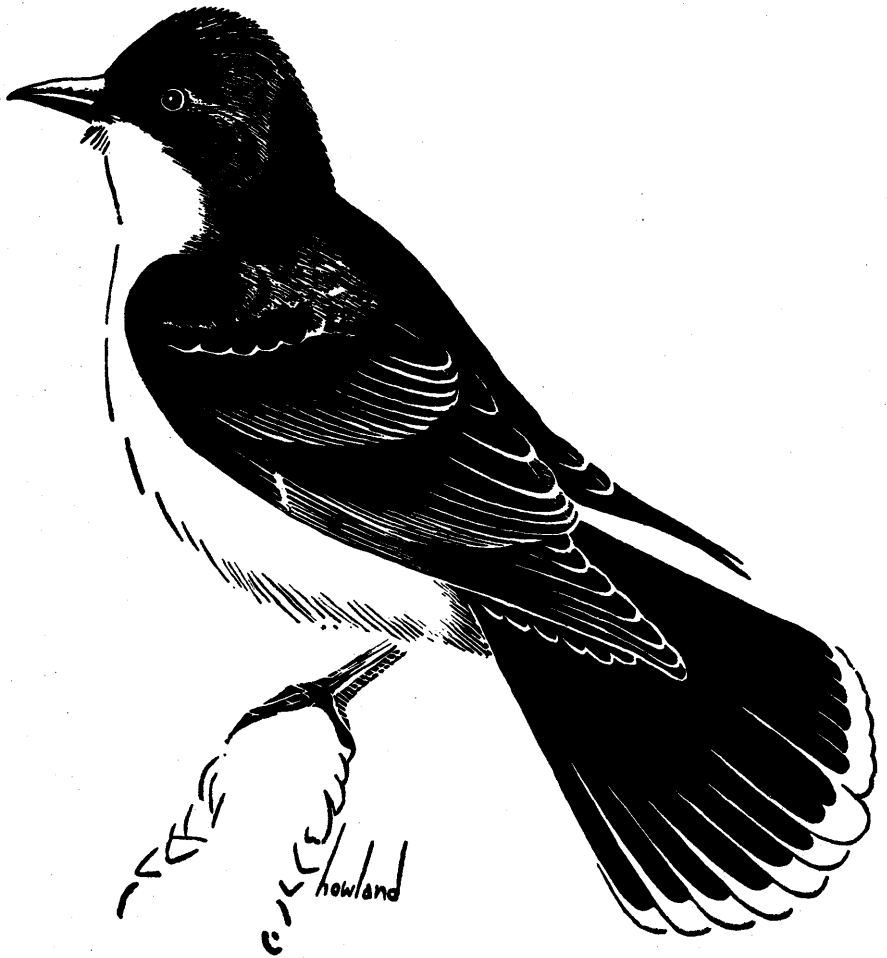


# The **KINGBIRD**



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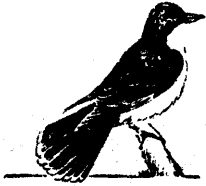
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# The KINGBIRD

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Wood Sandpiper, Marshlands Conservancy, Rye, New York, 31 Oct-5 Nov 1990.  
Photograph by Andrew Farnsworth.

## PHOTOGRAPHS OF NEW YORK STATE RARITIES 52: WOOD SANDPIPER AT MARSHLANDS CONSERVANCY

THOMAS W. BURKE

"Rather puzzling" were my thoughts regarding a shorebird that I'd seen briefly at the Marshlands Conservancy in Rye, New York, before the bird disappeared into the marsh grasses during my last hurried stop on the morning of Wednesday, 31 Oct 1990. The bird was reminiscent of, but did not conform to, a strongly patterned Solitary Sandpiper. But, it was Halloween, so perhaps a Solitary in disguise was to be expected. Upon returning to the marsh early Thursday morning, 1 Nov, I met Lysle Brinker, down from Maine for the week, who was just on his way out. After exchanging greetings, I inquired if he'd seen an odd Solitary Sandpiper, and he mentioned that when all the shorebirds were flushed by a Northern Harrier, such a shorebird flew by him, giving a very un-Solitary-like call. With suspicions mounting, it didn't take much to get Lysle to return with me to the marsh, where we searched patiently for the better part of an hour without success. We had actually picked up our telescopes and were leaving when, with excellent timing, the bird flew in, announcing its arrival with a trebled call I did not recognize. It took only as much time as needed to raise our binoculars for us to realize we were looking at something very unusual for Marshlands Conservancy.

Several features at once distinguished this bird from our regular shorebirds. A quick but difficult (for fear it might fly away) decision to flush the bird before it moved too far provided us with sufficient additional field marks to determine that we had discovered a Wood Sandpiper (*Tringa glareola*), a species that breeds across northern Europe and Russia and winters from southern Africa through southern Asia to Australia. Consultation with field guides in Lysle's car quickly confirmed this identification.

At this point I raced to a telephone to contact other observers, while Lysle returned to the marsh to photograph the sandpiper and tape record its call. The latter was accomplished nicely with the additional authenticity of hearing Lysle's footsteps as he sloshed through the water around the mud flat. Needless to say, both Lysle and I were rather late to work that day. By Thursday afternoon many local birders had arrived at Marshlands to see the sandpiper. For most, the brownish bird, with its

broad white superciliary, heavily spotted upper parts, white rump, barred tail and long greenish legs, was a life bird. Good photographs were taken by Andrew Farnsworth and Frank Mantlik (and later by others). Some of these, along with the recording, will accompany the written reports being submitted to the New York State Avian Records Committee as part of the permanent documentation of this occurrence.

With many more people from throughout the Northeast, and a few from even more distant parts, pouring into Marshlands on Friday, it became apparent that additional preparations for the weekend would be needed. Alison Beall from Marshlands and Ken Soltesz from the Read Sanctuary at Playland constructed signs and prepared and marked the trail down to the marsh. The adjacent Rye Golf Club, through superintendent Harry Dunning, very generously allowed birders to park at the club, use a service road down to the marsh, and use the spit known as "poison ivy point" for the best views of the marsh mud flat. It was from there that close to a thousand birders got to enjoy wonderful views of the Wood Sandpiper, which stayed through Monday, 5 Nov. It left with the passage of a cold front that day. Its notoriety was spread by national newspaper coverage and a Monday segment on ABC's Eyewitness News.

Ironically, despite the extremely few records in North America outside of Alaska (where the species sometimes nests in the Aleutian Islands), this is not a first New York record. A shorebird collected in Orleans County, New York, in Oct 1907, and labeled as a Solitary Sandpiper, was reidentified as a Wood Sandpiper after it had been donated to the University of California in 1979 (Dziadosz, *Am. Birds* 34(3):231; 1980). Apparently excepting one at Tokeland, Washington, in October, 1988, all other reports outside of Alaska have been rejected by their respective state bird records committees.

*235 Highland Road, Rye, New York 10580*

## **RANGE EXPANSION IN FISH CROW (*Corvus ossifragus*): THE ITHACA, NY, COLONY AS AN EXAMPLE**

**JEFFERY V. WELLS<sup>1</sup> AND KEVIN J. MCGOWAN<sup>2</sup>**

The dynamics of colonization and range expansion are poorly understood in most bird species. The establishment of a colony of Fish Crow (*Corvus ossifragus*) in Ithaca, Tompkins County, New York is an interesting and perhaps instructive example of this process. This paper examines the history of this colony and comments on the dynamics of range expansion in Fish Crow.

Fish Crow occurs along the Atlantic Coast of North America from Massachusetts south to Florida, across the Gulf Coast to Texas, and inland along major rivers to Arkansas, Tennessee, Kentucky, Missouri, Oklahoma, and Illinois (AOU 1983). In New York, they traditionally have been found along coastal regions of Long Island and up the Hudson River to Poughkeepsie on the east bank and to Esopus, 16 km north, on the west bank (Bull 1974; Bonney 1988). Fish Crow shows a strong preference for habitats near water and is rarely seen any distance from such areas (AOU 1983). Although the movements of this species have not been well studied, it is thought that some northern populations may withdraw south in winter (Bull 1974, McNair 1985). Most populations, however, are largely sedentary (Bull 1974).

### **HISTORY OF THE ITHACA FISH CROW COLONY**

In March 1974, a Fish Crow was discovered in Ithaca, New York, (Comar 1974) 200 km (125 miles) from the nearest known breeding site along the Hudson River in southeastern New York. Its identification was verified by comparing the bird's taped vocalizations with known Fish Crow calls. This bird was last reported on 9 May of that year (Comar 1974). A Fish Crow found in Ithaca in March 1975 was joined by a second bird from May through July, raising the possibility of breeding (Kibbe 1975). Reports continued sporadically from 1976 to 1978 (Benning 1976a, 1976b, 1977, 1978, McIlroy 1976).

In 1979, six Fish Crow were present (Cayuga Lake Basin Record Cards, Cornell Lab of Ornithology), with one pair observed carrying nesting material in early May. The birds were later seen on a nest located in a

White Pine (*Pinus strobus*) in the Cayuga Heights section of Ithaca (McIlroy 1979). The nesting attempt apparently failed, since no young were observed in the nest (Benning 1979). However, in September two young were reported from Stewart Park on the south end of Cayuga Lake, two miles west of Cayuga Heights (Cayuga Lake Basin Record Cards, Cornell Lab of Ornithology), indicating at least one other nest was present. Four birds remained in Ithaca until at least 17 Nov 1979 (Benning 1980a). From 1980 to 1988, three or four pairs of Fish Crow were noted during the breeding season each year (Benning 1980b, 1981a, 1981b, 1981c, 1982a, 1982b, 1983a, 1983b, Clements 1984a, 1984b, Kibbe and Boise 1984a, 1984b, 1986, Melin 1986a, 1986b, 1987a, 1987b, 1988). Several nests were located during this period, and although no observed nest succeeded, fledged young were observed in 1981 (Cayuga Lake Basin Record Cards, Cornell Lab of Ornithology) and 1984 (Clements 1985), and a bird of the year was found in 1988 (McGowan pers. obs.).

Fish Crow was first observed on the 1 Jan 1982 Ithaca Christmas Bird Count (CBC) with three observed (Confer 1982). Two to four have been seen on each CBC since that time, with one exception. A surprising count of 16 was reported on the 1 Jan 1988 count (Butcher 1988), twice as many as the previous maximum observed at any time in Ithaca; eight were present in 1983 (Benning 1983a).

In the summer 1988 we began systematic observations of Fish Crow in Ithaca. Five were present in Stewart Park in July, 1988, where they had been observed throughout the winter. Six were seen in Stewart Park in April 1989, and 5 or 6 were present in Cayuga Heights in May. In the beginning of 1989, McGowan began a study of both American Crow (*Corvus brachyrhynchos*) and Fish Crow in the Ithaca area. He discovered three temporally sequential Fish Crow nests, all of which failed. A fourth nest (fate unknown) was reported at the same time as the third nest, and juveniles were observed in Stewart Park in August, indicating at least two and perhaps three breeding pairs were present that year. Six Fish Crow were counted in April 1990. McGowan found and banded young in two successful nests, and was aware of two other possible nests that season. One of the latter was successful, as an unbanded juvenile was present at Stewart Park in August 1990 with one banded young and eight adults. Again, three or four breeding pairs were present in the area.



The maximum number of Fish Crow reported from Ithaca each year is shown in Figure 1. It should be noted that during this entire period no other Fish Crow colonies have become established anywhere in the area, although Fish Crow was reported inland on Christmas Bird Counts at Binghamton (Bemont 1987, 1990) and Clinton (Hurd 1989, 1990), have been reported as possible breeders in Vestal (Bonney 1988), and have been reported in other seasons at scattered points across upstate New York (below).

### DYNAMICS OF RANGE EXPANSION

A population can expand its range by one of three ways. In the first (Figure 2A), which we have termed *gradual* or *creeping* range expansion, areas along the range edge are colonized without skipping over large areas of suitable habitat. In the second (Figure 2B), which we have called *leapfrogging* range expansion, substantial sections of apparently suitable habitat are skipped and an area at some distance from the range edge is colonized. After a colony has been founded, the unoccupied habitat

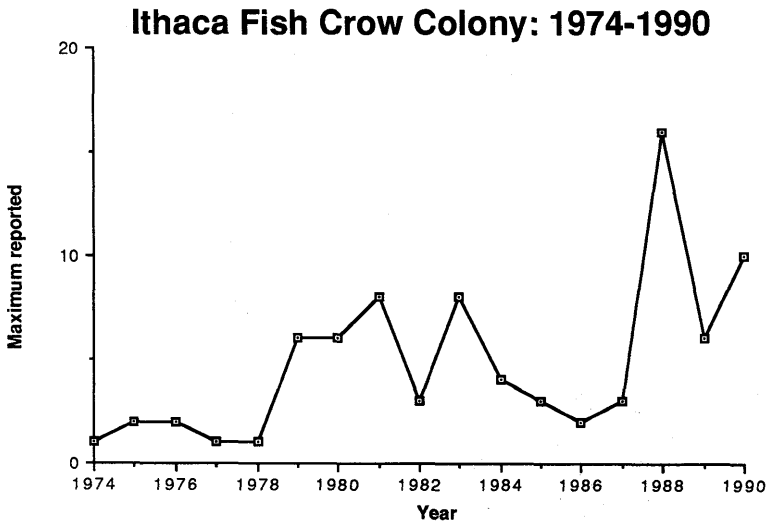
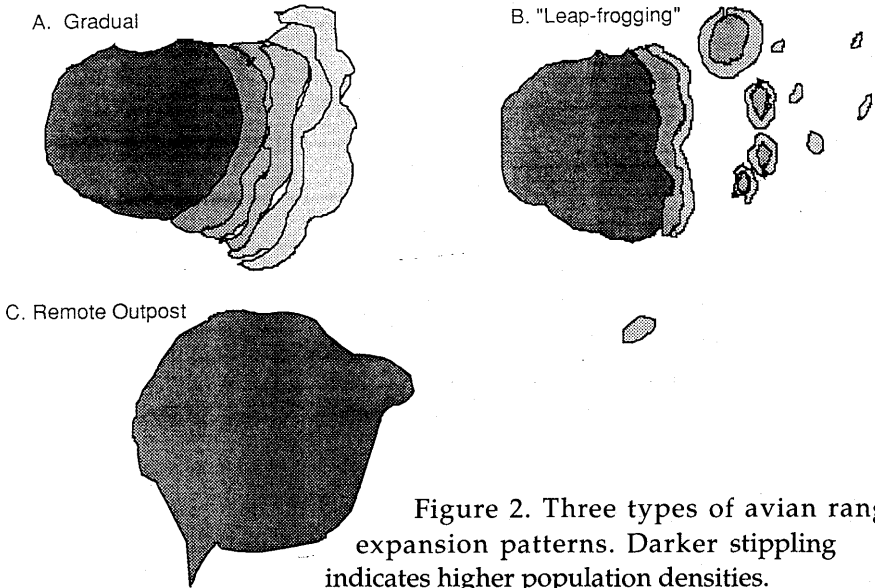


Figure 1. Maximum number of Fish Crow recorded in the Ithaca colony from 1974 to 1990. Pre-1988 data are from the literature (see text for citations).

between may be filled from both directions. It is important to note that a pattern of range expansion by noncontiguous colonization events is not necessarily an example of leapfrogging. Leapfrogging range expansion occurs only when areas of available habitat between colonies are unoccupied. If no suitable habitat is present between colonies, such range expansion would be an example of gradual or creeping range expansion. The third pattern of range expansion (Figure 2C), which we have termed *remote outpost colonization*, also involves establishment of a colony at some distance from the former range edge but in this pattern the area between the colony and the range edge remains unoccupied. The first two types of expansion occur when a population is numerically increasing while the last type can occur when a population is increasing, stable, or even decreasing.

To understand which type of range expansion pattern fits the Ithaca Fish Crow colony, we must examine the status and distributional history of Fish Crow throughout its range. Fish Crow has expanded inland along the rivers of the Mississippi drainage in Arkansas (James and Neal 1986), Oklahoma (Sutton 1967, Wood and Schnell 1984, Grzybowski 1990), Missouri, Illinois, and Kentucky (Mengel 1965, Peterjohn 1988), and has recently occurred in Kansas (Grzybowski 1990). Expansion up major rivers has been noted in Alabama (Jackson 1990),



Georgia (Burleigh 1958), South Carolina and North Carolina (Fink 1975, Potter *et al.* 1980), Virginia (Larner *et al.* 1979, Meanley 1981), West Virginia (Hall 1979), Maryland (DeGraef *et al.* 1980), and Pennsylvania (Poole 1964, DeGraef *et al.* 1980). Northward coastal expansion was reported from Massachusetts and Maine (Vickery 1978). In Maine, Fish Crow was not officially added to the state list until 1978 (Cannell 1982). Breeding was confirmed at Brunswick, Maine, in 1985 (Tingley 1985), approximately 240 km (150 miles) from the prior range limit in Massachusetts. Birds were discovered nest building in Portland, Maine, in 1988 (Despres and Wells 1988), midway between the Brunswick colony and its Massachusetts range. Increasing numbers have been noted in western Massachusetts as well (Nikula 1983).

In New York, expansion along river systems has been reported (Kibbe 1987, Bonney 1988). During the New York State Breeding Bird Atlas period (1980-1985), breeding was confirmed on the Hudson River at East Greenbush, 48 km (30 mi) north of the previously reported range limit (Bonney 1988), and possible breeding was noted near the Susquehanna River in Vestal 40 km southeast of Ithaca and 5-10 km north of the Pennsylvania border (Bonney 1988).

For a population to expand its range, some individuals must leave the original range limits. Therefore, it is instructive to examine patterns of vagrancy in Fish Crow. In New York state, vagrant birds have been reported at Braddock Bay (Kibbe 1987), Derby Hill (Kibbe and Boise 1984a, 1986), Elmira (*Kingbird* 1967, in Comar 1974), Hamlin Beach State Park (Kibbe and Boise 1984b), Montezuma (Kibbe and Boise 1984a), in the Utica-Rome area (D. Evans pers. comm.), and, early in this century, at Geneva (Eaton 1914). Vagrants have also been recorded in Ontario, Nova Scotia, Vermont (DeSante and Pyle 1986), and Indiana (Peterjohn 1988). All New York localities are at least 55 km (35 miles) from the nearest known range limit at the time of the record. Other localities are at least 160 km (100 miles) from the known range boundary of Fish Crow.

It is clear that Fish Crow is expanding its range throughout its entire range and that vagrancy is not unprecedented in the species. In this context it appears that the Ithaca Fish Crow colony is an example of a leapfrogging range expansion pattern, and that this pattern is generally common to the species wherever it is extending its range. For example, in Maine (Tingley 1985, Despres and Wells 1988), New York (Bonney 1988), and Virginia (Meanley 1981) new colonies were established large

distances from previous breeding range limits. The Ithaca colony is unusual, however, in that it is not along a major river system like inland colonies. More Fish Crow colonies may well become established in upstate New York and the future colonization of the shore of Lake Ontario seems likely.

The difficulties in distinguishing Fish Crow from American Crow could affect our interpretation of range expansion patterns. Although differing in size and some subtle plumage characteristics, Fish Crow is essentially indistinguishable in the field from American Crow except by voice. American Crow has a wide range of vocalizations that include calls that can be mistaken for Fish Crow calls. Not only can the begging calls of young American Crow cause confusion with Fish Crow, but so can the begging calls of courting female American Crow (McGowan pers. obs.). The latter vocalization occurs in the early spring when observers sometimes assume that American Crow do not make sounds that could be mistaken for Fish Crow. The only absolutely diagnostic Fish Crow call is a double-noted "Uh-Uh." This call is never given by American Crow. Therefore, two problems exist: silent Fish Crow can be mistaken for American Crow, and begging American Crow can be mistaken for Fish Crow. Despite this problem we feel that the records we have cited are indicative of the true range expansion pattern in Fish Crow. Range expansion has been reported repeatedly throughout the species' range, and we have cited only records that have been reviewed by some process.

We have shown evidence from examination of range changes that Fish Crow has increased in abundance. Robbins *et al.* (1986), using Breeding Bird Survey data, also documented increases in Fish Crow populations throughout the species range during the period 1965-1979. Many other North American and European corvids have shown steady increases in this century. American Crow has increased significantly in eastern North America (Robbins *et al.* 1986) and is expanding its range northwest into Alaska (Gibson 1986, Gibson *et al.* 1987). Common Raven (*Corvus corax*) populations are on the rise over the entire North American continent (Robbins *et al.* 1986), reinvading areas they historically occupied and colonizing new localities (Knight and Call 1980). Mexican Crow (*Corvus imparatus*) has spread north into Texas (Arvin *et al.* 1975, Tyler 1976). Blue Jay (*Cyanocitta cristata*) also has increased (Bock and Lepthien 1976, Smith 1978), perhaps due to the

proliferation of bird feeding stations. In Great Britain, Eurasian Jackdaw (*Corvus monedula*) populations are expanding (Parslow 1967, Sharrock 1976). A recent influx of that species into northeastern North America (Smith 1985, Yank and Aubry 1985) may be linked to this increase. Because corvids often prey on the eggs and young of other species, some authors have suggested that recent population declines in certain North American passerines could be related to the increase in corvid populations (Terborgh 1989).

Examination of range expansion and shrinkage is an under used method for following population trends (Wilcove and Terborgh 1984) Most indices of population trends, such as analyses of Christmas Bird Counts and Breeding Bird Surveys, are based on measures of abundance within a fixed area. With the increase in breeding bird atlas projects completed or in progress throughout North America, changes in range patterns will become easier to document. Such analysis should become an integral part of our efforts to understand and manage bird species.

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**A SAD DAY FOR THE 'QUAWKS':  
DESTRUCTION OF A BLACK-CROWNED NIGHT-HERON COLONY  
IN THE LOWER MOHAWK VALLEY**

**CARL J. GEORGE**

An early account claims the Black-crowned Night-Heron was an "uncommon summer resident" of Albany County with only isolated nests (Judd 1907). In contrast, three years later Eaton (1910) noted the species as a "common" summer resident in the Hudson-Champlain Valley as far north as Washington County, with one of the three more notable colonies in New York State located near Dunsbach Ferry, Saratoga (=Albany) County. A third early record for this region mentions a colony of about 500 pairs on the Hudson River due east of Saratoga Lake (Bull 1974).

In 1933 Guy Bartlett reported the colony cited by Eaton near Dunsbach Ferry, also known as the Normandin or Crescent Colony, to be composed of a "few hundred nests" and to be of long standing (Stoner 1942). The colony was estimated at 300 to 400 nests on 17 May 1935; at 175 to 200 nests on 5 May 1939; at 125 nests on 11 May 1940; at 80 to 90 nests on 25 June 1941; at 60 to 70 nests on 9 May 1942; and, finally, on 24 June 1942, "Inspection of the rookery, well populated six weeks before, now revealed a complete absence of night herons." (Stoner 1942). Reportedly, the 'authorities' had issued a permit for removing the nests and the owner of the land had cut many of the nests down after the nesting season (Andrews 1943).

Concurrent with the demise of the Normandin colony, a new one of 100 to 150 nests was forming in the area now known as the Vischer Ferry Nature and Historic Preserve (Andrews 1942). However, this colony seemed short-lived and, probably, was replaced by one located on an island just west of the Route 9 crossing of the Mohawk River. As the colony at Vischer's Ferry apparently disappeared about the time this new colony appeared, the change seems reasonably explained as a translocation. Vincent Schaefer, an astute observer in the region, also remembers the presence but not the dates for the colony at this location. Although unnamed on published maps, local residents call the latter site 'Long Island.'

A spritely account of an unpleasant 1948 visit to the 'Long Island' colony suggests a population of about 450 herons (Drahos and Fosburgh

1949) and a somewhat mixed view of the species: “. . . it is extremely doubtful if there exists in the State of New York a more truculent, noisy, balmy yet beautiful bird.” The negative aspects of their evaluation echo a much earlier commentary by T. H. Jasper (1881): “There are few things in nature more repelling than one of these heronries. The treacherous, waterlogged surface of the swamp will be white with the excrements of the birds, the air hot, close, and insufferable with its penetrating odor, and fine particles of these excrements floating in the air will cause the perspiring body of the intruder to smart wherever they touch. Decaying fish are everywhere, slowly rotting, and intensifying the intolerable stench; while at the approach of the intruder, the air is filled with a clamor like the breaking out of pandemonium.”

Nothing more is known about the ‘Long Island’ colony until the early 1950s when, according to Gerald Metzger (pers. comm.), a marksman from the Selkirk area, apparently hired by local residents, visited ‘Long Island’ and emptied 6 boxes of .22 caliber shells to kill the Black-crowned Night-Herons present. This action apparently ended the last of the night-heron rookeries of the Mohawk Valley.

Currently, there are no known nesting sites for the Black-crowned Night-Heron in the Tri-Cities Region (Andrle and Carroll 1988) and it has again assumed the status of an “uncommon summer resident.” In May 1989 I asked Walton Sabin, one of the more experienced ornithologists of our region, what his memories are regarding the Black-crowned Night-Heron. He claimed to have seen fewer than five in the last twenty years, knew of none nesting in our region, and never saw the rookeries of the lower Mohawk Valley. Other experienced members of the Hudson Mohawk Bird Club provided similar remarks on the species regionally. During my twenty years of Mohawk Valley watching, I estimate seeing no more than six different Black-crowned Night-Heron. Of these sightings, the presence of a pair of adults at Collins Lake from 24 through 29 June, 1989, was the most exciting; I thought I had observed nest building but they were gone on the morning of 30 June.

My contribution to this unhappy history is the account of interviews with Ernest Normandin on 3 Oct 1988 and with Gerald Metzger on 8 Oct 1988. At the time, Normandin was 93 years old. He remembered well the times when, after his purchase of part of Dunsbach’s farm in 1930, he shared the premises with the Black-crowned Night-Heron while managing a small restaurant and a series of campsites at the farm.

He remembered the noise, night and day; the odor emanating from the five acre heronry and the whitewashing of nearby houses, laundry and cars, as well as his efforts to displace the birds. He spoke of his requests for help and of the visit of a uniformed Washington official who became 'plastered' when Normandin clapped his hands causing an uproar in the colony, but he did not remember the granting of a permit or his purported destruction of the nests in 1942. Instead, he attributed the demise of the colony to the hurricanes of 1938 and 1952, which blew down the trees and nests. Indeed, the region did experience destructive hurricanes in these years. He also remembered the attacks of owls and hawks on the herons, and the eventual movement of the remaining herons to Laving's Flat east of Vischer's Ferry.

Normandin's other recollections were fascinating as well: the days by the Erie Canal when he drove mules through groves of chestnut trees with the edible nuts; wading across the Mohawk River; the three large brickyards; three large ice houses loading their blocks for transport to New York City; the Whitehead Sand Co., a source of foundry sand for the local iron casters; white egrets coming at night to roost among the other herons; busloads of Union College students coming to see the colony; the arrival and chemical demise of the Water-Chestnut (*Trapa natans*) from the river and nearby Wager's Bay, and its return; and the glowing legs of the night-herons which lured fish to their demise.

My interview with Metzger was another instance of an encounter with a keen observer. I had met him on a late summer day a year or so earlier when my wife Gail and I were struggling to paddle our canoe through the Water-Chestnut choked channel to the south of 'Long Island' near the Route 9 bridge. Metzger was tending his garden and we invited him to come and tell us about his life with the Water-Chestnut. He turned the volume of his hearing aid up, joined us on his now useless dock and spoke for thirty minutes with vivid detail on the chemical destruction of the Water-Chestnut beds, the outlawing of the herbicides by the EPA and the eventual return of the smothering mats spread out before us. I had little interest in the Black-crowned Night-Heron at the time and didn't inquire. On learning about the onetime night-heron colony of the island adjacent his home, I returned on 8 Oct 1988 for a possible account, which he provided in sterling detail.

Metzger bought his riverside home at 21 Crescent Terrace in the Town of Colonie, in the 1940s and remembered the Black-crowned Night-

Heron (which he called 'quawks' or 'black-crested' night herons.) as unpleasant neighbors: the usual whitewashing of houses, clothing and cars; the noise and rank odors. His house along with those of his neighbors were prone to receive the worst the herons had to offer because the birds fed below the Federal Dam at Cohoes and Waterford and took the direct route over them. Metzger remembered counting three hundred herons on one occasion and had other recollections as well: the shabby nests of the herons and the eggs being blown out by strong winds; the herons bringing snakes, lizards, crabs, frogs, brown bullheads (in spite of their spines) and other morsels for their young and nest mates and the regurgitation of this provender for these associates and those humans walking beneath their lofty nests; and the coming of the 'hired gun' from Selkirk, a member of the Selkirk Pistol Team. Metzger described the day in the late spring of 1953 when the man arrived and showed him the six boxes of .22 cartridges (each with 50 shells) he planned to use and then, after three hours of slaughter, the six empty boxes with the claim that he "didn't miss often - only about forty times." On the basis of the number of shots fired and the number of misses reported Metzger had arrived at the estimate of 260 herons killed. From this day in 1953 the herons were no longer a problem in the area. Metzger informed me that the marksman has passed on as well; there is no need nor opportunity for recrimination .

Metzger had other interesting memories as well: a Mr. Doyle (a lock-tender at Waterford) with his mentally ill wife and their six year old son living on the island for its quiet!; the construction (*ca.* 1928) on the island of the foundations of a huge ice house to serve the New York City barge trade but never finished because of the hard times and the new "monitor top" refrigerators being invented by General Electric (the foundations with their 36 inch thick walls still stand); the use of the island as a way station for liquor during prohibition; the presence at one time of a causeway connecting the island to the southern shore; the presence of white egrets roosting among the night-herons; the louse laden night-herons whose feathers often were chewed to tatters by these parasites; and the destructive whitewashing of the vegetation over the two acres of the heronry.

One of my students, Leela Mulukutla, and I tried to revisit Metzger about a year later to explore the story further but he had died in the interim. Normandin, I believe, lives on. The demise of the Black-

crowned Night-Heron in the Capitol district has been blamed on crows (Stoner 1942), DDT (Henny *et al.* 1984; Custer *et al.* 1983; Fleming 1984), owls and hawks, hurricanes, and human settlement. We may add gunning to the list.

Several ideas emerge in this account. The first is that a colony of Black-crowned Night-Heron may translocate relatively easily as appears to be the case at hand. The next is that once a colony has been decimated so ruthlessly, there is little likelihood of its redevelopment by the few survivors. Today, the range of the Black-crowned Night-Heron in New York (Andrle and Carroll 1988) is notable for the hiatus of nesting colonies within a radius of some one hundred miles of the former Mohawk colony of Long Island. Finally, there is the tragedy of our own species expanding so relentlessly into the domains of others; would that we could live more comfortably with those whose habits are not as we prefer.

The author would greatly appreciate receiving additional information on nesting of the Black-crowned Night-Heron in the upper Hudson-Mohawk region. Confirmation of the events described is needed.

Ernest Normandin and Gerald Metzger are gratefully acknowledged for their time spent and their patience with my many questions. Special thanks are extended to Leela Mulukutla, Andrew Joachim and Carolyn Parker for their textual guidance on this sad affair.

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**FEDERATION OF NEW YORK STATE BIRD CLUBS, INC.**  
**ANNUAL MEETING**  
**Riverhead, New York**  
**26-28 October 1990**

President Chad Covey called the 43rd Annual Meeting of the Federation of New York State Bird Clubs, Inc. to order at the Holiday Inn in Riverhead at 3:02 PM on Friday, 26 Oct 1990. The roll call totaled 14 member clubs, including the host club, the Moriches Bay Audubon Society. The minutes of the 42nd Annual Meeting were accepted as published in *The Kingbird*. Dick Sloss and Barbara Butler were appointed to the Committee on Resolutions.

The President read his report, in which he stressed the interest in membership promotion and the Federation's active role in conservation issues. He then read a letter from Cornell University thanking the Federation for cosponsoring the Symposium on the Conservation of Biological Resources held in September. Treasurer Berna Weissman released copies of her report so that it could be examined before her formal presentation on the next day.

Membership Chairperson Myrna Hemmerick reported that there were 639 individual members, a net loss of 52 since last year, and 40 member clubs. She then proposed a new club for membership, the Roger Tory Peterson Ornithological Club in Jamestown, which has about 30 members. This proposal was approved unanimously.

By-Laws Committee Chairperson Dick Sloss, read a letter proposing a new dues structure. This letter, coauthored by him and Stan Lincoln, was sent to all member clubs on 15 August. The motion to amend the by-laws regarding dues structure was voted on and approved.

Publications Committee Chairperson Manny Levine reported that the proposed revision to *Birds of New York State* by John Bull was tabled. A proposal for cosponsoring *The Birds of the Adirondacks*, by J. M. C. Peterson and B. Beehler, was up for reinstatement.

President Covey announced that a volunteer club is needed to host the 1991 Annual Meeting. All member clubs were invited to consider this opportunity.

National Audubon Regional Vice President David J. Miller explained the role of his Albany office, which covers Connecticut, Maine, Massachusetts, New Hampshire, New York, Rhode Island, and Vermont.

Stoner Award Committee member Bill Reeves announced that the

Lillian C. Stoner Award, for encouraging young birders, went to Adam M. Byrne of the Cayuga Bird Club. Mr. Byrne was not able to be present to receive it. Elliott Award Committee member Manny Levine announced that the John J. Elliott Award, for the best paper published in *The Kingbird* during 1990, went to Gerald A. Smith for his article on Point Peninsula. Mr. Smith was not able to be present to receive it.

Nominations Committee member Manny Levine presented the slate of officers for 1991: Chad Covey for President, Stan Lincoln for Vice President, Berna Weissman for Treasurer, Mary Ann Sunderlin for Corresponding Secretary, and Donald Windsor for Recording Secretary. The slate was accepted and all the candidates were elected.

President Chad Covey announced a new grant program. Grants are to be awarded by the Federation to member clubs for unique innovative projects that would advance the cause of birding in New York State. This grant program was originated by Stan Lincoln. The money to be awarded will come from the interest on a \$5000 fund.

With the announcement of a Federation sponsored birding foray into the Finger Lakes National Forest planned for next Spring, the President adjourned the meeting at 4:52 PM.

When the delegates reconvened at 9:55 AM on Saturday, 27 Oct, an additional 8 clubs indicated their presence, bringing the total represented to 22.

A report from the New York State Avian Records Committee Chairperson Bob Andrlé was read by President Covey. He then discussed NYSARC's functions and read the names of its members.

Treasurer Berna Weissman gave her report. Briefly, the Federation began the year with a general operating fund of \$16,774.79 and finished with \$23,272.32, for an increase of \$6,497.53. Berna explained the dues increase for individual members from \$15.00 to \$18.00, but emphasized that if dues are paid by 1 Jan, then members receive a \$3.00 discount. The discount serves as an incentive for members to pay on time so as to avoid the additional costs engendered by mailing reminder notices and back publications, which must go first class. In other words, people who require special services by their tardiness will now have to pay for them.

Auditing Committee member Dick Sloss read the report written by him and Irv Cantor on 31 December 1989. The books of the Federation did pass their audit.

Andy Mason reported on several issues for the Conservation



Committee. First, binoculars were needed by naturalists in tropical rain forests. Anyone wishing to donate should send them directly to the Manomet Bird Observatory, Manomet, MA 02345. Next he proposed a resolution supporting the Return a Gift to Wildlife funds. Sentiment expressed in discussion favored having the Federation go on record as supporting the RAGTW program, but recommending that more funds go towards non-game species. The resolution was approved. Next, he proposed a resolution regarding the damming for hydropower at James Bay, Ontario. A vigorous and informative discussion ensued. The need for the clean energy of hydropower was contrasted with the damage of damming. Andy stated that the proposed resolution merely advocated a through examination of the situation, such as in an environmental impact statement. The resolution, minus an endangered species mention, was approved. Andy voiced his support for the upcoming Environmental Bond Act. Discussion followed and support for the Bond Act was widespread.

Department of Environmental Conservation Non-game Unit representative Bob Miller reported that the Return a Gift to Wildlife program had its most successful year ever, bringing in over 1.8 million dollars. Thirty-eight projects are supported. DEC is still evaluating public comment on its wildlife program. Bob detailed the status of the Black Tern and the Common Tern. Research Scientist Barbara Loucks reported on the latest nesting data for the Osprey, the Bald Eagle, and the Peregrine Falcon.

A new Audit Committee, composed of Dick Sloss and Irv Cantor, was elected for 1991. A new Nominating Committee, composed of Manny Levine, Harriet Marsi, and Charles Smith, was elected.

A resolution that the Executive Committee distribute all resolutions to member clubs at least 30 days prior to the Annual Meeting, whenever possible, was proposed by Stan Lincoln. This was approved.

After a discussion on communications between the Executive Committee and the members/member clubs and between the member clubs and their members, President Covey adjourned the meeting at 11:55 AM.

At the banquet later that evening, the 99 attendees congratulated Myrna Hemmerick and Mary Ann Sunderlin upon their reception of Distinguished Service Awards for their many years of dedication to the Federation. Barbara Butler read the resolution thanking the host club,

the Moriches Bay Audubon Society, for their splendid hospitality. Shelley Vakay was recognized for her leadership in organizing this meeting, which attracted 115 registrants. The audience was then treated to a presentation on "Marine mammals of New York and the Arctic" by Sam Sadove, the Research Director of the Okeanos Ocean Research Foundation. With that, another successful Annual Meeting had come to a close.

Respectfully submitted,  
*Donald A. Windsor*  
Recording Secretary

## NOTES AND OBSERVATIONS

**Fishing by a Winter Wren:** During a February visit to Connetquot River State Park, I was sitting on the bank of the Connetquot River observing numbers of about 3/4-inch-long trout fry holding against the current in shallow riffles. I watched a Winter Wren foraging along the eroded bank on the far side in a typical wren fashion. The bird suddenly dashed through several feet of 1/2 inch deep water, grabbed a small fish and rushed back to the bank. It then beat the fish against the ground several times and swallowed it head first. The wren then resumed its previous foraging behavior, working upstream, investigating nooks and crannies among the roots in the eroded banks. During the five minutes that I observed the bird, it twice more suddenly ran several feet into the stream, caught a fish, returned to the bank, beat and swallowed its prey and returned to terrestrial foraging behavior. It's catch each time was a small fish, and the only fish I observed in the shallows were recently hatched trout. Eventually the bird moved upstream to where the water was deeper, and disappeared from my view. I had previously noticed how Osprey, Great Blue Heron, Black-crowned Night-Heron, Belted Kingfisher, crows and gulls have taken advantage of the abundant trout of all sizes in the river. I was surprised to see that a Winter Wren can be such an opportunistic feeder. During the time I observed the bird, I never saw it eat anything in its terrestrial foraging, yet that is where it seemed to concentrate its attention despite great success in its aquatic endeavors (3 large protein rations on 3 attempts). It wasn't apparent to me that the bird was really paying special attention to the water. It seemed that possibly the fish's motion caught the bird's eye, and the bird responded and then reverted to its "normal" feeding behavior. As far as I could see, it didn't really seem to be keying on this specialized resource of abundant small fish in very shallow water. It seemed to concentrate its energies on much less productive foraging on the shore. Perhaps this could change with time and continued opportunity. Of course the bird knows its business much better than I do. Well, anyway, we've seen Herring Gull adjust to garbage dumps, and Brant adapt to golf courses, so, fish hatchery managers, beware!

*Peter Martin, 2079 Hillside Ave., Bellmore, New York, 11710*

## HIGHLIGHTS OF THE WINTER SEASON

ROBERT SPAHN

Another mild winter was the consensus from all Regions, a bit warmer to the southeast in January and colder to the north, and somewhat drier in the eastern half of the state than in the west, especially in January. Still it probably was as uniform a season for weather as we will ever see. Such a winter brings many confounding factors into play when analyzing seasonal trends. Certainly, the warmth induced more half-hardy species to linger in most Regions than is normal, and this trend is supported at least by the variety of such reports, if not by the numbers of individual birds, in nearly every Region. However, wild food crops were noted as poor, which probably constrained the numbers which might have tarried, and open water and bare ground left the potential for wide dispersal for most of the winter. This was cited by several Regional editors to explain poor feeder counts and poor totals on field trips. Still, many CBCs reported very good species totals and record high counts for many species scattered from waterfowl to passerines. Obviously biological systems as large as New York State are complex and interpretation of events influenced by a multitude of complex, interacting, and uncontrolled variables always will be extremely difficult.

There were some observations that were widespread and relatively straightforward. In most Regions, waterfowl variety was good through at least January and many good counts were recorded. Some examples are large counts for Mute Swan in Regions 8, 9 and 10 and the increasing numbers in Region 2, where their invasion draws mixed emotions; a count of over 105,000 Canada Geese in Region 3; Snow Goose in nine Regions, with peak counts of 300 and 500 in Regions 5 and 9 and a record high 12,000 in Region 7; Wood Duck wintering in eight Regions, again with up to 50 located at one site in Region 2; a good representation of other less common wintering dabbling ducks scattered over the state; peak counts of 3000, 2000, and 2500 Canvasback in Regions 1, 9 and 10; Ring-necked Duck in eight Regions; King Eider and Harlequin Duck in Regions 2, 5, 6 and 10; Barrow's Goldeneye in Regions 6, 7 and 10; a peak count of 2500 Common Goldeneye in Region 6; Hooded Merganser in eight Regions, with a peak of 560 in Region 1; 10,000 Common Merganser in Region 6; and a continuation of the recent trend to have

many more Red-breasted Mergansers wintering inland on fresh water than in the past. In Region 10, some really rare waterfowl, **Pink-footed Goose** (of perhaps uncertain status), **Ross's Goose**, and **Greater White-fronted Goose**, were recorded along with the now annual Tufted Duck and Eurasian Wigeon.

Perhaps unsurprisingly, several other of the families of water birds also provided interesting records. Common Loon was noted in seven Regions. An Eared Grebe appeared in Region 10. **Northern Gannet** was noted in Region 1 and 4-5,000 were sighted on 1-2 December in Region 10. Double-crested Cormorant was observed in six of the eight inland Regions, including a first winter record in Region 7; I assume the species was not reported from the coastal Regions because they are not noteworthy. The long-legged waders included Great Blue Heron in all Regions; Black-crowned Night-Heron in Regions 1 and 2 in January; Tricolored Heron in Region 10 in December; Glossy Ibis in Region 10 in December (barely); and an inland record late immature *Plegadis ibis* in Region 2. An Osprey was seen in mid December in Region 8. Gulls brought us Little Gull through late February in Region 1 and through late March in Region 2, where they typically depart by mid January; Common Black-headed Gull only in Region 10; Thayer's Gull in Regions 3 and 6; Iceland Gull in eight Regions, with incredible and unprecedented February maxima from Region 6; Glaucous Gull in seven Regions in more modest numbers; Great Black-backed Gull in large numbers, with a inland record high count in Region 6; Lesser Black-backed Gull in Region 3; and Black-legged Kittiwake in Regions 1, 5, 6 and 10. Forster's Tern was noted late in Region 10 and set a state record late in Region 1. Finally, alcids put on their best show in 25 years in Region 10, with numbers of **Dovekie**, a **Black Guillemot**, and substantial numbers of **Razorbill** noted. Shorebirds were the only disappointing water bird group, with variety and numbers noted very poor. Other than the few typical, annually lingering species, only late Sanderling and Dunlin in Region 5 were notable.

The major land bird highlights of the season were raptors and the half-hardy species, and again, both of these highlights were at least partly weather related. Starting with the former, wherever vole populations were high, raptors gathered, typically including N. Harrier, Red-tailed Hawk, Rough-legged Hawk, and Short-eared Owl. The highest concentrations were in Region 6, with peak counts of 54 Red-tailed

Hawk, 39 N. Harrier, a record high 69 Short-eared Owl and an incredible peak of 125 Rough-legged Hawk, with one tally of 39% dark morph birds. Elsewhere, a peak of 79 Red-tailed Hawks in Region 4 was also impressive. Numbers tended to drop through the season and in rare periods and areas with snow cover late in the season. Region 10 notes specifically increased visibility of raptors in the region, leading to the mixed blessing of a *New York Times* article on hawks attending feeders. Additional raptor highlights included **Black Vulture** again in Region 9 and Turkey Vulture in five Regions; Bald Eagle reported from all ten Regions, with the typical peak wintering concentrations in Regions 4 and 9; the typical accipiter pattern of more Cooper's than Sharp-shinned in western New York gradually shifting to the reverse in the eastern regions; and N. Goshawk numbers continue very low. Falcon reports included American Kestrel declining in Region 10, Merlin in **seven** Regions, and Peregrine Falcon in **four** Regions, with two pairs wintering near breeding sites in Region 10. Of the owls, Snowy Owl appeared in eight Regions and in better numbers eastward; both Long-eared and N. Saw-Whet Owl reports were more widespread than usual; and a few were lucky enough to see **N. Hawk Owl** in Region 2 or **Great Gray Owl** in Region 7.

In spite of the 'open winter blues' and the 'full (with untouched food) feeder' complaints, the CBCs and other hard-working observers turned up an impressive total and variety of half hardy species scattered all over the state. Nearly all are irregular winter visitors; it is the total numbers in areas like Region 10 and the overall variety which were most impressive. Many of the species were reported in five to seven of the ten Regions, rather than the normal two or three. Just a few of the best (to whet your appetites to search out more in the Regional reports): House Wren in Region 10; Orange-crowned Warbler in Regions 2, 9 and 10, with a total of 10 in Region 10!; a "**Spotted**" **Rufous-sided Towhee** in Region 2; Savannah Sparrow in Region 2 and Fox Sparrow in Region 9; and both E. Meadowlark and Rusty Blackbird in six Regions, though wintering blackbird numbers in general again seemed relatively low. The state's newest blackbird arrival, Boat-tailed Grackle, tallied 58 on a Region 10 CBC. The only surprising misses were Rose-breasted Grosbeak and Northern Oriole. Species currently undergoing range expansion all were present in typical or improved numbers at the edges of their ranges. The most amazing number was an estimate of the total Carolina Wren population size in Region 10.

Not all was rosy. The bird flocks of winter fields and brush generally were noted as hard to find or present in low numbers. However, in Region 6 a flock of 154 Lapland Longspurs was located, American Pipit was noted in four Regions, and last fall's "**Gray-headed**" **Dark-eyed Junco** was relocated in Region 2 near the winter's end. There were no major, widespread irruptions. Red-breasted Nuthatch stayed home; Black-capped Chickadee staged only an interesting mini-invasion, well documented in Region 8; Bohemian Waxwing was noted in four Regions but numerous only in Region 6; and winter finches were noted only in very small groups at widely scattered dates and locations. The most positive irruptive notes were of N. Shrike in all regions, increasing to double digit total reports east of Region 3, and of Evening Grosbeak back up a bit after several years of very low numbers.

No attempt at organization seems to package neatly all of the season's highlights, so here are a few more birds and some of the more interesting regional notes. Wild Turkey continues to flourish and spread, with representative peak counts of 100 in Region 4, 50 in Region 5, 85 in Region 8, and 30 in Region 9. Among the typically few rail reports is **Black Rail** (listers turn green) in Region 10. Finally, additional misfit rarities included a Sandhill Crane in Region 3 in February, Varied Thrush in Regions 2, 6, 9 and perhaps also 8, and a **Western Tanager** in Region 10. In the Region 1 report find an interesting summary of a feeder survey, with 6% of the feeders noting Pileated Woodpecker — are they really becoming that much less shy? Region 6 notes Rough-legged Hawk displacing Snowy Owl at some feeding sites, a report I found interesting having seen Short-eared Owls haze Rough-legged Hawks off fields on several occasions in the past. For the marsh stompers, we have a good winter list from Queen Catharine Marsh in Region 3 (but is it not typically birded or is this an unusual list?), and an update on Humpo Marsh, a hotspot in Region 9 where the old beaver dam finally breached and the water level plummeted. In the latter case, will observers document population changes as the old pond bottom grows over or will someone look for a pair of DEC transplant beavers to rebuild?

This season the rarities were woven in the summary above. All that's left is Bird of the Season. **Pink-footed Goose** would seem to be the obvious choice as a first state record, but waterfowl are notorious for their potential as escapes and no supporting details accompanied the report. **Black-billed Magpie** is next in line, but again this species often

has been cited as a frequent escape and there is no commentary to aid the evaluation. These species eliminated, I will display pure personal bias and award the BOTS to Region 7's **Great Gray Owl**.

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**Standard abbreviations:** county names are shortened to their first four letters and are in UPPER case; months are shortened to their first three letters; ! — details seen by Regional editor; ad — adult; Alt — Alternate plumage; arr — arrival or first of season; CBC — Christmas Bird Count; I — Island; imm — 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; y — young.



## REGION 1 — NIAGARA FRONTIER

STEPHEN W. EATON

December was much warmer than usual and wet. The temperature averaged 34.4°, 5.5° above normal, and the 8.7 inches of precipitation, 0.52 inches above normal, fell mostly in the form of rain and a total of 15.4 inches of snow. At the end of the year snowfall at Buffalo was 20 inches below normal and Lake Erie had cooled to 39°. The first twenty days of January continued the mild trend of December. Winter weather began on 21 Jan with seasonal temperatures and snow. The average temperature for the month at Buffalo was 26.0°, 2.5° above normal. At Amity Lake, Vivian Pitzrick said the ground was mostly clear of snow during the month and the lake was partly open on 20 Jan, very unusual. Lake Erie finally reached 32° for a period, three weeks late. Terry Mosher said an excellent little group of water birds took shelter at Dunkirk after the high winds on 18 and 19 Jan. Lake Erie remained partially open through the winter, helping to produce snow bursts. February was another mild winter month, 6° above normal at 30.6° and there was little snow except in the snow belt in the lee of Lake Erie. On Valentines Day the barometer bottomed out at 28.94 inches. To account for the mild winter, weathermen said the southern of two jet streams streaking across the country moved north, keeping much cold Canadian air away from the Region. This second really mild winter in a row allowed Eastern Bluebird to winter successfully from the Lake Ontario Plain to the Allegheny plateau, but, strangely, there were fewer American Robin wintering than last year.

Open water allowed many waterbirds to winter successfully. Double-crested Cormorant, Tundra Swan, Wood Duck, Green-winged Teal, Surf and White-winged Scoters, American Coot all were seen through the winter. A **Forster's Tern**, presumably a late migrant, was unprecedented in winter.

Diurnal raptors, Northern Harrier, Rough-legged Hawk, and Short-eared Owl were present in good numbers where *Microtus* populations were abundant. They were best represented on the Lake Ontario plain but also on the Huron and Erie plains; one record of Short-eared Owl and several reports of Rough-legged Hawk came from the Allegheny Plateau. A **Merlin** and a **Peregrine Falcon** visited Buffalo during the winter.

Many people thought traffic at feeders was light this winter, which

hopefully reflects the openness of the winter and not some more general population decline. Allen Benton in Fredonia surveyed 87 feeders in and around the city; the total number of species was about average at fifty. Evening Grosbeak were at 30% of the feeders, the highest in five years. Also reaching new highs were Carolina Wren at 10%, Tufted Titmouse at 16% and American Goldfinch at 50% of the feeders. Red-bellied Woodpecker occurred at 7% and Pileated Woodpecker at 6%. Feeders continue to hold or concentrate unusual wintering birds such as Yellow-bellied Sapsucker, Gray Catbird, Brown Thrasher, Rufous-sided Towhee and Chipping Sparrow.

The cardueline finches were represented by a few Purple Finch, Pine Siskin, two flocks of four and six Red Crossbill and many House Finch, American Goldfinch and Evening Grosbeak.

Easterly blows brought a **Northern Gannet** to the Region which remained until 2 December. A Common Raven reported in Wyoming County is a possible range extension to be monitored.

Welcome to The Roger Tory Peterson Institute Ornithological Club. It has been formerly welcomed as a member of the Federation of New York State Bird Clubs by President Chad Covey, according to Jean Pigman, secretary of the Institute's Club.

Contributors: Allegany County Bird Club, Robert Andrle, Tim Baird, Wavel Barber, Gordon Bellerby, Allen Benton, William Bogacki, Elizabeth Brooks, Lois Buck, Roy and Cris Budniewski, Buffalo Ornithological Society, Doris and Lou Burton, Cattaraugus County Bird Club, Bruce Chilton, Richard Christensen, Kenneth Cohen, Dick Collins, David Cooper, William D'Anna, Tom Enright, Flory, Michael Galas, Goetz, Joe Gula, Sr. & Jr., Holms, Jamestown Audubon Society, Subra Keller, Don Klaybor, Lake Erie Bird Club, Ron Lange, Roger Tory Peterson Institute Ornithological Club, R. Meyers, Terry & Judy Mosher, David Neveu, Vivian & Raymond Pitzrick, Betsy Potter, Fran Rew, Gerry Rising, Donald Roberson, Olga Rosche, Audrey Schafer, David Suggs, Robert Sundell, Joe Thill, Regina & Jim Van Scoy, Lou & Judy Vernon, William Watson, Tom Welch.

Abbreviations: ACCBC - Allegany County CBC 15 Dec; ABH - Adam Beck Hydro; ARes - Allegheny Reservoir; BCBC - Buffalo CBC 16 Dec; ChauL - Chautauqua Lake; DFCBC - Dunkirk-Fredonia CBC 30 Dec.; DH - Dunkirk Harbor; INWR - Iroquois National Wildlife Refuge; JCBC - Jamestown CBC; NF - Niagara Falls; NR - Niagara River; GHSP - Golden Hill State Park; PTwn - Pomfret Town CHAU; SCBC - Scio CBC 15 Dec; SBCBC - St. Bonaventure CBC 15 Dec; TNP - Tiff Nature Preserve.

LOONS- DUCKS: Com. Loon: last DH 5 Jan. Pied-billed Grebe: max six Lakewood ChauL 7 Dec; last Buffalo 15 Jan. Horned Grebe: last DH 6 Jan. N.

**Gannet:** one Lewiston 2 Dec (WD, RA, mob). Double-crested Cormorant: one to three DH to 29 Dec; one Prendergast Pt ChauL 2 Dec; singles NR 1 Jan-22 Feb. Great Blue Heron: max 46 Motor I NR; 26 on 27 Jan. Black-crowned Night-Heron: one Buffalo 10 Jan. Tundra Swan: max 148 ChauL 1 Dec; 25-30 southbound Fredonia 26 Dec; two Celeron ChauL 10 Feb; arr 29 INWR 28 Feb. Snow Goose: one GHSP 8 Dec; two INWR 9 Dec; one DH 31 Dec; one to two DH 5-28 Jan. Canada Goose: 1037 JCBC; 674 DFCBC; 1073 ACCBC; 1682 BCBC, continues to increase. Wood Duck: one E Aurora 13 Dec; one Cassadaga 5 Jan; one Java WYOM 8,19 Jan; one Williamsville Glen ERIE 3 Feb. Green-winged Teal: one Charlotte Twn CHAU 5 Jan ; two DH 26 Jan. Am. Black Duck: 44 JCBC; 88 BCBC; 29 DFCBC; 8 SCBC; 15 SBCBC. Mallard: 2269 BCBC, all time high. N. Pintail: two PTwn 30 Dec; six NR 19 Jan; arr PTwn 21 Feb. N. Shoveler: six INWR 2 Dec.; one Buffalo Harbor 1 Jan. Gadwall: max 75 NF 3 Feb. Canvasback: max 3000 NR 2 Jan. Redhead: max 180 Lakewood ChauL 7 Dec; 130 NR 19 Jan; 45 DH 21 Jan; 100 NR 20 Feb. Ring-necked Duck: max 130 Lakewood ChauL 14 Dec; 14 NR 15 Jan. Greater Scaup: max 600 Wilson Twn NIAG 5 Feb. Surf Scoter: imm Pt Gratiot L Erie 3 Feb; three to four DH 18, 21 Feb, very rare in winter. White-winged Scoter: 50 GHSP 1 Dec; 35 Porter and Wilson Twn NIAG 19 Jan; max 125 Olcott to Carlton Twns NIAG & ORLE 2 Feb, uncommon in winter. Hooded Merganser: max 560 Mayville ChauL 8 Dec. Ruddy Duck: max 36 Lakewood ChauL 7 Dec.

**HAWKS-ALCIDS:** Bald Eagle: two imm ARes 2 Dec, one ad and one near ad on 20 Jan (TB). N. Harrier: six Porter Twn NIAG 30 Dec, six 6 Jan, eight 15 Jan; six NIAG 3 Feb, harvesting field mice. N. Goshawk: one GHSP 8 Dec. Red-shouldered Hawk: arr Sheridan Twn CHAU 23 Feb. Rough-legged Hawk: one Ward Twn ALLE 17 Dec, three 27 Dec; three INWR 16 Dec; five Wilson to Lockport NIAG 6, 22 Jan; one Randolph Twn CATT 3 Feb; eight other reports BOS Jan, two Feb. **Merlin:** one Buffalo 14 Jan-26 Feb. **Peregrine Falcon:** one Buffalo 15,16 Jan (WD, Holms, mob). Am. Coot: two INWR 9 Dec; max 30 DH 8 Jan. Purple Sandpiper: max six NF 16 Dec; one to seven 1-15 Jan. Dunlin: two Goat I NR 13 Jan, one 15 Jan. Franklin's Gull: one ABH 9 Dec. Little Gull: one NF 16 Dec; one Barcelona Harbor 5, 9 Jan; one NR 19 Jan; two Lewiston 23 Feb. Bonaparte's Gull: max 40,000 mouth NR 8 Dec (GB); 15,000 NR 19 Jan; 153 mouth NR during Feb. Iceland Gull: max three ABH, NR 2 Dec: one 1-26 Jan; two 3 Feb. Lesser Black-backed Gull: max three NF 2 Dec; one Niagara Power Project 1 Jan. Glaucous Gull: two NF 2 Dec; one ABH 1, 6 Jan; two 3 Feb. Black-legged Kittiwake: one Buffalo 14 Jan. **Forster's Tern:** one DH 3-6 Jan.

**PIGEONS-WOODPECKERS:** Mourning Dove: 28/party BCBC; 17/party JCBC; 18/party FDCBC; 14/party SCBC; 10/party SBCBC, population remains high. Great Horned Owl: 0.4/party BCBC, highest density, on Huron Plain; 0.3/party DFCBC, next highest density, includes mainly L Erie Plain; 0.08/party JCBC, on plateau and much urban; SCBC 0.09/party, upper Genesee Valley on plateau; SBCBC 0.09/party Allegheny Valley on plateau. Snowy Owl: arr DH 9 Dec; 8, 13, 14 Jan; one Yates Twn ORLE 15, 22 Dec; one PTwn 30 Dec; one Porter

Twn NIAG 1 Jan; one NF 2, 9, 10 Feb; max four Wheatfield Twn NIAG 3 Feb. Long-eared Owl; two Elma Twn ERIE 22 Dec, three 1 Jan; three Porter Twn NIAG 9 Feb; one Lewiston Twn NIAG 16 Feb. Short-eared Owl: seven Porter Twn NIAG 23, 30 Dec, one to max nine 1-15 Jan; one Java WYOM 24 Dec; four Sheridan Twn CHAU 27 Jan; two Yates Twn ORLE 24 Feb. N. Saw-whet Owl: one TNP 19, 20 Feb, only report. Belted Kingfisher: 0.08/party JCBC at fishable streams; 0.4/party SCBC on Genesee R and tributaries; 0.3/party SBCBC on Allegheny R and tributaries; none BCBC, NR, DFCBC. Red-headed Woodpecker: one Fort Niagara SP 8 Dec, 6 Jan, 3 Feb; two Lakeside Beach SP 2 Feb. Red-bellied Woodpecker: one at feeder Wales 1-31 Dec, 1-28 Feb; one INWR 9 Dec, 18 Feb; one Sheridan Twn CHAU 15, 16, 30 Dec; one Yates Twn ORLE 16 Feb; several other similar reports throughout. N. Flicker: five E Aurora 6 Jan; at 5% of 87 feeders in Fredonia grape country area.

FLYCATCHERS-STARLINGS: Horned Lark: 65 Somerset Twn NIAG 28 Dec. Com. Raven: one Bliss Twn WYOM 18 Feb. Tufted Titmouse: *intro*; one Wales 1-31 Dec, 1-28 Feb; two at feeder NF 5, 6, 26, 29 Dec; two GHSP 8 Dec; eight reports BOS Jan, seven in Feb. Red-breasted Nuthatch: one Hamburg 1-31 Dec; two NF Dec; one-two Jan; one Wales 11-31 Dec; one Alfred Twn ALLE 9 Jan; not a big year. Carolina Wren: *intro*; one at feeder Eden Twn ERIE 5, 31 Dec, 3, 5, 14 Feb; one Mayville 8 Dec; one Salamanca 21 Jan (TB); one Alfred Twn ALLE 16 Jan, one 18 Feb; two Wellsville 27 Jan, good reproductive year with increase on plateau. Winter Wren: one Porter Twn NIAG 8 Dec, late; one Alfred Twn ALLE 15, 18, 27 Dec., difficult to stir from cover. E. Bluebird: two Sheridan CHAU 2 Dec, 15 Jan, 4, 12, 13 Feb; max six Perrysburg 17 Dec; two Amity L 17 Dec, 24 Feb; four E Aurora 22 Dec, five 6-31 Jan; four PTwn 28 Jan; one Porter Twn NIAG 9 Feb, wintering trend developing. Hermit Thrush: one Alfred Twn ALLE 5-8 Dec, late. Am. Robin: max 225 Hamburg 13 Jan. Gray Catbird: two E Aurora 29 Jan. Brown Thrasher: one Olean 2 Feb (TE *fide* TB). N. Mockingbird: reported four areas on Huron, Erie and Ontario Plains. N. Shrike: six reports throughout Region Dec, 12 reports Jan, Feb.

VIREOS-WARBLERS: Yellow-rumped Warbler: one Portland Twn NIAG 5 Jan; six-eight 27 Jan.

TANAGERS-WEAVERS: N. Cardinal: eight/party BCBC (21 hrs at feeders); two/party DFCBC (7 hrs at feeders); ten/party JCBC (66 hrs at feeders); six/party SBCBC (feeder hrs not given); five/party SCBC (36 hrs at feeders), density dependent on time watching feeders. Rufous-sided Towhee: one Grand I NR 26 Dec; one at feeder Orchard Park 7, 12 Jan; one at feeder Westfield Twn CHAU 20 Jan. Chipping Sparrow: one Siver Creek 17, 18 Feb; one Cherry Creek Twn CHAU 16 Feb, starting to winter regularly. White-throated Sparrow: max 19 E Aurora 11 Feb. White-crowned Sparrow: max nine Lewiston 6 Jan. Lapland Longspur: max 50 Yates Twn ORLE. Snow Bunting: max 150 Allenberg Bog CATT 9 Feb. Rusty Blackbird: one E Aurora 14 Jan, unusual in winter; two 27 Feb perhaps migrants. Purple Finch: three Amity Twn ALLE 29 Dec, two 5 Jan; two

Scio 3 Jan; one at feeder Wales 29 Jan-28 Feb. Red Crossbill: six Westfield Twn CHAU 8 Dec (L&JV *fide* TM); four Fredonia CHAU 3, 8 Jan. (SK *fide* TM). Pine Siskin: two E Aurora 26 Dec, 6 Jan; one 1, 17, 20 Feb; three Pt Gratiot CHAU 6 Jan; one Somerset Twn NIAG 23 Feb. Am. Goldfinch: max 50 Beaver Meadow Nature Sanctuary WYOM 1 Jan. Evening Grosbeak: max 72 Sheridan Twn CHAU 3-31 Dec; four other reports Dec, seven reports Feb, mostly e and s of Buffalo.

*Ten Mile Road, Allegany, New York 14706*

## REGION 2 — GENESEE

### KEVIN C. GRIFFITH

Birding during the winter season was rich with variety. Many half-hardy species were noted and waterfowl numbers were good. The expected incursions of wintering species failed to materialize, and it was another season with a scarcity of winter finches.

December was mild. The average temperature of 33.8° was 4.8° above normal, and precipitation was 1.59 inches above normal at 4.18 inches; snowfall totaled 18.2 inches. These conditions both helped and hindered the Christmas counts. It allowed a variety of birds to linger, but did not cause a big push of winter visitors into the Region. Nevertheless some good totals were reached on the counts. January also was about average, due in part to the warm spells during the second and fourth weeks. This was balanced by the cold spell in the third week. The average temperature was 25.1°, which was 1.5° higher than normal. Overall precipitation was less than an inch below normal at 1.69 inches, even though the snowfall was 3.5 inches above normal. February finished the season in a mild fashion. The average temperature was 30.5°, over 6° above normal. Precipitation on the other hand, amounted to only 1.16 inches, and snowfall was down by about 6 inches at 16.1 inches. No meteorological events dominated the winter season. Most bodies of water were open in December, but most had frozen by January. Bare ground was prominent early, but snow shrouded grounds were the norm for a good portion of the season.

The Christmas Bird Counts produced some interesting finds and information. The Letchworth-Silver Lakes Count, held on 15 Dec, produced a total of 67 species. The highlight of the count was most

certainly the **Varied Thrush** located in Letchworth State Park by Sharon Skelly and Brian Mongi. This species occurs in the Region from time to time but was a first for the count. The day's totals included a new high for Canada Goose and Yellow-bellied Sapsucker. Oldsquaw, Killdeer and Common Yellowthroat were found for only the second time. Waterfowl were generally absent, but seven Tundra Swan on Silver Lake was unusual.

The Rochester Count was held on the following day. This count usually has the highest total for the local counts due to the inclusion of Lake Ontario and a good variety of habitat. This year's total was 93 species. A *Plegadis* sp., most likely a Glossy Ibis, noted several times at Webster 1-16 Dec, was new for the count. A female Common Eider, for which the observer was not positive that details were diagnostic (RS, NYSARC), found at Braddock Bay 12 and 16 Dec would be new for the count if accepted. Mute Swan reached a new high with a total of five, and new highs also were obtained for Mallard, Surf Scoter, Sharp-shinned Hawk, Great Black-backed Gull, E. Screech-Owl, Black-capped Chickadee, Am. Robin, Cedar Waxwing, N. Cardinal and House Sparrow. Large numbers of waxwing were found in Durand-Eastman Park, Am. Robins was found in very large numbers on the west side of the Genesee River. House Finch numbers dropped for the first time since 1975. A Chipping Sparrow was a species seldom found on the count.

The Little Lakes Count was held on 22 Dec. Open water and sparse snow cover contributed to a good count of 83 species, the third highest total for the count. Highlights included the first Red-throated Loon and Double-crested Cormorant ever, the former (two birds) on Conesus Lake and the latter on Honeoye Lake. Long-eared Owl was reported again this year, and three Yellow-bellied Sapsucker were good. New highs were reached for several species, including Tundra Swan, Gadwall, Lesser Scaup, Bufflehead, Hooded Merganser, Ring-billed Gull, Belted Kingfisher, N. Flicker, Black-capped Chickadee, E. Bluebird and Cedar Waxwing. Horned Lark, Dark-eyed Junco and Am. Tree Sparrow were scarcer than usual.

On the whole, the winter season brought no major surprises but had some interesting finds and trends. The Red-throated Loon occurrences were somewhat out of character. Horned Grebe and Pied-billed Grebe appeared in small numbers. Double-crested Cormorant on two of the Christmas counts is less surprising based on the population increase in the Region. The open water and fairly mild conditions continued to allow Great Blue Heron to continue their recent trend of wintering in the

Region. Black-crowned Night-Heron was present through the early portion of the season but did not persist. Waterfowl numbers and variety were pretty good for winter. Tundra Swan was found on open water and Canada Goose continued to stay through the winter. The expected contingent of Wood Duck spent the winter in Penfield. Am. Black Duck seemed to be more numerous than in recent years. There were the usual sightings of small numbers of dabbling ducks during the season. Eiders provided the waterfowl highlights for the season at Braddock Bay where, besides the Common Eider noted above, two immature male King Eider appeared 1-16 Jan. A juvenile male Harlequin Duck was off Rigney Bluff in the town of Greece on 12 Jan (BO, KG). Other wintering waterfowl numbers were fairly stable although there seemed to be fewer wintering scoters than in recent years. Killdeer and Com. Snipe lingered late into the season. In most years Little Gull departs in late December or early January. This season they were observed for the duration of the season in low but fairly consistent numbers. White-winged gulls were noted but in relatively low numbers.

Turkey Vulture wintered once again in Letchworth State Park, and a report of a bird in the Lima area during January was unexpected. Bald Eagle was reported during each month of the season. With the increase in population we have grown to expect this in recent years. All three accipiters were reported, with good totals for Sharp-shinned and Cooper's Hawks throughout the season. Rough-legged Hawk reports were somewhat inconsistent. Birds were difficult to pinpoint, yet were found fairly regularly. Good numbers of wintering Red-tailed Hawk and Am. Kestrel were noted. A single **Merlin** report was a highlight of the winter season. The season had a very interesting owl report. On 27 Jan, Dick O'Hara observed a **Northern Hawk Owl** along Church Road in Hamlin. The bird was most uncooperative and was not seen subsequently. The expected Snowy Owl season never materialized and only a couple of individuals were reported. Barred Owl made a surprise appearance in Durand-Eastman Park on 16 Dec.

Red-headed Woodpecker was located once again in the Nations Road area near Avon. Yellow-bellied Sapsucker was once again reported during the winter season and has become somewhat of a yearly occurrence. Winter Wren was noted in the area in greater numbers than usual. They were found in a number of locations. Carolina Wren reports seemed to be up. A number of observers reported them at feeders. The wintering bluebird population was about normal. Hermit Thrush was

widely noted this season. Wintering Gray Catbird and Brown Thrasher were a bonus to winter list keepers. Cedar Waxwing numbers fluctuated throughout the season, and Durand-Eastman Park seemed to be the only location where they were consistent. Bohemian Waxwing was observed in January after a couple of years' absence. Northern Shrike was found in about average numbers. The warbler highlight of the season was an Orange-crowned Warbler that spent 25-29 Dec in the yard of Mike Lanzone in North Chili, and also was seen sporadically in January. The only other warblers reported during the season were Yellow-rumped Warbler and Com. Yellowthroat. A **"Spotted" Rufous-sided Towhee** found by Jeanne Skelly and Dominic Sherony on the Little Lakes CBC was a rare visit by this western subspecies. Sparrow highlights included Chipping, Field, Savannah and White-crowned Sparrows. White-throated Sparrow was found in somewhat reduced quantity as was Am. Tree Sparrow. After last fall's appearance, Robert Spahn rediscovered a **"Gray-headed" Dark-eyed Junco** at Hamlin Beach on 9 Feb. Snow Bunting was generally scarce with only one report of a large flock. It was a down year for Lapland Longspur. Winter finches were scarce, and Pine Grosbeak, Com. Redpoll and Red Crossbill were represented by only a few individuals.

Contributors: John Boettcher, Sue Boettger, Carolyn Cass, Belma Cerosaletti, Julie Claffey, Anne Clarridge, Jerry Czech, Mike Davids, Frank Dobson, Jim Doherty, John Foster, Ralph & Mary Gerner, Kevin Griffith, Bill Gruenbaum, Harriet Hamilton, Gary Hartenstein, Diane Henderson, Gary Klue, Mike Lanzone, Walt Listman, Bob Marcotte, Pat Martin, Robert McKinney, Nancy Miller, Brian Mongi, Richard O'Hara, Bob Oswald, Bill & Betty Powell, Marty Robinson, Martha Reinhardt, Dominic Sherony, Jeanne Skelly, Sharon Skelly, Tom Smith, Robert & Susan Spahn, Cathy & Kristin Spahn, Paul & Jeff Spindler, Ann Stear, David, Allen & Grace Strong, Mary Ann Sunderlin, Bill Symonds, Don & Donna Traver, and Ron Wellman.

Abbreviations: BB - Braddock Bay; CL - Conesus Lake; DE - Durand-Eastman Park and adjacent waters; HBSP - Hamlin Beach State Park; HL - Honeoye Lake; IB - Irondequoit Bay; LSP - Letchworth State Park; RS - Russell station; SB - Sodus Bay; WL - west lake shore (L Ontario w of Rochester).

LOONS-DUCKS: Red-throated Loon: *intro*; one SB 5 Jan, unusual in winter. Pied-billed Grebe: one Greece 16-19 Jan, uncommon in winter. Horned Grebe: max 15 L Ontario e Rochester 1 Jan (RMc), high total. Double-crested Cormorant: *intro*. Black-crowned Night-Heron: one Greece 1 Dec-31 Jan; one HL 26 Jan, unusual location. *Plegadis* species: *intro* (MD, mob). Tundra Swan: *intro*; max 53 SB 9 Jan. Mute Swan: *intro*. Snow Goose: arr eight BB 23 Feb. Wood Duck: max 50 Penfield 23 Feb. Green-winged Teal: one IB 20 Jan, unusual in



winter. N. Pintail: max five Greece 23 Feb, poor total. N. Shoveler: ad male Greece 13,16,19, 26 Jan. Am. Wigeon: one Greece 1 Jan, one HL 1 Jan, unusual in winter. Ring-necked Duck: max 30 Canandaigua L 20 Jan. Com. Eider: *intro*. King Eider: *intro*. Harlequin Duck: *intro*. Oldsquaw: max 500+ RS 17 Feb. Hooded Merganser: max 92 CL 22 Dec. Ruddy Duck: one Greece 1 Jan, only report, late.

**HAWKS-ALCIDS:** Turkey Vulture: one LSP 19 Jan (CC, MD), one Lima 25 Jan (JF), one HBSP 19 Feb (MD) and 23 Feb (DS). Bald Eagle: ad CL 25 Dec; ad CL 3 Jan; imm Oklahoma Beach 13 Jan; imm IB 16 Jan. N. Goshawk: one Springwater 12 Feb. Rough-legged Hawk: max 18 WL 8 Jan. Am. Kestrel: max 19 WL 8 Jan. **Merlin:** one WL 22 Dec. Wild Turkey: max 16 Mendon 16 Feb. Virginia Rail: one Mendon 21 Jan (MD), usual wintering location. Killdeer: two IB 18 Dec, one BB 18 Feb. Com. Snipe: four IB 6 Dec, late; one Brockport 2 Feb. Little Gull: max 14 DE 6 Jan. Iceland Gull: imm IB 16 Dec, 28 Jan, and 22 Feb; imm Greece 10 Feb. Glaucous Gull: ad IB 5 Jan; ad IB 27 Jan; two imm SB 13 Jan; imm Charlotte 20 Jan; ad Greece 10 Feb; one WL 17 Feb.

**PIGEONS-WOODPECKERS:** N. Hawk Owl: *intro*. Barred Owl: *intro*. Snowy owl: one Churchville 7 Jan (ML), one Rochester 24 Feb (fide RS). Long-eared Owl: *intro*. Yellow-bellied Sapsucker: *intro*; one Pittsford 22 Dec, one CL 22 Dec, one Lima 24 Jan, good year.

**FLYCATCHERS-STARLINGS:** Tree Swallow: one Greece 5 Dec (WL), quite late. Winter Wren: one Webster 6 Jan, one DE 16 Jan, good year. E. Bluebird: max 36 CL 22 Dec. Hermit Thrush: max three Rochester 16 Dec, three DE 1 Jan, good season. **Varied Thrush:** *intro*. Am. Robin: max 2354 RCBC 16 Dec. Gray Catbird: one Greece all winter. Brown Thrasher: one Greece Jan, one Greece 2 Feb. Am. Pipit: arr 12 Retsoff 3 Feb. Bohemian Waxwing: two Greece 10 Jan (RO'H), nine Webster 12 Jan (JC).

**VIREOS-WARBLEDERS:** Orange-crowned Warbler: *intro*. Yellow-rumped Warbler: one WAYN 13 Jan, new location for winter sightings. Com. Yellowthroat: *intro*.

**TANAGERS-WEAVERS:** Rufous-sided Towhee: *intro*. Chipping Sparrow: one Greece 16 Dec (BO, KG, BM); one M 6 Feb (AC), rare in winter. Field Sparrow: one LSP 19 Jan (MD, CC), unusual in winter. White-crowned Sparrow: one Bergen 26 Jan, some reported nearly every winter. Dark-eyed Junco: *intro*. Snow Bunting: max 3000+ Caledonia 28 Jan. Pine Grosbeak: three HBSP 23, 24 Feb (BMo, SS), only report. Purple Finch: one Springwater Jan, poor year once again. Red Crossbill: eight Chili 16 Dec (PM), max 13 Rochester (ML). Com. Redpoll: one Pt Breeze 15 Dec (WL), four Webster 24 Dec (BC), off year once again.

61 Grandview Lane, Rochester, New York 14612

## REGION 3 — FINGER LAKES

C. K. MELIN AND C. R. SMITH

December was warm and wet with temperatures and rainfall generally above historical averages for the month. Winter weather was not seen until the third week of December, when seasonably cold temperatures and snowfall returned to the Region. Temperatures actually plummeted to 5-15° below normal, but returned to unseasonably warm levels by the end of the month when 50° temperatures and more rainfall returned to melt the snows of Christmas. The warm weather of December continued into January, but average temperatures for the month were only slightly above normal, with precipitation totals for the month near normal. February was among the ten warmest Februaries on record, with temperatures throughout the Region averaging 5-6° above normal. Precipitation for February was consistently below normal. In general, the period from December through February was the sixth warmest in 96 years of record-keeping (weather information provided by the Northeast Regional Climate Center, Cornell University).

A **Sandhill Crane** flying north-northeast over Fish Road between Enfield and Mecklenburg on 5 Feb is noteworthy (B. Evans). The crane was flying low and riding warm southwesterly winds, linked to a high pressure area over the Mississippi Valley which produced near-record warm temperatures for the Region. It was a good winter for Short-eared Owl throughout the Region, with groups of as many as 25 birds reported from some localities. It was not, however, a "finch winter." There were only scattered reports of Red Crossbill and no reports of Pine Siskin for the period.

Careful scrutiny of large concentrations of gulls at Stewart Park at the south end of Cayuga Lake by Ned Brinkley, Adam Byrne, Bill Evans, Sue Seely, and others produced some interesting observations. Among them were Glaucous, Iceland, **Lesser Black-backed**, and **Thayer's Gull**, and a possible Glaucous x Herring hybrid. More than 8,000 gulls were present at Stewart Park on 9 Feb, and the highest count ever of both Ring-billed (2,400) and Herring (1,400) Gull was reported for the Ithaca Christmas Bird Count. The high Ring-billed Gull numbers may be a reflection of the warm weather, as well as the continued growth of the Lake Ontario breeding gull population. Likewise, the occurrence of 1-3

wintering Double-crested Cormorant on both Cayuga and Seneca Lakes also may be the result of the population growth of this species at summer breeding colonies on Lake Ontario. J. Brubaker and B. Hilfiker report that Great Black-backed Gull also appears to be increasing in winter on Seneca Lake.

Waterfowl reported from Cayuga and Seneca Lakes included Gadwall, Northern Pintail, American Wigeon, Wood Duck, American Black Duck, Mallard, Redhead, Ring-necked Duck, Canvasback, Greater Scaup, Lesser Scaup, Common Goldeneye, Bufflehead, Hooded Merganser, Common Merganser, and Red-breasted Merganser.

The relatively warm weather may have contributed to winter reports of Chipping Sparrow and a number of Rufous-sided Towhee at feeders, as well as some apparent early "spring" arrivals. B. Evans reported a Chipping Sparrow that lingered at a feeder near Enfield through 24 Dec and N. Brinkley found an early (or late?) **Eastern Phoebe** at Hog Hole at south end of Cayuga Lake on 6 Feb. Queen Catharine Marsh at the south end of Seneca Lake provided winter shelter for an estimated 50 American Robin on 25 Jan and J. Brubaker found as many as 50 Song Sparrow, along with Carolina Wren, Winter Wren, Field Sparrow, and Swamp Sparrow throughout the winter.

Contributors: N. Brinkley, J. Brubaker, Cayuga Bird Club, Chemung Valley Audubon Society, D. Clements, Eaton Birding Society, B. Evans, T. Gingrich, B. Hilfiker, Schuyler County Bird Club.

Abbreviations: CL - Cayuga Lake; FLNF - Finger Lakes National Forest; MNWR - Montezuma National Wildlife Refuge; QCM - Queen Catharine Marsh, Watkins Glen; SL - Seneca Lake; StP - Stewart Park, Ithaca; WGSP - Watkins Glen State Park.

LOONS-DUCKS: Com. Loon: only scattered reports of single birds from SL in Dec and Jan (JB, BH) and CL in Feb (NB). Horned Grebe: CL Jan and Feb (NB). Pied-billed Grebe: three Ithaca throughout period (NB). Tundra Swan: north end SL 13 Jan (no numbers reported, BH), 25-75 on CL and MNWR early Feb (NB). Snow Goose: two MNWR Dec (TG) and singles CL Jan and Feb (NB). Canada Goose: 105,835 CL 29 Jan (TG). Green-winged Teal: male StP 27 Feb (NB). Great Blue Heron: CL and SL through early Jan, with 30-40 MNWR 1 Jan (BH).

HAWKS-ALCIDS: Red-shouldered Hawk: one near Ithaca 19 Jan (NB). Bald Eagle: four-five MNWR throughout period (TG); 3 ad, 2 imm MNWR 1 Jan (BH); ad Canandaigua L 2 Feb (BH). Peregrine Falcon: one SL 3 Feb (BH), one along Rt. 352 between Elmira and Corning 3 Feb (DC). **Merlin**: one Sundown Farms, near Ithaca, 15-16 Jan (NB), one Horseheads 3 Feb (DC). **Sandhill Crane**: *intro*. Am. Woodcock: one displaying near Dryden 24 Feb. Ring-billed Gull: *intro*; max 6,070 StP 9 Feb (NB). Herring Gull: *intro*; max 3,589 StP 9 Feb (NB). Iceland Gull: one-three StP 1 Jan to end of Feb (CBC, NB). **Thayer's Gull**: one StP 27 Feb (NB, mob).

**Lesser Black-backed Gull:** ad StP 6 Jan (NB). **Glaucous Gull:** first-year bird StP throughout Feb (NB). **Glaucous X Herring Gull:** one StP 15, 21, 28 Feb (NB, mob). **Great Black-backed Gull:** *intro*; max 798 StP 9 Feb (NB); record high of 14 SL 17 Feb (JB).

**PIGEONS-WOODPECKERS:** **Short-eared Owl:** numerous reports from throughout the Region, with as many as 50-100 wintering between CL and SL (BE). **Long-eared Owl:** roost of six near Ithaca 10 Feb; on nest near Canoga 24 Feb (all NB). **N. Saw-whet Owl:** two found dead (road-kills) near Ithaca 11 Dec (BE); two calling near Ithaca 9 Feb (NB, mob).

**FLYCATCHERS-STARLINGS:** **E. Phoebe:** *intro*. **Com. Raven:** two Horseheads 13 Feb (DC). **Carolina Wren:** numbers (20) recovered on Ithaca Christmas Count for first time since cold winters of 1977-78. **N. Shrike:** Geneva, Waterloo, and Junius in Dec (BH); one Reading Center 1 Jan (JB), and FLNF 7 Dec, 1 Jan, and 26 Jan (JB).

**VIREOS-WARBLEDERS:** **Yellow-rumped Warbler:** none, in spite of the unseasonably mild winter.

**TANAGERS-WEAVERS:** **Rufous-sided Towhee:** several reports of singles at feeders. **Chipping Sparrow:** *intro*. **Field Sparrow:** *intro*; one near Enfield 3 Jan (BE). **Song Sparrow:** *intro*. **Swamp Sparrow:** *intro*. **Red-winged Blackbird:** flock of 250 Montour Falls 1 Feb (JB); several migrating flocks throughout Region last week of Feb. **Pine Siskin:** none. **Red Crossbill:** 12 WGSP 27 Dec (JB), one near WGSP 1 Jan (JB), and two Yellow Barn State Forest 7 Jan (NB).

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## REGION 4 — SUSQUEHANNA

### MARY DOBINSKY

Ho-Hum! Another mild, open winter! Another dull birding season! December 1990 and February 1991 were considerably warmer than usual, according to weather reports from Link Field. Although January experienced nearly normal temperatures, they still were 2° above average. Record high readings of 60° to 62° were reached on four days in late December, with above average temperatures 23 days of the month. December precipitation, mostly rain, measured two inches above normal, capping a very wet 1990. Until the season's only heavy (a mere six to eight inches) snowfall on 11 Jan, snow had melted almost as soon as it fell. The ground had been bare. The week of 21 Jan, with five nights of single digit temperatures, afforded the only extended cold period.

The one night officially below-zero was 22 Jan, although the Region's northern communities would insist it hit zero more often than that. The coldest spot that one night was Cooperstown with a  $-16^{\circ}$  reading, and ice finally and officially locked in Otsego Lake, a very late date. Precipitation for both January and February was slightly below normal. Binghamton snowfall in January measured a scant 15 inches, five inches under average. Total snowfall in February was an inch below the 17.5 inch norm, and for the second year in a row, February temperatures averaged about  $6^{\circ}$  above normal.

Heavy late December rains caused flooding along the Susquehanna and Chenango Rivers on 30 and 31 Dec, at time of the Broome and Tioga Christmas Bird Counts. Judy and Don Bell bemoaned floodwaters that blocked access to choice birding sites. Yet Jonathan Shepherd, on the Broome Count, had no complaint. Amid 90 Herring Gulls, he spotted a second winter **Iceland Gull**. He was able to verify size, bill coloration and leg color for identification. It was a first for Region 4.

Despite the balmy winter, few less hardy birds persisted and even the usual species disappeared in January. There were such contradictions as Tufted Titmouse at feeders but no junco, or Red-bellied Woodpecker but no Blue Jay. Veteran birder Harriet Marsi complained, "I don't think I've ever known a winter when birds were so scarce - not only at the feeder but also in the country." The winter wild food supply had looked plentiful in early fall was not so at the onset of winter. Had the fall's heavy rains and strong winds stripped trees, shrubs and plants of their fruits and seeds?

Rivers remained more or less open all season boosting the winter population of Canada Goose and some diving ducks to new records. Geese totals were particularly impressive. Flocks of up to 250 birds all through December culminated in the TCBC report of a startling 2,004 birds. Dave Messineo at Otselic spotted occasional small flights all season. The staff of Finch Hollow Nature Center marveled at 100 geese in Cole Park the week of 11 Feb. "The lake was frozen over at this time - no open water."

With few birds to see mid winter, birders tend to be more observant of those they find. Such was the case with Bruce Bozdos, Gail Kirch, Marsi and Steve Rice as they twice studied "small flocks (one or two dozen) of Com. Mergansers". Each time they first noted the size difference of one duck. "After 15 minutes of intense concentration, we were able to get the

good look at the breast we needed - a good silhouette of the head etc. for our identification." The odd one was a female Hooded Merganser on 12 Jan and a female Red-breasted Merganser on 18 Feb. Another 12 Hooded and three Red-breasted Merganser, both uncommon in winter, were reported on the January Waterfowl counts.

Predators fared well this open winter. At least 50 Bald Eagles wintered in Delaware County according to Thomas Sanford of Margaretville. As a volunteer for the state's Department of Environmental Conservation, he conducted official ground and aerial surveys in December and January in the areas of Delaware and Schoharie counties that surround the New York City Reservoir system. Pretty wild country, it is considered excellent habitat for the growing number of Bald Eagle.

In this third successive mild winter, southern species, which repeatedly try to expand their range northward, were more entrenched than ever. Tufted Titmouse led the pack. The record 263 spotted on all five CBC's more than doubled the total of two years ago, itself a record. Carolina Wren and N. Mockingbird showed more moderate gains. Most disappointing was the scarcity of winter finches. No Pine Grosbeak or White-winged Crossbill were seen. A single small flock of Red Crossbills at McDonough 13 Dec was reported to Chad Covey and a single flock of six redpoll was spotted on the Cortland CBC. Pine Siskin reports were limited to 16 birds on two CBC's.

Occasional Great Blue Heron, Belted Kingfisher and Am. Robin were reported all season. Missed were Common Loon, all grebe species, Wood Duck, Green-winged Teal, Hermit Thrush, White-crowned Sparrow and Rusty Blackbird.

Observers: C. & J. Baldwin, R. & J. Barnes, D. & J. Bell, R. Bennett, L. Bemont, B. Bozdos, M. Clark, C. Covey, M. Davis (MDv), M. Dobinsky, S. Dorber, M. Ferranti, P. & E. Getkin, G. Kirch, M. Layton, S. Levin, H. Marsi, A. Mason, D. Messineo, R. Milliken, S. O'Connell, B. Pantle, M. Petuh, S. Rice, I. Rowe, J. Sedlacek, T. & N. Tasber, B. Toner, G. Wade, A. Whitaker, D. Windsor, I. Wright.

Abbreviations: BCBC - Binghamton Christmas Bird Count, 30 Dec; Can Res - Cannonsville Res; ChCBC - Chenango Christmas Bird Count, 15 Dec; CCBC - Cortland Christmas Bird Count, 29 Dec; FHNC - Finch Hollow Nature Center; OCBC - Oneonta Christmas Bird Count, 15 Dec; OPM - Oneonta, Portlandville, Milford; TCBC - Tioga Christmas Bird Count, 31 Dec; WFC - Waterfowl Count.

LOONS-DUCKS: Snow Goose: only one report TIOG, Feb. Canada Goose: *intro.* Am. Black Duck: max 70 CCBC; 73 Can Res 20 Jan (SD); up to five other

reports a month. Mallard: max 635 on five CBC's and 539 WFC. Gadwall: two Chen Forks 27 Feb (FHNC staff) only report. Canvasback: only one TIOG Feb (RB). Redhead: three CCBC, only report. Ring-necked Duck 19 CCBC, only report. Greater Scaup: 41 CCBC, only second report in 15 CBC's. Lesser Scaup: 36 CCBC, high. Com. Goldeneye: max 37 on three CBC's; 32 WFC; up to four reports/month, high. Bufflehead: two Jan and one Feb reports, TIOG (C&J B, AW), only ones. Hooded Merganser: *intro*. Com. Merganser: up to 90/month all season, high. Red-breasted Merganser: *intro*.

HAWKS-ALCIDS: N. Harrier: max eight TCBC; arr Windsor 2 Feb (JS), max four TIOG 18 Feb (HM, BB, GK), high. Bald Eagle: *intro*. Sharp-shinned Hawk: nine on four CBC's; four to seven Jan/Feb; 12 in Feb, low. Cooper's Hawk: 10 on five CBC's; frequent at two BROO feeders through 15 Feb (MP, SR); three other reports, good numbers. N. Goshawk: singles BROO 20 Dec (ML) and CORT 12 Feb only reports. Red-tailed Hawk: max 79 five CBC's; mid winter max six 18 Feb. Rough-legged Hawk: seven reports, max three, high. Am. Kestrel: seven-eight/month, good numbers. Ring-necked Pheasant: one OCBC, two BCBC, only reports. Ruffed Grouse: "several" early Dec (JS); 12 four CBC's; only one/two after Dec, low. Wild Turkey: max 100 Harpursville, DELA 15 Feb (AM), good counts all season. Killdeer: arr TIOG Feb (D&JB). Am. Woodcock: one TIOG 8 Dec (D&JB) only third winter report in 11 years. **Bonaparte's Gull:** TCBC, first one in many years. Ring-billed Gull: max 50 Otsego L 27 Dec. Herring Gull: max 153 CCBC. Great Black-backed Gull: two CCBC, one TIOG Feb (D&JB & RB), only reports. **Iceland Gull:** *intro*.

PIGEONS-WOODPECKERS: Mourning Dove: max 350 five CBC's. E. Screech-Owl: five on two CBC's; two BROO Dec; one banded Candor Feb (BP), good. Great Horned Owl: 13 on three CBC's; five other Dec reports decreasing to two Feb, low. Snowy Owl: one TIOG 6 Jan (R&MS), often missed. Barred Owl: one BROO 11 Dec (JS); one each ChCBC and BCBC, only reports. N. Saw-whet Owl: one banded Candor Feb. (BP). Belted Kingfisher: eleven on four CBC's; four to six/month, good. Red-bellied Woodpecker: seven CCBC & TCBC; seven singles Dec decreasing to four Feb, all TIOG. N. Flicker: arr Endwell Golf Club 6 Feb (MP) and one TIOG (B&EM), early. Pileated Woodpecker: 12 on five CBC's; five other Dec singles; two OTSE Jan-Feb, low.

FLYCATCHERS-STARLINGS: Horned Lark: 33 ChCBC; only report until six Homer 9 Feb; max 70 CHEN 16 Feb and 50 BROO 25 Feb. Am. Crow: max 1541 TCBC; midwinter max 400 OPM 12 Feb, high counts all season. Black-capped Chickadee: max 2212 five CBC's, winter stalwart of field and feeder. Tufted Titmouse: *intro*. Red-breasted Nuthatch: 28 five CBC's; one daily after 25 Dec (MDv); four to five other sites/month, very low after last year's incursion. Brown Creeper: 18 five CBC's; only two to four sites/month, scarce. Golden-crowned Kinglet: 11 three CBC's; "common" three BROO sites 8, 9 and 11 Dec (JS) dwindling to two sites Feb (T&NT, DM). Ruby-crowned Kinglet: only one BCBC. E. Bluebird: only one TCBC. Brown Thrasher: one Ivor Rowe's feeder Virgil until

12 Feb, seldom in winter. Cedar Waxwing: five on two CBC's, continuing scarce (one other report) until four reports Feb, max 30 TIOG 18 Feb. N. Shrike: one each TCBC and OCBC; one Otselic, "several sightings" all season (DM); one Linklean 3 Jan and one McDonough 22 Jan (CC); one CORT 27 Jan "a lifer for us" (MP&MF); one TIOG Jan (AW); one OPM 2 Feb (MD); last TIOG 18 Feb (HM et al), most reports in 12 years.

TANAGERS-WEAVERS: N. Cardinal: a record 299 on five CBC's, twice the previous high. Rufous-sided Towhee: one TCBC, only one. Am. Tree Sparrow: 365 on five CBC's; after early Jan mostly singles eight to 10 reports/month, scarce. Chipping Sparrow: two TCBC only report. Song Sparrow: 19 three CBC's; three others TIOG Dec; one DELA 2 Jan last (AM). Swamp Sparrow: only one ChCBC. White-throated Sparrow: up to four BROO feeder through 15 Feb (MP); two other singles, low. Dark-eyed Junco: 3825 CBC's, scarce in Jan. Snow Bunting: 40 OCBC; small flocks all season CHEN(DM); max 100 BROO 7 Jan (HM, mob); last BROO 26 Feb (SR). Red-winged Blackbird: none overwintered; arr 30 OPM 21 Feb and 200 McDonough 22 Feb. Com. Grackle: two TIOG reports, Jan; arr CHEN 23 Feb (DW). Brown-headed Cowbird: one TCBC, only fall leftover; arr BROO 4 Feb (SR). Purple Finch: seven OCBC, four CCBC; one BROO 15 Jan (MP) and one 2 Feb (JS) only reports, very scarce. House Finch: 1839 five CBC's; common all season. Red Crossbill: *intro*. Am. Goldfinch: 384 five CBC's; scarce Jan, mostly at feeders. Evening Grosbeak: occasional small flocks all season; midwinter max 120 Milford 20 Feb (AM), good compared to recent years.

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## REGION 5 — ONEIDA LAKE BASIN

### GENE HUGGINS

As one observer reported, it was another mini-winter in central New York. The average temperature for the three month period was 4.2° above the norm of 25.0° making this the eighth warmest winter since records were first kept in 1902 and the balmiest on record since 1952-53. Precipitation in the form of rainfall was above normal for December, with 5.24 inches establishing it as the third wettest on record. Rainfall for January was near normal and February was dryer than usual. Total snowfall for Syracuse was 93.9 inches, and Old Forge received 122 inches by the end of the period. Although January's snowfall was three inches above the norm of 27.9, very little of it stayed on the ground with the mild weather. An open winter with a scarcity of berry and seed



crops made for generally poor birding, especially in the Adirondacks and the southern highlands.

Despite a noticeable decline in the populations of land birds, a good variety of waterfowl were found on our major rivers and urban ponds. Common Loon persisted to the end of the period at both Fairhaven and Oswego Harbor. A surprising 42 Great Blue Heron were reported from the Region, with the largest concentration near Fulton. Over a thousand Canada Goose were observed at Woodman's Pond, Rome, Fairhaven and near Montezuma during the last week of December and the beginning of January. Each winter for the last several years an increasing number of Green-winged Teal have overwintered on the Hookway Tract (a flood control pond) in Syracuse. This season the maximum was 23, an increase of least 11 birds from the preceding year. Observers conducting the waterfowl census in mid January counted a record number of Mallards (4359), which contributed to the highest census total since 1964. For the second consecutive winter Am. Wigeon were found; this season a total of 16 was observed from five different locations. The overall population for most of our diving ducks was down with the exception of Ring-necked Duck, attaining a new high of 21 on the waterfowl census. Besides two King Eider at Oswego Harbor, the Region's first **Harlequin Duck** in five years highlighted this season's display of ducks.

Winter raptor numbers showed a moderate increase over the previous winter. Reports of N. Harrier, Sharp-shinned Hawk, Rough-legged Hawk and Am. Kestrel were up, suggesting that rodents were more easily accessible. A **Merlin** in early December constituted the Region's third winter record since 1988.

Other winter highlights include more Wild Turkey in northern Oneida and Herkimer Counties. Thirty Wild Turkey near Remsen and seven at a feeder in Old Forge all winter indicated this bird's continued population expansion. Late departures included such species as Sanderling, Dunlin, Bonaparte's Gull and Black-legged Kittiwake. The two reports of Long-eared Owl were the first in six years and eight to twelve Short-eared Owl were reported from three locations south and east of Oneida L. A few Bohemian Waxwing near Rome was the only group to be seen all winter. The first major snowstorm to pass through our area occurred during the second weekend in January. With over ten inches of snow on the ground, significant numbers of Snow Bunting were found foraging in the manured fields located in the southern portion of the region. Of course birders take this opportunity to look for Lapland Longspurs and they were not disappointed when a total Regional count of seven were

observed. This same storm also may have contributed to the disappearance of Gray Catbird, Field Sparrow and Swamp Sparrow afterwards. Carolina Wren was found at higher elevations than normal, particularly at feeders located in northern Pompey Township and Erieville. Am. Crow and Am. Robin were found in greater numbers than usual along Lake Ontario, especially at Fairhaven and Oswego.

Winter finches were virtually absent except for American Goldfinch and Evening Grosbeak. Pine Grosbeak and White-winged Crossbill were observed at most for two days only, along with just three reports of Pine Siskin.

Negatives for the season include very few scoters, no Killdeer, and no Common Snipe. With the Oswego River remaining ice free for most of the winter, very few white-winged gulls were seen resting at sites where they are normally found. Finally, American Tree Sparrow, White-throated Sparrow and Dark-eyed Junco were not especially common, averaging no more than ten to twenty birds per day after December.

Observers in the Region reported 115 species during the winter. The most unusual of these were **Harlequin Duck** and **Merlin**. Other notable species reported were Red-throated Loon, Red-necked Grebe, Tundra Swan, Snow Goose, King Eider, Bald Eagle, Sanderling, Dunlin, Black-legged Kittiwake, Long-eared Owl, N. Saw-whet Owl, Gray Jay, Com. Raven, Boreal Chickadee, Gray Catbird, Bohemian Waxwing, Rufous-sided Towhee, Chipping Sparrow, Field Sparrow and White-winged Crossbill.

A special thanks to Gary Lee and Marge Rusk for their contributions to the introduction of this report.

Contributors: Sue Adair, Sue Boettger, David Cesari, Dorothy Crumb, Paul DeBenedictis, Robert L. Evans, William T. Gruenbaum, Elva Hawken, Gene Huggins, Gary Lee, Robert Long, Sheila McCombie, Stephen Mikochik, Belle Peebles, Bill Purcell, Margaret S. Rusk, Ginny Skoglund, Gerald Smith, Jim Throckmorton, Judy Thurber, Glenn Wolford.

Abbreviations: DH - Derby Hill, OSWE; LSB - Fairhaven, Little Sodus Bay and vicinity, CAYU; LOL - Lake Ontario Littoral, OSWE; NPT - northern Pompey Township, ONON; OnonL - Onondaga Lake, ONON; SSSP - Selkirk Shores State Park, OSWE; SVB - Sylvan and Verona Beach, ONEI; TRWMA - Three Rivers Wildlife Management Area, ONON.

LOONS-DUCKS: Red-throated Loon: one Oswego H 16 Dec, 5 Jan. Com. Loon: max five Oswego R 23 Feb, four Oneida L 22 Dec, two LSB 2 Dec, one Onondaga L 3 Jan, *intro*. Pied-billed Grebe: one Oswego R 16 Dec to 17 Feb, two LSB 1 Jan. Horned Grebe: max 12 LOL 5 Jan. Red-necked Grebe: one SPd 1 Dec,

one SVB 10 Feb. Double-crested Cormorant: six Oswego 2 Jan, three in the same locality 23 Feb. Great Blue Heron: max 19 Fulton 24 Jan, *intro*. Tundra Swan: two Oneida L 9-15 Dec. Snow Goose: max 300 Holland Patent 20 Dec. Canada Goose: max 1250 LSB 6 Jan, *intro*. Wood Duck: three Baldwinsville 27 Jan to 17 Feb; singles LOL 2 Dec-13 Jan, Rome 5 Dec, Dewitt 1-2 Jan. Green-winged Teal: *intro*. Am. Black Duck: max 151 Woodman's Pd 1 Dec. N. Pintail: one Oswego 2 Jan, two LSB 8 Feb. Gadwall: max 27 LSB 27 Jan. Am. Wigeon: ten LOL 2 Dec, two Baldwinsville 19 Jan to 3 Feb, two LSB 1 Jan, 8 Feb, one Oswego 1 to 20 Jan, one Twn of Brutus 22 Dec, 16 Feb. Canvasback: nine LSB 8 Feb, 27 reported for the period. Redhead: max 26 LSB 26 Jan. Ring-necked Duck: max 19 Skaneateles L, mid Jan, *intro*. Greater Scaup: max 619 Skaneateles L, mid Jan. Lesser Scaup: five Oswego 9 Feb, three LSB 8 Feb, one Baldwinsville 17, 23 Feb, one Skaneateles L 19 Jan. King Eider: male Oswego 1, 2 Jan, female there 10-23 Feb. **Harlequin Duck**: female Oswego R Phoenix 13 Jan. Oldsquaw: max 90 Oswego 27 Jan. White-winged Scoter: five LOL 5 Jan, singles Oswego 17 Feb, Scriba 24 Feb. Com. Goldeneye: max 332 Oswego and LSB 6 Jan. Bufflehead: max 200 LOL 2 Dec. Hooded Merganser: max 100 Oneida L 9 Dec. Com. Merganser: max 1380 OnonL and Oswego R 15 Jan. Red-breasted Merganser: max 500 LOL 2 Dec.

**HAWKS-ALCIDS**: Bald Eagle: ad Fulton, 5 Jan, 3-10 Feb, ad OnonL 29 Jan, imm Oswego 6 Jan, imm LOL 2, 13 Jan, one Fulton Chain, Adk's to the end of period. N. Harrier: four SVB 22 Dec-1 Jan, Biddlecum 23 Feb. N. Goshawk: five reports. Rough-legged Hawk: max ten MADI and ONON 10 Feb. Am. Kestrel: five near Oneida L 9 Dec, 22 Dec. **Merlin**: one Cicero Swamp 9 Dec, an unidentified falcon possibly this species seen twice Syracuse in Jan. Ring-necked Pheasant: 15 reported for the period. Ruffed Grouse: max 12 Nelson 27 Feb. Wild Turkey: max 50 Holland Patent, Jan, *intro*. Am Coot: max 20 LOL 2 Dec, three LSB 8-13 Jan, one Oswego 19 Jan-23 Feb, one OnonL 4 Feb. Sanderling: last SPd 1 Dec, record late. Dunlin: last four SPd 1 Dec. Bonaparte's Gull: ten Oneida L 9 Dec, last Syracuse 15 Jan. Iceland Gull: singles Oneida 22 Dec, Oswego 2-13 Jan, Fulton 8 Jan-17 Feb, two, one an ad *kumleini*, Baldwinsville 27 Jan-23 Feb. Glaucous Gull: two Baldwinsville 9 Jan to end of period. Great Black-backed Gull: max 520 LOL & Oswego R 1 Jan. Black-legged Kittiwake: one SPd 1 Dec.

**PIGEONS-WOODPECKERS**: Mourning Dove: max 110 Sterling 6 Jan. E. Screech-Owl: five reports. Snowy Owl: two Oswego 1-19 Jan, one SVB 22 Dec-27 Jan, one Big Moose L 27 Feb. Barred Owl: one SVB 23 Dec-6 Jan, one Old Forge 19 Dec. Long-eared Owl: one Baldwinsville, one Liverpool 29 Jan. Short-eared Owl: *intro*. N. Saw-whet Owl: one Cato 1 Jan, one Old Forge 20 Feb. Red-bellied Woodpecker: one at a feeder Holland Patent 25 Feb. Yellow-bellied Sapsucker: singles Hannibal 16 Dec, Pompey 9 Feb, Camillus 19 Feb. N. Flicker: 24 reports.

**FLYCATCHERS-STARLING**: Horned Lark: max 145 Twn of Otisco 14 Jan. Gray Jay: three n. branch Moose R 19 Dec. Am. Crow: max 260 Pumpkin Hollow 22 Jan. Com. Raven: one Third L 23 Feb. Black-capped Chickadee: max 75 LOL 2 Dec. Boreal Chickadee: singles Third L 19 Dec, Old Forge 2 Feb, DH 22 Feb. Red-

breasted Nuthatch: max 25 TRWMA 2 Jan. Carolina Wren: 14 reports, *intro*. Winter Wren: singles at Deansboro 29 Dec, Port Byron 1 Jan. Golden-crowned Kinglet: five SSSP 19 Jan, very scarce. E. Bluebird: two Oneida 22 Dec, three Skaneateles 30 Dec, one Nine Mile Pt 8 Feb. Am. Robin max 110 LSB and Oswego 8 Feb. Gray Catbird: one Andrew's Road Dewitt 2 Jan, three Dewitt 7 Jan, one Fayetteville 10 Jan. Bohemian Waxwing: max 11 Rome 9, 16 Feb. Cedar Waxwing: max 170 Dewitt 15 Dec. N. Shrike: 21 reports for the period.

VIREOS-WARBLERS: None

TANAGERS-WEAVERS: Rufous-sided Towhee: one Cazenovia 11 Jan. Am. Tree Sparrow: max 43 Toad H 23 Dec. Chipping Sparrow: one Nine Mile Pt 9-11 Jan. Field Sparrow: one Oswego 10 Jan. Song Sparrow: 21 reports. Swamp Sparrow: one Dewitt 5 Jan, only report. White-throated Sparrow: nine Hookway Tract Syracuse 1 Jan. Dark-eyed Junco: max 20 Oneida 30 Jan. Lapland Longspur: three T Otisco 12-14 Jan, four Cazenovia 19-29 Jan. Snow Bunting: max 1000 Fabius 7-10 Jan. Red-winged Blackbird: six/day until mid Feb, arr Hookway Tract 19 Feb. E. Meadowlark: two Mexico 2 Jan. Rusty Blackbird: one NPT 1-3 Feb. Com. Grackle: max 22 Oneida 22 Dec, one Hastings 15 Jan, arr Oneida, Rome 22 Feb. Brown-headed Cowbird: max 12 Lamson Road ONON 23 Jan. Pine Grosbeak: ten Erieville 24 Jan, only report. Purple Finch: nine Rome 29 Dec. House Finch: max 177 Cato 12 Feb. White-winged Crossbill: one Hastings 5, 6 Jan, only report. Pine Siskin: three reports 8 Dec to 20 Jan. Am. Goldfinch: max 91 Hastings 22 Feb. Evening Grosbeak: max 100 Erieville 25 Jan.

*Corrigenda:* Kingbird 40:164, 165 Spring Arrivals Table: Tree Swallow should read 14 Mar instead of 14 Apr, Savannah Sparrow should read 20 Mar instead of 14 Apr; 40:184 Lamson Road is in ONON, not OSWE; 40:187 Willow Flycatcher: max 28 Clay and OSWE 28 May, delete Peat Swamp; 40:188 Chipping Sparrow: max 23 Clay and OSWE 27 Apr, delete *intro*; Swamp Sparrow: max 54 Clay Marsh and Scott Swamp 28 May.

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## REGION 6 — ST. LAWRENCE

KENNETH L. CROWELL

The winter period averaged 3-4° above normal, and precipitation was 110% of normal in much of the Region, and 130% of normal in northern St. Lawrence Co. and on the Tug Hill. December was warm and wet, 4-5° above normal, with one to three inches more rain than usual. The maximum temperature in the mid 50's occurred on 23 Dec, while the monthly minimum was only -10° on 27 Dec. Although for most of the

state January was on the warm side, in the North Country it was a degree or two below normal. A minimum temperature of  $-31^{\circ}$  was recorded at Gouverneur on 25 Jan, and maximum daily snowfall was 12 inches at Booneville on 18 Jan. February was  $5-6^{\circ}$  above average and slightly drier. Snowfall ranged from 10 inches throughout St. Lawrence and most of Jefferson Co. to 65 inches on Tug Hill. According to Mary Wood, there was open water in the St. Lawrence River until 21 Jan; similar conditions existed near Massena. Open water allowed waterfowl to disperse, reducing numbers of individuals on CBCs considerably.

Reports from our three counties show a remarkable diversity of sightings ranging from northern visitors to half-hardy species. A record 97 species included 21 water birds, 14 raptors, 10 gulls, and 39 passerines. The Massena CBC scored a record 71 species with four new species and 11 record high counts or ties for the NYS portion. New rarities included **King Eider** and **Harlequin Duck**, both great Regional rarities! Most notable was the extraordinary number of raptors in the Lake Ontario lowlands where they took advantage of low snow cover and high vole populations. There were three sightings of **Merlin**. There was a major invasion of Lapland Longspur in the Brownville-Cape Vincent area. Numbers of Northern Shrike and Bohemian Waxwing were also above normal, but winter finch counts were low, with fruits of mountain ash and high-bush cranberry remaining uneaten according to Peter O'Shea. This was the first time that Am. Crow spent most of the winter in Fine rather than moving to the St. Lawrence Valley, where the snow cover is less. Many persons complained of a dearth of birds at their feeders, perhaps also a result of the mild weather.

Substantial numbers of Northern Harrier, Red-tailed Hawk, and Rough-legged Hawk were in the Pt. Salibrius-Pt. Peninsula-Cape Vincent area. There were several small groups of Short-eared Owl. Mary Wood felt that increasing numbers of Rough-legged Hawk displaced the generally small numbers of Snowy Owl in late Dec, taking over the owls' perches and hovering over them as they fed. Raptor numbers were considerably lower with increased snow cover in Feb. Eleven reports, including the two CBCs, included all three Accipiter species

In the finch arena, Northern Cardinal was up, with a record on the Massena CBC. Pine Grosbeak was reported only by one observer. Purple Finch was down with only two reports, while House Finch continues to increase. There were only two sightings of Com. Redpoll, both near

Massena. Pine Siskin was scarce. American Goldfinch was abundant, but Evening Grosbeak was again irregular.

Half-hardy species included five reports of Great Blue Heron for Dec, and Wood Duck and Green-winged Teal were at Moses-Saunders Dam in Jan. Two **Dunlin** seen by Gerry Smith at El Dorado Beach Preserve, T Henderson, on 5 Jan were a Regional record late, the previous being 28 Dec. A Northern Flicker was seen at Hawkin's Pt during all three months, and Red-bellied Woodpecker appeared at several new locations in Jefferson Co. Pileated Woodpecker numbers were up, especially in southern St. Lawrence Co., where they feed on dead and dying Beech. A pair of **Carolina Wren** was resident in Canton for the entire period, with the male singing daily after 9 Jan. Also seen were Brown Thrasher, Northern Mockingbird, Red-winged Blackbird, Eastern Meadowlark, Rusty Blackbird and Common Grackle. Last and best was a male **Varied Thrush** with 17 Am. Robins near Hawkin's Pt on 15 Jan.

Contributors: Joanne & Nobl Ackerman, Marilyn Badger, Richard Brouse, Lee Chamberlaine, Ken Crowell, Bruce Di Labio, Bob Hendrickson, Paul Kelly, Debbie & Steve Litwhiler, Peter O'Shea, Gerald A. Smith, Mary & Brian Wood.

Abbreviations: CV - Cape Vincent; MSD - Moses-Saunders Dam and Hawkin's Pt; MCBC - Massena CBC, 23 Dec; PTP - Pt. Peninsula; PtS - Pt Salubrius, T Brownville; RP - Reynolds Plant, Massena; TICBC - Thousand Islands CBC, 30 Dec; SLR - St. Lawrence River.

LOONS-DUCKS: Com. Loon: record counts of five on both TICBC and MCBC; two SLR, CV 12-18 Dec. Horned Grebe: two PtP 23 Dec, one MCBC, one CV 1 Jan. Double-crested Cormorant: one MCBC. Great Blue Heron: *intro*; new to MCBC. Tundra Swan: arr three PtP 29 Nov, max 12 there 23 and 28 Dec. Mute Swan: four CV 13 Jan, not a good sign. Canada Goose: max 1500 MSD 9 Dec; 3-700 Ellisburg entire period. Wood Duck: two males MSD 9 Jan. Green-winged Teal: two males MSD 1 Jan. Am. Black Duck: max 35 MSD 23 Dec. Ring-necked Duck: male PtS 23 Dec, very unusual in winter. Greater Scaup: regular at RP in Jan, max eight on 4 Jan. Oldsquaw: one MSD 2 Dec through 15 Jan. Com. Goldeneye: max 2500 MSD 9 Jan. Barrow's Goldeneye: max two male, one imm male RP 19 Jan. **King Eider**: *intro*. **Harlequin Duck**: MCBC; molting into breeding plumage 25 Feb; second Regional record. Hooded Merganser: max five RP 15 Jan. Com. Merganser: max 10,000 MSD 9 Dec.

HAWKS-ALCIDS: Turkey Vulture: arr Henderson 27 Feb, early. Bald Eagle: numbers low, four to six per day, on SLR due to open water; two ad PtP 21 Jan, ad and imm Henderson Bay 3 Mar; ad MSD 9 Feb, imm MSD 24 Jan and four times thereafter, last 21 Feb; two ad T Clare mid Jan probably scavenging coyote-killed deer carcasses (PO'S). N. Harrier: max 39 PtS-PtP-CV 23 Dec; new to MCBC. Sharp-shinned Hawk: total of five reported. Cooper's Hawk: total of

eight reported, max three PtS-PtP-CV 23 Dec. N. Goshawk: total of six reported, one at a feeder in Lorraine. Red-tailed Hawk: max 51 PtS-PtP-CV 23 Dec; also one dark morph imm 20 Dec and one Krider's type imm 23 Dec (GAS). Rough-legged Hawk: max 125 PtS-PtP-CV both 23 Dec and 21 Jan; RB counted 43 dark morph out of 110 on 13 Jan. Am. Kestrel: one to three per day in Lake Ontario lowlands. **Merlin**: one near Woodville 9 Dec, probably first Regional winter record; one Mud Bay CV 20 Dec; imm male(?) hunting House Sparrow and European Starling CV 27 Jan. Gray Partridge: up to 15 CV per day with six groups totaling as many as 48 (MW). **Dunlin**: *intro*. Little Gull: two in second winter plumage MSD 2 Dec. Bonaparte's Gull: max 375 MSD 2 Dec. Ring-billed Gull: max 3500 MSD 5 Dec; 376 MCBC record high; three migrants 6 Feb reflect mild weather. Herring Gull: max 4000 MSD 9 Dec. **Thayer's Gull**: imm MSD 2 Dec. Iceland Gull: one per day MSD in Dec; Jan max 32 on 19 Jan; record max 67 on 6 Feb. **Lesser Black-backed Gull**: ad MSD 6 Feb. Glaucous Gull: five to seven per day MSD in Jan. Great Black-backed Gull: max 1200 MSD 9 Dec. Black-legged Kittiwake: one first winter plumage MSD 5 and 9 Dec.

DOVES-WOODPECKERS: E. Screech-Owl: male in Maple at MW's house, CV entire period, female arr nearby 13 Feb. Great Horned Owl: heard CV 20 Dec, Fine starting 6 Feb. Snowy Owl: up to six per day PtP-CV in Dec, then only one for Feb; two LEWI 15 Jan. Short-eared Owl: max 69 PtS-PtP-CV 23 Dec, 28 at PtS alone. Belted Kingfisher: one CV 16 Dec, only report. Red-bellied Woodpecker: imm female PtP Dec and Jan; one Brownville 2 Feb unusual; three new locations in Henderson; Honeyville, T Adams, and Watertown (LBC); more than usual.

FLYCATCHERS-STARLING: Gray Jay: five extreme s STLA in spruce-tamarack forest. Com. Raven: common and vocal in s STLA feeding on deer carcasses; one TICBC. Am. Crow: *intro*. Black-capped Chickadee: numbers up, 14 daily at my Pierrepont feeder. Tufted Titmouse: none. Red-breasted Nuthatch: reported by four of 11 observers. White-breasted Nuthatch: reported by 7 observers; record high MCBC. Brown Creeper: max five MSD 25 Feb. Golden-crowned Kinglet: two Louisville 4 Jan. Bohemian Waxwing: several reports from all three counties, usually without Cedar Waxwing; 270 feeding on cedar T Diana LEWI 11 Feb; 300 Louisville 24 Feb. Cedar Waxwing: small numbers, but 203 MCBC record high. **Varied Thrush**: *intro*. N. Mockingbird: one Theresa 16 Dec. N. Shrike: 19 reports.

VIREOS-WARBLEDERS: None.

TANAGERS-WEAVERS: Song Sparrow: just one MSD 1 Jan and one Louisville 11-12 Feb is surprising for a mild winter. Dark-eyed Junco: numbers low. Lapland Longspur: max 154 CV 27 Feb. Snow Bunting: good numbers in JEFF, max 660 CV 21 Jan. Red-winged Blackbird: one Ogdensburg 7 Dec. E. Meadowlark: colorful in snow Brownville 2 Feb. Rusty Blackbird: two Louisville 24 Jan. Com. Grackle: one with starlings Louisville 5 Feb. Pine Grosbeak: one questionable report only. Purple Finch: *intro*. House Finch: more than ever, max 75 Ogdensburg. Red Crossbill: 11 road-killed near Brantingham 19 Jan. Com. Redpoll: max three near

Massena on 20 Feb. Pine Siskin: only one JEFF, max five Ogdensburg 6 Jan. Evening Grosbeak: max 110 Lorraine 20 Jan.

*Corrigenda:* Harlequin Duck was not seen 30 Nov - see this report; also seen was juv Sabine's Gull 20 Sep (BDiL); 25 Com. Tern reported 16 Nov may well have been Bonaparte's Gull, and should not be accepted as a late record.

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## REGION 7 — ADIRONDACK-CHAMPLAIN

JOHN M. C. PETERSON

Although widely regarded as a "birdless" winter, species variety was the best in five years, perhaps due to relatively mild conditions. The average temperature for the first 15 days of December was 35°, some twelve degrees above the long-term average of 23°. There was only 2.3 inches of snow to 15 Dec, when a storm added another 4-6 inches. January was much colder, but seasonal snowfall remained about 8° below normal. Thermometers dropped to -11° at Ellenburg Depot on 21 Jan, to -28° at Saranac Lake on 22 Jan, and to -18° at Malone on 26 Jan. February was the fifth warmest and sixth driest on record, with temperatures ranging from -12° at Ellenburg Depot on 2 Feb to 43° at Plattsburgh on 5 Feb. Much of Lake Champlain remained open throughout the winter.

A total of 86 species were reported, the best showing since the winter of 1985-86, but short of the 96 species found in 1983-84. Nevertheless, there were fewer birds to be found. In three days of intensive birding and cross-country skiing near Indian Lake, HAMI, Bob McKinney found only 88 individuals of six species, noting that although it was a poor winter in the Genesee Region, "I now see that it is even poorer in the Adirondacks." Much of this was due to the lack of wild foods, especially cones at higher elevations. Except for low elevation buckthorn, sumac, and a bumper crop of small mammals for raptors, there was little food available to draw birds here.

Due to the open lake and late closure of inland waters, however, water bird numbers and variety were good. A **Double-crested Cormorant** at the Plattsburgh harbor breakwater until 16 Dec provided



a first winter record for the Region, although not unexpected in light of recent increases. Bob Hagar and Ted Mack found over 12,000 Snow Geese rafted off Pointe au Roche 16 Dec, and over 2,000 Canada Geese remained through the 13-19 Jan NYS Waterfowl Count. Mallards outnumbered Am. Black Ducks almost 10:1 on the same survey. Candy and John Hess spotted a drake **Barrow's Goldeneye** at Ausable Point on 19 Jan.

Bald Eagles continue their resurgence, with numerous reports from Lakes Champlain and George, as well as the Adirondack interior where deer carcasses are a staple. Red-tailed Hawk numbers were high, while Rough-legged Hawk staged a major invasion. Beth Edmonds and Dan Nickerson tallied ten (5 light morph, 5 dark morph) between Essex and Whallonsburgh on 17 Feb. Curiously, there were no reports of harriers or of any falcons. Owl variety was dismal at just three species, but one of those was a **Great Gray Owl** that twice paid brief daylight visits to the Kurtenbach feeder outside Elizabethtown on 29 Jan and again on 12 Feb, apparently content to perch and watch the red squirrels run about. Northern Shrike appeared in outstanding numbers; Edmonds and Nickerson counted *six* between Ausable Point and Whallonsburgh on 17 Feb, and at least 15 others were reported.

Feeder birds were in short supply, although there were a few Carolinian highlights in addition to the boreal zone owl. Pairs of Tufted Titmouse were reported from feeders near Elizabethtown, Essex, and Mineville, while single **Carolina Wren** frequented feeders at Elizabethtown, Plattsburgh, and Saranac Lake. The only winter finches not reported were Pine Grosbeak and Hoary Redpoll, and all of the others generally were scarce, as the species accounts reflect.

This winter there was coverage of six Christmas Bird Count circles located partly or entirely within the Region: Ferrisburg, VT/NY (15 Dec), Plattsburgh, NY/VT (16 Dec), Champlain Islands-St. Albans, VT/NY (16 Dec), Old Forge (19 Dec), Elizabethtown (22 Dec), and Saranac Lake (29 Dec). The revitalized Plattsburgh CBC, now under the aegis of High Peaks Audubon Society, turned up a record 61 species, while Old Forge CBC in the Adirondack interior could take equal pride in managing to locate 22 species this year.

Contributors: James Barrow, Robert Budliger, Dean Cook, Janet Cooper, Charlie Delehanty, Beth Edmonds, Greg Furness, Dot French, William Grinwell, Robert Hagar, Terry Hall, Candy Hess, Hal Klein, William Kreuger, Henry & Sylvia Kurtenbach, Theodore Mack, Steve Mahoney, Larry Master, Robert McKinney, Ann Moisan, Mary Lou Morgan, Dan Nickerson, John Parke, John & Susan Peterson, Alan Pistorius, Mike Storey, Hollis White, and all the Christmas counters.

Abbreviations: CICBC - Champlain Islands Christmas Bird Count; ECBC - Elizabethtown CBC; FCBC - Ferrisburg CBC; WFC - Waterfowl Count; OFCBC - Old Forge CBC; PCBC - Plattsburgh CBC; SLCBC - Saranac Lake CBC.

LOONS-DUCKS: **Double-crested Cormorant**: *intro*. Great Blue Heron: last Ausable R delta 1 Dec. Snow Goose: *intro*, 1202 PCBC same day. Canada Goose: *intro*. Am. Black Duck: *intro*. Mallard: *intro*. **Barrow's Goldeneye**: *intro*.

HAWKS-ALCIDS: Bald Eagle: ad Heart Bay, n L George 1 Dec; imm FCBC; 2 PCBC; two ad feeding on deer carcass Follensby Pd (hack site) 20 Dec; ad Tupper L 30 Dec & 25 Feb; ad Crown Pt Peninsula 8 Jan-28 Feb; ad T Santa Clara FRAN 11 Jan; three ad WFC; ad & subad Ausable Pt 19 Jan-17 Feb; Moose RRA all season, feeding on dead deer 24 Feb, suggest no fewer than ten individuals. Red-tailed Hawk: *intro*, max 7 ECBC. Rough-legged Hawk: *intro*. Wild Turkey: max 7 ECBC and 7 OFCBC, 2 Tupper L feeder and 2 Indian L feeder also show continued penetration. Bonaparte's Gull: 2 PCBC only report. **Iceland Gull**: one count week SLCBC highly unusual. **Glaucous Gull**: one Plattsburgh 11-16 Dec unusual. Great Black-backed Gull: max 49 WFC.

PIGEONS-WOODPECKERS: **Great Gray Owl**: *intro*. Belted Kingfisher: one OFCBC quite unexpected. N. Flicker: Wadhams feeder Dec-Feb, apparently subsisting on sunflower seeds.

FLYCATCHERS-STARLINGS: Horned Lark: two SLCBC noteworthy at higher elevation in winter; flock Crown Pt Peninsula late Jan more expected; two (Prairie race) arr Westport 18 Feb (BE, DN). Gray Jay: max three SLCBC; one OFCBC; Shingle Shanty Brook 11 Jan; Helldiver Pd 6 Feb, a good showing. Com. Raven: total of 21 reported on five CBCs; pair at cliff site NW side of Pitchoff Mt 23 Feb. Boreal Chickadee: max 5 ECBC; also 1 OFCBC. Tufted Titmouse: *intro*. **Carolina Wren**: *intro*. Bohemian Waxwing: 40-50 Westport 5-9 Jan (RB, TH, JP); 25 Ticonderoga 18 Feb (JC); has now appeared in all but two winters since the winter of 1979-80, or ten out of twelve years! N. Shrike: *intro*.

VIREOS-WARBLEDERS: None.

TANAGERS-WEAVERS: N. Cardinal: max 66 PCBC and a total of 97 on four CBCs demonstrates that this bird is now firmly established in settled areas. White-crowned Sparrow: one PCBC quite uncommon here in winter. E. Meadowlark: arr Westport 18 Feb (BE, C)N, record early. Brown-headed Cowbird: max six PCBC; four SLCBC only other report; has become quite scarce here in winter. Purple Finch: 15 PCBC only report. House Finch: max 136 PCBC; 44 FCBC, but absent on ECBC and SLCBC reflecting movement out of higher areas in spite of well stocked feeders. Red Crossbill: flock Adk VIC, Paul Smiths, for two weeks in Dec, bill-scraping on sandstone chimney, presumably for grit or salts in mortar (MS). White-winged Crossbill: one FCBC and two ECBC only reports. Com. Redpoll: two Lake Clear Airport feeder Jan only report. Pine Siskin: max five PCBC, one ECBC only reports. Am. Goldfinch: max 119 PCBC, scattered reports. Evening Grosbeak: max 598 ECBC; the most widespread winter finch, but nowhere really abundant.

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## REGION 8 — HUDSON-MOHAWK

KENNETH P. ABLE

The Region enjoyed an exceptionally mild and open winter. At Albany, December temperatures averaged 7° above normal, it was 64° on 23 Dec, and new record high temperatures were recorded on two dates. Precipitation was just slightly above normal for the month, but the year ended at a very wet 10.27 inches above normal. Snowfall totalled only 8.5 inches (6.8 inches below normal) and that which fell disappeared quickly. This trend continued through the remainder of the winter with well above normal temperatures, well below normal snowfall, and no accumulation of snow on the ground over much of the Region.

Reporters were in general agreement that birds were rather scarce. Feeders were ignored and land birds were often hard to find in numbers. That is to be expected given the mild and open conditions which make food available and do not drive birds into feeders. These are also the kinds of conditions that encourage so-called half-hardy species to linger in fall and attempt to overwinter north of their usual ranges. This season, that trend was evident only among waterbirds (from loons and grebes to coots) and Eastern Phoebe. The other species that typically fall into this category were not reported in greater than usual numbers.

It was an excellent winter for Short-eared Owl and Northern Shrike, but other northern irruptive species were in short supply. Winter finches were almost absent. At Jenny L in the southern Adirondacks, Yunick monitored a very intense and unusual irruption of Black-capped Chickadees. In December he captured 186, most in the last half of the month. By January the numbers were back down. This invasion rivalled those of 1971-72 and 1980-81 in magnitude, but differed in that the flight comprised mostly adults. Whether the young birds emigrated earlier is not known. Unusual numbers or activity were not noted elsewhere.

The only rarity reported was a possible Varied Thrush.

Thanks to Bill Cook for compiling the fall report while I was off having fun in the antipodes.

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Abbreviations: Alcove - Alcove Res, ALBA; Cat-Cox - Catskill-Coxsackie; FiveR - Five Rivers Environmental Education Center, Delmar, ALBA; HudR - Hudson R; SaraL - Saratoga L; SaraSpa - Saratoga Spa State Park.

LOONS-DUCKS: Com. Loon: two SaraL 2 Dec (BP); singles Cat-Cox CBC 18 Dec (BC), grounded SCHO 19 Dec (KEP), Hague 6, 22 Jan (AC,BCr,LM); rare in winter. Pied-billed Grebe: singles SaraL 2 Dec (BP), Alcove 16 Dec (ALBA CBC); rare in winter. Red-necked Grebe: one Alcove 16 Dec (ALBA CBC); rare in winter. Great Blue Heron: 11 reports include singles at TomR 1 Jan (BB,KB,AGR), near Greenwich WASH 6 Jan (JS), WASH 13 Jan (BP), Cambridge 29 Jan (JS). Mute Swan: 58 HudR in COLU 13 Jan (BC); continues to increase. Snow Goose: two Kinderhook 15 Dec (AL), one TomR 1 Jan (BB,KB); unusual in winter. Canada Goose: high counts, 1200 Cat-Cox CBC 18 Dec; 1330 HudR in COLU 13 Jan (BC). Wood Duck: singles HudR at Ft Edward WASH 15 Dec (BP), SaraSpa CBC 16 Dec (fide SZ). Green-winged Teal: male Schuylerville 15 Feb (BP). N. Pintail: two males, one female Niskayuna 15 Dec (RPY); two ALBA CBC 16 Dec; two Cat-Cox CBC 18 Dec (BC); two Linlithgo 13 Jan (BC). N. Shoveler: one female FiveR 23 Dec through freeze-up (AM). Gadwall: five SaraL 9 Jan (RPG), one Germantown 13 Jan (BC). Canvasback: 2000 Germantown 6 Feb (AL), large count. Ring-necked Duck: arr COLU 26 Feb. Greater Scaup: 31 ALBA CBC 16 Dec; one Cohoes 29 Dec (BC); uncommon in winter. White-winged Scoter: male Lock 7 Mohawk R 9 Dec (RPY); rare in winter. Hooded Merganser: five L Lonely SARA 9 Dec (BP), four ALBA CBC 16 Dec., pair Silver Bay WARR 18 Feb (LM), one Castleton COLU 24 Feb (PFC), no.? Granville WASH 25 Feb (JS). Ruddy Duck: two SaraSpa CBC, four ALBA CBC, 16 Dec; rare in winter.

HAWK-ALCIDS: Turkey Vulture: singles ALBA CBC 16 Dec, Greenport COLU 20 Feb (BC); two Schodack Ctr COLU 26 Feb (PFC). Osprey: one Hague 14 Dec (DD), very late. Bald Eagle: 11 ad, six imm, four unknown age reported. N. Harrier: 21 SaraSpa CBC 16 Dec, 13 Coxsackie Flats GREE 3 Feb (RPG), nine WASH; ca 12 other reports; numerous this winter. Sharp-shinned Hawk: 35 reports. Cooper's Hawk: 14 reports. N. Goshawk: singles Niskayuna 17 Dec (BL), Greenfield SARA 10 Jan (CF), SaraSpr 3 Feb (RB); rather scarce recently. Red-tailed Hawk: numerous winter SARA; carrying nesting material SCHE late Feb. Rough-legged Hawk: 23 reported, largest concentration 12 Ft Edward WASH 3 Feb (CF). Merlin: singles Cohoes 29 Dec (BC), New Baltimore 3 Feb (RPG). Peregrine Falcon: imm Scotia 30 Dec (BL). Ring-necked Pheasant: pair Cambridge 29 Jan (JS); Colonie 17 Feb (RPY), first there in years. Wild Turkey: increasing; large counts 20 Greenport area (BC), 85 WARR 26 Dec (BP), 48 Gallupville ALBA 23 Feb (BB, KB). Am. Coot: two SaraSpa CBC, one ALBA CBC, 16 Dec; rare in winter. Killdeer: one SCHE CBC 16 Dec; rare in winter. Lesser Black-backed Gull: adult Cohoes 29 Dec (BC).

PIGEONS-WOODPECKERS: Snowy Owl: one Gansvoort SARA 20 Jan through period (BG, mob). Short-eared Owl: up to 15 wintered near Ft Edward WASH, 6 SaraSpa CBC 16 Dec, two Coxsackie Flats Jan (RPG), one Stuyvesant COLU 8 Feb (AL). N. Saw-whet Owl: singles Greenport COLU 8 Feb (KEP), dead on road SARA 27 Feb (SZ). Belted Kingfisher: 13 reports. Red-bellied Woodpecker: outside usual range in COLU, GREE, male near Amsterdam and

three on SaraSpa CBC suggest continuing expansion. Yellow-bellied Sapsucker: one Clermont 23 Feb (KD, EG, BC, PI), only report.

FLYCATCHERS-STARLINGS: E. Phoebe: singles FiveR 8 Dec-11 Jan (AM), Colonie 17 Feb (RPY), Gallupville ALBA 22 Feb (BB, KB) would seem to be overwintering birds; most unusual. Fish Crow: increasing; 7 SCHE CBC 16 DEC. Com. Raven: 9 reported, about normal. Black-capped Chickadee: intro. Tufted Titmouse: doing well Jenny L SARA (RPY). Red-breasted Nuthatch: high counts, 20 ALBA CBC, 24 SCHE CBC, 16 Dec; otherwise not noted in unusual numbers. Carolina Wren: singles in SaraSpr (BJ) and at feeders in Queensbury and Assembly Pt WARR (fide BP) were all near the northern limit of the range. Hermit Thrush: one Cat-Cox CBC 18 Dec (BC); only report. Varied Thrush: a bird seen briefly in Greenfield SARA 12 Jan (CF) was probably this species. Gray Catbird: one Chatham 15,17 Dec (KD,EG). Am. Pipit: 20 Ghent 15 Dec (BC); always rare in winter, very large number. Cedar Waxwing: 40 Nuten Hook COLU 6 Jan (PFC), 55 Greenfield 28 Feb (CF), the only large numbers reported. N. Shrike: 18 reports 2 Dec - 24 Feb.

VIREOS-WARBLERS: None.

TANAGERS-WEAVERS: Field Sparrow: one at feeder SCHE CBC 16 Dec. White-crowned Sparrow: six-eight Kinderhook 2-26 Dec; large no. in hedgerow until road crew cut it down. Dark-eyed Junco: reported present in good numbers. Lapland Longspur: eight SaraSpa CBC 16 Dec.; high count. Red-winged Blackbird: arr 8-11 Feb. E. Meadowlark: one near Bacon Hill SARA 26 Jan (BP). Rusty Blackbird: two SaraSpa CBC 16 Dec, three Austerlitz 4 Jan (BMU). Com. Grackle: arr COLU 21,23 Feb. Brown-headed Cowbird: 70 Stuyvesant 2 Dec (PFC), large number. Pine Grosbeak: six SaraSpa CBC 16 Dec, no.? Chatham 31 Dec (Austin); only reports. Pine Siskin: seven reports, max 15 Schodack Ctr COLU 21 Jan (PFC). Evening Grosbeak: present in moderate numbers, max 439 SaraSpa CBC, 100 Greenfield 24 Dec (CF).

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## REGION 9 — HUDSON-DELAWARE

HELEN C. MANSON

December was generally mild with some warm days and very little snow, most of which fell at the end of the month. January continued the mild trend. The Hudson River was filled with moving ice floes and ponds and lakes were frozen except at leads kept open by the wintering Canada Geese and Mute Swan. American Coot and Ring-necked Duck took advantage of these openings and overwintered in some areas. February brought an early warm spell that took the ice from the river and sent the ducks north early. Ponds began to open and the snow that fell mid month did not stay. What little snow we did have was often followed by rain, which quickly took care of any ground cover. In general the temperature was above average and the precipitation, mostly in the form of rain, was about normal.

The Humpo Marsh in ULST has been watched with great interest for several years. It began as a impoundment made by beaver, who have long since gone. The fate of this swampy pond was unsure as the dam was bound to wash out after a period of time. That is what has finally happened. The water level continued to drop as the dam totally breached. The area has now reverted back to a meandering stream through Purple Loosestrife, cattails and other marsh plants. It will be interesting over the next few years to see what develops in this new habitat. Although we hate to see this interesting and productive area change, it was bound to happen if we let nature take its course. It not only will change the habitat but also the wildlife that live and visit there.

There was no winter finch invasion this year but two interesting visitors were noted. An **Orange-crowned Warbler** appeared at the home of Nancy April in Kripplebush, ULST. It remained at her feeder from late December to mid January, easily seen as it fed at the kitchen window feeder. For a second winter, a **Pine Warbler** turned up at Florence Germond's feeder, Shunpike, DUTC. It stayed through mid January. These two, along with the Yellow-rumped Warber, are the most frequent winter stragglers and occasionally turn up at feeding stations.

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Abbreviations: BCBC - John Burroughs Natural History Society CBC 29 Dec; EMBC - Edgar A. Mearns Bird Club; MCBC - Edgar A. Mearns Bird Club CBC 15 Dec; WBC - Ralph T. Waterman Bird Club; WCBC - Ralph T. Waterman Bird Club CBC 22 Dec; SCBC - Sullivan County Audubon Society CBC 22 Dec.

LOONS-DUCKS: Com. Loon: two Norrie Pt 2 Jan, one Sylvan L 4 Jan. Pied-billed Grebe: one Sylvan L 11 Feb (BM). Great Blue Heron: six WCBC, wintered in good numbers. Mute Swan: 26 Cornwall Bay 15 Dec, one Rio Res early Dec, 83 WCBC, more widespread than ever, wherever open water available. Snow Goose: 550 over Bashakill SCBC, small flocks throughout DUTC. Canada Goose: nearly 5000 WCBC, MCBC, wintered in large flocks. Wood Duck: 25+ Bashakill 20 Feb, four Vassar Farm 20 Dec, four Kays Pd 23 Feb (AJ), three Stissing 23 Feb (TH). Am. Black Duck: wintered in good numbers. Mallard: widespread and numerous. N. Pintail: four WCBC, three Pleasant Valley 24 Feb, three Kays Pd 24 Feb, three L Walton and Round Pd, DUTC. Gadwall: ten 1 Dec., seven Wappingers L 7 Dec, two Fishkill 8 Dec (RO). Am. Wigeon: two Bashakill SCBC, a winter first for SULL; two Hillside L 11 Feb, two Craft Pd 27 Feb, two Kays Pd DUTC Feb. Canvasback: 182 MCBC, 400 off Jones Pt ROCK 1 Dec (ET), 2500 Hudson R off Tivoil 22 Feb (SJ). Redhead: pair Brown's Pd, Newburg 15 Jan (ET), rare treat. Ring-necked Duck: 37 Orange Co. CBC, up to 60 all winter Sylvan L., many in inland ponds Feb. Oldsquaw: one Hudson R at Iona I (ET). Black Scoter: 12 MCBC. Com. Goldeneye: five SCBC, 25 Hudson R 7 Feb (MVW), 50 Esopus 27 Feb, few in Hudson R throughout Feb. Bufflehead: 11 L Welsh 19 Jan (DM), three Hudson R 7 Feb, one Kays Pd 23 Feb, eight Esopus 25 Feb, two L Dutchess 31 Dec. Hooded Merganser: five L Carmel 3 Dec, two East Branch Res PUTN 25 Jan (FB), one Stissing 27 Feb. Com. Merganser: 138 MCBC, 20 Rondout Res 19 Dec, large flocks in Hudson R Jan, max 1000 on 10 Dec. Red-breasted Merganser: two MCBC, two Vanderburg Cove 12 Feb (AJO). Ruddy Duck: 50 L Carmel 3 Dec (FB).

HAWKS-ALCIDS: **Black Vulture**: three MCBC, first winter record; four Stony Pt 22 Feb (DM), three feeding on a dead dog, Con Rail tracks ROCK 19 Feb (ET). Turkey Vulture: few wintered, arr mid Feb. Osprey: one Ables Pd 5 Dec (BB), late record DUTC. Bald Eagle: 47 ad, 35 imm DEC aerial survey ULST, SULL, ORAN 15 Jan; two or three observed along Hudson R. DUTC. N. Harrier: low winter numbers but widespread, four around DeBuck Sod Farms, max eight DUTC. Sharp-shinned Hawk: excellent winter numbers, six MCBC, six WCBC. Cooper's Hawk: few singles all period (JOT), one at feeder Carmel through Jan (FB), two BCBC, max six DUTC. Red-shouldered Hawk: one 1-8 Jan (OTW), one Kays Pd 23 Feb (AJ). Red-tailed Hawk: excellent winter population. Rough-legged Hawk: two-three wintered Sod Farms ORAN, scattered reports from e DUTC. Golden Eagle: one wintered Pepacton Res SULL., two Stissing Mt DUTC Feb. Am Kestrel: good numbers wintering ORAN, scarce DUTC, 11 MCBC, five WCBC, three BCBC. Merlin: one Pawling 20 Feb (CL). Ring-necked Pheasant: three BCBC, four WCBC, four SCBC, never plentiful. Ruffed Grouse: four BCBC, two WCBC,

starting to drum mid Feb. Wild Turkey: good numbers throughout Region, 25 outside Middletown all winter (JPT), 30 Cary Arb., Millbrook 9 Feb, 23 WCBC. N. Bobwhite: one Pawling 31 Dec, very scarce. Am Coot: 38 WCBC, max 30 wintered Sylvan L. Virginia Rail: one Pawling 31 Dec. Killdeer: four MCBC, two Travers Marsh 13 Dec (MVW), one Dover Plains 22 Feb. Com. Snipe: two Travers Marsh 13 Dec (MVW), one Pawling 31 Dec. Great Black-backed Gull: 30 Hudson R at Rhinecliff 22 Feb, 15 Napanock 24 Feb.

**PIGEONS-WOODPECKERS:** E. Screech-Owl: seven WCBC, otherwise scarce. Great Horned Owl: usual ones several areas DUTC, two SCBC. Snowy Owl: two Gardner William Conner, only report. Barred Owl: two SCBC, few noted DUTC. Long-eared Owl: one Fishkill 1 Jan (RO). Short-eared Owl: max six DeBruce Sod Farms ORAN all winter, two Galesville 23 Feb (SS). N. Saw-Whet Owl: one Goose Mt SP 9 Feb (FWA), one found dead Chester Mall 20 Feb (EMBC). Belted Kingfisher: good wintering population. Red-headed Woodpecker: one Bloomingburg 6 Jan, a new locality; ad at feeder N Terrytown 20 Jan to early Mar, well observed close to window from inside the house (Bob Lewis). Yellow-bellied Sapsucker: one MCBC, one Washingtonville Dec EMBC, several DUTC Dec and Jan. N. Flicker: good winter numbers. Pileated Woodpecker: nine WCBC, seven BCBC, good population most areas.

**FLYCATCHERS-STARLINGS:** Eastern Phoebe: one Bashakill SCBC, indicated mild Dec weather. Horned Lark: flock Haight Hill DUTC 6 Dec, max 250 Greigs Farm, Red Hook, 12 BCBC. Blue Jay: normal winter population. Am Crow: 7000+ Middletown Roost, 1500 WCBC. Fish Crow: three Castle Pt Road 21 Feb (Jean Beck). Com. Raven: scattered singles and pairs SULL, max 14 in a kettle 4 Jan (JW). Red-breasted Nuthatch: good numbers most areas. Brown Creeper: seven SCBC, nine WCBC, two BCBC. Carolina Wren: continues widespread in good numbers. Winter Wren: five MCBC, two WCBC, one SCBC, one Norrie Pt 2 Jan. Golden-crowned Kinglet: 24 WCBC. Ruby-crowned Kinglet: two WCBC, one BCBC. E. Bluebird: 32 BCBC, 49 WCBC., good numbers DUTC. Hermit Thrush: one MCBC, one Beacon 8 Dec. Am Robin: good numbers Dec, fewer Jan and Feb. **Varied Thrush:** one at the home of B & M Edleman Napanock late Nov. through Feb (mob). Gray Catbird: one Fishkill 1 Dec, one Poughkeepsie 16 Dec, one WCBC. Brown Thrasher: one Wawarsing 28-29 Jan. Am. Pipit: one Piermont Pier ROCK 1 Dec (ET). Cedar Waxwing: 30 Vassar Farm 2 Dec, 21 WCBC, few noted Jan and Feb. N. Shrike: one central ORAN (J&FF), one Fishkill 1 Dec (RO).

**VIREOS-WARBLEDERS:** **Orange-crowned Warbler:** *intro.* Yellow-rumped Warbler: few L Walton and Fishkill Dec, seven MCBC, three WCBC, one to two wintered Pleasant Valley (MVW). **Pine Warbler:** *intro.*

**TANAGERS-WEAVERS:** Rufous-sided Towhee: one Vanderburg Cove 13 Jan (HM), one Pleasant Valley 23 Jan (MVW). Am. Tree Sparrow: fairly abundant. Chipping Sparrow: seven at two localities SULL 2 Dec. Field Sparrow: five WCBC. Fox Sparrow: one Wawarsing early Dec, one DUTC 4-5 Jan (BM). Song Sparrow: good winter numbers, high MCBC. Swamp Sparrow: nine OCC, three



WCBC, one Cruger I 20 Jan (SJ). White-throated Sparrow: good numbers, many at feeders. Lapland Longspur: two Red Hook 27 Dec (HM), lack of snow made them especially hard to find. Snow Bunting: scattered small groups ORAN, SULL, 25 Greig's Farm, Red Hook 18 Jan (SJ), 13 East Park, T Gilbert 18 Jan. Red-winged Blackbird: some wintered. E. Meadowlark: three in uncut hay field PUTN 29 Jan (FB). Rusty Blackbird: one Wawarsing 17 Jan, max 30 Stissing 11 Dec (TH). Com. Grackle: few wintered, arr 21 Feb. Purple Finch: very few reported, max eight Dover Plains 24 Feb. Com. Redpoll: five Rudd Pd DUTC 13 Dec (DF). only report. Pine Siskin: scarce, 14 SULL (VF). Evening Grosbeak: 50 DeBruce early Dec, at many feeders SULL, 63 White L, very scarce DUTC.

*Moore's Mills, RD 4, Pleasant Valley, New York 12569*

## REGION 10 — MARINE

### SEYMOUR SCHIFF AND ALVIN WOLLIN

The month of December was the third warmest on record with an average temperature of 42.6° against the normal of 36.2°. January was 3° above normal, and February was the fourth warmest on record with five new daily highs, including four in the first week. However, just to show us that winter was really there, on 22 Jan the temperature fell to 10° and even February had a few days below 20°. As for precipitation, only December had above normal rainfall. February was below normal, with one major snow storm which quickly melted. All in all, the winter was without its usual bitter cold and we didn't have to shovel very much. The long lasting effects of this very warm weather probably will not be known for some time. Whether the weather had anything to do with the birding is also unknown.

There were many unusual waterfowl this winter, including **Pink-footed Goose**, **Greater White-fronted Goose**, **Ross' Goose**, and **Barrow's Goldeneye**. And contrary to what one would expect from the "mild" weather, this was the first winter in at least 25 years when substantial numbers of alcids were seen in the Region. Single **Dovekie** were seen mid and late December, and a single **Black Guillemot** was seen at the Jones Beach Coast Guard Station. **Razorbill** was almost common. They were seen at Montauk Point from early December to late January, with peaks of 28 on 15 Dec and 25 on 19-20 Jan. In addition, they were seen at Jones Beach West End, Captree and Shinnecock Inlet during the winter.

On a positive note, winter raptors are becoming more noticeable. To highlight this fact, *The New York Times*, in an article on 26 Mar 1991, summarized reports of predation by hawks at bird feeders throughout the state as reported to the Cornell Laboratory of Ornithology. Raptors were conspicuous in more open areas as well. Up to three Red-tailed Hawk wintered along the Meadowbrook Parkway between Southern State Parkway and the toll booths where they could be seen perched in the trees along the road. They were joined by a Rough-legged Hawk on the Loop Parkway to Long Beach. Other wintering raptors were a pair of Peregrine Falcon seen in the vicinity of the Throgs Neck Bridge, another pair roosting on the Jones Beach water tower, and Northern Goshawk which wintered in Central Park and Tobay. A Cooper's Hawk wintered between South Hempstead and Rockville Centre, visiting feeders at the homes of both your Regional editors. Floyd Bennett Field also harbored this species, where there were at least three on 12 Jan (*per* Jean and Ronald Bourque). The one negative note is that more than one observer reported a decrease in the local wintering American Kestrel population.

Half-hardy species are always present in the Region. This season had greater numbers of these species and other birds which usually are gone by Christmas Bird Count time. In December there were good numbers of House and Winter Wren, and eight species of warbler including ten Orange-crowned Warbler, five on the Southern Nassau Co. Christmas Bird Count and four on the Montauk count. Carolina Wren has benefited noticeably from the milder winters of recent years. It was seen in many areas and in greatly increased numbers. From the partial list of counts we saw, there must be at least 300-500 wintering birds of this species in the Region.

The best land bird reported was a **Black-billed Magpie**, which wintered at the point at Montauk from November through the period and was seen by numerous observers.

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Abbreviations: CP - Central Park; FBF - Floyd Bennett Field; JFKWS - John F. Kennedy Wildlife Sanctuary (Tobay); JBch - Jones Beach; JBWE - Jones Beach West End; LI - Long Island; MPt - Montauk Point; PBP - Pelham Bay Park; ShIn - Shinnecock Inlet; SNCBC - Southern Nassau Christmas Bird Count; SI - Staten Island.

LOONS-DUCKS: Com. Loon: 77 Cullodin Pt 4 Jan (JR). Red-necked Grebe: one MPt 7 Dec-19 Jan, one FBF 26 Jan, one JBWE 10-18 Feb. **Eared Grebe**: one

South Beach SI 13 Jan (Bob Claremont). N. Gannet: 4-5,000 MPt 1-2 Dec. Tricolored Heron: one JFKWS 2 Dec, 20 Dec; one Oceanside P 19 Dec (PM), SNCBC 30 Dec, late. Glossy Ibis: MPt 1 Dec. Tundra Swan: eight ad, one imm Hook Pd East Hampton 1 Dec (JR), four still there 28 Feb (JF, PG). **Pink-footed Goose**: one Spring Lake Golf Course, Middle Island, and nearby ponds 16 Jan through the month (JC, JR, mob). **Greater White-fronted Goose**: one Mecox Bay 27-28 Jan (Bill Lee, mob); two were shot by hunters on e LI in early Jan (Jim Ash). Snow Goose: one to two dozen wintered on the s shore of LI, including up to five Blue morphs. **Ross' Goose**: one Watermill 5 Jan, Hook Pd 15 Jan (Jim Ash). Wood Duck: one Hempstead L SP (SS,AW), five Kissena L, one CP 21 Feb (JR). Blue-winged Teal: ten Central Suffolk CBC, one JFKWS 1 Jan, one E Patchogue 16 Jan (JF). Eurasian Wigeon: a few widely scattered birds. Tufted Duck: one CP Reservoir. Com. Eider: 70 MPt 2 Dec; three female, one subad male MPt 4 Dec (JF); one MPt 19 Jan (JR). King Eider: one JBWE early Dec (SW), five MPt 20 Dec (PG), 19 MPt 19 Jan (JR), 7-10 MPt 24 Jan (JF), five MPt 17 Feb. Harlequin Duck: up to 14 wintered off the JBch/LB jetties; one South Beach SI 23 Dec to 20 Jan (Bob Claremont, HF). **Barrow's Goldeneye**: male East Hampton, female Whitestone all winter (mob).

**HAWKS-ALCIDS**: Turkey Vulture: one Orient 4 Feb (GR), one Mastic (Janet & Kevin Barry). Bald Eagle: one Jamaica Bay Wildlife Sanctuary 1 Dec; one Lawrence 9 Dec; imm Cox Lane, Cutchogue 20 Feb (PG). Cooper's Hawk: *intro*. N. Goshawk: *intro*. Red-shouldered Hawk: one wintered Muttontown Preserve. Red-tailed Hawk: *intro*. Rough-legged Hawk: *intro*. Am. Kestrel: *intro*. Peregrine Falcon: *intro*. **Black Rail**: one JFKWS 2 Dec (John & Ellen Caspars). Clapper Rail: reported on several counts. Virginia Rail: reported on several counts. Sora: one Napeague SP 15 Dec (JF). Semipalmated Plover: two Glenwood Landing 11 Dec (June & Robert Wood). Long-billed Dowitcher: one Brooklyn 15 Dec, six SNCBC 30 Dec. Little Gull: one Fire I inlet 11-13 Dec (AL). Com. Black-headed Gull: one ShIn 20 Jan (TB) to 2 Feb (JF). Iceland Gull: one MPt; imm ShIn 12 Dec to 2 Feb; ad ShIn 9 Dec to 17 Feb; others present. Lesser Black-backed Gull: one Dosoris Pd 19 Jan (HR). Glaucous Gull: one MPt 4 Dec to 24 Jan; imm ShIn 2-15 Dec; one Greenport 19 Dec (GR), JBch Inlet 29 Dec (SW); others present. Black-legged Kittiwake: 12+ MPt 4 Dec (JF). Forster's Tern: one JBch inlet 2 Dec (SW). **Dovekie**: one MPt 12 Dec (AL), seen 1 Jan; one SNCBC 30 Dec. **Razorbill**: *intro*. **Black Guillemot**: *intro*.

**PIGEONS-WOODPECKERS**: Barn Owl: wintered at FBF (J&RB). Snowy Owl: one MPt 15 Dec; one JBch mid Dec to late Jan; one to two Cedar Beach late Dec early Feb (mob); one Dune Road 5 Feb (JR); one ShIn 18 Feb. Long-eared Owl: one JBWE 9 Dec (SS,AW), one Oak Beach 6 Dec (JF), one Bronx 23 Dec, one CP early Jan, two PBP late Jan-Feb. Short-eared Owl: singles seen at all the south shore beaches in both SUFF and NASS. N. Saw-whet Owl: a dozen sightings from CP to mid SUFF. Red-headed Woodpecker: ad and imm CP all season. Yellow-bellied Sapsucker: four SNCBC 30 Dec, one CP in Jan, others present.

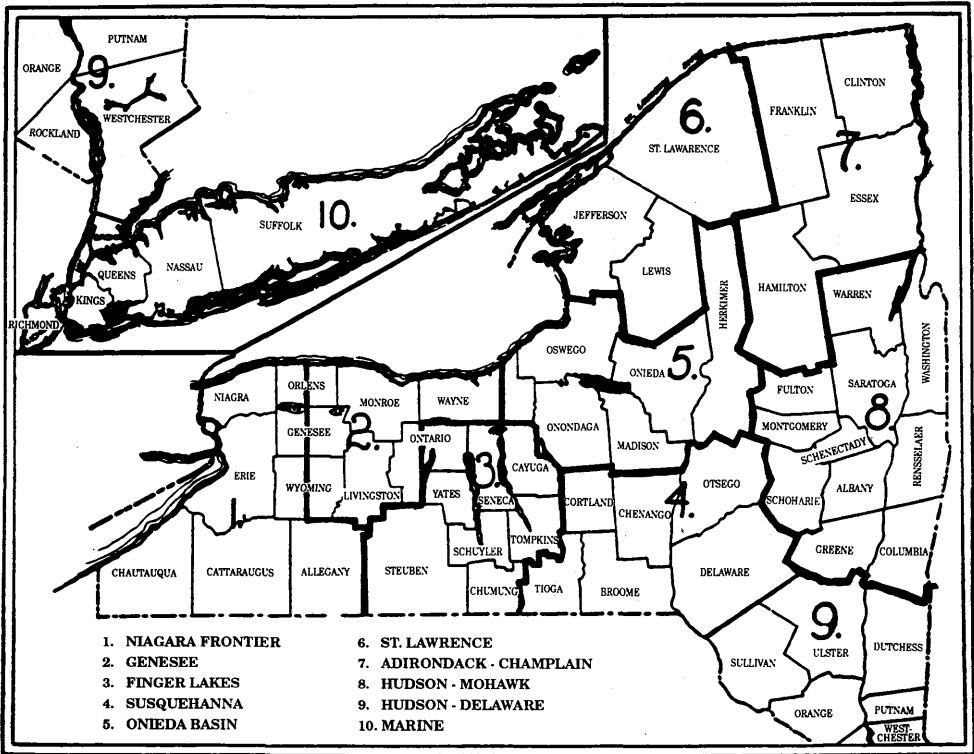
FLYCATCHERS-STARLING: E. Phoebe: one PBP 23 Dec-6 Jan. W. Kingbird: one Gardiner Co P, West Islip 3 Dec (JF); one Captree CBC. **Black-billed Magpie**: *intro*. Am. Pipit: Ward's Pt SI 30 Dec (HF). Carolina Wren: *intro*. House Wren: *intro*. Winter Wren: *intro*. Marsh Wren: a few seen in marshes on CBCs. **Northern Shrike**: one JFKWS 2 Dec (PM); one at entrance to Heather Hills SP all winter; one Wantagh Highway 21 Dec (JF).

VIREOS-WARBLERS: Orange-crowned Warbler: *intro*.

TANAGERS-WEAVERS: **W. Tanager**: one CP 1-27 Dec. E. Meadowlark: wintered at JBWE and FBF. Lapland Longspur: 22 St. Charles Cemetery mid Feb. Snow Bunting: flocks at various locations on the south shore and SI beaches. Rusty Blackbird: a number wintered. Boat-tailed Grackle: 58 Queens CBC 15 Dec. Red Crossbill: 13 JBch 7 Jan (SS, AW, mob), seven Hither Hills 26 Jan (JF). Pine Siskin: seven MPt 15 Dec. Evening Grosbeak: four Ridge 1 Jan (John Ruscica).

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# 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

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