or other bird moved it, or he might have seen them eating and thus realized it was food. With 11 inches of fresh snow on 23 January, the owl did not return, but on following days he again sat near the cabin during the daytime.

Merry Baker, P.O. Box 115, Paradox, NY 12858



Say's Phoebe, Delmar, Albany Co., New York, 7 Feb 1987. Photograph by Alan Mapes.

NOTES AND OBSERVATIONS

Say's Phoebe in upstate New York: The Say's Phoebe (*Sayornis saya*) in the accompanying photograph appeared at my home near Delmar, Albany Co., on 7 Feb 1987. Our warm sunny weather brought out a number of cluster flies on the south side of the house. The phoebe perched in nearby apple trees, making repeated trips to the house to feed on the flies. My photographs were taken from an upstairs window. The bird was present that Saturday at the house and at two buildings on the Five Rivers Environmental Education Center nearby, and was seen by a number of local birders. It was seen briefly during the late afternoons of Sunday and Monday, 8 and 9 Feb, and then disappeared.

Say's Phoebe is native to the western half of North America, wintering in the southwestern United States and in Mexico. The species is described as a "casual vagrant" during fall and winter on the east coast from Nova Scotia south. Bull (*Birds of New York*, Cornell Univ. Press, 1985, p. 369) lists four records from Long Island and one from upstate New York (Greece, Monroe Co., 13-19 Dec 1959). Two more recent Upstate records are listed by Crumb (*The Kingbird* 32(3): 147; 1982) and two very recent sightings, one Upstate and one from Long Island, have not yet been reviewed by the New York State Avian Records Committee.

Alan A. Mapes, RD 1 Box 409B, Delmar, NY 12054

NOTES AND OBSERVATIONS

Common Redpolls excavating snow burrows and snow bathing: A dozen Common Redpolls (*Carduelis flammea*) first appeared at the Furness home feeding station near Moriah Center, Essex County, on 2 Jan 1987, and during the following weeks as many as 150-200 were daily visitors. Many would roost on the nearby garage roof while waiting their turn at the already crowded feeders stocked with niger seed. Normally they just sat there, but on the early morning of 9 Feb Furness noted some feverish activity among the rooftop redpolls about 7:15 a.m.

A series of January storms had left a couple of feet of wind-drifted snow on the garage roof. On the morning of 9 Feb this was covered by three inches of fresh powder snow, left during the night. The temperature was 5°F, the wind east at about 20 m.p.h. or more, providing a sub zero windchill factor. The roof of the garage is just 30 feet opposite a living room window, and observations were made with binoculars at close quarters.

The Common Redpolls were actually excavating by beak and foot small snow caves in the drift. Once they had excavated in two or three inches, they turned around, heads pointed out, and simply roosted in these little holes, presumably to conserve body heat and to stay sheltered from the 20+ m.p.h. winds. Of the total flock of 150-200 individuals present, about half were engaged in this burrowing activity at any one time. As some left their caves and flitted down to the feeders, others took up residence in the vacated holes, or displaced individuals who were already occupying burrows. This activity continued until Furness had to leave at 8:00 a.m. and apparently involved most of the flock. This appears to be the first recorded observation of such activity by Common Redpolls, although the number of birds involved suggests that such protective burrowing may be a well-developed trait in this northern species.

Cade (1953) suggested that the Common Redpoll "has a sufficiently adventure-some disposition to utilize sub-nival situations" in winter food-gathering, and described a single observation of redpolls feeding in tunnels formed by snow-buried weeds. Clement (1968), however, felt this provided "no evidence that the birds actually excavated these openings to get at food."

Both Palmer (1949) and Clement (1968) report an account of Common Redpolls seen bathing in wet snow on a Mount Desert Island, Maine, roof by Mrs. E. A. Anthony:

The birds would take a series of vigorous hops to gain momentum, then plunge and burrow head first until almost out of sight. They fluttered their wings like birds taking a water bath. They would then remain quiet for several minutes, and emerge, flutter their wings, throw snow over themselves with their bills, and hop to another place to repeat the bathing. When a bird came out of a hole, another would dash into it, the first going into another hole or making a new one. About 50 birds kept this up for an hour and left the snow on the roof only after they had honeycombed it with holes.

Furness observed snow bathing on the mornings of 3, 4, and 6 Feb. Each time there was recently fallen powder snow on the roof. The behavior followed the classic form of passerine dust or water bathing, with fluttering wings and preen-

ing, but with a minimum of actual excavation in the snow. Pock-marks resulted, but not the deeper burrows produced several days later during the 9 Feb excavations.

On the morning of 1 March, however, Furness observed almost continuous instances of snow bathing excavations between 8:00 a.m. and 12:30 p.m., again at his home near Moriah Center. This was not the burrowing and sitting witnessed 9 Feb, but clearly bathing activity. Of a total flock of about 150 redpolls, a dozen to two dozen at a time would actually excavate in the new-fallen snow by flapping their wings exactly as in normal dust bathing, followed by preening, then more fluttering and preening. After up to a minute and a half of this activity, the redpolls would fly down to feed, and other individuals would fly up to the garage roof to take their turns snow bathing. The purpose of the excavation was to shower their bodies with snow; in some instances they would peck at the roof of the burrow to shower snow over themselves while fluttering their wings. The snow on the garage roof was ultimately riddled with about 50-60 holes.

Although the 9 Feb incident may provide a first record of redpolls excavating snow burrows for shelter, the 1 Mar episode of snow bathing is strikingly similar to that previously reported from Maine. Following a warming trend that began on 6 Mar, the rooftop snow began to melt and no further excavations were noted before Common Redpoll numbers began to decline in April. No similar behavior has been previously described from the Adirondack-Champlain region, or apparently from New York State.

Literature Cited

- Cade, T. J. 1953. Sub-nival feeding of the redpoll in interior Alaska: a possible adaptation to the northern winter. *Condor* 55: 43-44.
- Clement, R. C. 1968. Common Redpoll. In *Life histories of North American cardinals, grosbeaks, buntings, towhees, finches, sparrows, and allies*. Part 1. A. C. Bent, O. L. Austin, eds. Smithsonian Institution Press. Washington.
- Palmer, R. S. 1949. Maine birds. *Bull. Mus. Comp. Zool.*, vol. 102.
- Gregory Furness, 76 Plank Road, Mineville, NY 12956, and
John M. C. Peterson, Discovery Farm, RD 1, Elizabethtown, NY 12932

HIGHLIGHTS OF THE WINTER SEASON

ROBERT SPAHN

This winter continued the string of relatively negative or dull seasons with only local bright spots. Birding apparently was best in Regions 8 and 10 where snowfall was the greatest. It was good once again to see a report from Region 10 and to learn that next season there should be reports from all of the Regions.

The season's weather was fairly uniform across the state. The winter storm track generally by-passed the western snowbelt areas by moving to the south and then swinging up the coast. December generally was warm and wet, January closer to average, and February was **cold**. Over most of the state, February approached or set records for lack of precipitation and abundance of sunshine. The easy winter Upstate was not reflected well in records of half-hardy species. The standard reasoning, that these birds were not driven to feeders, is "proved" by the better reports from the snowier Regions. By the season's end there was little sign of the start of the spring migration, with very few waterfowl on the move, only a scattering of hawks past the watches, and a few blackbirds arriving.

In evaluating the winter season, we typically consider the waterfowl, winter raptors, half-hardies, and incursives including the winter finches. Quantitative comparisons with the past are best made from the refined Christmas Bird Count data and the Federation Waterfowl Census tables published later. Looking through the Regional reports relative to these topics, you first will find waterfowl numbers generally average to a bit low. Waterfowl highlights and notes include: continued large numbers of lingering Canada Goose; Wood Duck in five Regions; Blue-winged Teal in Regions 3, 5 and 10; Eurasian Wigeon in Regions 2 and 3 and with at least 12 in Region 10; good Canvasback counts in Regions 8 and 10; and a peak report of six Barrow's Goldeneye in Region 6. Among the raptors, you will find: Bald Eagle reported from all Regions except 10, with fair numbers, but Region 9, which typically produces the highest counts, did not report; Turkey Vultures in Regions 2 and 5 continue the recent increase in winter records; Accipiter numbers fairly good, though reduced from last winter; Red-tailed Hawk and American Kestrel with mixed reviews; Merlin in four Regions; Peregrine Falcon in Regions 7, 8 and 10; and owls generally more widely noted than usual. In the general incursive category you will find: Rough-legged Hawk in very good numbers, especially at the start of the season; white-winged gulls scarce except in Region 6; Snowy Owl widely reported, with good numbers in most Regions and again numbers best

early in the winter; Black-capped Chickadee and Red-breasted Nuthatch not particularly numerous; Bohemian Waxwing in large numbers in Regions 6 and 7, scarce or absent in the other Regions; Northern Shrike reported in all Regions, with good counts in most; American Tree Sparrow numbers low; average numbers of Horned Lark, Lapland Longspur, and Snow Bunting; and winter finches very scarce except for a large invasion of Common Redpoll across the state, accompanied by Hoary Redpoll reports from Regions 2, 5, 6, 7 and 8.

Half-hardy species were quite variable across the state, with the coast having variety and numbers far above the rest of the state as one would expect. Among the normally most widespread half-hardy species, we find: Great Blue Heron wintering across the state; Killdeer reported in four Regions; Common Snipe only in Regions 2 and 5; Yellow-bellied Sapsucker in four Regions; Northern Flicker counts good, with an excellent peak of 13 in Region 1; no Eastern Phoebe; generally good numbers of Carolina Wren; Winter Wren in four Regions; Ruby-crowned Kinglets in Regions 1, 2 and 3; Eastern Bluebird well reported, with flocks in six Regions; Hermit Thrush **very scarce**; Gray Catbird from Regions 2, 3 and 8; nine species of warblers recorded, with the best: Yellow to 5 Dec in Region 3, Cape May in Region 2, Pine in Regions 1 and 10, Palm in Regions 5 and 10, Ovenbird in Regions 1 and 10, and Yellow-breasted Chat in Region 10; Rose-breasted Grosbeak only in Region 10; Rufous-sided Towhee in four Regions; Savannah Sparrow in Regions 3 and 10; Song and Swamp Sparrows noted as scarce in several Regions; White-throated Sparrow numbers low; blackbirds unusually scarce, though a very high inland count of 50 was recorded in Region 7; and no reports of Northern Oriole at feeders.

By scanning the Regional reports carefully, you may find many other notes of interest. This season the only heron other than Great Blue reported outside of Region 10 was a Green-backed Heron in Region 2. A large number and variety of woodpeckers frequented a Region 1 feeder and 75 Blue Jays spent all winter at a Region 3 feeder. In Region 7, Blue Jays were observed eating brittle chips of polyurethane. In Region 6 the St. Lawrence River remained open all winter, while in Region 7 water was open for nine miles of canoe coverage on one Christmas Bird Count. Region 8 reported that 90% of the checklists received noted the Eastern Bluebird, certainly encouraging for that troubled species. Also from Region 8, you may read of the good winter for ski-birding. From experience, I can add that you will probably need an external harness for your binoculars to practice this sport effectively; skiing with loose binoculars, you will acquire a bruised chest and/or beat-up binoculars, while if you tuck them inside your jacket, you acquire fogged lenses, but if you keep them in a backpack, they are

useless for quick looks at anything you may encounter. Your reading of these reports will uncover other items that interest you.

This season the rarity list is relatively short, though some of the reports are very unusual indeed. As expected, the variety from Region 10 far eclipses that of the rest of the state. Many species which are very rare elsewhere in the state are regular as vagrants along the coast. Running through the Regional reports, we find: Region 1—the Rock Wren tarrying into December; Region 2—Western Grebe, a likely holdover from Fall, Eurasian Wigeon, Common Black-headed Gull, Black-legged Kittiwake, Varied Thrush, Cape May Warbler, and Hoary Redpoll; Region 3—Yellow Warbler; Region 5—Turkey Vulture, Thayer's Gull, Boreal Chickadee, Bohemian Waxwing, Palm Warbler, and Hoary Redpoll; Region 6—Carolina Wren; Region 7—Carolina Wren; Region 8—Hoary Redpoll; and Region 10—Eared Grebe, Greater Shearwater, Barrow's Goldeneye, Azure Gallinule of uncertain origin, Purple Gallinule, Franklin's Gull, single-observer report of Ross' Gull, Yellow-headed Blackbird, and a "Bullock's" Oriole. Except for the question marks, either of Region 10's rarest would be BOTS, as would the Rock Wren of Region 1, had it not been discovered last season. These eliminated, the BOTS Award for this season goes to Region 8's first Say's Phoebe, seen by many 7-9 February.

716 High Tower Way, Webster, New York 14580

Standard abbreviations: county names are shortened to their first four letters; months are shortened to their first three letters; ad—adult; arr—arrival or first of season; CBC—Christmas Bird Count; Ft—Fort; I—Island; im—immature; *intro*—see introduction to report; j—juvenile; L—Lake; max—maximum; mob—multiple observers; NWR—National Wildlife Refuge; NYSARC—report to New York State Avian Records Committee; P—Park; Pd—Pond; ph—photographed; Pt—Point; Res—Reservoir; SP—State Park; spm—specimen; subad—subadult; T—Town of; Twn—township; WMA—Wildlife Management Area.

REGION 1 – NIAGARA FRONTIER

STEPHEN W. EATON

December 1986 was dull and damp in Region 1 but a bit warmer and more snow free than normal. Only 4.8 inches of snow was logged at Buffalo International Airport, a marked change from the 68.4 inches in December 1985. Most of the month's foul weather occurred during the first week when a lake effect snow burst hit towns in the lee of Lake Erie on 4 Dec. The **Rock Wren** in Fredonia found last season was not seen after this storm. There was only one other day, 8 Dec, when any appreciable amount of snow fell. After 15 Dec temperatures were above normal but sunshine was scarce, only 11 compared to the normal 27 percent of possible sunlight.

January 1987 was mild, cloudy and a bit snowier than average. Twenty-eight and a half inches of snow at Buffalo International Airport was just above the normal 25.7 inches. The average temperature for the month was 26.1°F, almost 3° above normal. Lake Erie remained largely unfrozen. Fortunately, five winter storms struck to the south of the Region and did not produce snow bursts here. They must have had terrible effects on birds wintering in Tennessee, Virginia and the Carolinas. Dunkirk Harbor birders, however, wished for colder weather to freeze Lake Erie and concentrate water birds in their backyard. A midwinter storm on 23 Jan with peak gusts up to 43 mph in Buffalo drove six Little Gulls and 3,000 Bonaparte's Gulls into Dunkirk Harbor. The coldest day of the month at Buffalo was -2° on 27 Jan, -17° at Chaffee in southern Erie Co., and -21° in Franklinville, the icebox of the Region, in central Cattaraugus Co.

February was dry and sunny, the sunniest winter month since 1970. The sunshine was an amazing 54 percent of the possible, well above the normal 38 percent. Heavy rains moved into the Region on 28 Feb and opened most of the ice-bound streams. Only 7.6 inches of snow was recorded at Buffalo International Airport, well below the normal 18.6 inches. On 8 Feb up to eight inches of snow fell to the north of Buffalo as the wind blew from the southwest over a mostly open Lake Erie.

The mild winter is reflected in the presence of many species which normally winter further south. Apparently Great Blue Heron, Northern Harrier, American Coot, Yellow-bellied Sapsucker, Northern Flicker, Ruby-crowned Kinglet, Eastern Bluebird, Hermit Thrush, unusually many American Robin, Brown Thrasher, Yellow-rumped Warbler, Rufous-sided Towhee and White-crowned Sparrows all survived the winter in Region 1. **Four** species of warblers in Region 1 this winter is certainly unusual and also reflects the mild December. Only Yellow-rumped Warbler was reported after 7 Jan. The others apparently succumbed to winter's wrath or moved out. In some cases this was due to well stocked feeders, in others to open water, and in others to the lack of snow.

Terry Mosher reported "a plague of woodpeckers" at the feeders of Keven and Daun Jaynes near Barcelona on the Erie Lake Plain. Almost daily their backyard, bordering Chautauqua Creek near Lake Erie, was visited by two Red-headed, two Red-bellied, six Downy, two Hairy and two Pileated Woodpeckers, several

Northern Flicker and two Yellow-bellied Sapsucker. The Jaynes must have a good source of suet to keep their feeders filled!

The winter finches and other northern birds helped swell the numbers of birds at feeders and in the woods and fields. It was a good winter for Snow Bunting, Purple Finch, Common Redpoll, Pine Siskin and Evening Grosbeak. Blue Jay, Black-capped Chickadee and Red-breasted Nuthatch also wintered in good numbers.

The first movement of hawks along the escarpment in the town of Sheridan was on 19 Feb, when Joe Gula, Jr. noted a kettle of six Red-tailed Hawks. These were followed by nine on 21 Feb and 15 at Forsythe Road in Chautauqua Co. on 22 Feb. The pair of Bald Eagles which nested last year at Iroquois National Wildlife Refuge returned to the nest site near the end of the period. Migrating blackbirds were first seen along the Erie Lake Plain on 22 Feb, but further away from the lake they had not appeared by the end of the period. The unusual amounts of snow and cold to the south of New York appeared to have slowed migration as only one Common Grackle and one Killdeer were reported from lake plain areas by the Buffalo Ornithological society before the end of February.

No great rarities were found in the Region during the period except the Rock Wren, which probably didn't survive beyond the storm of 3-4 Dec.

Contributors: Allegany County Bird Club, Robert Andrie, Tim Baird, Bellerby, Elizabeth Brooks, Lois Buck, Lou and Doris Burton, Buffalo Ornithological Society, Cattaraugus County Bird Club, Bruce Chilton, Don and Jane Clark, William D'Anna, Steve Eaton, the Elderkins, Don Enders, Joe Jula, Joe Jula Jr., Jamestown Audubon Society, Tom Jurczak, Walter and Harriet Klabunde, Erma Larsen, Terry and Judy Mosher, Neveu, Vivian and Raymond Pitzrick, Fran Rew, Olga Rosche, Art Schaffner, Helen Shear, Robert Sundell, Joe Thill.

Abbreviations: BOS–Buffalo Ornithological Society; DH–Dunkirk Harbor; FCBC–Fredonia Christmas Bird Count; INWR–Iroquois National Wildlife Refuge; JCBC–Jamestown Christmas Bird Count 21 Dec; NF–Niagara Falls; SBCBC–St. Bonaventure Christmas Bird Count 20 Dec; SCBC–Scio Christmas Bird Count 3 Jan.

LOONS-DUCKS: Red-throated Loon: one DH 24 Feb only report. Com. Loon: one Niagara Power Res 28 Dec, rare in winter. Pied-billed Grebe: one Ft Niagara SP 4 Jan; seven DH 7 Feb. Horned Grebe: arr? Frewsburg 4 Feb. Great Blue Heron: successfully over-wintered on lake plains and plateau. Tundra Swan: last five over Chau L 24 Jan. Snow Goose: one Barcelona H 10 Jan, 7 Feb, uncommon in winter.

HAWKS-ALCIDS: Bald Eagle: ad Lewiston 26 Dec; one lower Niagara R 11 Jan; *intro*. N. Harrier: max seven Porter, Niag, 28 Dec, three 14 Feb; six INWR 1 Jan; unusual numbers for winter. Sharp-shinned Hawk: continues a Regional winter visitor. Rough-legged Hawk: max five Lake Ontario Plain 11 Jan; eight other Regional reports in Jan, nine in Feb, a good flight year. Wild Turkey: large flocks S Tier Cos, max 44 Allegany 7 Feb. Am. Coot: max 31 DH 11 Jan. Purple Sandpiper: max seven NF 13, 29 Dec; Goat I 11, 14 Jan. Dunlin: one NF 13 Dec; one Goat I 1 Dec, rare inland in winter. Franklin's Gull: one NF 1 Dec. Little Gull: continues increase, max 22 at Niagara-on-the-Lake, Ont; *intro*. Bonaparte's Gull: max 15,000 at Niagara-on-the-Lake; *intro*. Iceland Gull: one Adam Beck Hydro 14 Dec. Lesser Black-backed Gull: one NF 21 Dec, only report. Glaucous Gull: one NF 8 Dec, five other reports Niagara R and Buffalo area.

PIGEONS-WOODPECKERS: Snowy Owl: singles Buffalo H, DH, Bennington, Stillwater during period. Long-eared Owl: max two Porter, Niag. Short-eared Owl: max six Darien 16 Feb; four Java 31 Dec; five other reports on the lake plains and two in central and s Chau 3 and 17 Feb; apparently a good Meadow Vole supply. Red-bellied Woodpecker: eight sites mostly on lake plain during period (BOS). Yellow-bellied Sapsucker: one Lewiston most of Dec-Jan; *intro*. N. Flicker: max 13 Sheridan 17 Jan, unprecedented number in winter; two Salamanca 26 Dec, 1 Jan, feeding on wild grape.

FLYCATCHERS-STARLING: Horned Lark: arr 34 INWR 14 Feb. Com. Raven: two Ten Mile Hollow, Catt, 2 Feb (SE). Blue Jay: 12/party SCBC, 10/party SBCBC, 435 JCBC indicate influx in S Tier Cos. Black-capped Chickadee: 33/party SCBC, 39/party SBCBC, 18/party Fredonia CBC, 435 JCBC suggest influx S Tier Cos. Tufted Titmouse: four SBCBC, five each SCBC and JCBC; BOS reported three more sites, continuing slow increase from winter 1976-77 decline. Red-breasted Nuthatch: five SBCBC and 17 JCBC indicate a good flight year. **ROCK WREN:** *intro*. Carolina Wren: two Vandalia through period, two Barcelona 22 Feb (*vide* TM), three pairs near Jamestown, one Allegany Bird Count, two Houghton 2-12 Jan indicate recovery well underway from winter 1976-77 decline. Ruby-crowned Kinglet: one BOS refuge 26 Dec; one INWR 14 Jan; rare in winter. E. Bluebird: four Eden 27 Dec; par S Dayton 21 Jan, wintering birds? Hermit Thrush: one INWR 14 Feb, rare in winter. Am. Robin: max 120 Lake Erie SP, many reports throughout in unprecedented numbers. N. Mockingbird: BOS reports from four sites; one SCBCB; slowly increasing after "winter of their discontent" 1976-77. Cedar Waxwing: max 160 Sheridan. N. Shrike: ten reports from lake plain (BOS), a good flight year.

VIREOS-WARBLERS: Yellow-rumped Warbler: one Pomfret 5 Feb; seven or eight Lake Erie SP 21 Feb. Palm Warbler: one Times Beach, Buffalo, 20 Dec, 6 Jan (RA), not seen in Feb. Ovenbird: one Wellsville 4-7 Jan (HS, EL), very late. Com. Yellowthroat: one W Seneca 27 Dec, very late.

TANAGERS-WEAVERS: N. Cardinal: numbers about half 1985 totals on most Regional CBCs; 15 in 10 acres feeding on wild grape Allegheny R bottoms during period (TB). Rufous-sided Towhee: one Pomfret 11-14 Dec; one Tonawanda 1-28 Feb; becoming a feeder bird. Fox Sparrow: one Pomfret 6 Dec, late. White-crowned Sparrow: two Pomfret 6 Dec; one Eden 26-28 Dec, another sparrow now wintering. Dark-eyed Junco: large flocks of 1985 absent this winter s Catt. Snow Bunting: max 550 Shelby 30 Jan; seven reports BOS Feb. Purple Finch: max ten Amity 15 Feb; fewer numbers five other areas (BOS). White-winged Crossbill: two Porter, Chau, 14 Jan, only report. Com. Redpoll: max 400 INWR 29 Jan and Porter, Niag, 21 Feb; 11 other reports BOS. Pine Siskin: max 28 Silver Creek, Chau, 16 Jan; seven other Jan reports, four Feb (BOS). Am. Goldfinch: so ubiquitous not reported except on CBCs. Evening Grosbeak: max 60 Wales; smaller flocks throughout, a good flight year.

Ten Mile Road, Allegany, New York 14706

REGION 2 – GENESEE

KEVIN C. GRIFFITH

If you are a fan of typical winter weather, then this wasn't your year. December was warm and wet, with above average temperatures most of the month and precipitation nearly an inch above normal. Snowfall measured only 9.3 inches, about half the average total. Early January continued warm until a cold snap hit about the middle of the month. Even so, the average temperature was 25.3°, 1.7° above average. Precipitation was 0.4 inches below average. Snowfall was up 6.6 inches but still left the season total below normal. February was the driest in 100 years. Precipitation totaled a paltry 0.66 inches compared to a norm of 2.32 inches. A few warm spells during the month kept the average temperature up and just slightly below normal.

The above average temperatures much of the season made birding relative easy and comfortable. It also provided for much open water. This obviously contributed to high numbers of Great Blue Heron and to a record late Green-backed Heron that was sighted in the Naples area on 1 Jan by Betty and Martin Baker. It also seemed conducive to wintering Wood Duck, which once again were evident in the Region. The open water did not appear to have much influence on the overall waterfowl population, for totals generally were down a little.

The minimal snow cover was attractive to birds of prey. There were excellent numbers of Snowy Owl, Short-eared Owl and Northern Shrike. Rough-legged Hawk was plentiful early in the season but diminished in numbers towards the latter part. American Kestrel also was found in good numbers. The light snow cover also proved beneficial to some open country birds. Common Redpoll, which often feeds in fields, remained away from feeders during most of the season but could be found working fields along the shore of Lake Ontario west of Rochester in large numbers. The open conditions also seemed to keep some species away from feeders. Even though it was relatively mild, there were not many half hardy species. Totals for some species were notably low. Hermit Thrush was conspicuously absent, Red-breasted Nuthatch numbers were a bit below recent winters and Purple Finch continued its downward trend in the Region.

The cold spell that hit in January had some impact on the season. Of note is the sudden disappearance of some of the Snowy Owls that were conspicuous earlier in the season. Interestingly enough, their numbers increased again after the cold snap. The cold provided some ice for observation of gull concentrations. However, gull counts in general were down from usual numbers. Iceland and Glaucous Gull reports were sparse in the first half of the season. One of the more interesting species to show reduced numbers was Great Black-backed Gull, which has been increasing in recent years. This season they seemed to drop in numbers and were not found in usual numbers along the shore of Lake Ontario.

The Regional Christmas Bird Counts were about average in terms of number of species but totals of individuals were low. The Rochester Count featured a Common Black-headed Gull, and Ruby-crowned Kinglet was a good sighting also. New high counts were established for Eastern Screech-Owl, Great Horned

Owl, Eastern Bluebird and White-winged Crossbill. House Finch continued its climb with a total of 762 but even more may have been present. The Little Lakes Count also included new highs for some species, including Common Loon, Gadwall and Black-capped Chickadee.

Although the total number of species sighted was very high, there were few early arrivals. This was especially true of waterfowl. Rarities included Western Grebe, Eurasian Wigeon, Black-legged Kittiwake, Varied Thrush and Hoary Redpoll while Green-backed Heron, Cape May Warbler were unexpected stragglers from the fall.

Contributors: Fred Arnold, Charlotte and Ed Avery, Betty and Martin Baker, Paula and Tom Bartlett, John Boettcher, Susan Boettger, Nancy Boudrie, Betsy Brooks, Jean Browning, Carolyn Cass, Julie Claffey, Anne Clarridge, Jerry Czech, Mike Davids, Gertrude Davis, Agnes del Toro, Bob Dobson, Frank Dobson, Eric Donahue, Jim Doherty, Arlieen and John Foster, Dick Garnham, Mary and Ralph Gerner, Frieda Gibbons, Bill Gillette, Kevin Griffith, Bill Gruenbaum, Harriet Hamilton, Robert and Sandra Hazen, Øivind Jensen, Brian Keelan, Allan and Sandra Klonick, Ted Koszelak, Warren Lloyd, Hayward Madden, Pat Martin, Robert McKinney, Robert Mead, Richard O'Hara, J. Olsen, Tom Painting, Tom Penner, Dave Phelan, Arliss and Mary Ransom, Martha Reinhardt, Patty Reister, Don Ross, Pat Scheible, Marge Schmale, Jeanne and Sharon Skelly, Herald Smith, Pat and Tom Smith, Cathy, Robert and Susan Spahn, Jeff and Paul Spindler, Anne Stear, Harriet Stride, Allan, Brian, Dan and David Strong, Mary Ann Sunderlin, William Symonds, Steve Taylor, Dave Tetlow, Joanne and Mike Tetlow, Don and Donna Traver, Bruce and Dorothy Wason, Paul Weld, Munro Will, Doris Wilton and Alice Wood.

Abbreviations: BB—Braddock Bay; CaL—Canadaigua Lake; CoL—Conesus Lake; DEP—Durand Eastman Park and adjacent water, Rochester; IB—Irondequoit Bay; LL—Little Lakes; SB—Sodus Bay; WL—shore of Lake Ontario west of Rochester.

LOONS-DUCKS: Red-throated Loon: singles WL 6 Dec, SB 14 Jan, CaL 1 Feb, scarce in winter. Com. Loon: max two SB 1 Jan. Pied-billed Grebe: several singles during the season. Horned Grebe: max 26 East Lakeshore 1 Jan, high for winter. Red-necked Grebe: singles Manitou 7 Jan and 28 Feb, probably the same individual. **WESTERN GREBE**: one off East Manitou Road, Greece, 6 Dec (RS) and off DEP 20 Dec (RS), first confirmed Regional record since 1965. Double-crested Cormorant: one Pultneyville 11-18 Jan, almost annual in winter now. **GREEN-BACKED HERON**: *intro*. Tundra Swan: Mute Swan: max 26 CoL 6 Dec. Snow Goose: one Letchworth SP 7 Feb, very unusual. Wood Duck: max Penfield 10 Jan. N. Pintail: one SB 1-7 Feb. N. Shoveler: two CoL 28 Dec (LLCBC). **EURASIAN WIGEON**: male SB 8-12 Feb *(DTe), first Regional winter record. Redhead: max 1000 CaL, high for winter. King Eider: im male Pt Breeze 1-16 Dec (WS), female IB 4 Dec (BK), female BB 7 Dec, im male IB 8-16 Jan (mob), im male BB 14 Feb (BK), plumages suggest several different males present, good total. Surf Scoter: single IB 18-19 Jan and 1, 10 Feb.

HAWKS-ALCIDS: Turkey Vulture: one Newark 12 Dec, very late; one Avon 7 Feb, wintering? Bald Eagle: reports from CoL all winter, max two in Dec. N. Goshawk: max two Webster 1-31 Dec. Rough-legged Hawk: max 13 Kendall 16 Dec. Merlin: one Livonia all winter. Wild Turkey: max 7 Hickory Bottom 26 Dec; one Genesee Valley Park, Rochester, 11 Jan, new location. Virginia Rail: one Greece 21 Dec continues trend of winter records. Com. Moorhen: im Greece 12 Dec (RS), very late. Killdeer: four reports of wintering individuals. Com. Snipe: one CoL 28 Dec (LLCBC), one Chili 16-26 Feb. Little Gull: max 21 DEP 4 Jan, three there 3 Feb later than usual. **COM. BLACK-HEADED GULL**: *intro*. Iceland Gull: Basic II plumage IB 12 Dec, Basic I plumage Manitou 7 Jan,

Basic II plumage BB 16 Feb. Glaucous Gull: two IB 17-30 Jan, one Basic II plumage there 7-10 Feb; ad Greece 15 Feb. **BLACK-LEGGED KITTIWAKE**: two ad Pultneyville 6 Dec (DTe), very unusual inland; im DEP 13 Dec.

PIGEONS-WOODPECKERS: Snowy Owl: max four SB Feb, as many as ten reported during season. Short-eared Owl: max 29 Avon-Retsoff 25 Jan, secondhand reports of up to 30 WL. Long-eared Owl: one Honeoye Falls 13 Feb; one Manitou 27 Feb probably a migrant. Yellow-bellied Sapsucker: one Hamlin 11 Dec, uncommon in winter.

FLYCATCHERS-STARLING: Winter Wren: one DEP 1 Jan. Ruby-crowned Kinglet: two Greece 21 Dec (RCBC), one visiting a feeder Brighton 10-28 Feb (JBR). **VARIED THRUSH**: female DEP 13 Dec (TPe, TK), third Regional record. Gray Catbird: singles BB 21-32 Dec, 3 Jan, CoL 28 Dec, Hamlin 3 Jan. N. Mockingbird: max four Pittsford 6 Feb, good winter total. N. Shrike: very good number throughout the season, found regularly in the field along WL.

VIREOS-WARBLED: **CAPE MAY WARBLER**: one Pittsford 6-25 Jan, good winter report. Com. Yellowthroat: max two Greece 21 Dec (RCBC) and CoL 28 Dec (LLCBC).

TANAGERS-WEAVERS: Rufous-sided Towhee: female Webster 28-31 Dec and 1-16 Feb, probably the same bird. Field Sparrow: max eight CoL 1 Jan, good total for winter. White-crowned Sparrow: im Hamlin 12 Feb, only winter report. Lapland Longspur: max 100 WL 24 Jan. Red-winged Blackbird: low max 26 Rochester 13 Jan. E. Meadowlark: one Hamlin 1 Feb. Rusty Blackbird: two BB 10 Jan, one Greece 21 Dec (DTe). Com. Redpoll: max 1250 WL 17 Feb (KG), excellent numbers this winter. Hoary Redpoll: one IB 24 Dec (J&PS!). Evening Grosbeak: max 104 Springwater 1-15 Dec.

61 Grandview Lane, Rochester, NY 14612

REGION 3 – FINGER LAKES

C. K. MELIN

December 1986 was exceptionally cloudy and warmer than normal. There was little if any snowfall during the month in the Finger Lakes. Ithaca, for example, had only 4 inches of snow for December, the least since 1934. There was no snow at all until the end of the month, and cold fronts early in December and at Christmas brought rain and freezing rain. Typical winter weather arrived in the Region late on 1 Jan, with 12 to 17 inches of snow reported in the eastern Finger Lakes. The weather remained seasonal until a monthly temperatures peaked in the 40's on 15 Jan. This was followed by two successive low pressure systems which brought heavy snowfalls of 4 to 8 inches on 19 and 22 Jan. Between 25 and 27 Jan, there were record-breaking low temperatures. Ithaca had a low of -13° on 25 Jan. The month closed with another snowfall on 29 Jan. Although January was sunnier than normal, it was quite snowy. For example, Ithaca recorded it's third greatest January snowfall total with 36.9 inches. February was exceptionally sunny and dry, with unusually cold temperatures. There were two

to four inches of snow on 8 and 9 Feb, but this was the only significant precipitation until 22 Feb. Cold temperatures and sunny skies were the predominant weather features for February. An arctic cold front from 13 through 17 Feb broke record low temperatures throughout the state. On 15 Feb, Ithaca broke their record with -18° . Following this front, temperatures returned to more seasonal levels for the remainder of the month.

The highlight of the season for many observers was the unusually high numbers of raptors which feed on meadow mice. There were frequent sightings all season of Northern Harrier, Rough-legged Hawk, Snowy Owl, and Short-eared Owl. Observers who walked across the fields where these raptors were feeding could easily observe the abundant tunnels and nests created by meadow mice, as well as observing mice scurrying on top of the snow. One could collect dozens of regurgitated pellets containing the remains of these mice. Northern Harrier were reported throughout the Region all season, with a maximum of eight on the Montezuma Christmas Bird Count. Rough-legged Hawks were well represented on all Christmas Bird Counts, with a maximum of 9 at Ithaca. Snowy Owl, which had been reported early in November at several locations, persisted through December, especially at Hayts Corners and Seneca Lake State Park. After December, reports of Snowy Owl declined. Short-eared Owls were located and observed by many, especially at Hayts Corners and Levanna Road near Aurora. As many as 9 birds were observed at one time, foraging, resting, and vocalizing. Although the owls often were difficult to locate because of their coloration and their habit of sitting on the ground, they were reported consistently through the entire season.

Bald Eagle was well represented on Christmas Counts. Other species present all season throughout the Region were Sharp-shinned, Cooper's, and Red-tailed Hawks, as well as Am. Kestrel. There were very few reports of N. Goshawk. Three owls were reported only on the Ithaca Christmas Count. They were E. Screech-Owl, Barred Owl, and two N. Saw-whet Owls near Dryden, the first ever on this count.

The relatively mild weather early in the season provided Christmas Count observers with an opportunity for waterfowl species counts. Several species of gulls were well represented on Regional Christmas Bird Counts, and there also was a single report of an Iceland Gull. In contrast, Pied-billed Grebe were scarcer than usual, present all season but not more than one per report. As usual, the only report of Wood Duck came from Sapsucker Woods, where three birds overwintered. Oldsquaw once again were conspicuously absent from the Region.

Ruffed Grouse and Ring-necked Pheasant were well represented on Christmas Counts while Wild Turkey was scarce. The Ithaca Christmas Bird Count provided maxima of many species which also were reported regularly all season throughout the Region. These were Great Horned Owl, and Red-bellied, Downy, Hairy, and Pileated Woodpeckers, as well as Northern Flicker. The only reports of Yellow-bellied Sapsucker were from the Ithaca area, where it was reported regularly all season. Blue Jays were present all season, but appeared at feeders more as the season progressed; J. & K. Confer had over 75 at their feeders most of the season. Carolina Wren was reported all season in the Ithaca area, even after the heavy snows and cold spells. However, there was only one report of Carolina Wren

outside the Ithaca area, where a maximum of 9 were found on the Christmas Bird Count. Species reported only on the Region's Christmas Bird Counts included Field Sparrow, Swamp Sparrow, White-crowned Sparrow, Common Grackle, and Brown-headed Cowbird. Rounding out the winter season were a trickle of Common Redpoll early in the season, which developed into a substantial 707 on the Montezuma Christmas Bird Count. Redpolls gradually drifted southwards through the Region in ever increasing numbers for a maximum of 1,000 birds 15 Feb at Hayts Corners, and remained in numbers even in southern parts of the Region through the end of February.

The great rarity of the season was a belated Yellow Warbler. Other highlights include White-fronted Goose, Brant, Green-winged and Blue-winged Teal, and Eurasian Wigeon. Christmas Bird Count highlights include Fish Crow, Gray Catbird and Northern Shrike.

Contributors: Cornell Field Ornithology Club, B. Hilfiker, P. Keating, D. McIlroy, L. Povero, J. Robson.

Abbreviations: CCCBC—Cayuga County Christmas Bird Count; ICBC—Ithaca Christmas Bird Count; MCBC—Montezuma Christmas Bird Count.

LOONS-DUCKS: Red-necked Grebe: three reports from Cayuga Lake in Feb. Great Blue Heron: max 16. Tundra Swan: max 23. Greater White-fronted Goose: one Cayuga Lake 20 Dec. Brant: one Aurora 25 Feb. Canada Goose: max 20,510 MCBC. Green-winged Teal: one Myer's Point 22 Feb. Am. Black Duck: max 293. Mallard: max 1261. N. Pintail: singles MCBC and ICBC. Blue-winged Teal: ad. male Owasco Lake on CCCBC. Eurasian Wigeon: two ad males Aurora 5 Feb. Redhead: max 2133. Greater Scaup: max 445. Hooded Merganser: max 15. Com. Merganser: max 39.

HAWKS-ALCIDS: Bald Eagle: three MCBC. Ruffed Grouse: ten on both ICBC and MCBC, high. Ring-billed Gull: max 805 ICBC. Herring Gull: max 973 ICBC. Great Black-backed Gull: max 43 ICBC.

PIGEONS-WOODPECKERS: Yellow-bellied Sapsucker: *intro*.

FLYCATCHERS-STARLINGS: Fish Crow: three Stewart Park ICBC. Black-capped Chickadee: max 1711 ICBC. Tufted Titmouse: max 74 ICBC. Red-breasted Nuthatch: max 32 ICBC. Brown Creeper: max 42 ICBC. Carolina Wren: *intro*. Winter Wren: one Ithaca 28 Jan. Golden-crowned Kinglet: max 72 ICBC. Ruby-crowned Kinglet: one Freeville 28 Feb. E. Bluebird: max 11 ICBC. Am. Robin: max 11 ICBC. Gray Catbird: one near Dryden on ICBC. Cedar Waxwing: max 410 ICBC. Northern Shrike: singles ICBC and CCCBC. European Starling: max 3643 ICBC.

VIREOS-WARBLEDERS: **YELLOW WARBLER**: present near Trumansburg 28 Nov-5 Dec; normal departure is late September, and the previous record late is 11 Nov 1970 at MNWR (H. Axtell). Yellow-rumped Warbler: several reports throughout Region, max six CCCBC; also present at B. Hamilton's bayberries and feeders in Cayuga Heights through Feb.

TANAGERS-WEAVERS: Rufous-sided Towhee: singles Newfield 4 Jan, Ellis Hollow 21 Jan, and Interlaken 26 Jan. Am. Tree Sparrow: max 188 ICBC, low. Savannah Sparrow: four near Ovid 1 Feb, early if not wintering. Song Sparrow: max 14 ICBC. White-throated Sparrow: max 158 ICBC. Dark-eyed Junco: max 226 ICBC. Purple Finch: max 54 ICBC. House Finch: max 2008 ICBC. Pine Siskin: max 48 ICBC. Am. Goldfinch: max 301 ICBC. Evening Grosbeak: max 742 ICBC. House Sparrow: max 784 ICBC.

84-A Turkey Hill Rd. Ithaca, N.Y. 14850.

REGION 4 – SUSQUEHANNA

The Region 4 winter report had not arrived in time for this issue.

REGION 5 – ONEIDA LAKE BASIN

GENE HUGGINS

The winter season began on a very wet note with a record one day precipitation of 1 inch on 2 Dec surpassing .94 inches set on the same date in 1936. Snowfall on 12 and 13 Dec brought a total of 4.4 inches to the Syracuse area, with only a trace of snow falling for the rest of the month. It was not until 2-3 Jan that central New York was subjected to a northeaster that dumped 11.5 inches of snow, the largest single-day snow fall since 25 Dec 1978 when 15.6 inches fell. Persistent low temperatures dominated February's weather from 12 to 20 Jan, with a slow increase in the thermometer's readings over the last eight days. Precipitation for February was in marked contrast to early winter. Only .63 inches fell, breaking the old record minimum of .76 inches recorded in 1906. The amount of sunlight brightened many observer's hopes for an early spring with 10,554 minutes of bright sunshine for February, a rarity indeed.

The season began with expectations for a major irruption of Snowy Owl, but only a few remained in scattered locations. Several Short-eared Owls persisted in weedy fields near Peter Scott Swamp and a N. Saw-whet Owl was heard calling in the East Syracuse area on 19 Feb. Unfortunately, another N. Saw-whet Owl became a road fatality on Route 104B just west of Texas, Oswego Co.

Reduced numbers of all wintering woodpeckers were apparent. Two Red-bellied Woodpeckers near Eaton indicate a possible eastward range expansion for the Region. A Boreal Chickadee persisted at a well-provisioned feeder in Pompey Township, far from the Adirondacks, until mid-February.

Half-hardies were almost nonexistent for this period with the exception of Carolina Wren, Winter Wren, American Robin and Northern Mockingbird. The following birds were not reported: Hermit Thrush, Gray Catbird, Brown Thrasher, Yellow-rumped Warbler and White-crowned Sparrow. A surprising **PALM WARBLER** broke all previous records by becoming a Regional winter first and a record late date. The only Bohemian Waxwing was recorded by Dorothy Crumb in northern Pompey Township on 8 Jan.

The only icterids to be found in substantial numbers were Rusty Blackbirds especially in and around Hancock Air Base, Syracuse, and adjacent riparian habitats. Half-hardy sparrows such as Song and Swamp Sparrow were low in numbers. The single major finch invasions were Common Redpolls with four **HOARY REDPOLL** reports to make things interesting.

Modest numbers of Common Loon, Horned Grebe and Red-necked Grebe remained on our larger bodies of water during the early part of winter. An above average number of wintering Great Blue Heron were found along our major waterways with a late bird near Holland Patent on 12 Dec. Black Duck continued to show a steady decline with a maximum of 115 down by 40 from the previous winter. Mallard and Gadwall increased in numbers with maxima of 748 and 31 respectively during mid-winter. One observer reported that this was the worst white-winged gull winter ever with only three Iceland and Glaucous Gulls each, but record counts of Great Black-backed Gull were obtained. The bright spot was one immature and one adult **THAYER'S GULL** on the Oswego River from 21 Dec-25 Jan.

A very hungry **TURKEY VULTURE** was observed feeding on a carcass 75-100 ft. from the edge of Rt. 8 between Utica and Poland on 24 Dec by Martha Reinhardt, a passing motorist who is familiar with dark-phased Rough-legged Hawks. The above note represents a record late date and a fourth winter appearance for the Region. An immature Bald Eagle observed on the Oswego R. in Fulton 22 Feb. was the only eagle report of the winter. Irruptive raptors remained scarce with eight Northern Goshawks and twelve Rough-legged Hawks being reported.

A total of 115 species was reported, about average. The great rarities included Turkey Vulture, Thayer's Gull, Boreal Chickadee, Bohemian Waxwing, Palm Warbler and Hoary Redpoll.

Contributors: Gerald Church, Dorothy W. Crumb, Paul DeBenedictis, Robert L. Evans, John Hanyak, Gene Huggins, Jeanne Lally, Gary N. Lee, Robert L. Long, Sheila Peebles McCombie, Belle Peebles, Robert L. Post, Bill Purcell, Margaret Reinhardt, Margaret Rusk, F. G. Scheider, Roy & Cathie Slack, Gerald A. Smith, Magdalena Stooks, Elba VanDresar.

Abbreviations: Adks-Adirondacks, Oneida & Herkimer Cos.; DH-Derby Hill, Oswego Co.; LOL-Lake Ontario Littoral; NPTR-northern Pompey Township.

LOONS-DUCKS: Red-throated Loon: last L Ontario 1 Feb, late. Com. Loon: max 4 mid-Dec to 1 Feb. Pied-billed Grebe: one over-wintered Oswego R to 1 Feb. Horned Grebe: last LOL 7 Feb. Red-necked Grebe: last two Skaneateles, Onon L, 14 Jan. Double-crested Cormorant: last two Oswego H 15 Jan. Great Blue Heron: max 10 Seneca, Oswego R, 26 Feb, 22 for the Region. Tundra Swan: nine Lakeport 22 Dec-2 Jan. Canada Goose: migrants T of Mexico 8 Dec, last Regional report one 15 Feb. Wood Duck: one Seneca, Oswego R, to 1 Feb. Green-winged Teal: three Hookway Tract, Syr, to 17 Jan. Am. Black Duck: max 115 mid-Jan, low. Mallard: max 748 10 Jan. N. Pintail: two Seneca R Baldwinsville to 20 Feb. Blue-winged Teal: one Onon L 14 Jan-26 Feb. N. Shoveler: one Manlius 10-18 Jan. Gadwall: max 31 Oswego R, LOL 11 Jan. Am. Wigeon: one Oswego R 14 Dec only. Canvasback: max 60 Fairhaven 14 Dec. Redhead: max 14 Seneca, Oswego R, 26 Feb. Ring-necked Duck: max 7 Oswego H, 14-21 Dec. Greater Scaup: mid-winter max 1010 Mexico Pt 29 Dec. Lesser Scaup: max 12 Oswego H 21 Dec. King Eider: one bird LOL 14 Dec, only report. Oldsquaw: max 56 Oswego R, L Ontario 24 Jan. White-winged Scoter: max 15 LOL 1 Feb, last 7 Feb. Com. Goldeneye: max 320 Oswego R, L Ontario 15 Feb. Bufflehead: max 40 Oswego R and Harbor 24 Jan. Hooded Merganser: max 23 Otisco L 1-6 Dec. Com. Merganser: max 1300 Brewerton to Oswego H 15 Jan. Red-breasted Merganser: max 18 Oswego R and Harbor 14 Dec.

HAWKS-ALCIDS: TURKEY VULTURE: *intro*. Bald Eagle: *intro*. Ring-necked Pheasant: six per day, 31 reported for the Region. Ruffed Grouse: max 11 T of Fabius 6 Feb. Wild Turkey: max 23 Highland Forest 18 Jan. Am. Coot: one Oswego H 21 Dec, only report. Killdeer: three T of Elbridge, 4 Jan-5 Feb. Com. Snipe: singles from DeWitt, Hookway Tract, and Ley Creek, 20 Dec-31 Jan. Ring-billed Gull: max 3400 mid-Dec. Herring Gull: max 2600 mid-Jan. **THAYER'S GULL:** in Oswego, 21 Dec, Fulton, 25 Jan (FGS, NYSARC). Great Black-backed Gull: record max 1074 Oswego R Phoenix to Oswego 1 Feb, 1086 on 7 Feb (FGS).

PIGEONS-WOODPECKERS: Snowy Owl: one to three per day Oswego H, 21 Dec-28 Feb, two additional reports from Madison Co. Short-eared Owl: three near Phoenix, 29 Dec-1 Feb (mob). N. Saw-whet Owl: *intro*. Belted Kingfisher: one outlet of Big Moose L, 20 Dec (GL), late for Adks. Downy Woodpecker: max 16 per day. Hairy Woodpecker: max three per day. N. Flicker: max three per day, 21 for the Region.

FLYCATCHERS-STARLING: Horned Lark: max 100 T of Fabius 29 Jan. Blue Jay: max 55 Oswego Co 1 Feb. Boreal Chickadee: *intro*. Tufted Titmouse: max four per day, 26 reported for the Region. Red-breasted Nuthatch: max two per day, scarce. Brown Creeper: one to four per day until 12 Feb. Carolina Wren: singles at feeders in Camillus, DeWitt and Hastings. Winter Wren: last Mexico Pt 14 Dec. Golden-crowned Kinglet: max seven per day. E. Bluebird: max six Onon 8 Feb, 11 reported for the Region. Am. Robin: 100 per day at Otisco L and Rice Creek Bio. Station. N. Mockingbird: one to three per day, 10 for the Region. Bohemian Waxwing: *intro*. Cedar Waxwing: max 115 Oswe 1 Feb. N. Shrike: max two per day, 11 for the Region.

VIREOS-WARBLERS: PALM WARBLER: one at feeder near Hastings, 1 Dec.-14 Jan (ph BP, NYSARC), record late and first for the winter period.

TANAGERS-WEAVERS: N. Cardinal: max 26 Erie Canal, DeWitt, 16 Jan, none at DH for first time in 10 years. Rufous-sided Towhee: female Noyes Sanctuary until 7 Feb (RS). Am. Tree Sparrow: max 55 Onon 28 Jan, low. Song Sparrow: one to four per day, 19 for the period. Swamp Sparrow: one to three per day, seven for the Region. White-throated Sparrow: up to 12 per day. Lapland Longspur: one near Highland Forest 31 Jan, only report. Snow Bunting: mid-winter max 450 late Jan. Red-winged Blackbird: one to seven per day, 14 for the period. E. Meadowlark: max two per day, six reports for the winter. Rusty Blackbird: max 25 Brewerton to Oswego, 15 Jan. Com. Grackle: four reports through the period. Brown-headed Cowbird: max 12 Oneida 25 Jan. Pine Grosbeak: one Balsam L, Adks, 21 Dec, only report. Purple Finch: max seven Oswe 1 Feb. Red Crossbill: max four NPT 20 Dec (DWC). Com. Redpoll: very common, to 350 per day, mostly at feeders. **HOARY REDPOLL:** four separate reports (one NYSARC) from Hastings, Phoenix, Skaneateles and Oneida, 4 Jan-24 Feb. Pine Siskin: max 20 DH 1-3 Jan. Evening Grosbeak: 25-100 per day for the period.

1065 Westmoreland Avenue, Syracuse, New York 13210

REGION 6 – ST. LAWRENCE

KENNETH L. CROWELL and GERALD A. SMITH

The weather for this period was remarkable only for its relative mildness. For the period 1 Dec to 28 Feb, the average temperature was normal, the total precipitation 1-2 inches below normal, and the St. Lawrence River remained virtually ice-free. December was the warmest month, with a maximum temperature of 44° on 27 Dec. The only major lake-effect snowfall occurred on 3 Dec. Snowfall was greater in January, with total accumulations ranging from 10 in. in the St. Lawrence Valley to 50 in. on Tug Hill. A minimum temperature of -26° was recorded at Canton on 26 Jan. February was sunny and dry, but temperatures averaged 4-7° below normal. The third week of the month was especially cold with a minimum of -34° at Canton on the 15 Feb. The heaviest snowfall in most areas occurred 8-9 Feb with severe winds.

The mild weather may have been responsible both for the explosion of wintering Canada Goose, 2325 on the Watertown CBC and 800 on the Massena CBC, which found corn exposed until mid-January; and also for the numbers of Common Merganser, Common Goldeneye and Herring Gull being down 50% at Moses-Saunders Dam where they usually congregate due to ice elsewhere on the St. Lawrence. Similarly, the large rafts of Greater Scaup were absent from eastern Lake Ontario. Half-hardy species were represented by one or more sightings of Belted Kingfisher, Northern Flicker and Common Grackle, but Northern Cardinal was down by 50% on the WCBC and neither Song Sparrow nor White-throated Sparrow was reported.

With regard to boreal species and northern visitors, both Rough-legged Hawk and Snowy Owl numbers were modest, but Northern Shrike was plentiful. D. Gagne reported several boreal species from their expected habitat in southern St. Lawrence Co., including large flocks of both crossbills.

Noteworthy sightings included Merlin, Bonaparte's Gulls, Long-eared Owl and Carolina Wren. A total of 93 species including 19 waterbirds, 13 raptors, 7 gulls, and 31 passerines was reported.

We regretfully report that Johannes VanRiet has left our Region for employment reasons. For almost 20 years, Joe has regularly and thoroughly covered northeastern St. Lawrence County and especially the area of the Moses-Saunders Dam, as well contributing greatly to the Breeding Bird Atlas project. Although Bruce Di Labio's weekly visits to the Seaway provide vital information on this important spot, we shall miss Joe and wish him well.

Contributors: Richard Brouse, Sheila Cerwonka, Lee Chamberlaine, Ken Crowell, Bruce Di Labio, David Gagne, John Green, Everett and Mildred Howard, Paul Kelly, and Brian Watson.

Abbreviations: MCBC–Massena Christmas Bird Count; MSD– Moses-Saunders Dam; ULL–Upper and Lower Lakes WMA; SLR–St. Lawrence River; WCBC–Watertown Christmas Bird Count.

LOONS-DUCKS: Com. Loon: one SLR 9 Jan (BDiL) . Red-necked Grebe: one MSD 5 Dec. Double-crested Cormorant: im SLR 5 Dec. Great Blue Heron: one killed by car Brasher early Dec; one Winthrop to mid-January (PK) . . Canada Goose: increased num-

bers wintering on SLR, max 1500 MSD 6 Feb; 12 ULL 9 Jan, unusual at this location in winter. Green-winged Teal: one Henderson through period with feral mallards. Am. Black Duck: small numbers wintering; max at MSD 20. Gadwall: two MSD 5 Dec. Red-head: 300 Henderson Harbor 10 Jan (LC). Greater Scaup: five MSD 27 Feb. Lesser Scaup: two MSD 27 Feb. Oldsquaw: numbers still low, but two MSD 27 Feb is unusual. Com. Goldeneye: max 300 MSD 21 Feb. Barrow's Goldeneye: more than usual at MSD, max 4 ad male, 1 ad female, 1 im female 21 Feb (BDiL). Bufflehead: max 7 MSD 21 Feb. Hooded Merganser: two MSD 17 Dec (MB). Com. Merganser: max 8000 12 Dec, decreasing to 100 in Feb. Red-breasted Merganser: max 150 12 Dec.

HAWKS-ALCIDS: Bald Eagle: increased numbers wintered along SLR; ad at mouth of Black R 17 Dec. N. Harrier: two Henderson 13 Dec; one Henderson Harbor 3 Jan; one Lakeview WMA 21 Jan only reports except WCBC. Sharp-shinned Hawk: total of 10 reports down from last year. Cooper's Hawk: total of nine reports down. N. Goshawk: one Henderson 21 Feb only report except MCBC. Red-tailed Hawk: numbers way down; six in Canton-Pierrepont area after 18 Jan. Rough-legged Hawk: numbers down, but more common than Red-tail in s Jeff and StLa; max four Henderson area 13 Dec; total 16 sightings including several dark morph. Am. Kestrel: "sparse", five Jeff Co to 4 Feb (LBC). **MERLIN:** one MCBC. Wild Turkey: seven Canton-Morley 25 Nov only report; are they down or no longer noteworthy? Gray Partridge: ten Ellisburg 9 Feb only report. Bonaparte's Gull: two ad MSD 12 Dec very late (BDiL). Ring-billed Gull: max 150 MSD decreasing to 8 on 27 Feb. Herring Gull: max 200 MSD decreasing to 35 on 27 Feb. Iceland Gull: through period at MSD, max 22 there 6 Feb—one ad plus bird in all three immature plumages. Glaucous Gull: max 12 MSD 6 Feb, only one an ad. Great Black-backed Gull: max 325 MSD 6 Feb.

PIGEONS-WOODPECKERS: E. Screech-Owl: one Louisville 1 Feb. Snowy Owl: a few reports from Pt Peninsula, Brownville; one RMSP 12 & 19 Dec; singles Ogdensburg 2 Dec and Feb. Long-eared Owl: one found dead Jeff Co (LC). Short-eared Owl: several sightings in Brownville. N. Saw-whet Owl: one Canton 8 Feb; one Parishville 14-16 Feb. Belted Kingfisher: one Canton 26 Dec and 4-5 Jan. Red-bellied Woodpecker: female at feeder Henderson 14 Dec and male after 14 Feb (LC). Black-backed Woodpecker: female regular Wanakena. N. Flicker: one Massena 6 Feb.

FLYCATCHERS-STARLING: Blue Jay: slightly more than last year. No. Raven: one to four Wanakena through period; three Colton 26 Jan (JG). Am. Crow: no large flocks reported. Tufted Titmouse: at least one pair at Henderson, only report. Red-breasted Nuthatch: only one report. Brown Creeper: three reports at feeders. **CAROLINA WREN:** one daily Watertown 7-25 Feb, fed at both seed and suet feeders, first sighting since Jan, 1974 (RB). Golden-crowned Kinglet: one Colton 2 Jan; regular at Wanakena, max 14 on 23 Feb. Am. Robin: only one Massena 9 Jan. Bohemian Waxwing: more common than Cedar, 376 total sightings, max 126 Massena 27 Feb. N. Shrike: total of 23 sightings up from last year.

TANAGERS-WEAVERS: Snow Bunting: max 300 Henderson 14 Dec. Com. Grackle: three Pierrepont 9 Dec, one male until 4 Feb. Pine Grosbeak: none from Jeff, scattered sightings in StLa, max 12 RMSP 21 Feb. Purple Finch: total of 32 reported. House Finch: total of 213 reported; max 100 Henderson in Jan. Red Crossbill: eight Canton 30 Dec; abundant at Wanakena, max 98 on 12 Feb (DG). White-winged Crossbill: likewise, max 78 Wanakena 12 Feb. Com. Redpoll: many more than past three years, increasing in Feb; max 2-300 Canton 28 Feb (MEH) and 50 Henderson, where a mainstay of Sharp-shinned Hawk. Hoary Redpoll: tentative identification Potsdam (SC) and Canton (MEH). Pine Siskin: max 68 Canton 4 Jan, but generally increasing in Feb. Am. Goldfinch: modest numbers, max 14 Canton, 18 Henderson. Evening Grosbeak: numbers low at in lowlands; max 260 Wanakena 6 Feb.

KLC-RD 4 Box 97, Canton, New York 13617
GAS-P.O. Box 498, Mexico, New York 13114

REGION 7 – ADIRONDACK-CHAMPLAIN

JOHN M. C. PETERSON

December was cloudy, January snowy, and February cold. Except for the lack of birds and a January thaw, the season was about average, at least meteorologically. First the weather . . .

The 20 Dec Ferrisburg Christmas Bird Count was done on 3-4 inches of fresh snow in the Champlain Valley, good for both hikers and skiers. By 27 Dec some of the High Peaks in the Elizabethtown count circle had 18 inches, but at lower elevations the ground was bare. On 28 Dec, the Plattsburgh counters enjoyed mild temperatures and minimal snow cover. That same day, Saranac Lake had similar conditions, with only 5-8 inches of crusted snow and the Saranac River open for nine miles of coverage by canoe. About 27% of available sunshine made for a dreary month.

A storm 2-3 Jan brought dry, drifting snow behind a massive coastal low, stalled on a line from Newfoundland to the Gulf of Mexico. Another storm 10-11 Jan also brought blowing snow and near classic conditions for the infamous New York State Waterfowl Count on 11 Jan. Before the month ended, another foot of snow fell over much of the Region on 23 Jan.

Overnight temperatures then plummeted to the -30°F range between 13-18 Feb. Lake Champlain froze over completely on 19 Feb, the first complete closing since 1982.

A poor to nonexistent cone crop and a generally weak supply of other wild foods discouraged birders, but not all birds. Bohemian Waxwings were abundant, especially where good amounts of staghorn sumac and buckthorn fruits were available at lower elevations. Flocks were reported from six general locations: Wadhams, Lake Placid, the Lake Shore Road between Essex and Westport, near Keeseville, north of Elizabethtown (all in Essex County), and Hogansburg in Franklin County. Following their November arrival, Common Redpolls also staged an invasion and were the common feeder bird throughout the Region for most of the period, although numbers were not as high as in some major flight years. Only a single Hoary Redpoll was reported. Only 128 individuals of eight species were banded near Elizabethtown 6 Nov-16 Feb, with 45 Common Redpolls the most abundant species.

Raptors also visited feeders, as usual. The Sharp-shinned Hawk dining on a Downy Woodpecker on North Jay Road 26 Jan was typical, as were several Northern Shrike attacks witnessed by feeder watchers. The weather, however, seemed to put more stress on owls. There was an increase in reports of Barred Owls sitting out during the daytime, with several of them visiting feeders. Merry Baker watched a Barred Owl at her log cabin near Paradox on the morning of 22 Jan as it carried off and then devoured a 5" square of suet in spite of being harassed and even struck by Blue Jays. On 24 Feb a Barred Owl sat in the snow all day at Armand Villiancourt's Tupper Lake feeding station. When approached, at 3:30 p.m., the owl flew off leaving behind a decapitated Ring-necked Pheasant; the pheasant's remains disappeared that night. A weakened "small owl" found

at an Elizabethtown feeder in late Feb probably was a Northern Saw-whet. Other unusual feeder visitors included a Gray Jay near Saranac Lake in Dec, the Carolina Wren that stayed at the Hagar feeder in Saranac Lake for count day and the male Lapland Longspur at the Furness feeder in Moriah Center on 3 Feb. Greg Furness also reported Common Redpolls excavating snow caves on the garage roof on 9 Feb, and snow bathing on the same burrow-riddled roof on 1 Mar.

Plattsburgh, with 43 species and 4589 individuals, had the highest totals of the four Christmas Bird Counts. A total of 13 species were tallied in Clinton, Essex, and Hamilton Counties on the NYS Waterfowl Count. Just 82 species were recorded during the period, quite low compared to recent years: 91 in 1983, 96 in 1984, 89 in 1985 and 88 last year.

The recent NYS DEC study of Common Loons has found that the New York population is stable and may be on the increase. Breeding of 157 pairs was noted on 128 Adirondack lakes and three sites in the St. Lawrence River, fledging 196 young. Data collected in the DEC survey was supplemented by additional reports from volunteers. "The Common Loon in New York" report, which was partially funded through the Return a Gift to Wildlife tax checkoff program, is available from the NYS DEC, Wildlife Resource Center, Delmar, NY 12054.

Contributors: Bartlett & Isabelle Bailey, Russell Bailey, Merry Baker, Sylvia Campbell, Geoffrey Carleton, Glen & Malinda Chapman, Dean Cook, Charlcie Delehanty, John E. Delehanty, Joe DiCostanza, Sean Duffy, Bill, Katherine & Nan Eagleson, Greg Furness, Anne Hungerford, Chris & Dave Keefer, Brian & Eileen Keelan, Marie Kuhnen, Anne Lacy, Gary Lee, William Lee, Theodore Mack, Larry Master, Sue Millar, Drew Panko, John Peterson, William Peterson, Gary Randorf, David Rutkowski, Andy Saunders, Laura Sells, Ann Shaw, Anna Straight, Gen Sutter, Karen Sylvester, Jan Trzeciak, Armand Villiancourt, Hollis White, and all the Christmas bird counters.

LOONS-DUCKS: Com. Loon: singles FCBC, PCBC, NYSWC only reports. Horned Grebe: max 66 PCBC. Red-necked Grebe: 2 NYSWC only sightings. Great Blue Heron: 1 FCBC late, but typical of recent years. Snow Goose: 1 FCBC only report. Canada Goose: max 995 FCBC. Wood Duck: 2 NYSWC late. Gadwall: hen North West Bay 11 Dec (GC) unexpected. Canvasback: 35 Essex harbor 30 Jan late, but 2 drakes wintered there at artificial opening with Am. Black Ducks and Mallards. Ring-necked Duck: 1 PCBC only report. White-winged Scoter: max 2 NYSWC. Com. Goldeneye: max 821 NYSWC. Bufflehead: max 20 FCBC. Hooded Merganser: five reports of 1-2. Com. Merganser: max 270 NYSWC. Red-breasted Merganser: two reports of 2-3.

HAWKS-ALCIDS: Bald Eagle: im Heart Bay 6 Dec, subad Tupper L 6 Dec-14 Jan, im Tupper L 10 Dec-1 Jan, 2 ad North West Bay 20 Dec, im Grog Harbor 20 Dec, ad Westport 28 Jan, a healthy showing. N. Harrier: 1 FCBC late. Sharp-shinned Hawk: 2 reports. Cooper's Hawk: Elizabethtown-Wadhams Rd. 15 Jan. Red-tailed Hawk: max 3 ECBC. Rough-legged Hawk: max 5 PCBC. Peregrine Falcon: Westport 5:30 p.m. 21 Feb (JP) unexpected. Ruffed Grouse: max 10 on two CBCs an improvement. Ring-billed Gull: max 476 PCBC. Herring Gull: max 183 PCBC. Great Black-backed Gull: max 65 PCBC high.

PIGEONS-WOODPECKERS: Rock Dove: max 780 PCBC. Mourning Dove: max 107 PCBC. Great Horned Owl: max 4 ECBC. Downy Woodpecker: max 37 ECBC. Hairy Woodpecker: max 32 ECBC new record. Black-backed Woodpecker: female Hurricane Mt and female Ray Woods Rd 27 Dec new to count, singles Chubb R and Riverside Dr 30 Dec made SLCBC count period, but none found on count day. Pileated Woodpecker: max 10 ECBC.

FLYCATCHERS-STARLING: Horned Lark: max 50 Whallonsburg Jan-Feb, one Inlet landfill 18-19 Dec and six Keene 23 Feb (EJ) rather unusual. Gray Jay: three reports, including one visiting feeder Saranac L. Blue Jay: max 363 ECBC, eating brittle polyurethane plastic (for grit?) Paradox Jan-Feb. Am. Crow: max 289 ECBC. Com. Raven: recorded on all four CBCs, max 11 SLCBC. Black-capped Chickadee: max 803 ECBC. Boreal Chickadee: singles SLCBC and Moose R. Plains 29 Dec only reports. Tufted Titmouse: one Elizabethtown 29 Dec only report. Red-breasted Nuthatch: max 62 SLCBC. White-breasted Nuthatch: in song Paradox 13 Dec; max 31 ECBC. Brown Creeper: max 6 SLCBC. **CAROLINA WREN:** *intro*. Golden-crowned Kinglet: max 58 SLCBC. E. Bluebird: two apparently wintered near Whallonsburg, with reports 18 Jan (JD, AS)-28 Jan (GR). Am. Robin: one Lake Shore Rd 18 Jan only report. Bohemian Waxwing: six locations included max 300 near Wadhams 26 Dec-19 Jan, 14 Lake Placid 27 Dec, max 150 Lake Shore Rd between Essex and Westport 6 Jan-20 Feb, 450 between Keeseville and Port Douglas 11 Jan, 200 Hogansburg, Fran, 2 Feb, and 22 Roscoe Rd north of Elizabethtown 21 Feb; one wonders how many others went unrecorded. Cedar Waxwing: 20 Lake Shore Rd 19 Jan only report. N. Shrike: 12 reports, involving perhaps 10 birds. Eur. Starling: max 214 PCBC.

TANAGERS-WEAVERS: N. Cardinal: max 10 PCBC. Am. Tree Sparrow: max 100 ECBC. Song Sparrow: max 3 PCBC. Dark-eyed Junco: max 31 PCBC. Lapland Longspur: *intro*. Snow Bunting: none on CBCs and reports from just four locations, max 15 Whallonsburg 20 Feb, low. Red-winged Blackbird: max 4 PCBC, also reports from Elizabethtown, Saranac Lake, and Tupper Lake areas. Com. Grackle: 50 PCBC extraordinary, singles near Saranac Lake and Tupper Lake. Brown-headed Cowbird: max 21 SLCBC. Pine Grosbeak: generally scarce, with only nine reports, max 15 Paradox 24 Jan. Purple Finch: 18 PCBC (without comment) the only report of the winter. House Finch: max 82 PCBC, plus reports from Elizabethtown, Essex, Wadhams, and Westport. Red Crossbill: present at Paradox thru period with male in full song 21-24 Dec and still singing 1 Feb, max 35 there on 27 Jan (MB); also reports from Owl Pate Pd and Wadhams. White-winged Crossbill: small flock Limekiln L 11 Dec (GL); 1 SLCBC; singing near Paradox 26 Dec-4 Jan (MB). Com. Redpoll: abundant through most of period, max c. 200 Moriah Center 3 Feb. (GF). Hoary Redpoll: one among flock of redpolls at Lewis landfill 27 Dec (KE, NE), plus other possibles near Elizabethtown and Moriah Center. Pine Siskin: max 16 Elizabethtown 1 Jan (12 banded). Am. Goldfinch: max 41 ECBC and 40 at Elizabethtown feeder 29 Dec. Evening Grosbeak: max 846 ECBC. House Sparrow: max 280 PCBC.

Discovery Farm, RD 1, Elizabethtown, NY 12932

REGION 8 – HUDSON-MOHAWK

LINDA ARMSTRONG

For those of us who enjoy looking about while on skis or snow shoes it was the perfect season for birding. This winter afforded us exercise as well as birds to look at. According to the newsletter of the American Meteorological Society the total precipitation in December varied from two inches in some parts of the region to more than seven inches in other parts. The two major storms produced heavy, wet snow. January was an event to live through and enjoy with record snowfall totals. February was the opposite with no precipitation until the last week, but ground conditions remained basically the same with January's snow still covering the ground.

Aside from the usual fun of birding in the winter we had an exciting season. While enjoying a leisurely breakfast on 7 Feb, Alan Mapes noticed a Say's Phoebe feeding from a nearby roof. This is a first for this species in our Region. (We all should see such things over scrambled eggs!) The bird was cooperative for the next two days and was photographed and observed by many.

It was a wonderful owl season with just about every species likely to be found in our Region in evidence. Short-eared Owls were reported from Delmar, Sharon and Marshville and twelve Long-eared Owls were reported from Castleton. Most area Christmas Bird Counts tallied Great Horned and Screech-Owl. Barred Owl were reported, one at Sabbath Day Point, one in Brainard, and another near Saratoga. The greatest enthusiasm seemed to be generated by the look of the arctic that several Snowy Owls afforded our Region. One had state workers peering out their office windows, another was rescued by a kind man after being hit by a truck. This owl repaid the debt by taking up winter residence on the man's barn in Fort Edwards. Six other Snowy Owls were reported. Finally, one of our most elusive, the Northern Saw-whet, was reported in Taghkonc State Park, and another found and photographed near Hague.

People who traveled to the more northern section of our Region were able to see eagles. Birding the Hague area produced a Golden Eagle on 9 Jan. and two Bald Eagles on 15 Dec. These two were reported for three additional days. Seven other eagle sightings were noted. Although many of us traveled to a nearby Region for the most exciting raptor of the winter season, we did have a tremendous supply of our own. Accipiters were well represented with Sharp-shinned and Cooper's reported either frequenting feeders or maneuvering impressively through the woods. Sightings of N. Goshawks came from Niskayuna, Embough Bay, and Clarksville. Most interesting were the numbers of dark morph Rough-legged Hawks reported. While observing the Snowy Owl in Fort Edwards, birders could watch numerous Rough-legged Hawks. Two dark morphs often sat in the same tree and clearly exhibited the size difference between sexes. Another ten individuals were sighted in other parts of the Region. Falcons observed included nine American Kestrels, two Merlins and one Peregrine Falcon in Catskill.

Thistle feeders were extremely popular this year as well as winter seed crops. Impressive numbers of Common Redpolls and Pine Siskins were reported, many in locales where they had not been seen previously. Not enjoying thistle but

finding the rodent population satisfying were Northern Shrikes. One individual spent most of the season at Five Rivers in Delmar, others were observed in Berne, Knox, Jenny Lake, Chestertown, Saratoga Spa State Park and Hudson Falls.

In direct opposition to this northern influx were the reports of Tufted Titmice. This more southern species was reported from locales and elevations where it has either been uncommon or in one case never before observed.

One of the prettiest sights in the Hudson-Mohawk Region this winter was not the brilliant red of male Cardinals but that of Eastern Bluebirds, with flocks silhouetted against snow, gray sky, or feeding near icy streams. Ninety percent of all reports submitted listed Eastern Bluebirds. Does this suggest the need for even more Bluebird boxes?

Contributors: Ken Able, Elliot Adams, Harriette Armstrong, Linda Armstrong, Robert Budliger, Malinda Chapman, Paul Conner, Bill Cook, Edward Crabbs, Bruce Craig, Nancy Curtis, Donald Davis, Rena Dykstra, William Foster, Dolly Kennedy, Jane Lape, William Lee, Alan Mapes, David and Mark Martucci, Laura Meade, James Merrit, Joyce Miller, Raymond Perry, Barbara Putnam, Elton Rising, Joan Robertson, Alice Ross, Paul Rubin, Leamon Snow, Jim Sotis, Henry Watts, Linda White, Robert Yunick.

Abbreviations: CCCBC–Catskill Coxsackie 18 Dec; CHCBC–Chatham 20 Dec; HFCBC–Hudson Falls 20 Dec; HR–Hudson River; MR/C–MohawkRiver/Crescent; Nisk–Niskayuna; SSCBC–Saratoga Spa State Park 18 Dec; SCBC–Schenectady 20 Dec; SL–Saratoga Lake; TRCBC–Troy 4 Jan.

LOONS-DUCKS: Com. Loon: two SL 13 Dec only report. Horned Grebe: two Hague Bay 2 Dec, one HR on CCCBC, late. Red-necked Grebe: one SL 13 Dec, one Embough Bay, CCCBC, late. Great Blue Heron: two reports, one Glens Falls 19 Dec, two SCBC. Mute Swan: ten HR 13 Dec. Snow Goose: last two Claverack 16 Dec. N. Pintail: two CCCBC, only report. Am. Wigeon: four CCCBC, only report. Canvasback: max 1500 Embough Bay Dec. Lesser Scaup: 5 SSCBC, 12 SL, late. Oldsquaw: male, Rens 11 Dec only report. Com. Goldeneye: numerous, CBC max 195 SSCBC, four SL 13 Dec, 20 MR/CRES 25Jan, eight Embough Bay Dec. Bufflehead: male CHCBC only report. Hooded Merganser: scarce, 1 SSCBC, female Colu 3 Dec, two pair TRCBC, 8 Hague Brook 13 Dec. Com. Merganser: ten reports totalling 202 individuals.

HAWKS-ALCIDS: N. Harrier: numerous reports of small numbers throughout the season. Red-tailed Hawk: max 20 Ghent 25 Jan; feeding on garbage at the Nisk. Landfill and one took a live starling (RY). Wild Turkey: throughout the Region, max 15 CCCBC. Killdeer: one CCCBC, one Kinderhook 14 Jan, late. Ring-billed Gull: max 135 CCCBC. Herring Gull: max 130 TRCBC. Iceland Gull: scarce, three Saratoga Co Landfill 30 Dec. Glaucous Gull: scarce, two Saratoga Co Landfill 30 Dec. Great Black-backed Gull: max 35 TRCBC.

PIGEONS-WOODPECKERS: Belted Kingfisher: eleven reported wintering throughout the Region. Red-bellied Woodpecker: one Charlestown early Jan, one Sharon Feb, frequenting feeders, only reports. Yellow-bellied Sapsucker: seen more regularly than in previous years, one CHCBC, two TRCBC, and singles Delmar 8 Feb, W. Taghkonik 10 Feb, Clarksville 14 Feb, and Slingerlands 28 Jan.

FLYCATCHERS-STARLINGS: **SAY'S PHOEBE:** *intro*. Horned Lark: high max 112 CHCBC. Fish Crow: numerous reports, one Nisk Landfill SCBC, first sighting of species there, one MR/Cres 21 Feb, two Castleton 22 Feb-early date at this breeding locale. Com. Raven: four North Mtn, one Bolton Landing 17 Jan, one Clarksville 18 Dec, four Hague landfill Jan-Feb, one Taborton 2 Feb; additional numbers and sightings south of where the species has been reported other years. Brown Creeper: many reports all

winter. Carolina Wren: scarce, one Delmar 25 Dec. Winter Wren: one in emaciated condition, entered a building but did not survive, Delmar 26 Dec, only report. Golden-crowned Kinglet: regularly reported, often seen with Brown Creepers. Gray Catbird: one Castleton 4 Jan, one SCBC, late. N. Mockingbird: reported from Embough Bay north to Cambridge and Hudson Falls. Cedar Waxwing: max 47 Hague 24 Dec feeding on crab apples.

VIREOS-WARBLERS: Yellow-Rumped Warbler: max four CCCBC. Com. Yellowthroat: one Five Rivers 22 Dec only report.

TANAGERS-WEAVERS: Am. Tree Sparrow: max 403 HFCBC. Song Sparrow: CBC max 13 SCBC and present on all others, one MR/Cres 21 Feb, one Altamont 20 Dec, one Five Rivers 2 Jan, one N. Troy 9 Jan, more than usual. Swamp Sparrow: two CCCBC, three SCBC, 3 Five Rivers 22 Dec, scarce. White-throated Sparrow: widespread, max 137 SCBC. Lapland Longspur: Marshville 7 Dec only report. Snow Bunting: max 45 Schoharie Jan-Feb and 50 Johnstown 1 Dec. Red-winged Blackbird: 15 CCCBC, two Altamont 9 Dec. scarce. Eastern Meadowlark: one Kinderhook 21 Dec unusual winter sighting. Com. Grackle: male W. Taghkonic 24 Feb, early. Evening Grosbeak: numerous reports, numbers described as "lots", "droves", 20, 30. Purple Finch: scarce, 6 SCBC, two TRCBC, three HFCBC, five SSCBC. White-winged Crossbill: only reports from northern section of the Region, ten HFCBC, RY reports a lack of crossbills in a Fult/Hami area where he has found them in other years and noted a total lack of spruce cones there. **HOARY REDPOLL**: single report, one Berne 8 Feb.

RD 1, Box 159, Feura Bush, NY 12069

REGION 9 – DELAWARE-HUDSON

[The new Editor for Region 9 effective the spring migration period is: **Ms. Helen Manson, Moores Mills, RD 4, Pleasant Valley, New York 12569.**]

REGION 10 – MARINE

TONY LEUKERING AND JOHN WALSH

PART A: WINTER 1986-87

This winter's report is slim due to the small number of reports received from contributors. The Region was without an editor for four seasons and all but a few contributors had stopped submitting reports. We heartily thank those that continued to submit field notes to the previous Regional Editor and/or to Paul DeBenedictis during the time when there was no editor for Region 10.

The season started out warmer and wetter than normal. The mean daily temperature in December was 39.0°F (norm 36.2°) with a high of 59° on 3 Dec. A cold snap in the middle of the month, down to 19° on 14 Dec, froze many water bodies and sent some lingering migrants south. Above-average temperatures returned the next day and remained in effect throughout the Christmas Bird Count period. All of December's 6.16 inches of precipitation, 2.35 inches above average, fell as rain. January and February temperatures were about average, 0.7° above and 0.2° below, respectively, but precipitation differed widely between the two months. January was very wet with 5.61 inches of precipitation, but most of that fell as snow on 19 Jan. Manhattan received some six inches, but eastern Long Island was really socked with 12+ inches. February's 1.01 inch of precipitation was 2.12 inches below normal. A very bitter period, again in the middle of the month, sent the mercury to 3° on 15 Feb and, as in December, was immediately followed by moderating temperatures.

Good numbers of Rough-legged Hawks, "the best in at least five years," were reported in the Region, with the high count being nine on the Brooklyn CBC. The winter's most interesting and unusual record, and one that shortly will be generating a lot of controversy, was of an **AZURE GALLINULE** (*Porphyrio flavivestris*) found dead in a back yard in Ft. Salonga on 14 Dec (specimen to American Museum of Natural History). It may be a true vagrant but upon examination was found to have some subcutaneous fat (R. Dickerman), and this species has no history of vagrancy as do many other gallinules. A report has been submitted to NYSARC and, if accepted, would furnish the first North American record and the first recorded north of Trinidad. A live **PURPLE GALLINULE** was in the basement of a Greenport, Brooklyn factory for two days before being caught on 27 Jan, establishing the first Regional winter record.

An American Oystercatcher wintered successfully at Shinnecock again this year, and five also overwintered at Jones Inlet. Little, Common, Black-headed, Iceland, and Lesser Black-backed Gulls were widely reported in ones and twos. A very well-described second-year **ROSS' GULL** was reported by a visiting birder, Jack Reddall, at Lake Montauk inlet on 11 Dec (details to NYSARC). This species has not previously been reported from New York.

Single Snowy Owls wintered at Mecox, West End Jones Beach, and Jamaica Bay Wildlife Refuge, with others scattered throughout the Region. Ten N. Saw-whet Owls were reported with the maximum being three on the Southern Nassau Co. CBC. Orange-crowned Warblers were recorded in normal numbers on a few CBCs. Yellow-rumped, Pine and Palm Warblers, Common Yellowthroats, and Yellow-breasted Chats were the only other warblers found on Regional CBCs. Boat-tailed Grackles continue to increase in the Jamaica Bay area as 106 were counted on the Queens CBC and varying numbers were noted in the Broad Channel community throughout the winter. A female **BULLOCK'S ORIOLE** found in Prospect Park by Mary Yrizzary on 24 Jan provided one of very few winter records for this western race of the Northern Oriole.

A female White-winged Crossbill, an irregular visitor to our Region, was found on the Southern Nassau Co. CBC. Common Redpolls staged a fairly good show this winter with most area CBCs recording their presence and a peak count of

200 along the parkway at Jones Beach on 1 Feb. Pine Siskin also was present throughout the winter in good numbers. The 2600 on the Southern Nassau Co. CBC were counted as they migrated along the coastal strip in flocks of 20-100.

Christmas Bird Counts: Bronx-Westchester (28 Dec) 120 sp., Brooklyn (20 Dec) 122 sp., Captree (21 Dec) 114 sp., Central Suffolk Co. (27 Dec) 125 sp., Montauk (20 Dec) 123 sp., N. Nassau Co. (27 Dec) 107 sp., Orient (3 Jan) 97 sp., Queens (20 Dec) 115 sp., Quogue-Watermill (20 Dec) 100 sp., Smithtown (27 Dec) 94 sp., S. Nassau Co. (4 Jan) 126 sp., Staten Island (20 Dec) 85 sp.

Rarities this season were: Eared Grebe, Barrow's Goldeneye, Azure Gallinule, Purple Gallinule, Franklin's Gull, Ross' Gull, Yellow-headed Blackbird and Bullock's Oriole.

Abbreviations: CP-Central Park; JBWR-Jamaica Bay Wildlife Refuge; JB-Jones Beach; LI-Long Island; RMSF-Robert Moses State Park; SI-Staten Island; WEJB-West End Jones Beach.

Contributors and initialed observers: Robert Adamo, Stephen Dempsey, Bob Dieterich, Joseph DiCostanzo, Paul Gillen, Thomas Hook, Tony Leukering, Lyman Langdon Audubon Society (R. Cioffi, field notes ed.), Arthur Morris, New York Rare Bird Alert (T. W. Burke, ed.), New York State Waterfowl Count, Queens Co. Bird Club (L. Schore, field notes ed.), Jack Reddall, John J. Ruscica, Starr Saphir, John Walsh, Steve Walter, Alvin Wollin.

LOONS-DUCKS: Red-necked Grebe: max 6 Shinnecock 6 Dec (NYRBA). **EARED GREBE**: one Jones Inlet 13 Feb (SW), rare visitant. Greater Shearwater: one dead JB 15 Dec (JR), record late. Great Egret: one Spring Cr, Queens 14 Dec (TL, SW); three Queens CBC, late. Snowy Egret: one Queens CBC, rare in winter. Green-backed Heron: two Bronx-Westchester CBC, rare in winter. Tundra Swan: three Smithtown CBC; two Hook Pd throughout (mob); one N Nassau Co CBC, uncommon in winter. Green-winged Teal: one Eurasian race Milburn Pd, Baldwin 4-10 Jan (mob), uncommon winter visitant. Blue-winged Teal: male overwintered Pond X, Lawrence (mob), casual in winter. Eurasian Wigeon: one to two male JBWR throughout (mob); two male, one female, Mill River P throughout (mob); three S Nassau Co CBC; one Cove Neck, Nass, 21 Jan (*fide* LLAS), uncommon. Canvasback: max 2000+ Dosoris Pd, Nass 28 Jan (*fide* LLAS), record max by 500. Ring-necked Duck: female Greenwood Cemetery on Brooklyn CBC, unusual location. Tufted Duck: male returned CP 2-26 Dec (SS *et al.*), rare. Com. Eider: max 185 Montauk 19 Jan (NYRBA). King Eider: max four ad male, two im male, eight females Montauk 6 Dec (SW, TL); one Sands Pt 14 Jan (NYRBA), rare w LI Sound. Harlequin Duck: max two male, eight females Montauk 11 Dec (JR). White-winged Scoter: max 10,935 Montauk 10 Jan (NYSWC, *fide* JJR). **BARROW'S GOLDENEYE**: female L Montauk 6 Dec (*fide* JJR), rare and early. Red-breasted Merganser: max 15,000 Montauk 11 Dec (JR).

HAWKS-ALCIDS: Rough-legged Hawk: one to five JBWR throughout (mob); *intro*. Merlin: six S Nassau Co CBC; five Central Suffolk Co CBC, rare in winter. Peregrine Falcon: max four Bronx-Westchester CBC. **AZURE GALLINULE**: *intro*. **PURPLE GALLINULE**: *intro*. Com. Moorhen: one Central Suffolk Co CBC, rare. Semipalmated Plover: one Shinnecock 9 Jan (PG); one Queens CBC, very rare in winter. Am. Oystercatcher: max 12 S Nassau Co CBC; *intro*. Greater Yellowlegs: max 11 Mill R 14 Feb (SW). Lesser Yellowlegs: two Smithtown CBC, rare in winter. W. Sandpiper: two overwintered Pt Lookout (SW), very rare winterer. Pectoral Sandpiper: one WEJB 7 Dec (NYRBA), very late if accurate. Long-billed Dowitcher: two Queens CBC; one Central Suffolk Co CBC, rare in winter. Laughing Gull: 41 Brooklyn CBC, record winter count. **FRANKLIN'S GULL**: one first-winter Shinnecock 1 Dec (JD, A. Shaw *et al.*), continued from fall.

Glaucous Gull: one Montauk 20 Dec & 17 & 19 Jan (mob), only record. **ROSS' GULL:** *intro*. Razorbill: one Montauk CBC, only report. Black Guillemot: one Montauk 7 Dec (mob), only report.

PIGEONS-WOODPECKERS: Snowy Owl: max three John F. Kennedy Int. Airport 20 Dec (S. Chevalier); *intro*. N. Saw-whet Owl: *intro*. Red-headed Woodpecker: one Bronx-Westchester CBC, only report.

FLYCATCHERS-STARLING: Tree Swallow: in count period Central Suff CBC, late. House Wren: singles Bronx-Westchester, Brooklyn & Queens CBCs, late. Blue-gray Gnat-catcher: one Central Suff CBC, late. Water Pipit: one JBWR 25 Jan (TL *et al.*), rare in winter. N. Shrike: four singles Rocky Pt 1 Dec (*fide* JJR), Captree CBC, Caumsett SP 26 Dec (B. Kurtz); and im Tobay 8 Feb (TL, JW *et al.*), irregular winterer.

VIREOS-WARBLERS: Ovenbird: one Riverside P, Manhattan 31 Dec (SS), late. Yellow-breasted Chat: singles Bronx-Westchester, N Nassau Co & Orient CBCs, rare in winter.

TANAGERS-WEAVERS: Rose-breasted Grosbeak: female Captree CBC, rare in winter. Lark Sparrow: ad Eastport at feeder 27 Jan-28 Feb (*fide* JJR), very rare in winter. Lapland Longspur: one to three Bay P Dec-Jan (SW), only report. **YELLOW-HEADED BLACKBIRD:** one partial albino m Riverhead at feeder 13-21 + Feb (*fide* JJR), rare visitant. Boat-tailed Grackle: *intro*. N. Oriole: one N Nassau Co CBC, rare in winter; *intro*. White-winged Crossbill: *intro*. Com. Redpoll: *intro*. Pine Siskin: *intro*.

PART B: SUMMARY OF RECENT REPORTS

The following is a summary of the significant records reported from 1 Dec 1985 to 30 Nov 1986 – the four seasons for which there was no Region 10 Editor. All dates are 1986 except where noted. The most significant and saddest event of 1986 was the passing of Thomas H. Davis, Jr. on 15 July. Tom was a former Region 10 Editor, past-President of The Linnaean Society of New York, initiator of the Jamaica Bay Wildlife Refuge shorebird survey, former voice of the New York Rare Bird Alert, and one of the top birders in the state. He certainly will be missed.

The winter 1985-86 was mild with spring weather arriving fairly early, although most passerine migrant species were first noted on expected dates. The summer, though dry, was unexceptional with the only tropical disturbance being Hurricane *Charlie* which turned out to sea 18 Aug before reaching the Region. The only records that conceivably could be connected with *Charlie* were 25 Cory's Shearwaters seen from Robert Moses SP on 18 Aug, an adult Franklin's Gull on Great Gull Island the same date, and a Bridled Tern reported on a New York City Audubon Society pelagic trip to Cox's Ledge, RI, on 23 Aug.

Winter saw at least two extreme rarities: an adult male Magnificent Frigatebird seen sailing over Staten Island two miles southwest of Great Kills Park on 12 Jan by Hannah Richard, and a possible immature Ferruginous Hawk at Montauk on 2 Jan seen by Irving Cantor. Only slightly less rare than the two previous species was a Western Grebe, first seen 5 Dec, that overwintered on the ocean between Ditch Plains and Montauk. It probably was seen by more birders than any previous state record. The warm early spring brought one of only a handful of state records for White Ibis.

Spring passerine migration was good with many records of some of the rarer species, particularly southern overshoots. There were six records of Philadelphia

Vireo, six of Kentucky Warbler, two of Yellow-breasted Chat, and eleven of Summer Tanager which included three separate birds at Central Park. Gulls highlighted the rarities in summer with the aforementioned Franklin's and an adult California at Shinnecock on 15 Aug. A California Gull in third-winter plumage had been reported from the south shore the previous summer. What are the possibilities that it was the same individual?

Fall migration dandies included a first-winter plumaged Franklin's Gull observed at Shinnecock 29-30 Nov by Joseph DiCostanzo (who also found the Great Gull Island individual). Joe certainly does seem to have the right search image for the species! Also reported in the fall were an unconfirmed Say's Phoebe, a probable Ash-throated Flycatcher, no fewer than nine W. Kingbird, a Scissor-tailed Flycatcher, a N. Wheatear, two Varied Thrush, and a very late Yellow Warbler.

The Breezy Point Raptor Banding Station and the Fire Island Hawk Watch reported for the ninth and fifth consecutive years, respectively. The Fire Island Hawk Watch, organized by Drew Panko, logged a record number of hours and set a record for total hawks. All-time season highs were set for five species: Cooper's Hawk (23 vs. 8 in '83 & '84), Northern Harrier (251 vs. 239 in '85), American Kestrel (1851 vs. 1613 in '85), Merlin (1086 vs. 1027 in '85), and Peregrine Falcon (109 vs. 53 in '84). New one-day highs for Fire Island, which also establish new Regional maxima, were set for Northern Harrier (53 on 16 Sep), Sharp-shinned Hawk (338 on 1 Oct), American Kestrel (625 on 5 Oct), Merlin (149 on 16 Sep and 140 on 5 Oct), and Peregrine Falcon (21 on 4 Oct and 18 on 1 Oct).

Arthur Morris conducted the sixth annual Jamaica Bay Wildlife Refuge shorebird survey with help from many others. He found that adults averaged one week late in arriving and numbers were slightly above average. Juveniles averaged one to three weeks late in arriving and numbers for all species were way down. As an example, the first of only three juvenile Black-bellied Plovers for the season (norm 50-100+) didn't arrive until 27 Sep, three weeks late. Abnormally high water levels on East Pond during July and August probably heavily influenced the shorebird tally.

Other shorebird news included large flocks of Lesser Golden-Plovers on eastern Long Island. Numbers built up at Cutchogue through August to peak at 1000+ on 3 Sep, a count three times the previous maximum in the Region. A count of 250+ American Oystercatchers at North Line Island 19 Jul showed that the Regional population is still growing dramatically. The five or more oystercatchers which overwintered at Shinnecock also was illustrative of this growth. Hudsonian Godwits were recorded at the Line Islands by July, with an early peak of seven there 10 Jul. Brook Lauro suggests that one or two may have summered, as she saw them often while conducting her field work on nesting oystercatchers on those islands.

We had fun writing this summary of an entire year's avian events and hope that no one feels slighted by our concentration on the fall season. We were limited to those records that were historically significant. We would ask you, the readers, to submit reports to us in the future not only of rarities, but also of the more common species. Notes on the timing of migrations, age and/or sex of rarer species, interesting behavioral observations, among other things, are very helpful to us when writing this report.

We thank Joseph DiCostanzo, former Region 10 Editor, for his advice and for providing the basic framework for writing the regional summary. We also thank Joe and Susan Roney Drennan for reviewing previous drafts of this report.

Dates of cited Christmas Bird Counts: Bronx-Westchester 27 Dec 1985, Captree 22 Dec 1985, Central Suffolk Co 27 Dec 1985, Montauk 21 Dec 1985, Smithtown 27 Dec 1985, Southern Nassau Co 5 Jan 1986.

Rarities: Eared Grebe, Western Grebe, Magnificent Frigatebird, White Ibis, Greater White-fronted Goose, Barrow's Goldeneye, Ferruginous Hawk, Yellow Rail, Sandhill Crane, Franklin's Gull, California Gull, Sabine's Gull, Sandwich Tern, Say's Phoebe, Ash-throated Flycatcher, Scissor-tailed Flycatcher, Fork-tailed Flycatcher, Northern Wheatear, Varied Thrush, Yellow-headed Blackbird.

Abbreviations: BP—Battery Park, Manhattan; CP—Central Park; FI—Fire Island; GGI—Great Gull Island; JBWR—Jamaica Bay Wildlife Refuge; JB—Jones Beach; LI—Long Island; NYSARC—New York State Avian Records Committee; RMSF—Robert Moses State Park; SI—Staten Island.

Contributors and initialed observers: Robert Adamo, Irving Cantor, Arthur Cooley, Michael Cooper, Stephen Dempsey, Joseph DiCostanzo, Susan R. Drennan, Fran File, Paul Gillen, Thomas Hook, Tony Leukering, Lyman Langdon Audubon Society (R. Cioffi, field notes ed.), Arthur Morris, New York Rare Bird Alert (T. W. Burke, ed.), Drew Panko, Robert Paxton, Queens Co. Bird Club (L. Schore, field notes ed.), Jack Reddall, Hannah Richard, John J. Ruscica, John Walsh, Steve Walter, Alvin Wollin.

LOONS-DUCKS: Red-throated Loon: one JBWR 22 Jun (NYRBA), very rare in summer. Red-necked Grebe: one CP 24-25 Apr (mob), rare away from coast. **EARED GREBE**: one JBWR 6-22 Sep (mob), rare. **WESTERN GREBE**: *intro*. Cory's Shearwater: *intro*. Greater Shearwater: one Jones Inlet 9 Nov (AW, S. Schiff), very late. Wilson's Storm-Petrel: eight nr GGI 8 Jun (JW, TL *et al.*); and six on 13 Jun (JW), rare LI Sound. **MAGNIFICENT FRIGATEBIRD**: *intro*. Snowy Egret: four JBWR 7 Dec (TL), late. Yellow-crowned Night-Heron: max 7 ad and 10 im JBWR in Aug (mob), high count away from colonies. **WHITE IBIS**: ad Riverhead 28-29 Mar (F. Allen, SD). Glossy Ibis: one JBWR 16 Mar (NYRBA), ties record early. **GREATER WHITE-FRONTED GOOSE**: one various sites e LI 18-27 Apr (mob), rare and late; one, Greenland race, Bridgehampton 21 Oct (NYRBA) and Mecox 2 Nov (MC), rare. Snow Goose: one summered JBWR (mob), rare in summer; 51 Smith Pt Beach 15 Sep (*fide* JJR), early. Canvasback: record max 1500 Agawam L, Suff 15 Nov (JJR). Tufted Duck: ad male CP 5 Dec 1985-16 Mar 1986 (mob), returning rare winterer. Com. Eider: one Democrat Pt 19 Oct (NYRBA), early; female CP 22 Nov (NYRBA), very rare away from s shore LI. **BARROW'S GOLDENEYE**: male Orient Pt 11 Jan (NYRBA); one Montauk 14 Feb (J. McConville, E. Wilson), rare winterer.

HAWKS-ALCIDS: Black Vulture: one Montauk 15 Jul (JR), rare visitant. N. Harrier: max 53 FI 16 Sep (DP), *intro*. Sharp-shinned Hawk: max 338 FI 1 Oct (DP), *intro*. **FERRUGINOUS HAWK**: *intro*. Am. Kestrel: *intro*. Merlin: *intro*. Peregrine Falcon: *intro*. **YELLOW RAIL**: one injured w LI 24 Sep (NYRBA). **SANDHILL CRANE**: one Mt. Sinai to 5 Dec 1985 (mob), continued from fall. Lesser Golden-Plover: *intro*. Semipalmated Plover: one Central Suff CBC, two Smithtown CBC, very late. Am. Oystercatcher: *intro*. Hudsonian Godwit: *intro*. W. Sandpiper: eight Southern Nass CBC, late. White-rumped Sandpiper: one Hook Pd 29 Nov (MC *et al.*), late. Pectoral Sandpiper: record spring max 46 Goethals Bridge Pd, SI 31 Mar (AM). Curlew Sandpiper: one Alt North Line I 17 & 19 Jul (TL, SRD *et al.*), faded ad JBWR 25 Oct (S. Saphir), only two reported. Stilt Sandpiper: one JBWR 2 Jul (NYRBA), early. Ruff: four reported, one JBWR 20-30 Apr (mob); male Marine Environmental Center, Oceanside, 10-15 May (mob); one Mecox 7 Aug (NYRBA); one j male JBWR 28 Sep (AM *et al.*). Long-billed Dowitcher: two Tobay

in Jan (NYRBA); two Grant's P, LI, 17 Feb (SD), very rare in winter. Wilson's Phalarope: one Goethals Bridge Pd, SI 9-16 May (AM), rare spring migrant. Pomarine Jaeger: one Jones Inlet 9 Nov (MC), late. **FRANKLIN'S GULL**: 1 Sep (R. Dickerman *et al.*), *intro*. Bonaparte's Gull: ad JBWR 26 May (TL), late; one JBWR mid-Jul (mob), very rare in summer. **CALIFORNIA GULL**: *intro*. Iceland Gull: one Montauk 14 Sep (NYRBA), early. **SABINE'S GULL**: one Shinnecock 7 Aug (M. Clayton, *vide* NYRBA), very early; im Great Kills Harbor, SI, 12-18 Oct (R. Clermont, mob; ph); im Montauk 21 Oct (B. McGrath). Gull-billed Tern: one to three JBWR late May (mob). Caspian Tern: two CP 1 Oct (NYRBA), very rare inland. **SANDWICH TERN**: two False Pt, Montauk, 15 Jul (JR), very rare. Roseate Tern: two ad JBWR 23 Aug (TL, JW), rare away from colonies. Com. Tern: two im Montauk 2 Nov (mob), late. Forster's Tern: one ea Captree, Central Suff, and S. Nassau Co CBCs, late.

PIGEONS-WOODPECKERS: Mourning Dove: one ad with y Wading River 12 Apr (RA), possibly record early fledging date.

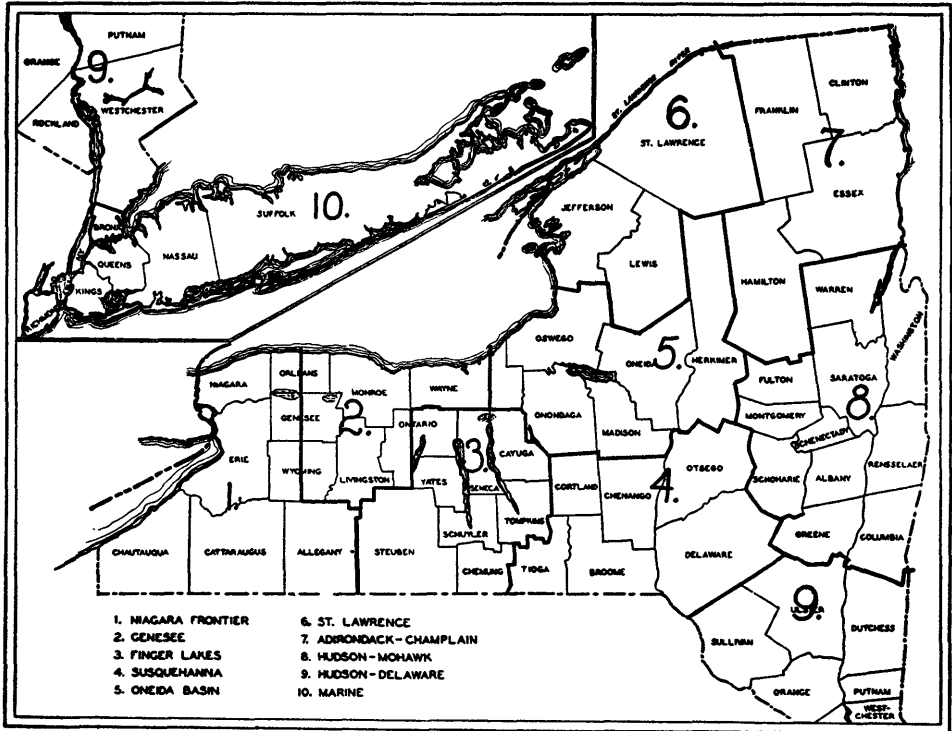
FLYCATCHERS-STARLING: Willow Flycatcher: male summered GGI (P. Hunt *et al.*; banded), first summer record there. **SAY'S PHOEBE**: one unconfirmed JB 4 Oct (*vide* B. Spencer). **ASH-THROATED FLYCATCHER**: one possible BP 13 Nov (SW), not all field marks seen. **SCISSOR-TAILED FLYCATCHER**: one Fort Tilden 5-9 Oct (NYRBA), very rare. **FORK-TAILED FLYCATCHER**: one Greenpoint, Brooklyn 17 Jul (J. Flack, NYSARC). Fish Crow: pr fledged two y CP (TL), unusual breeding locale. **NORTHERN WHEATER**: one JB 29 Sep (mob). Wood Thrush: one Orient CBC, very late. **VARIED THRUSH**: one Sag Harbor 20 Sep (J. Leo); male BP 30-31 Oct (SW *et al.*), rare. Water Pipit: one RMSP 9 Feb (D. Kaufman), very rare in winter. Loggerhead Shrike: one Caumsett SP 17 Sep (FF *et al.*), only report.

VIREOS-WARBLERS: Philadelphia Vireo: six spring reports include one banded GGI 17 May (K. Parkes *et al.*), very rare spring migrant. "Brewster's" Warbler: two High Rock, SI, early May (H. Fischer), only spring report; one Prospect P 29 Aug (NYRBA), only fall report. "Lawrence's" Warbler: one Sands Pt 10 Sep (NYRBA), only 1986 report. Golden-winged Warbler: one CP 3 May (NYRBA), only 1986 report. Orange-crowned Warbler: one CP 10 & 15 Sep (TL, NYRBA), early. Nashville Warbler: singles Montauk & Bronx-Westchester CBCs, very late. Yellow Warbler: ad male Zach's Bay 22 Nov (R. Villani), record late by a month and apparently *not* of the Alaskan race, to which virtually all other late records of this species can be referred. Black-throated Blue Warbler: female Zach's Bay 22 Nov (R. Villani), late. Yellow-throated Warbler: one CP 29 Apr-3 May (mob), only report. Bay-breasted Warbler: record max approx 100 High Rock, SI, early May (H. Fischer); ad female banded GGI 14 Jul (D. McKay *et al.*), very early fall migrant. Cerulean Warbler: one Bloesser's Pd, SI, 27 Apr (AM), early. Ovenbird: one CP early Dec (NYRBA), very late. Kentucky Warbler: six reported, singles CP & Forest P on 6 May, CP on 14 May, and CP, Forest P, Alley Pond P on 18 May, rare spring migrant. Com. Yellowthroat: one Montauk 19 Jan (NYRBA), rare in winter. Hooded Warbler: male singing Connetquot River SP 3 Jun (FF), very rare LI nester. Yellow-breasted Chat: one Montauk 14 Feb (J. McConville, E. Wilson), rare in winter.

TANAGERS-WEAVERS: Summer Tanager: 11 reported in spring including sub-ad male banded GGI 17 May (P. Cane *et al.*), more than usual. Rose-breasted Grosbeak: female Pelham Bay P 5 Jan (NYRBA), very rare in winter. Henslow's Sparrow: one Douglaston Marsh, Queens, 11 May (S. Yeaton), rare migrant. Lapland Longspur: two Smith Pt Beach 6-7 Oct (J. Clinton, JJR), one Bay P, Queens, 14 Nov+ (mob), only reports. **YELLOW-HEADED BLACKBIRD**: im male East Northport 7 Mar (*vide* FF), rare visitant. Boat-tailed Grackle: 48 wintered Broad Channel, Queens (mob), increasing in winter. N. Oriole: one Valley Stream 1 Feb+ (NYRBA), very rare in winter. Evening Grosbeak: ad male CP 9 May (TL *et al.*), late; ad male CP 22 Aug (TL), very early.

c/o American Birds, 950 Third Ave., New York, NY 10022

REPORTING REGIONS



For descriptions of Regions see Kingbird Vol. XXXVII No. 1, p. 9-10.

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

FEDERATION OF NEW YORK STATE BIRD CLUBS, INC.

1987 Officers

President

Harriet T. Marsi Powderhouse Road,
Box 1, H.C. 61, Binghamton, NY 13903

Vice-President

Berna Weissman 15 Laurel Hill Road, Dobbs Ferry, NY 10522

Corresponding Secretary

Constance Wilkins 4000 West Road, Cortland, NY 13045

Recording Secretary

Marilyn Schindler 19 Shoreway Drive, Rochester, NY 14612

Treasurer

Stanley Lincoln P.O. Box 362, Mt. Kisco, NY 10549

Editor of **THE KINGBIRD**

Paul DeBenedictis, 306 Kensington Place, Syracuse, NY 13210

Editor of **NEW YORK BIRDERS**

Maxwell C. Wheat, Jr., 333 Bedell Street, Freeport, NY 11520

Appointed Committees

Membership: Myrna Hemmerick, Chr.,

P.O. Box 2203, Setauket, NY 11733

Publications and Research: Robert S. Arbib, Jr., Chr.,

226 Guion Dr., Mamaroneck, NY 10543

History Research: Gordon M. Meade, Chr.,

27 Mill Valley Road, Pittsford, NY 14534

Conservation: Pera Gorson, Chr.,

2069 Milburn Ave., Baldwin, NY 11510

Finance: Stanley Lincoln, Chr., P.O. Box 362, Mt. Kisco, NY 10549

Bibliography: Allen Benton, 292 Water St., Fredonia, NY 14063

Breeding Bird Atlas: Gordon M. Meade, Chairman,

27 Mill Valley Rd., Pittsford, NY 14534

By-Laws: Richard Sloss, Chr.,

1300 Seawane Drive, Hewlett Harbor, NY 11557

John J. Elliott Memorial Committee: Emanuel Levine, Chr.,

585 Mead Terrace, South Hempstead, NY 11550

Lillian C. Stoner Fund: John L. Confer, Chr.,

R.D. #1, Hammond Hill Road, Brooktondale, NY 14817

New York State Avian Records: F. G. Scheider, Chr.

Send reports to Secretary, NYSARC, c/o Laboratory of Ornithology,

159 Sapsucker Woods Road, Ithaca, NY 14850

Elected Committees

Auditing: Irving Cantor, Richard Sloss

Nominating: Charles Smith, Chr.,

159 Sapsucker Woods Road, Ithaca, NY 14850