

The

KINGBIRD

New York State
Ornithological
Association, Inc.
Vol. 66 No. 2
June 2016



ACV

THE KINGBIRD (ISSN 0023-1606), published quarterly (March, June, September, December), is a peer-reviewed publication of the New York State Ornithological Association, Inc., which has been organized to further the study of bird life and to disseminate knowledge thereof, to educate the public in the need for conserving natural resources, and to document the ornithology of the state and maintain the official *Checklist of the Birds of New York State*.

Website: <http://nybirds.org>

Members of NYSOA receive *The Kingbird* and the newsletter *New York Birders*. Membership is available in the following annual categories:

Individual	\$30	Contributing	\$50
Family	\$35	Kingbird Club	\$100
Student	\$17		

Clubs and organizations — variable, please inquire.
Institutional subscriptions to *The Kingbird* are \$25 annually.

All amounts stated above are payable in US funds only, with checks payable to NYSOA. Add \$10 to all categories for addresses in Canada or Mexico, \$20 for all other non-US addresses.

Applications for membership and subscriptions: New York State Ornithological Association, Inc., P.O. Box 296, Somers, NY 10589.

Requests for single copies and back numbers (\$5.00 each): New York State Ornithological Association, Inc., P.O. Box 296, Somers, NY 10589.

**Send address changes to:
THE KINGBIRD, P.O. Box 296, Somers, NY 10589.**

© 2016 New York State Ornithological Association, Inc. All rights reserved.

NEW YORK STATE ORNITHOLOGICAL ASSOCIATION, INC.

2015-2016 Officers

President	Directors (Term Expiration Dates)
Joan Collins, P. O. Box 556, Long Lake, NY, 12847	Michael DeSha 2016
Vice-President	Kevin Griffith 2016
Seth Ausubel, 118-17 Union Tpke, Apt. 16B, Forest Hills, NY 11375	Greg Lawrence 2016
Recording Secretary	William Ostrander 2016
Mary Beth Warburton, 130 Smith Rd., Potsdam, NY 13676	Derek Rogers 2016
Treasurer	Peter Capainolo 2017
Andrew Mason, 1039 Peck St., Jefferson, NY 12093	Dawn O'Neal 2017
	Carena Pooth 2017
	Kathryn Schneider 2017

continued on inside back cover



The KINGBIRD

PUBLICATION OF THE NEW YORK STATE ORNITHOLOGICAL ASSOCIATION, INC.

Volume 66 No. 2

June 2016

pp. 89-168

CONTENTS

First occurrence of Pacific Common Eider (<i>Somateria mollissima v-nigrum</i>) in New York State Dominic Sherony and Kenneth P. Able	90
A New York perspective on the 2016 Supplement to <i>The Check-List of North American Birds</i> Angus Wilson	97
Winter Waterfowl Count, January 2016 Bill Ostrander	106
Notes and Observations Interactions between gulls and predatory diving birds (loons and cormorants) Harold G. Klein	113
Regional Reports	115
Photo Gallery	127
Standard Regional Report Abbreviations, Reporting Deadlines and Map of Reporting Regions	167

Editor – S. S. Mitra
Regional Reports Editor – Robert G. Spahn
Production Manager – Patricia J. Lindsay
Circulation and Membership Managers – Patricia Aitken, Berna Lincoln

Front Cover – Eastern Kingbird, © Andrew Valley.

Back Cover – Eastern Kingbird, © Douglas Howland.

FIRST OCCURRENCE OF PACIFIC COMMON EIDER (*Somateria mollissima v-nigrum*) IN NEW YORK STATE

Dominic F. Sherony

51 Lambeth Loop, Fairport, NY
dsherony@live.com

Kenneth P. Able

Department of Biological Sciences,
University of Albany, Albany, New York 12222
Current address: Bob's Creek Ranch,
535-000 Little Valley Road, McArthur, California 96056
kennethable@gmail.com

A female Common Eider (*Somateria mollissima*) present at Irondequoit Bay Outlet, Monroe County, New York from 13 November to 2 December 2005 was seen and photographed by many observers. Because this species is very rare away from the immediate coast in New York State (Levine 1998), documentation was submitted to the New York State Avian Records Committee, and the record accepted at the species level, but without any conclusion regarding its subspecific identity (NYSARC 2008). More recent work has determined that this bird was a first-year Pacific Common Eider (*S. m. v-nigrum*), the first of this taxon documented in New York State.

First recorded on 13 November 2005, this eider frequently fed near the rocky jetty and was cooperative for photos. It did not associate with the local Mallards, and there were no bands on the legs. It appeared to be a molting hatching-year bird because it retained some juvenile feathers in combination with barred, formative, flank-feathers. The bill was long and sloping and pale at the tip. The bill processes (the lobe portions of the bill that extend towards the eye) were elongated, narrow and ending in a sharp point. Its plumage was dark brown with pale edges to the feathers (some of the back feathers showed rufous edges) and the head showed a dark area beneath the eye and a pale supercilium. Figure 1 shows most of these features.

This bird's identity as a locally rare Common Eider was fairly straightforward, as its bill shape and color and overall size readily ruled out King Eider (*S. spectabilis*), which occurs much more regularly in upstate New York (Levine 1998). Given the paucity of records of Common Eider from the Great Lakes region of North America, this bird's geographic origin is a question of considerable interest.



Figure 1. Pacific Common Eider (*Somateria mollissima v-nigrum*), Irondequoit Bay Outlet, 13 November 2005, © Dominic Sherony.

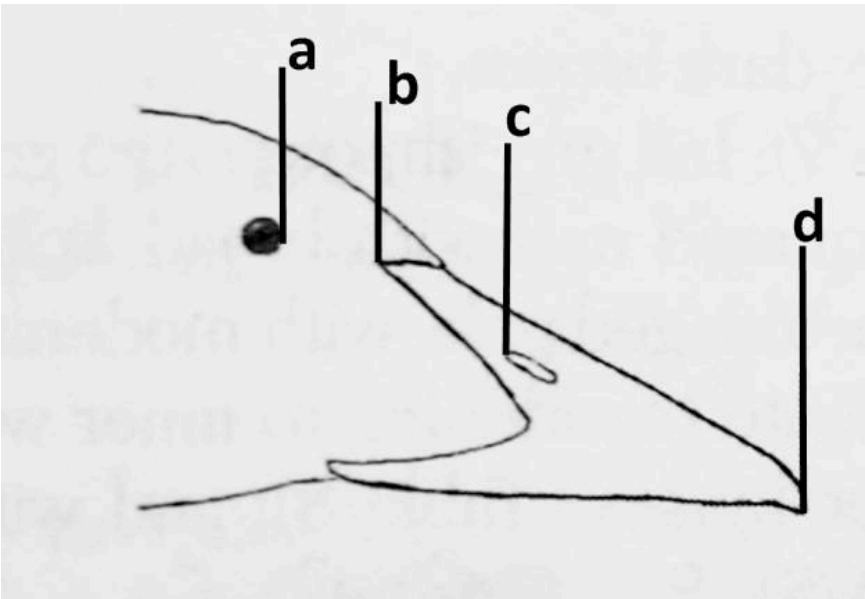


Figure 2. Bill characteristics of eiders, genus *Somateria*. a – rostral edge of eye, b – tip of the process, c – proximal end of naris opening, d – bill tip. Distances: b-d: bill length, c-d: nostril extension, a-b: eye to frontal process. Illustration from Pyle (2008), © Siobhan Ruck.

Subspecies of Common Eider (*Somateria mollissima*)

Gaudie et al. (2000) and Able et al. (2014) give a description of the subspecies of Common Eider. Common Eider races are separated into six or seven subspecies depending on the author. They fall into four natural groups based on morphology and range: *S. m. v-nigrum* (Pacific Eider), *S. m. sedentaria* (Hudson Bay Eider), *S. m. dresseri* (Atlantic Eider), and finally *S. m. borealis* (Northern Eider). Also associated with *S. m. borealis* are two additional races: *mollissima* (Eurasia), and *faeroeensis* (Faeroe Islands). In their descriptions of the subspecies of *S. mollissima*, Gaudie et al. (2000) state that some authors consider *islandica* as a seventh subspecies but it is generally included in *S. m. borealis*. They also state that intergrades between *dresseri* and *borealis* are well known but intergrades between *borealis* and *v-nigrum* are not known. The Pacific Eider breeds from the Northwest Territories in Canada west into Siberia, whereas the Northern Eider breeds from Ellesmere Island, south and east (Able et al. 2014); thus, these subspecies do not overlap in breeding range.

Bull (1974) reviewed the status of Common Eider in New York State and stated that *S. m. dresseri* is the subspecies expected in coastal areas, such as Long Island. A specimen of *S. m. borealis* was collected on Long Island, but the specimen is not in existence. A male *S. m. sedentaria* was collected on the Niagara River in 1936 (Beardslee and Mitchell 1965).

Although *S. m. v-nigrum*, the Pacific Common Eider, was previously unrecorded in New York, there have been a few records from the Midwest. The Michigan Rare Bird Committee has two records of female *S. m. v-nigrum*, one from Grand Marais, Alger Co., 29 June-1 July 2007 and a second from Grand Haven on 22 December 2014-22 March 2015. Furthermore, during the winter of 2014, a total of three female *v-nigrum* eiders were recorded in Minnesota (MOURC 2015): two were in Duluth from 10 November 2014-19 February 2015; and the other was at Silver Bay Marina 13-15 November 2014. This bird wandered into Wisconsin and was recorded there as well (MOURC 2015).

The overall features of the shape and dimensions of the head and bill are distinctive among the North American subspecies of Common Eider. Figure 2, reproduced with permission from Pyle (2008), illustrates some of the relevant head and bill characteristics used in this work.

METHODS

To identify the eider from Irondequoit Bay, we measured head and bill features from photographs and compared these to data from female eiders of known subspecies. We collected the latter by measuring two specimens of *S. m. borealis* and one specimen of *S. m. v-nigrum* at the Smithsonian Museum of Natural History on 26 November 2014, and by measuring photographs vetted by records committees or other authorities (for *S. m. borealis*, photos from J. Iron, R. Schain, M. Iliff, B. Naden, D. Beadle, and R. Heit; for *S. m. v-nigrum*, photos

from P. Svingen, S. Haas, Central Park Zoo, G. Chapin). Measurement of a-b, the eyes to frontal process, was difficult on specimens because of the damage to the eye socket, so this feature was not used. All measurements were normalized to ratios using the bill length as the denominator.

RESULTS

Age and sex: Based on the plumage and the presence of juvenile feathers on the sides, this is most likely a first year female Common Eider, but the sex is not completely certain. It is possible that the Irondequoit Bay bird could be a male but first year males in first basic tend to be darker (Gaudie et al. 2000).

Shape of the process: From the photographs of the Irondequoit Bay bird, identification is restricted to either *S. m. borealis* or *v-nigrum*, based on the shape of the frontal lobe of the bill (process). The frontal lobe is sharply pointed thus eliminating *S. m. dresseri* and *S. m. sedentaria*.

Ratio of bill length to nostril extension (c-d)/(b-d): Nostril extension is a useful measurement to separate Common Eider subspecies (Gaudie et al. 2000). The method used is described in Pyle (2008). In their paper, Able et al. (2014) show a relatively narrow range of nostril extension normalized by bill length for the four subspecies of Common Eider. Their data show an overlap between two subspecies: *v-nigrum* (0.41-0.47) and *borealis* (0.37-0.45). For this study, a vernier calipers was used to measure these properties on the specimens at the Smithsonian and on four of the photographs of the bird in question. The measurements for *v-nigrum* of two adults were 0.44 and 0.45 and the lone immature was 0.42. The measurements on specimens for *borealis* were 0.46 to 0.50 for three adults, higher than the range reported by Able et al. (2014).

Using photographs, this measured ratio for the Irondequoit bird was 0.48 (std = 0.01) from four photos. This seems to be slightly higher than the published upper limit (0.47), but it is closest to *v-nigrum* and within the range of error of the measurement. It is definitely beyond the range for *S. m. borealis* as published but our measurements of specimens at the Smithsonian confuse these results.

Distance from rostral edge of eye to tip of frontal process divided by total bill length (a-b)/(b-d): In studying the elongated head of *S. m. v-nigrum*, it was noticed that the distance from the rostral edge of the eye to the process (a-b) was shorter in *S. m. borealis* than in *v-nigrum*. Measurements on specimens taken in California and on photographs verified this feature. Subsequently, a collection of photographs was used to measure this ratio (a-b)/(b-d). These data show that there is no overlap in this measurement for these two subspecies, and that the

Irondequoit Bay Common Eider is in the range of *S. m. v-nigrum*. These results are shown in Table 1.

Table 1. Ratio of distance of eye to naris, normalized to bill length, for female Common Eiders, *S. m. borealis* and *v-nigrum*. (a-b)/(b-d) represents the distance from eye to frontal process divided by the bill length (Fig. 2.)

Sample	Number	(a-b)/(b-d)	Std Dev
<i>S. m. borealis</i>	7	0.22	0.022
<i>S. m. v-nigrum</i>	4	0.36	0.021
Irondequoit Bay eider	5*	0.40	0.076

*independent measurements of different photos.

Malar feathering: The shape of the malar feathering varies among the subspecies. In photos of the Rochester bird, the feathered area is quite broad and rounded at the distal end as shown in Figure 3. This is very characteristic of *v-nigrum*. *S. m. borealis* can also show some rounding to this feathering, but it is generally tapering toward the distal end. M. Iliff (2016) has commented on the malar feathering of the Irondequoit Bay bird: “I also feel that the shape of the distal end of the ‘malar feathering’ is highly distinctive for *v-nigrum* and your bird is classic in this regard. The cautions are warranted, but I believe this is diagnostic in the more extreme cases and I feel your bird falls in that category.” The shape of the malar feathering for the two species is compared in Figure 3.

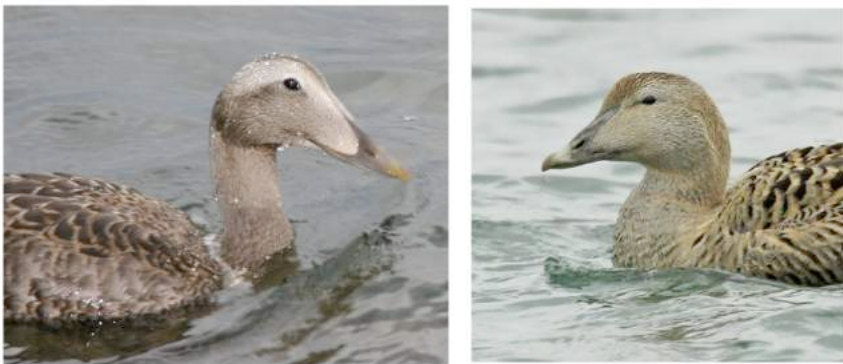


Figure 3. Comparison of malar feathering of the female Pacific Common Eider *S. m. v-nigrum* at Irondequoit Bay (left) and an example of Northern Common Eider *S. m. borealis* on right (© R. Schain).

Malar feathering with respect to the distal terminus of the naris: Able et al. (2014) also used the extension of the malar feathering on the bill past the distal

end of the naris, as measured by a vertical line from the distal position of the naris. Using photographs of the bird in question and comparing them with specimens, this was indeterminate for separating *S. m. borealis* and *S. m. v-nigrum*.

Head shape: McLaughlin (2014) used head shape as an important feature to separate *borealis* and *v-nigrum*. In his words: “In *borealis*, the forehead is quite clearly discrete from the top of the bill, that is to say, two separately visible units, forehead and bill, are readily discernible and positioned in an obtuse angle in relation to one another. This contributes to a decidedly round-headed gestalt that is present in this subspecies. The other three subspecies have more of a straight line confluence of the bill and forehead, imparting a wedge-shaped effect to the head, with *v-nigrum* perhaps being the most obvious in this respect.” This is best shown in two figures from his paper, reproduced here with permission as Figure 4. Using this criterion, the Irondequoit Bay eider resembles *v-nigrum*, as shown in Figure 3. Although we are uncertain of how much variation can appear in this angle in a single bird due to variation in age, sex, molt, or posture, head shape appears to differ consistently between these subspecies.

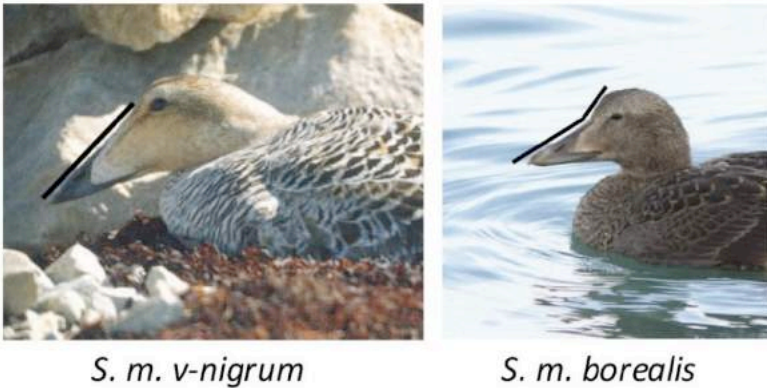


Figure 4. Comparison of head shape (angle between forehead and bill) between two subspecies of Common Eider, *S. m. v-nigrum* and *S. m. borealis*. From McLaughlin (2014).

DISCUSSION

The evidence suggests that this Irondequoit Bay eider was a Pacific Common Eider, *S. m. v-nigrum*. The shape of the bill process reduces the possible number of subspecies to only two, *S. m. borealis* and *S. m. v-nigrum*. Distance from rostral edge of eye to tip of frontal process divided by distance from process to bill tip and the shape of the malar feathering are both diagnostic for *v-nigrum*. The ratio of bill length to nostril extension and the head shape are supportive but not conclusive by themselves. And other possible measurements on the face and bill from the photographs were inconclusive for a variety of different reasons.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

For helpful suggestions and photographs, we thank Marshall Iliff, Patricia Lindsay, and an anonymous reviewer. We are indebted to all those whose photographs we used for study and comparisons: Jean Iron, Ryan Schain, Ben Naden, David Beadle, Marshall Iliff, Peder Svingen, S. Haas, R. Heit, Kevin McLaughlin, and Gary Chapin.

LITERATURE CITED

- Able, K. P., A. Barron, J. L. Dunn, K. E. Omland and L. Sansone 2014. First occurrence of an Atlantic Common Eider (*Somateria mollissima dresseri*) in the Pacific Ocean. *Western Birds* 45:90-99.
- Beardslee, C. S., H. D. Mitchell 1965. Birds of the Niagara Frontier Region. *Bulletin of the Buffalo Society of Natural Sciences*, vol. 22. Buffalo, NY. p. 146.
- Bull, J. 1974. *Birds of New York State*. Doubleday, Garden City, New York.
- Gaudie, R. I., G. J. Robertson and A. Reed 2000. Common Eider (*Somateria mollissima*). In *The Birds of North America* No. 546 (A. Poole and F. Gill, eds.). The Birds of North America, Inc., Philadelphia, PA.
- Iliff, M. 2016. Personal communication.
- Levine, E. ed. 1998. *Bull's Birds of New York State*. Comstock Pub., Ithaca, NY. 622 pp.
- McLaughlin, K. A. 2014. "Northern" Common Eider (*Somateria mollissima borealis*) new to Ontario. *Ontario Birds* 35:98-111.
- Minnesota Ornithologists' Union Records Committee (MOURC). 2015. *Proceedings Spring-Fall 2015*.
- New York State Avian Records Committee (NYSARC) 2008. Report of the New York State Avian Records Committee for 2005. *Kingbird* 58: 310-338.
- Pyle, P. 2008. *Identification Guide to North American Birds*, part II. Slate Creek Press, Pt. Reyes Station, CA. p. 127.

A NEW YORK PERSPECTIVE ON THE 2016 SUPPLEMENT TO THE CHECK-LIST OF NORTH AMERICAN BIRDS

Angus Wilson

Chair, New York State Avian Records Committee
New York State Ornithological Association

In July 2016, the AOU's *North American Classification Committee* (NACC) published its 57th Supplement to the *Check-list of North American Birds* (Chesser et al. 2016). As in previous years, the update has interesting and very real consequences for the *Checklist of the Birds of New York State* <<http://www.nybirds.org/Publications/ChecklistNYS.htm>>, which is maintained by NYSOA's New York State Avian Records Committee (NYSARC).

As a service to NYSOA members the present article provides a digest of the changes involving the species occurring in New York State with some background on the thinking that went into these often complex decisions. A strong theme in this update is improving the alignment of the AOU Check-list with other major lists such as those used by eBird and the *Handbook of Birds of the World* (HBW). See web addresses at the end of this article for links to these reference materials.

Readers are strongly encouraged to look at the 57th Supplement itself, and to read over the individual proposals and comments that the Committee considered. These documents provide welcome transparency to the process, along with a wealth of ornithological wisdom. Links to these, and also to several of the most prominent among other checklists, are given at the end of the present article. In pondering the details, it is worth reflecting on how the revisions affect your own perceptions of the birds themselves. Do they tell us more about their lives? Does this leave you with a better sense of the structure underlying the extraordinary diversity of living birds? It is also a good opportunity to think about the ways that you interact with ornithological publications, field checklists, sightings databases and other resources.

Shuffling the deck: does this bring clarity or confusion?

Modern avian systematics deals with evolutionary relationships among birds and relies on a combination of morphological, biochemical, biogeographical, vocal and behavioral evidence along with other measurable traits such as the relatedness of ectoparasites. In simple terms, diverse populations of birds can be progressively subdivided at the level of order then family then genus and finally species; each successive category proposing a more granular measure of shared ancestry. The extensive use of gene sequencing has been especially instructive—some might say, explosive—in terms of clarifying the higher-order relationships between the 35 or so orders and more than 230 families that

encompass all living birds (Fjeldså 2013, Cracraft 2013). Increasingly this work is often performed on a scale that requires a small army of scientists spread across multiple institutions if not the globe. Some of the discoveries are akin to an earthquake, violently shaking and rearranging what we thought we knew about the relationships between birds. For instance, we've already seen the caracaras and falcons wrenched away from the hawks and other diurnal raptors to be placed awkwardly between woodpeckers and parrots. Hold on tightly to your binoculars, because the seismic upheavals are not over yet.

Drawing most heavily on the congruent findings of two immense studies by separate research programs (Jarvis et al. 2014 and Prum et al. 2015), the 57th Supplement lays out a large number of radical higher-level changes, aftershocks following the initial quake. From the standpoint of the *Checklist of the Birds of New York State* the positions of a whopping fifteen orders of non-passerines and three families of passerines (song birds) are now changed. These are summarized in Table 1 and have been incorporated into the online checklist. In addition, the following Passerine families are now listed between Bombycillidae (Waxwings) and Calcariidae (Longspurs & Snow Buntings):

Passeridae - Old World Sparrows (House Sparrow)
Motacillidae - Wagtails & Pipits
Fringillidae - Finches & Crossbills

The New World vultures, represented in NYS by Turkey Vulture *Cathartes aura* and Black Vulture *Coragyps stratus*, have always been difficult to place. Although similar to other diurnal raptors (Old World vultures, eagles, hawks and falcons) on a superficial level, vultures exhibit a number of anatomical and behavioral differences from hawks and falcons such as the inability to grasp strongly with their feet and the rather disgusting habit of defecating on their bare legs as a way to cool themselves. When molecular studies by Sibley and Ahlquist (1990) indicated that American vultures, and their cousins the condors, were in fact closely related to storks (*Ciconiidae*), many commentators felt that the puzzle had finally been solved and the revision was adopted by the AOU in 1998. Then, to the chagrin of the “of course they are storks” crowd, the AOU reversed its stance in 2007 and moved the New World vultures into the Falcons and Caracaras (*Falconiformes*)! This too was short-lived and, based on the newer DNA sequencing studies, the New World vultures and condors are now in a separate order (*Cathartiformes*). This is considered a sister grouping to the hawks and allies (*Accipitriformes*). Given the uncertainties, the shuffles may continue and indeed affinities to other orders have been noted. The one thing that seems to be clear is that more analysis is needed, either to cement the present taxonomy or support additional changes.

Although based on the latest scientific information, there remains an element of subjectivity in avian systematics with the prospect of continued flux as more information is collected and as our thinking about evolutionary

Table 1. Changes to the sequence of avian orders in the 2016 Supplement.

OLD

ANSERIFORMES (Geese, Swans, Ducks)
 GALLIFORMES (Gallinaceous birds)
 GAVIIFORMES (Loons)
 PODICIPEDIFORMES (Grebes)
 PROCELLARIIFORMES (Sea Birds)
 PHAETHONTIFORMES (Tropicbirds)
 CICONIIFORMES (Storks)
 SULIFORMES (Frigates, Boobies, Cormorants, Anhingas)
 PELECANIFORMES (Pelicans, Bitterns/Herons, Ibises)
 ACCIPTRIFORMES (Vultures, Osprey, Kites/Eagles/Hawks)
 GRUIFORMES (Rails, Gallinules, Coots, Cranes)
 CHARADRIFORMES (Stilts, Avocets, Oystercatchers, Plovers, Sandpipers)
 COLUMBIFORMES (Pigeons & Doves)
 CUCULIFORMES (Cuckoos)
 STRIGIFORMES (Owls)
 CAPRIMULGIFORMES (Goatsuckers)
 APODIFORMES (Swifts & Hummingbirds)
 CORACIIFORMES (Kingfishers)
 PICIFORMES (Woodpeckers)
 FALCONIFORMES (Falcons)
 PSITTACIFORMES (Parrots)
 PASSERIFORMES

NEW

ANSERIFORMES (Geese, Swans, Ducks)
 GALLIFORMES (Gallinaceous birds)
PODICIPEDIFORMES (Grebes)
COLUMBIFORMES (Pigeons & Doves)
CUCULIFORMES (Cuckoos)
CAPRIMULGIFORMES (Nightjars)
APODIFORMES (Swifts & Hummingbirds)
GRUIFORMES (Rails, Gallinules, Coots, Cranes)
CHARADRIFORMES (Stilts, Avocets, Oystercatchers, Plovers, Sandpipers)
PHAETHONTIFORMES (Tropicbirds)
GAVIIFORMES (Loons)
PROCELLARIIFORMES (Sea Birds)
CICONIIFORMES (Storks)
SULIFORMES (Frigates, Boobies, Cormorants, Anhingas)
PELECANIFORMES (Pelicans, Bitterns/Herons, Ibises)
CATHARTIFORMES (New World Vultures)
ACCIPTRIFORMES (Osprey, Kites/Eagles/Hawks)
STRIGIFORMES (Owls)
 CORACIIFORMES (Kingfishers)
 PICIFORMES (Woodpeckers)
 FALCONIFORMES (Falcons)
 PSITTACIFORMES (Parrots)
 PASSERIFORMES

relationships becomes more refined. This is a work-in-progress and it is impossible to know if the latest shuffles will remain in perpetuity or will succumb to further rearrangements. Concerned about this constant reordering and the confusion that results, a cadre of leading field guide authors have pushed for a more user-friendly and stable sequence of bird families and other distinctive taxa or groups that can be used in field guides and related publications (Howell et al. 2009). They don't disagree with the scientific reasoning for taxonomic overhauls but argue that in field guides, similarities in appearance are more important than the underlying evolutionary relationships and point out that field guide designs that mirror an official taxonomic sequence will soon become outdated.

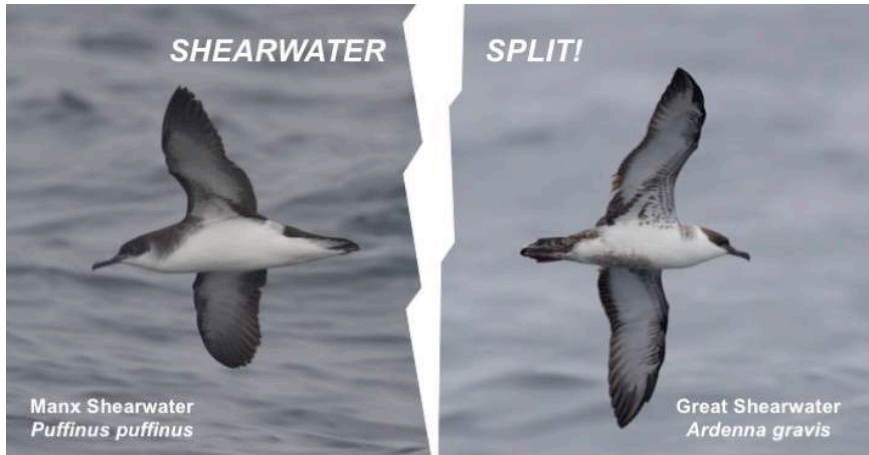
I'm inclined to agree. Having learned in my youth the classic sequence used by Bruun and Singer (1975), I still find it difficult to flip to the right section of a modern field guide or jump quickly to the right place on a checklist. In the revised *Checklist of the Birds of New York State*, there are now almost eighty species separating the grebes from the alcids, which they can resemble, and twice that many between grebes and loons. When struggling to identify a fast diving bird it makes sense to have the main candidates only a page or two apart, if that. Similarly, larks and longspurs are often found in the same habitat and can be mistaken for one another and yet are also widely separated when presented in the current taxonomic order. Should seasoned birders need to use the index to find the ever-mobile New World vultures? The conversation about whether or not to follow taxonomic order or something more intuitive or at least stable is for another discussion. However, this is something that everyday birders, the ultimate users of field guides and checklists, should be expressive about.

Buried among these tectonic shifts are a couple of comparatively trivial changes to the list positions within the shorebirds and vireos. The genus *Actitis*, which for us includes Spotted Sandpiper *Actitis macularius*, and the *Tringa* sandpipers, with four representatives on the NYS list, move down to just above the Phalaropes. Further down the list, analysis of nuclear and mitochondrial DNA sequences prompted a major overhaul of the organization of genera and the linear sequence of North American vireos (Slager et al. 2014). As a result, the list positions of Warbling Vireo *gilvus* and Philadelphia Vireo *V. philadelphicus* are swapped. These small moves are a manageable inconvenience.

New genus names for two shearwaters and Sandhill Crane

OK, let's begin with the shearwaters. No armchair lifers for anyone, just recognition of the differences between two of the larger shearwaters: Sooty and Great Shearwater, which become *Ardenna griseus* and *Ardenna gravis*, respectively, and the two smaller 'black-and-white' shearwaters: Manx and Audubon's Shearwaters, which remain in the genus *Puffinus*. This partition seems intuitive and will find ready acceptance with most field birders. It is based

on the findings of two now rather dated molecular studies (Penhallurick and Wink 2004; Austin et al. 2004) and was already recognized by a number of important agencies including BirdLife International (del Hoyo and Collar 2014).



In animal cells there are two sets of genetic information, the very large and complex genome that is stored in the nucleus and a much smaller set in the mitochondria. The nuclear genes are contributed by both parents whereas the mitochondrial genes are inherited from the mother only. Mitochondrial genes are favored in molecular phylogenetic studies because they evolve fast enough to accumulate differences between populations that have diverged very recently; however, there are technical biases associated with using mitochondrial rather than nuclear gene sequences (Prychitko and Moore 2000). Both shearwater studies used the same mitochondrial gene and confirmation using nuclear genes is needed. That said, the *Ardenna/Puffinus* split makes sense in terms of the physical appearance of these species and, is also supported by differences in their geographic distribution. Sooty and Great Shearwaters breed on temperate islands in the Southern Hemisphere and migrate across the equator into the North Atlantic during their non-breeding season. Manx Shearwaters, on the other hand, breed in the North Atlantic, predominantly in the British Isles and Iceland, and make a trans-equatorial migration in the other direction. Although not yet proven, some of the Manx Shearwaters seen in New York might come from colonies in Atlantic Canada and nesting may occur as close to us as Massachusetts. Audubon's Shearwater is also an exclusively northern hemisphere breeder, with the majority nesting in the Bahamas and presumably following the Gulf Stream into New York offshore waters. As a side note, the relationship trees cited in these studies suggest that Sooty Shearwater is more closely related to Great Shearwater than to Short-tailed Shearwater (*A. tenuirostris*), which looks very similar to Sooty Shearwater and is also a

southern hemisphere breeder that migrates into the northern hemisphere in austral winter.

The other genus name change affecting the *Checklist of the Birds of New York State* is the move of Sandhill Crane from *Grus* to *Antigone* so that the species name is now *Antigone canadensis*. As with the shearwaters, this brings the AOU in line with other authorities (del Hoyo and Collar 2014), and is also based on a study of mitochondrial gene sequences that indicates a closer affinity to *Antigone* cranes (Saurus, White-naped and Brolga) than to the *Burgeranus* (Wattled), *Anthropoides* (Blue, Demoiselle) and *Grus* (Red-crowned, Whooping, Common, Hooded and Black-necked) cranes (Krajewski et al. 2010). In this case the lineage trees are derived from complete mitochondrial genomes rather than just a portion of a single mitochondrial gene. That said, the new arrangement could still be upset by analysis of nuclear genes. An interesting point to consider is that, although it is no longer in the *Grus* genus, Sandhill Crane can hybridize with members of genera other than its own, such as Whooping Crane *Grus americana*, Common Crane *Grus grus* and even Wattled Crane *Burgeranus carunculatus*.

Common and Hoary Redpolls survive...for now at least.

Looking ahead, the Supplement notes that a decision on a proposal to bring together ('lump') Common (*Acanthis flammea*) and Hoary Redpolls (*A. hornemanni*) into one species has been postponed. The decision—if and when it comes—will doubtless be influenced by a 2015 study which compared more than 23,000 variable sites in the Redpoll genetic material and found no evidence of prolonged reproductive isolation (Mason and Taylor 2015). Researchers in the Lovett group at the Cornell Lab of Ornithology, Nick Mason and Scott Taylor have written a less technical account of their work, which can be viewed here:

<https://www.allaboutbirds.org/from-many-one-how-many-species-of-redpolls-are-there/>

Their work is really fascinating and has important ramifications for field identification that again are beyond the scope of this essay. Thinking forward, if the NACC votes to combine the two species, then the NYS list, which currently stands at 490 species, will be reduced by one!

The last modification impacting the *Checklist of the Birds of New York State* affects the English name of *Alauda arvensis*, an introduced species that is now extinct ('extirpated') in New York State but retained on the list. This is changed from Eurasian Sky Lark to Eurasian Skylark. Some readers will be aware that this 'new' name was already used by the AOU in the 34th to 39th Supplements (1982-1993) but in 1995 was changed to Sky lark and then in 1998 to Sky Lark, with an upper case L. Exciting stuff, eh? Anyhow, Eurasian Skylark seems a wise choice and hopefully it will stay put for a while. It is

already used by most global and local taxonomies, is consistent with the names of other lark species and provides distinction from the closely related Oriental Skylark (*A. gulgula*) and highly localized Razo Skylark (*A. razeae*).

In addition to the changes discussed here, there are other changes in the 57th Supplement that will be of interest to traveling birders, including the splitting of Western Scrub-Jay into the more coastal California Scrub-Jay (*A. californica*) and interior southwestern Woodhouse's Scrub-Jay (*A. woodhouseii*). Those who've birded in California and in Arizona may well have seen both, but so far no Scrub-Jay of any kind has been observed in New York State.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

My thanks to Carena Pooth for stimulating discussions and editorial suggestions that greatly improved this article.

LITERATURE CITED

- Austin JJ, Bretagnolle V, and E Pasquet 2004. A global molecular phylogeny of the small *Puffinus* shearwaters and implications for systematics of the Little-Audubon Shearwater complex. *Auk* 121: 847-864.
- Bruun B and A Singer 1975. *The Hamlyn Guide to Birds of Britain and Europe*. Hamlyn Publishing Group, London, UK.
- Chesser RT, Burns KJ, Cicero C, Dunn JL, Kratter, AW, Lovette IJ, Rasmussen PC, Remsen JV Jr., Rising JD, Stotz DF, and K Winker 2016. Fifty-seventh Supplement to the American Ornithologists' Union: *Check-list of North American Birds*. *The Auk* 133: 544-560.
- Cracraft J 2013. Avian higher-level relationships and classification: nonpasseriformes. Pp xxi-xliv in Dickinson EC and JV Remsen eds (2013). *The Howard and Moore Complete Checklist of the Birds of the World. 4th Edition. Volume 1, Non-passerines*. Aves Press, Eastbourne, UK.
- del Hoyo, J., Collar, NJ, Christie, DA, Elliott, A and LDC Fishpool 2014. *HBW and BirdLife International Illustrated Checklist of the Birds of the World*. Barcelona, Spain and Cambridge UK: Lynx Edicions and BirdLife International.
- Dickinson EC, Jemsen JV Jr, and L Christidis 2014. *The Howard and Moore Complete Checklist of the Birds of the World. 4th edition. Vol. 1: Non-passerines and Vol. 2: Passerines*, Aves Press, Eastbourne, UK.
- Fjeldså J (2013) Avian classification in flux. Pp 77-146 in: del Hoyo et al. 2013 *Handbook of the Birds of the World. Special Volume. New Species and Global Index*. Barcelona, Spain and Cambridge UK: Lynx Edicions and BirdLife International.

- Howell SNG, O'Brien M, Sullivan BL, Wood CL, Lewington I and R Crossley 2009. The purpose of field guides: taxonomy vs. utility? *Birding* 41: 44-49.
- Jarvis ED, Mirarab S, Aberer AJ, Li B, Houde P, Li C, Ho SY, Faircloth BC, Nabholz B, Howard JT, Suh A, Weber CC, da Fonseca RR, Li J, Zhang F, Li H, Zhou L, Narula N, Liu L, Ganapathy G, Boussau B, Bayzid MS, Zavidovych V, Subramanian S, Gabaldón T, Capella-Gutiérrez S, Huerta-Cepas J, Rekepalli B, Munch K, Schierup M, Lindow B, Warren WC, Ray D, Green RE, Bruford MW, Zhan X, Dixon A, Li S, Li N, Huang Y, Derryberry EP, Bertelsen MF, Sheldon FH, Brumfield RT, Mello CV, Lovell PV, Wirthlin M, Schneider MP, Prosdocimi F, Samaniego JA, Vargas Velazquez AM, Alfaro-Núñez A, Campos PF, Petersen B, Sicheritz-Ponten T, Pas A, Bailey T, Scofield P, Bunce M, Lambert DM, Zhou Q, Perelman P, Driskell AC, Shapiro B, Xiong Z, Zeng Y, Liu S, Li Z, Liu B, Wu K, Xiao J, Yinqi X, Zheng Q, Zhang Y, Yang H, Wang J, Smeds L, Rheindt FE, Braun M, Fjeldsa J, Orlando L, Barker FK, Jönsson KA, Johnson W, Koepfli KP, O'Brien S, Haussler D, Ryder OA, Rahbek C, Willerslev E, Graves GR, Glenn TC, McCormack J, Burt D, Ellegren H, Alström P, Edwards SV, Stamatakis A, Mindell DP, Cracraft J, Braun EL, Warnow T, Jun W, Gilbert MT, and G. Zhang 2014. Whole-genome analyses resolve early branches in the tree of life of modern birds. *Science*. 346: 1320-1331.
- Krajewski C., Sipiorski JT and FE Anderson 2010. Complete mitochondrial genome sequences and the phylogeny of cranes (Gruiformes: Gruidae). *Auk* 127: 440–452.
- Mason NA and SA Taylor 2015. Differentially expressed genes match bill morphology and plumage despite largely undifferentiated genomes in a Holarctic songbird. *Molecular Ecology* 24: 3009–3025.
- Penhallurick J, and M Wink 2004. Analysis of the taxonomy and nomenclature of the Procellariiformes based on complete nucleotide sequences of the mitochondrial cytochrome b gene. *Emu* 104: 125-147.
- Prum RO, Berv JS, Dornburg A, Field DJ, Townsend JP, Lemmon EM, and AR Lemmon 2015. A comprehensive phylogeny of birds (Aves) using targeted next-generation DNA sequencing. *Nature* 526: 569-73.
- Prychitko TM and WS Moore 2000. Comparative evolution of the mitochondrial cytochrome b gene and nuclear beta-fibrinogen intron 7 in woodpeckers. *Molecular Biology and Evolution* 17: 1101-11.
- Sibley CG and JE Ahlquist 1990. *Phylogeny and Classification of Birds: A Study in Molecular Evolution*. Yale University Press, New Haven, Connecticut.
- Slager DL, Battey CJ, Bryson RW Jr., Voelker G, and J Klicka 2014. A multilocus phylogeny of a major New World avian radiation: The Vireonidae. *Molecular Phylogenetics and Evolution* 80: 95–104.

LINKS TO THE 57TH SUPPLEMENT AND OTHER MATERIALS

57th Supplement to the AOU Check-List:

<<http://www.aoucospubs.org/doi/pdf/10.1642/AUK-16-77.1>>

Proposals and comments considered for the 57th Supplement:

<http://checklist.aou.org/nacc/proposals/current_proposals.html>

HBW/ BirdLife International Checklist:

<<http://www.birdlife.org/datazone/info/taxonomy>>

Clements Checklist, used by eBird:

<<http://www.birds.cornell.edu/clementschecklist/>>



WINTER WATERFOWL COUNT, JANUARY 2016

Bill Ostrander

80 Westmont Avenue, Elmira, New York 14905
browncreeper@gmail.com

A total of 352 volunteers went into the field 16-27 January 2016 and conducted the New York State Ornithological Association's January Waterfowl Count. The volunteers logged 973 hours and counted 502,336 waterfowl. Swift (2007) described the methodology of the count.

WEATHER CONDITIONS

Weather data from Buffalo, Ithaca, Plattsburgh, Kingston, and Islip showed that temperatures were generally mild and above freezing through December. During January, temperatures were more normal and below freezing. The first weekend of the count period, temperatures were above normal, but returned to normal through the rest of the count period. Still, shallow water was frozen for the count, but most moving water and lakes were open. December precipitation throughout the state was largely in the form of rain and only trace amounts of snow fell in January. The lack of freezing on the lakes and the lack of snow cover allowed larger numbers of geese to remain in the region through the count period.

RESULTS

In this summary, I will compare the 2016 numbers with those of the decade 2001-2010. The 2016 total count, mentioned above, was 118,630 more than the decade average of 383,706, which was well outside the standard deviation for that decade. The total was about 160,000 more than the 2015 count. Geese and swans accounted for the increases. Dabbling and diving ducks and non-Anseriformes waterfowl were all down from 2015 and all below the decade average, although within the decade's standard deviation.

Counts for 18 species were above the previous decade's average. Of these, Snow Goose, Brant, Trumpeter Swan, Tundra Swan, Ring-necked Duck, Harlequin Duck, Hooded Merganser, and Double-crested Cormorant were outside the standard deviation of the previous decade. The counts 138,682 Snow Geese, 4065 Tundra Swans, and 105 Harlequin Ducks were the highest since the count began in 1973.

Counts for 31 species were below the previous decade's average. Those outside the standard deviation of the previous decade were Mute Swan, American Wigeon, Northern Shoveler, Canvasback, Greater Scaup, and Ruddy Duck.

LONG-TERM TRENDS

The record number of Tundra Swans recorded in 2016 was the third record count for that species in four years, continuing the long-term trend of an increasing winter population in New York State. Following two consecutive years of increases since the record low count recorded in 2013, Canvasback numbers dropped to the second lowest count since 1973. Large fluctuations in Canvasback numbers has been the norm throughout the history of the count. Region 1 again hosted the vast majority and the species continued to decline in Region 10.

Hooded Mergansers were increasing through 2008. Since then the numbers have fluctuated. The 2015 count was well below the average for 2001-2010, but well above the overall average for 1973-2015.

A comparison of averages for the periods 1973-2000, 2001-2010, and 2013-2016 might detect other possible long-term trends in New York State's winter waterfowl populations. Long-term increases may be indicated in this way for White-fronted Goose, Snow Goose, Brant, Tundra Swan, Gadwall, Eurasian Wigeon, Blue-winged Teal, Mallard, Redhead, Ring-necked Duck, Lesser Scaup, Common Eider, Long-tailed Duck, Bufflehead, Hooded Merganser, Red-breasted Merganser, and Double-crested Cormorant. Long-term decreases may be occurring for American Wigeon, American Black Duck, Northern Pintail, Green-winged Teal, Common Merganser, and Great Cormorant.

FUTURE COUNTS

You can help with the 2017 count by contacting your regional compiler.

Compiler contact information is available online at:

<http://nybirds.org/ProjWaterfowl.htm>

—where you can also view the historical data.

For planning purposes, the January Waterfowl Count is conducted in a period that begins the Saturday before Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Day (the third Monday in January). The next two count periods will be:

2017 – January 14-22 (target date Sunday, January 15)

2018 – January 13-21 (target date Sunday, January 14)

Table 1. Regional totals for the 2016 January Waterfowl Count.

Species/Region	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	Total
Goose, White-fronted	0	0	2		0		0	0	3	0	5
Blue											
Snow	1	15,00	123,23	3	5		16	2	8	411	138,682
Ross's	0	0	0		0		0	0	0	0	0
Canada	8,124	28,84	25,716	4,98	1570	6,211	149	15,42	26,95	28,157	160,273
Cackling	1	9	0		0		0	0	1	0	11
Brant	0	0	0		0		0	0	868	22,951	23,819
Swan, Mute	4	118	1	1	16	10	0	4	114	776	1,044
Trumpeter	0	9	7		6	43	0	0	0	0	65
Tundra	719	17	2,744		508	77	0	0	0	0	4,065
Wood Duck	2	0	6		1		0	0	10	43	62
Gadwall	107	22	96		5	9	1	0	243	1,400	1,883
Wigeon, Eurasian	0	0	0		0		0	0	0	1	1
American	40	1	70	2	9	2	0	5	73	534	736
Am. Black Duck	189	520	1,184	245	197	194	413	119	412	6,072	9,545
Mallard	4,505	3,576	5,891	1,79	3365	709	2,862	1,722	5,075	7,193	36,690
Mallard X Black	1	10	7		0		2	0	1	43	64
Blue-winged Teal	0	0	0		0		0	0	0	5	5
Northern Shoveler	6	1	1	1	0		0	0	12	149	170
Northern Pintail	2	6	5	6	1		0	0	1	95	116
Green-winged Teal	0	0	2		1		0	0	0	136	139
Canvasback	4,158	29	31	2	2		14	2	244	32	4,514
Redhead	1,640	6,398	12,914	31	195	71	8	0	0	75	21,332
Ring-necked Duck	53	753	573	33	57	1	24	194	165	261	2,114
Tufted Duck	0	0	1		0		0	0	0	0	1
Scaup, Greater	3,341	1,532	100	5	55	255	13	0	735	6,699	12,735
Lesser	547	265	436	18	180	4	22	6	35	167	1,680
not to species	1	187	75		18	1	1,284	0	0	791	2,357
Eider, King	0	0	0		1		0	0	0	4	5
Common	0	0	0		0		0	0	0	149	149

Species/Region	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	Total
Harlequin Duck	2	0	0		0		0	0	0	103	105
Scoter, Surf	2	0	0		0		0	0	9	842	853
White-winged	141	242	4		14	2	19	0	25	6,259	6,706
Black	2	0	0		1		0	0	3	2,926	2,932
not to species	0	0	0		0		0	0	26	2,464	2,490
Long-tailed Duck	3,666	3,814	5		132	163	0	1	101	1,817	9,699
Bufflehead	2,266	145	283	37	91	108	119	5	427	5,233	8,714
Goldeneye, Common	4,312	2,417	778	104	860	2,086	6,118	443	233	712	18,063
Barrow's	1	1	0		0		2	0	0	1	5
Merganser, Hooded	193	74	43	262	120	12	23	48	313	1,230	2,318
Common	950	273	707	663	535	1,647	4,182	334	3,035	11	12,337
Red-breasted	733	2,055	303		858	961	16	0	141	1,602	6,669
not to species											
Ruddy Duck	22	37	3		8		0	0	75	1,029	1,174
Loon, Red-throated	0	14	0		1		0	0	7	112	134
Common	4	23	18	15	18	12	24	0	15	162	291
Yellow-billed											
not to species											
Grebe, Pied-billed	0	6	4		3	1	0	0	2	43	59
Horned	0	108	18		14		28	0	2	148	318
Red-necked	0	3	0		0	2	1	0	0	0	6
Eared	0	0	0		0		0	0	0	0	0
Cormorant, D.-	30	37	4		48		7	0	10	203	339
Great	0	0	0		0		0	0	29	38	67
not to species											
American Coot	36	221	795	60	38	1	4	0	16	99	1,270
Other/Unidentified	5,045	5	18		24	406	0	0	13	14	5,525
TOTAL OF ABOVE	40,84	66,76	176,08	8,26	2309	12,98	15,35	18,31	39,44	101,19	502,336

Table 2. Comparison of 2016 January Waterfowl Counts to Ten-year and Long Term averages.

Species	2016	Avg '01-'10	% Difference	Avg '73-'15	% Difference
Goose, White-fronted	5	6	-11	2	121
Blue	0	0		0	-100
Snow	138682	12,944	971	6,626	1993
Ross's	0	0	-100	0	-100
Canada	160273	143,674	12	91,904	74
Cackling	11			8	43
Brant	23819	16,519	44	15,593	53
Swan, Mute	1044	1,682	-38	1,317	-21
Trumpeter	65	42	57	12	424
Tundra	4065	857	375	467	770
Wood Duck	62	46	36	37	67
Gadwall	1883	1,520	24	1,156	63
Wigeon, Eurasian	1	4	-74	4	-72
American	736	1,319	-44	1,474	-50
Am. Black Duck	9545	12,141	-21	17,066	-44
Mallard	36690	39,594	-7	34,610	6
Mallard X Black	64	186	-65	85	-24
Blue-winged Teal	5	4	22	4	30
Northern Shoveler	170	451	-62	280	-39
Northern Pintail	116	149	-22	190	-39
Green-winged Teal	139	261	-47	264	-47
Canvasback	4514	14,722	-69	11,279	-60
Redhead	21332	15,601	37	11,319	88
Ring-necked Duck	2114	1,321	60	838	152
Tufted Duck	1	4	-77	2	-50
Scaup, Greater	12735	32,549	-61	27,534	-54
Lesser	1680	2,538	-34	1,584	6
not to species	2357	6,367	-63	16,875	-86
Eider, King	5	8	-33	7	-23
Common	149	1,183	-87	1,272	-88
Harlequin Duck	105	14	634	10	940

Species	2016	Avg '01-'10	% Difference	Avg '73-'15	% Difference
Scoter, Surf	853	6,028	-86	2,881	-70
White-winged	6706	5,502	22	7,117	-6
Black	2932	3,488	-16	1,335	120
not to species	2490	3,192	-22	2,265	10
Long-tailed Duck	9699	6,854	42	5,513	76
Bufflehead	8714	8,287	5	6,834	28
Goldeneye, Common	18063	15,701	15	13,354	35
Barrow's	5	18	-73	6	-15
Merganser, Hooded	2318	1,766	31	989	134
Common	12337	10,211	21	11,037	12
Red-breasted	6669	7,552	-12	5,495	21
not to species	0	0		0	-100
Ruddy Duck	1174	3,808	-69	2,371	-50
Loon, Red-throated	134	298	-55	111	21
Common	291	367	-21	220	32
Yellow-billed	0	0		0	-100
not to species	0	0		0	-100
Grebe, Pied-billed	59	82	-28	78	-25
Horned	318	479	-34	382	-17
Red-necked	6	8	-29	5	21
Eared	0	1	-100	0	-100
Cormorant, D.-crested	339	261	30	167	103
Great	67	130	-49	154	-56
not to species	0	0		1	-100
American Coot	1270	2,252	-44	2,001	-37
unidentified	5525	1,720	221	1,377	301
Total	502336	383,706	31	305,504	64
Total Geese	322645	173,143	86	114,131	183
Total Swans	5428	2,580	110	1,795	202
Total Ducks	166273	202,385	-18	185,083	-10
Dabbling ducks	55168	55,673	-1	55,636	-1
Diving ducks	111105	146,712	-24	129,447	-14
Loons, Grebes, Corms, Coot	2480	3,879	-36	3,119	-20

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

Thanks to everyone who participated in the 2016 January Waterfowl Count. The many dedicated field observers volunteered many hours in the field. Regional and local compilers and coordinators deserve special thanks for making sure that the state had good coverage and for compiling the data in a timely manner. The regional compilers, this year, were:

Region	Compiler	Region	Compiler
1	Jim Landau	6	Jerry LeTendre
2	Robert Spahn	7	Gary Lee
3	Thomas Bell	8	Bryan Swift
4	Gail Kirch	9	Bill Ostrander
5	Bill Purcell	10	Ronald Borque

LITERATURE CITED

Swift, B. L. 2007. January waterfowl counts, 2005-2007, and some observations on long-term trends. *Kingbird* 57:198-213.



NOTES AND OBSERVATIONS

Interactions Between Gulls and Predatory Diving Birds (Loons and Cormorants)

This report is a follow up to my observations of the simultaneous predation by loons and gulls on the same aquatic animals of Lake Champlain in the year 2014 (Klein, H. G. 2015. A Multi-species Feeding Aggregation Involving Gulls and Common Loons on Lake Champlain. *The Kingbird* 65: 103-105). Two hypotheses were suggested regarding the relationships between the Common Loons and the gulls (Ring-billed, Herring, Great Black-backed, and Bonaparte's). One was that the plunge-diving and surface-diving of the gulls on the subsurface prey animals (presumably small fish) was simply coincidental with the feeding of the loons on these prey animals that had independently ventured to the surface of the lake. An alternate hypothesis was that the underwater activity of the loons was the cause of the effect, in that prey animals were induced to the lake's surface where they were vulnerable to predation by the gulls as well as by the loons. As reported here, the result of my more focused observations (in 2015) on the behavior of the loons and gulls lends more credence to the second hypothesis.

The 2015 observations reported here occurred at the same place and under similar conditions as those of 2014. The most concentrated study period was 6-8 October 2015, covering about a dozen intermittent observations during a total of seven hours. Observations were made at a variable distance of about one mile through a Kowa 20X-60X zoom telescope.

The gulls were mostly Ring-billed Gulls, with small numbers of Great Black-backed and Herring Gull at times. The divers were always at least one (and possibly two, at times) Common Loons. On some occasions one Double-crested Cormorant was an unexpected participant; its role was unclear.

In the following general summary, the activities seen were similar to those reported for 2014. A swarm of gulls, hovering above and plunge diving into a small area of water surface, was correlated with the presence of a loon or two (plus sometimes a cormorant) in the water below. Amid much splashing, the loons were mixed in with the plunge- and surface-diving gulls, all species apparently attempting to feed on the prey animals just below the water's surface. This activity would start quickly and end abruptly, depending on whether or not the loons continued to dive, a presumptive cause and effect.

Specifically, there were some episodes that were visible in enough detail to further clarify the elements of cause and effect. Typically in these instances, a loon floating at the surface, with some gulls floating nearby, would dive. About 20 seconds later the gulls would rise from the water and hover and plunge dive at the place where the loon had risen close to the surface. All species appeared to be feeding on an abundant prey population. This scenario was seen a number of

times and supports the hypothesis that the diving and underwater activity of the loons was causing the ensuing swarming and diving of the gulls.

In another incident, a loon was floating some distance from a large concentration of gulls floating at the surface (the aftermath of a recent swarming). A few gulls were near the loon; it dove and soon these gulls rose into the air and began plunge diving where the loon had dove. Presently, a glimpse of a loon was seen among the splashing gulls. Moreover, nearby gulls immediately flew over and joined in the general predatory behavior. From this, and many other similar observations, it appears that the gulls realized that a feeding opportunity was imminent. They were quick to react by joining the feeding frenzy.

In conclusion, my study of the interaction of loons and gulls in exploiting a food source leads me to believe that the loons were causing a prey species (presumably small fish) to become vulnerable to gulls at the surface of Lake Champlain. An interesting question is, "What were the loons doing underwater that caused the fish to rise to the surface?" A conservative explanation might be that the loons were simply pursuing a school of small fish whose instinctive collective behavior was to flee toward the water surface when attacked by a predator.

An additional note: Although this report (and the Klein 2015 note) focuses on the underwater activity of the Common Loon, other predatory diving birds should be mentioned. In addition to Double-crested Cormorant, Common Merganser (and probably Red-breasted Merganser) may have the same four gull species (mostly Ring-billed) associated with them. Very often, gulls are seen floating near cormorants and mergansers, seemingly waiting for a feeding opportunity to occur. (In this study mergansers were not seen participating in the swarming, diving behavior of gulls.) Occasionally, gulls (again, mostly Ring-billed) were seen agitatedly flying about in wide circles above a flock of actively diving cormorants. The gulls dove down to the water surface and appeared to be picking up something there, presumably small fish. Sometimes a gull appeared to be aggressively snatching something from the bill of a cormorant. This activity may continue for several hours and then gradually taper off, with fewer cormorants diving.

The common thread that occurs throughout these observations of loons, cormorants, and gulls is that the underwater activity of the predatory aquatic birds is the causative factor and the resulting predatory behavior of the gulls on a prey population made vulnerable by the underwater activity of the diving species.

Harold G. Klein, 185 Stafford Drive, Plattsburgh, NY 12901

REGION 1—NIAGARA FRONTIER

Mike Morgante

6405 Woodberry Court, East Amherst, NY 14051
morgm@roadrunner.com

December 2015 brought record-shattering warmth and a near absence of snow. The mean temperature was 42.1° F, a whopping 12.0° above normal and the warmest December on record. A strong El Niño global pattern contributed to this warmth. Monthly precipitation at Buffalo-Niagara International Airport was 2.90", 0.99" less than usual, with only 1.0" of snow, 26.4" less than usual. January 2016 brought periods of mild temperatures but also lake effect snows from the warmer lake waters. The mean temperature was 26.9°, 2.0° above normal. The monthly precipitation was 1.81", 1.37" below normal, with 25.6" of snow, 0.3" above normal. Lake Erie did not fully freeze, but the water temperature was at or just above freezing by the second week of January. February's mean temperature was 29.7°, 3.4° above normal, although the coldest temperature in Buffalo since January 1982 occurred on the 14th when -12° was reached. The monthly precipitation was 3.47", 0.98" above normal, with 20.5" of snowfall, 3.2" above normal.

The record warm December allowed most lakes and ponds to remain unfrozen well into January and waterfowl took advantage. Reports and numbers of dabblers such as Northern Shoveler, Gadwall, and Green-winged Teal were higher than usual for winter. For the divers, there were impressive counts of Hooded Merganser and Lesser Scaup at inland locations such as Chautauqua Lake and Cuba Lake.

Geese lingered as well. **Cackling Goose** reports were up, a **Brant** was located at Beaver Island SP on 25 December, and a **Ross's Goose** was identified three times in late December and early January around Porter. Snow Goose reports and numbers were higher than usual each month, with geese still headed south into early January and then returning in late January. High counts of 2,000 and 1,500 were made in early February in Orleans County near Lake Ontario. Kim Sherwood photographed a flock of **29 Greater White-fronted Geese** in flight at Conewango Swamp WMA on 18 February, smashing the Regional record maximum and perhaps setting a new State maximum. Four Greater White-fronted Geese were also sighted at Dunkirk Harbor on 29 February.

Other notable waterfowl sightings included one or more **King Eiders** in Buffalo Harbor, up to five **Harlequin Ducks** in the raging rapids off Niagara Falls SP, the regular **Barrow's Goldeneye** at Point Breeze, and a **hybrid Mallard x Northern Pintail** identified and photographed by Mike Morgante and Chris Akios during the Waterfowl Count on the Niagara River off Grand Island.

The **Eared Grebe** at Batavia WWTP continued until early December. More unusual was one photographed at Barcelona Harbor in early January. There were only a few scattered Red-necked Grebe reports this winter.

Up to 11 **Black Vultures** wintered near the Niagara River in Lewiston for the fifth consecutive winter. Turkey Vultures were also present in Lewiston through the winter, and some seen elsewhere in late January and early February were likely early migrants. There were no large concentrations of Bald Eagles reported this winter. Ashley Casey and Cory Gregory identified and photographed **Golden Eagles** in Allegany County that were likely wintering, with one on 28 December in Wellsville and two in Willing on 22 February. Casey and Gregory also photographed an adult Northern Goshawk in Wellsville in December. Gary Hallick photographed an adult **Northern Goshawk** in his West Valley yard in January.

Sandhill Cranes continue to be found with more regularity, with two reports this season. Two in Kiantone were a treat for the Jamestown CBC whereas five on the Oak Orchard CBC were less of a surprise given their regular presence in the area and the warm December weather.

Five species of shorebirds is the most I recall including in a winter report. There was one Killdeer report for each month, with two on 21 February considered spring arrivals. A **Purple Sandpiper** was identified from Niagara Falls SP in early December. A **Dunlin** photographed at Forest Lawn Cemetery on 6 February was bizarre for location and date. Two **Wilson's Snipe** on the Jamestown CBC were somewhat expected, while one in Hinsdale on 15 Feb was probably an overwintering bird. A **Red Phalarope** was an unexpected bonus for Jim Wojewodzki and others conducting the Waterfowl Count at Point Breeze on 23 January.

Bonaparte's Gull numbers on the Niagara River dropped off after the first week of January. A **Black-headed Gull** was semi-regular along the Niagara River in Buffalo through December and into early January. **Little Gulls** were more prevalent on their return in February than in December or early January. There were several juvenile **Black-legged Kittiwake** reports. Lesser Black-backed Gulls are being reported more frequently at inland locations than previously and in increasing numbers on Niagara River, with a winter maximum of 16 this season.

Snowy Owls were present but not widespread this winter. There was one **Long-eared Owl** report, while Short-eared Owls were reported less than in recent winters.

An **Eastern Phoebe** on the Oak Orchard CBC 28 December was undoubtedly a beneficiary of the warm December compared to most years. The **White-eyed Vireo** found at Tiff NP in late November was last sighted on 1 December, to just make it into this winter report. An **American Pipit** was regularly found during a two week stretch in January at Niagara Falls SP. A **Fish Crow** at Unity Island on 6 December was across the Niagara River and international boundary but relatively close to an area where several Fish Crows

were regularly found in Fort Erie, Ontario throughout the winter. Common Ravens continue their expansion into the northern portion of the Region.

A **Pine Warbler** visited a suet feeder in Arcade through January and into February, and another was found at Niagara Falls SP in January. **Yellow-rumped Warbler** was reported from three locations. This was the second consecutive winter with **Savannah Sparrow** reports from three locations, a trend of increasing occurrence in winter. **Fox Sparrow** is slightly less than annual in winter; three December sightings and one in January made for a good winter showing. **“Oregon” Junco** and **Rose-breasted Grosbeak** continued from fall in Colden and Pomfret, respectively. Mike Zebehazy was treated to a first-year male **Baltimore Oriole** at his Orchard Park feeders from mid-December through mid-February.

It was a second consecutive slow winter for irruptive finches. **Pine Siskins** were around but not long-lasting or in large counts in most locations. There were only three reports of **Common Redpoll**. There were no crossbill or grosbeak reports, and Purple Finch numbers were unremarkable.

CONTRIBUTORS

Chris Akios, Andrea Andrews, Sue Barth, Doug Beattie, Cory Callaghan, R. Christopher Bohlman, Ashley Casey, Willie D’Anna, Dean DiTommaso, Brett Ewald, Andy Guthrie, Cory Gregory, Andy Guthrie, Gary Hallick, Alan Herdzig (AHe), Paul Hess, Alec Humann (AHu), Chris Kundl, Jim & Karen Landau, Lynne Landon, Greg Lawrence, Madeline Miles (MMi), Joe Mitchell, Donniss Morgan, Mike Morgante (MMo), Celeste Morien, Brian & Brooke Morse, Susan & Tom O’Donnell, Betsy Potter, Jeff Reed, Gerry Rising, Kevin Rybczynski, Richard Salembier, Marty Sanden, Shelly Seidman, William Seleen, Beverly Seyler, Debbie Sharon, Kim Sherwood, David & Debbie Suggs, Laura Szmania, Jeff Tome, Gale VerHague, Jim Wojewodzki, Peter Yoerg, Mike Zebehazy.

ABBREVIATIONS

AISP – Allegany SP, CATT; BeSP – Beaver I SP, ERIE; BufH – Buffalo Harbor, ERIE; BuSP – Buckhorn I SP, ERIE; BWWTWP – Batavia Wastewater Treatment Plant, GENE; ChauL – Chautauqua L, CHAU; CSWMA – Conewango Swamp WMA, CATT; DH – Dunkirk Harbor, CHAU; DHSP – Devil’s Hole SP, NIAG; FLC – Forest Lawn Cemetery, Buffalo, ERIE; FMCSP – Four Mile Creek SP, NIAG; FNSP – Fort Niagara SP, NIAG; GHSP – Golden Hill SP, NIAG; INWR – Iroquois NWR, GENE/ORLE; JAS – Jamestown Audubon Society, CHAU; LBSP – Lakeside Beach SP, ORLE; NF – Niagara Falls, NIAG; NFSP – Niagara Falls SP, NIAG; NPP – Niagara Power Project on NR, NIAG; NR – Niagara R; OOWMA – Oak Orchard WMA, GENE/ORLE; PB – Point Breeze, ORLE; PG – Point Gratiot, CHAU; Tiff NP – Tiff Nature

Preserve, ERIE; TRWMA – Tillman Road WMA; TWMA – Tonawanda WMA, GENE/NIAG.

WATERFOWL - VULTURES

Greater White-fronted Goose: arr 29

CSWMA 18 Feb (KS, ph.), flyover flock, record count; 4 DH 29 Feb (GV).

Snow Goose: 200 TWMA 20 Dec; 14 Sheridan CHAU 2 Jan; 2 Dunkirk Airport CHAU 6 Jan; 310 PB 30 Jan (GL); 1, 14 DH 31 Jan, 14 Feb; 120, 125 Shelby ORLE 2, 8 Feb; 35 Buffalo NR 3 Feb; max 2000 PB 6 Feb (J&KL, JW); 592 Gaines ORLE 6 Feb; 132 LBSP 7 Feb; 1500 Lyndonville ORLE 7 Feb (BE); good showing for each month; early arrivals in Feb.

ROSS'S GOOSE (R1): Lewiston NIAG 23 Dec (WD, BP); Porter NIAG 27 Dec (WD, BP); Bond L NIAG 1 Jan (BS); same bird in nearby locations.

Brant: BeSP 25 Dec (DSh), late.

Cackling Goose: 1, 3 Lewiston NIAG 2 Dec, 1 Jan; INWR 3 Dec; 2, 1, 1 BWWTP 5, 26 Dec, 7 Feb; 8 Cuba L ALLE 5 Dec (CG, AC); Oakfield GENE 17 Dec; Shelby ORLE 28 Dec; Lyndonville ORLE 2 Jan; 2 Silver Creek CHAU 8 Feb; 3 DH 29 Feb; good showing for each month.

Mute Swan: BuSP 14-24 Jan; Silver Creek CHAU 17 Jan; max 7 PB 23 Jan.

Tundra Swan: 230 NF 13 Dec; max 320, 254 BeSP 25 Dec, 2 Feb (DSh); 240 Buffalo NR 25 Dec; 91 Ellery ChauL 17 Jan; 140 JAS 19 Jan; arr 38 Wilson NIAG 1 Feb.

Wood Duck: AISP 12 Dec; BeSP 20 Dec; 4 Jamestown CBC 20 Dec; 9 Oak Orchard CBC 28 Dec; Wilson- Lake Plains CBC 29 Dec; Barcelona Harbor CHAU 8 Jan; good showing for winter.

Gadwall: 22 BWWTP 3 Jan; max 77, 141 NFSP 16, 27 Jan (WD), good counts for season.

Am. Wigeon: 28 BWWTP 12 Dec; 4 INWR 2 Jan; 18 NFSP 2 Jan; arr 5 Celeron CHAU 21 Feb.

Am. Black Duck: max 30 TWMA 12 Dec; 30 Barcelona Harbor CHAU.

Mallard: max 2354 INWR 17 Dec (CM).

N. Shoveler: max 118, 10 BWWTP 5, 26 Dec; 17 Jamestown CBC 20 Dec; 3 Cuba L ALLE 23 Dec; 8 NF CBC 27 Dec; 80 Oak Orchard CBC 28 Dec; 26, 4 BWWTP 3, 12 Jan, good counts for Dec and Jan; arr Tiftt NP 9 Feb.

N. Pintail: 24, 1 BWWTP 7 Dec, 3 Jan; 26 Oak Orchard CBC 28 Dec; 2 DH 2 Jan; 2 Grand I NR 24 Jan; 2 Wilson NIAG 30 Jan; arr 5 BuSP 23 Feb; 20, 32 DH 27, 28 Feb.

N. Pintail x Mallard: drake Grand I NR 24 Jan (MMo, CA, ph.), suspected first Reg report.

Green-winged Teal: max 18 BWWTP 6 Dec; 6 Cuba L ALLE 7 Dec; 4 TRWMA 24 Dec; Tiftt NP 1 Jan; NFSP 1-2 Jan; 2 BuSP 4 Jan; Carlton ORLE 20 Jan; arr 2 Cuba L 29 Feb; more reports than usual.

Canvasback: 3000, 10000 NF 16 Jan, 7 Feb (J&KL, D&DS); 3652 Grand I NR 24 Jan (MMo, CA); 2600 BuSP 5 Feb.

Redhead: 500 N Harmony ChauL 5 Dec (WS); 470, 1320 BufH 20 Dec, Feb 7 (AHU); 517 Grand I NR 24 Jan; 425 BeSP 28 Jan; 110 Celeron ChauL 21 Feb; higher counts than most winters.

Ring-necked Duck: 21, 14 Cuba L ALLE 5 Dec, 1 Jan; 25 BufH 20 Dec; 11 Cassadaga L CHAU 3 Jan; 7 BWWTP 3 Jan; max 72, 36 BuSP 12, 21 Jan; arr 15 Celeron ChauL 28 Feb.

Greater Scaup: max 1418 Grand I NR 24 Jan.

Lesser Scaup: max 400 N Harmony ChauL 5 Dec; 212 Jamestown CBC 20 Dec; 350 Ellery ChauL 26 Dec (WS); 82 Grand I NR 24 Jan (MMo); 36 Tonawanda NR 7 Feb; arr Celeron ChauL 28 Feb.

King Eider: 1, 1 BufH 15, 23 Dec (DD, AHU); one or more reportedly taken during hunting season.

Harlequin Duck: Lewiston NR 4, 6, 16 (WD); up to 5 NFSP 4 Dec thru; becoming regular at this location.

Surf Scoter: NF 6 Dec; 1, 1 Wilson NIAG 19, 29 Dec; 2 Olcott NIAG 22 Jan, 26 Feb; BufH 21, 23 Feb; only reports.

White-winged Scoter: BWWTP 25 Dec (DB); inland reports unusual, especially in winter.

Black Scoter: 2, 1 Olcott NIAG 19 Dec, 25 Feb; 2 Wilson- Lake Plains CBC 29 Dec; Ellery ChauL 2 Jan (WS), unusual inland; Buffalo NR 23 Jan; BufH 24 Jan; 2 LBSP 6 Feb; only reports.

Long-tailed Duck: max 169 PB 22 Jan.

Bufflehead: 214 Ellery ChauL 3 Dec; max 425 BufH 5 Dec; 55 Cuba L 1 Jan (CG, AC), good count for location and date.

Com. Goldeneye: 500 Buffalo NR 30 Dec; max 653 Grand I NR 24 Jan.

BARROW'S GOLDENEYE (R1): PB 5 Dec thru (GL, mob), continued from fall; apparently same male that has wintered here since Dec 2006.

Hooded Merganser: 103 AISP 12 Dec; 198 Cuba L 13 Dec; Celeron ChauL 20 Dec; max 600 Ellicott ChauL 20 Dec (WS), part of 973 Jamestown CBC; good counts for Dec; double digits at these locations into Jan.

Com. Merganser: 135 AISP 4 Jan (MMi), good count for inland location in Jan; max 155 Buffalo NR.

Red-breasted Merganser: max 280 GHSP 1 Dec.

Ruddy Duck: max 163, 42 BWWT 5 Dec, 3 Jan; 2 Buffalo NR 6 Dec; 49, 10, 4 Ellery ChauL 13, 26 Dec, 17 Jan; 2 DH 24 Jan, 2 Feb; 4 Barcelona CHAU 3 Feb; 7 Celeron ChauL 22 Feb.

Red-throated Loon: max 40 Wilson NIAG 19 Dec (WD); 6 FNSP 30 Jan (JM); 6 GHSP 31 Jan; 3 Wilson NIAG 21 Feb (WD), only Feb report.

Com. Loon: 2, 1 BuSP 8 Jan, 1 Feb; 3 Barcelona CHAU 24 Jan; GHSP 31 Jan; only reports beyond Dec.

Pied-billed Grebe: Cuba L 1 Jan; BuffH 14 Jan; BuSP 21 Jan; only reports beyond Dec.

Horned Grebe: 10 PB 2 Jan; 3 GHSP 31 Jan; BuSP 29 Feb (AHu); only reports past Dec.

Red-necked Grebe: 6, 2 PB 5 Dec, 17 Jan; 2 AISP 13 Dec (AHu), unusual location; 2, 1 BuffH 13 Dec, 2 Jan; 2, 1, 6 Wilson NIAG 19 Dec, 1 Jan, 21 Feb; 2 GHSP 3 Jan.

EARED GREBE (R1): BWWT 5 Dec (GL); Barcelona CHAU 7 Jan (GV ph), rare for date and location.

Double-crested Cormorant: ChauL 1 Jan; 19 Buffalo NR 9 Jan; 19 Grand I NR 24 Jan; max 26 Tonawanda NR 7 Feb.

Black Vulture: 11 Lewiston NIAG 16 Dec, 1 Jan; (PY, WD), overwintered for at least 5th consecutive year.

Turkey Vulture: 30, 12 Lewiston NIAG 17 Dec, 7 Jan; Dunkirk Airport CHAU 30 Jan (GV); 3 Wilson NIAG 30 Jan (JM), probably early migrants; Silver Creek CHAU 7 Feb (MS); 10 Fredonia CHAU 23 Feb; Colden ERIE 27 Feb.

HAWKS - LARIDS

Bald Eagle: 4 AISP 12 Dec; max 13 Oak Orchard CBC 29 Dec; 4 Cuba L ALLE 29 Feb;

no large concentrations this winter; also reported from other traditional wintering and breeding areas.

N. Goshawk: ad Wellsville ALLE 4 Dec (CG, AC ph.); ad West Valley CATT 19 Jan (GH ph.), only reports.

Red-shouldered Hawk: St. Bonaventure CBC, Jamestown CBC 20 Dec; JAS 21 Jan; 2 Aurora ERIE 18 Feb; 2 Bemus Pt CHAU 20 Feb; 2 Canadaway Creek WMA 28 Feb; some of the Feb records may be returning migrants.

Rough-legged Hawk: moderate presence.

Golden Eagle: Wellsville ALLE 28 Dec (CG, AC); 2 Willing ALLE 22 Feb (AC, CG); evidence of overwintering.

Am. Coot: 500 Busti CHAU 5 Dec (WS); 248 INWR 17 Dec; max 653 Jamestown CBC 20 Dec; 113 Oak Orchard CBC 29 Dec; 35 DH 2 Jan, 7 Feb; few reports after Dec.

Sandhill Crane: 2 Kiantone CHAU 20 Dec (JT); 5 Oak Orchard CBC 28 Dec; becoming more regular.

Killdeer: INWR 3 Dec; GHSP 21, 22 Jan (GR, DB), odd location for date; arr 2 Stannards ALLE 21 Feb (AC, CG).

Purple Sandpiper: NFSP 5, 6, 23 Dec; only reports.

Dunlin: FLC 6 Feb (AHe ph); unusual location and date; sixth Feb record.

Wilson's Snipe: 2 Jamestown CBC 20 Dec; Hinsdale CATT 15 Feb (JR), likely overwintered.

RED PHALAROPE (R1): PB 23 Jan (JW), only fourth winter record beyond Dec.

jaeger sp.: NFSP 22 Dec (CK), only report.

Black-legged Kittiwake: juv Whirlpool SP NIAG 5 Dec; juv NFSP 20 - 30 Dec; juv DHSP 7 Jan; possibly same bird.

Bonaparte's Gull: 1800 Buffalo NR, 1200 NFSP 6 Dec; 1600 DHSP 16 Jan; 1632 Lewiston NR 6 Feb; only short period in mid to late Jan of near absence from NR.

Black-headed Gull: Buffalo NR 5, 20 Dec, 3, 8 Jan (AHU, PY, KR); thought to be same bird.

Little Gull: 1, 2, 2 DHSP 5-8 Dec, 23 Jan, 6 Feb; 3 Buffalo NR 19 Dec (PY); 2, 1, max 5 Lewiston NR 7, 16 Jan, 6 Feb (AG, BM).

Iceland Gull: 10 NPP 30 Dec; 10, 13 NFSP 1, 13 Jan; 10 DHSP 14 Jan; max 18 Lewiston Res NIAG 8 Feb (CK).

Lesser Black-backed Gull: 4 Cuba L ALLE 10 Dec, 1 Jan (CG, AC); max 10, 15, 16 NFSP 21 Dec, 13 Jan, 6 Feb (CK, CK, AG, BM); 2 Ellery ChauL 9 Jan (WS); increasing.

Glaucous Gull: 3 NFSP 14 Jan; max 4 Lewiston Res NIAG 9 Feb.

G. Black-backed Gull: max 113 Ellery ChauL 16 Jan (WS); 104 DH 3 Feb (GV).

PIGEONS - PARROTS

Snowy Owl: Buffalo Airport ERIE 16, 21 Dec; 2, 2 BufH 20 Dec, 9 Jan; Olcott NIAG 25 Dec; 1, 1 Yates ORLE 29, 30 Dec, 30 Jan; Wilson NIAG 1 Jan; Somerset NIAG 3 Jan; Dunkirk Airport CHAU 22 Jan; Oakfield GENE 22, 23 Feb; limited distributions compared to irruptions over last two winters.

Long-eared Owl: GHSP 3 Jan – 21 Feb; several sightings, uncertain if same individual.

Short-eared Owl: 2, 4, 1 Shelby ORLE 4 Dec, 25 Jan, 14 Feb; Wellsville ALLE 4, 6, 13 Dec (CG, AC); Alabama GENE 6 Jan; Royalton NIAG 19, 20 Feb; Porter NIAG 27 Feb; only reports.

N. Saw-whet Owl: no reports.

Red-headed Woodpecker: PG 18 Dec – 8 Feb (sev), only loc.

Yellow-bellied Sapsucker: NF CBC 27 Dec; Aurora ERIE 14 Jan (LS); only reports.

Merlin: reported from 15 locations throughout Reg.

Peregrine Falcon: arr Hamburg HW 28 Feb; reported from other 10 locations.

FLYCATCHERS - WAXWINGS

E. Phoebe: Medina ORLE 28 Dec (BM, CC); late.

N. Shrike: apparent moderate numbers.

WHITE-EYED VIREO: Tiftt NP thru 1 Dec (KR), from late November.

FISH CROW (RI): Unity 1 NR 6 Dec (CM); up to 4 regular thru winter in Ft Erie, Ontario, some or all of these may come to roost in Buffalo.

Com. Raven: OOWMA 2 Dec; NPP 4, 16 Dec (WD); 2 Medina ORLE 17 Jan; NF 17 Jan (S&TO); Alabama GENE 7 Feb; 2 Tonawanda ERIE 12 Feb, established year round at this location; Shelby ORLE 22 Feb; continue increasing reports in northern portion of Reg; regular in southern portion of Reg.

Horned Lark: max 127 Alabama GENE 19 Feb.

Winter Wren: NFSP 14 Jan; Ellery CHAU 15 Jan; AmSP 28 Jan; only reports.

E. Bluebird: well reported on CBCs.

Hermit Thrush: LBSP 5 Dec; 2 NF CBC 27 Dec; Wilson NIAG 28 Jan; GHSP 14 Feb (WD); only reports.

Am. Robin: max 250 Porter NIAG 22 Jan.

Gray Catbird: Olcott NIAG 19 Dec (B&BM); 2 Beaver Meadow CBC 19 Dec; Wilson-Lake Plains CBC 29 Dec; Tiftt NP 20-31 Jan (KR, RS, SS); only reports.

Am. Pipit: NFSP 12-25 Jan (CK), Three Sisters Island, sighted multiple times in Jan; late.

Bohemian Waxwing: no reports.

Cedar Waxwing: uncommon this winter.

LONGSPURS - WARBLERS

Lapland Longspur: max 20 Yates ORLE 24 Jan; 7 other loc, small numbers.

Snow Bunting: 250 Yates ORLE 8 Jan; max 260 Dunkirk Airport CHAU 24 Jan.

Pine Warbler: Arcade WYOM 2 Jan – 15 Feb (DM), regular at suet feeder; NFSP 21-27 Jan (WD).

Yellow-rumped Warbler: 3, 10, 1 BuSP 28 Dec, 9 Jan, 4 Feb (AHu); 11 Oak Orchard CBC 28 Dec; Youngstown NIAG 30 Jan – 29 Feb (LL), regular at suet feeder.

SPARROWS - WEAVERS

E. Towhee: Scio CBC 19 Dec; Bethany GENE 23 Jan (PH); Lockport NIAG 13 Feb (RCB); only reports.

Chipping Sparrow: Willing ALLE 12 Dec; Scio CBC 19 Dec; BWWTP 3 Jan; Portland CHAU 4 Jan; only reports.

Field Sparrow: 2 Scio CBC 19 Dec; Orchard Park ERIE 28 Jan (SB); only reports.

Savannah Sparrow: 1, 1 Yates ORLE 1 Dec, 4 Jan (WD, CM); Shelby ORLE 24, 25 Jan (CM); Dunkirk Airport CHAU 25 Jan (GV); continues trend of more reports than usual for winter.

Fox Sparrow: Tiftt NP 2 Dec; Grand Island ERIE 5 Dec; 2 Beaver Meadow CBC 19 Dec; Lyndonville ORLE 24 Jan (BE); only reports.

Swamp Sparrow: Pomfret CHAU 24 Jan; only report beyond Dec.

White-crowned Sparrow: 2 Yates ORLE 1 Dec; 2 Bethany GENE 4, 25 Jan; max 12 Dunkirk Airport CHAU 6 Jan (GV); 6 Hartland NIAG 15 Jan; 4 Porter NIAG 21 Jan; 3 Sheridan CHAU 5, 7 Feb; 6 Alden ERIE 16 Feb.

“Oregon” Dark-eyed Junco: Colden ERIE 1 Dec thru (J&KL!, ph), likely same ind as at this feeder in previous winters, continued from fall.

Rose-breasted Grosbeak: Pomfret CHAU thru 16 Dec (AA), late.

Red-winged Blackbird: seven winter reports; arr 110 Sheridan CHAU, 25 Hamburg HW 28 Feb.

Rusty Blackbird: 20 OOWMA 2 Dec; 2 SPNS 8 Dec; Porter NIAG 6 Jan; arr 7-11 BuSP 20-27 Feb (AHu); only reports.

Com. Grackle: 3 Scio CBC 19 Dec; 11 Wilson-Lake Plains CBC 29 Dec; arr 40 Hamburg HW 28 Feb.

Brown-headed Cowbird: 90 Carlton ORLE 30 Dec; max 175 Porter NIAG 2 Feb; more winter reports than usual.

BALTIMORE ORIOLE (R1): Orchard Park ERIE 16 Dec thru 14 Feb (MZ1); apparent 1st yr m coming regularly to feeders.

Purple Finch: 28 on six CBCs; max 10 Concord ERIE 19 Jan, 10 Colden ERIE 3-29 Feb.

Com. Redpoll: 2 Scio CBC 19 Dec; Attica WYOM 23 Jan; Shelby ORLE 13, 15, 19 Feb; only reports.

Pine Siskin: 56 AISP 12 Dec; 5-39 Attica WYOM 1-29 Jan; 10-45 Gaines ORLE 1-29 Jan; 31 Whitesville ALLE 17 Jan; 48 Wellsville ALLE 21 Feb; not widespread.

Evening Grosbeak: no reports.



REGION 2—GENESEE

Robert Spahn

716 High Tower Way, Webster, NY 14580

rspahn@prodigy.net

Winter 2015-16 provided a dramatic contrast with last winter. Long periods of deep snow and cold were replaced by warmth and little snow. The weather patterns were dominated by a very strong El Niño with warm air flow from the west.

December was the warmest on record, smashing the old record by 3.2° F. Temperatures averaged 42.2°, 12.2° above normal. Precipitation was near normal at 2.73", 0.10" above normal. Snowfall was the least on record at 2.3", though the records for this datum only go back to 1926. Except for minor skim ice, all water was open through the Christmas Bird Count season.

January was closer to normal, with temperatures averaging 27.4°, 2.7° above normal, and precipitation 1.52", 0.89" below normal. Snowfall totaled 20.2", 8.0" below normal. Snow fell on 22 days, but only two days saw heavy snow and the 1-day maximum was only 4" and the average on the ground only 1". Surprising in the light of the warm winter, we saw periods of only 24 hours of cold resulting in all the bays and ponds locking up totally in ice.

February provided a huge contrast with last year's coldest ever—17.3° warmer for the fourth warmest February on record. Temperatures averaged 29.5°, 3.1° above normal. It still was cool, with 23 days with the low below freezing and 10 days with even the high below freezing. Precipitation of 3.78" was 1.83" above normal. Snowfall at 28.0" was 6.5" above normal, but the only big snow event was an official 18.3" on the 16th, with another inch the next day. This was the fifth highest calendar day snowfall on record. But temperatures

into the 50s on the 19th sucked the snowpack into the sky or melted it into the ground in short order. A warm last couple of days in the month brought a taste of spring migrants.

Lake Ontario remained largely open, with only a narrow rim of shore ice other than after a period of north winds and the big snow event, when ice extended north to the horizon with only small open patches. The next shift to southwesterly winds blew this out quickly.

Given the warm and relatively open winter—little snow and water open late—it was no surprise that waterfowl provided a number of highlights this season. Waterbirds provided a substantial part of the local CBC totals, with only the Letchworth-Silver Lake Count hurt a bit by a local heavy snowfall on the count day. On the Rochester CBC, record highs were set for Cackling Goose, Trumpeter and Tundra Swans, and Double-crested Cormorant. Maybe the biggest surprise was the lack of high numbers for most waterfowl species in spite of the good variety; back to the old discussions around too much open water so birds not concentrated. The species section will illustrate many of the peak counts. Along this same line, we did not finally see peak numbers for some of the migrant diving ducks in December, expected after their failure to appear in November. However, December brought the first of two major waterbird “events” of the season. On 5, 8, and 12 December, substantial numbers of Red-necked Grebes were found on the water off Hamlin Beach SP, falling off rapidly in numbers to the east and west over distances of 5-10 miles. On the 14th, Bob Spahn counted 1677 Red-necked Grebes on the water just off our lakewatch site there, with visibility a bit over ½ mile either side and limited by fog and haze to on that order offshore. At a point 9 miles east the count was about 100. Dave Tetlow did a more thorough count later that day covering the water visible from the park to Troutburg just west, a total distance of about 4.5 miles, and tallied **6740** birds plus noting later only 100 near Point Breeze 8 miles further west. This eclipses the previous high of 2754 on 4 April 1996 when the passing Fast Ferry flushed birds past Bill Symonds at the lakewatch. It is also in dramatic contrast with historical fall data. Through most of the 1990s, a double digit tally of Red-necked Grebes was a good day. In the past 10+ years, the numbers have been increasing, with a few days with several hundred counted. Nothing like this. This number approaches nearly a third of the higher totals passing Whitefish Point in fall migration in August and September.

Next, we jump back to the start of the checklist and look at Snow Goose. The fall migration seemed slow. None were reported on our three local CBCs, though just outside the Region the Montezuma and Geneva CBCs tallied large numbers. By January, large counts were being reported in the Region, with sites slowly shifting west and north; one large flock moving about and shifting and splitting on occasion--or several? Some of the bigger numbers were seen in the latter half of January when typically all have left for the winter. Only very rarely have we seen a very early move back north by the end of January. And the numbers persisted through February across the Region, with a 50,000 count in

the NMWMA suggesting a spring influx on 28 February. This is the first winter season in this Region for Snow Goose present all season.

This leads back to the January State Waterfowl Count, where the total number of individuals set a record high in the Region. But all of the difference from the previous high is accounted for in a single flock of 15,000 Snow Geese. And most of the increase over prior averages is accounted for in the total goose numbers 5x the 10-year average and > 10x the 1973-2015 average. The overall species variety was very good, but most counts were about average and dabbling ducks, especially Mallard, were relatively low. Other interesting waterbird observations included: quite a few Greater White-fronted Geese and a single Ross's Goose in January and February; several puddle ducks returning in late February; Redhead numbers good on Conesus Lake all winter when open water was available and also found with scaup off the rocky points on the Lake Ontario shore during the waterfowl count where mostly absent in recent years; White-winged Scoter locally in modest numbers, but other scoters scarce; good numbers of Long-tailed Duck; and rarer finds including a King Eider in February, Harlequin Duck in January, and the usual male Barrow's Goldeneye at Point Breeze through the season. Hybrids reported were a Snow x Canada Goose on 5, 7, and 9 February at two locations and a Common Goldeneye x Hooded Merganser on 24 January and 21-22 February at Braddock Bay.

Other than the story above, loons and grebes were scarce except for the good numbers of Horned Grebes off Wayne County on the Waterfowl Count and Eared Grebes at Pultneyville on 6-8 December and Honeoye Lake on 26 December.

This was not a big winter for diurnal raptors. Highlights included good numbers of Bald Eagle, single Northern Goshawks in January and February, a few more Red-shouldered Hawk reports than in most recent years, and Rough-legged Hawks present, with a fair number of reports but birds not really easy to find. Pulling the falcons from later in the list, we had American Kestrel scarce; Merlin and Peregrine Falcon in good numbers for winter; and a dark **Gyrfalcon** photographed near South Livonia on 21 February by Dianne McCullough but not subsequently relocated, though many searched.

Back to the water's edge and marshes, the usual Virginia Rail was not seen in Mendon Ponds Park (probably too much open water out in the marsh), but Chris Wood located one in the Turning Point Park area along the Genesee River on 2 January. A Common Gallinule found by Jay McGowan and Nathan Goldberg in the Van Dyne Spoor area of the NMWMA on 12 December was about the 15th winter record for the Region. American Coot numbers were poor other than at Van Dyne Spoor early and Conesus Lake through the season. Surprisingly, Sandhill Cranes were present all season, most in the NMWMA, with a peak of 67 there on 4 December, but also 10 seen on 1-4 January in a field north of the village of Honeoye and just west of Taylor Marsh, a new high count for that area.

As usual for winter, shorebirds were scarce. The last “fall” Killdeer were seen on 20 December, then none until singles in Hamlin and at Braddock Bay on 20 and 28 February. Purple Sandpipers were found at Irondequoit Bay Outlet on 2-3 January and two at Sodus Point from 5-9 January. Most surprising was a Long-billed Dowitcher on Salmon Creek, Town of Greece, on 1 January found by Jessie Barry and Chris Wood and seen later by several others. This is record late for the Region. Finally, Bruce Cady found a lingering Wilson’s Snipe in the High Acres Nature Area (HANA) from 14-16 December.

The lack of stable, dependable ice edges on the bays and ponds resulted in fewer than usual reports of our “winter” gulls. Bonaparte’s Gull lingered in small numbers to the end of January, then was not reported in February. Adult Little Gulls were seen at Braddock Bay on 13 December and Ontario Beach on 1 January, but there was no late fall through early January gathering along the Rochester lakeshore. There were a couple of good counts of Herring Gull, but otherwise relatively low numbers for gulls generally. White-winged gulls started slowly, but numbers picked up into double digits in February. Lesser Black-backed Gull was found in good numbers through the season. Gull highlights included adult Thayer’s Gull found at Northrup Creek, Town of Greece, on 1 January by Jessie Barry and Chris Wood and photographed at the Riga landfill on 4 January by Brian Morse. A presumed Herring x Lesser Black-backed Gull was seen on 16 December at the south end of Irondequoit Bay and on 9 January on Long Pond, Town of Greece.

Among the non-passerine landbirds, 1-2 Eurasian Collared-Doves were seen off and on at the Greenwell farm in the Town of Hamlin in January and February. Eastern Screech-Owls were found in the usual good numbers on the CBCs, with a maximum of 64 on the Rochester CBC. Snowy Owls were present mainly at a few regular sites and were way down in numbers from the past two years, but 87 reports of about 27 individuals in January is still a decent number. Long-eared Owl was found on 1 January in Bergen Swamp (a typical location for the date) and then on the last day of the season at the Owl Woods roost area. Short-eared Owls were found in good numbers on the biweekly DEC raptor/owl surveys and by others at the same sites through the season. A N. Saw-whet Owl on the Rochester CBC was a rarity for the count, with possibly the same bird re-found on 9 January. Among the woodpeckers, notes of interest included no reports of Red-headed Woodpecker and reports of lingering Yellow-bellied Sapsucker in each month.

For an open winter, the passerine scene was interesting and in some ways a bit surprising. There were some unexpected species for winter, but surprisingly low numbers for most of the half-hardy lingerers. Back to the old “not enough snow cover to push birds to feeders or otherwise concentrate them.” Really?

Let’s tackle the passerines by starting with more detail on the lingering half-hardy species—a bit of a “bag of snakes” due to likely different perceptions among observers. Starting with the species I would consider rarer, we find eight species present in December and add one later. An Eastern Phoebe was found on

8 December. Three State-record-late Cliff Swallows were photographed on 15 December off Webster Park by Mike Gullo. Ruby-crowned Kinglets were found in two locations on 4 and 23 December, then at new locations on 1 January and 7 February. American Pipits are scarce in winter, so as many as 40 on 1 December and birds on 30 January and 28 February were interesting reports. Warblers of any kind have been scarce in recent winters, so a State-late Hooded Warbler was a surprise on the Rochester CBC in Durand-Eastman Park. Eastern Towhees are found fairly regularly in winter, but this year none until two in mid-February. Fox Sparrow is rarely reported here in winter, but there was one on 13 December and another on 26 January. Finally, an immature Baltimore Oriole was found in Durand Eastman Park from 24-26 December by Steve Daniel and Dick Horsey.

Next we have a list of species that are found nearly every winter in small numbers which were seen at least several times this winter: Winter Wren, Marsh Wren, Hermit Thrush, Gray Catbird, Common Yellowthroat, Yellow-rumped Warbler, Chipping Sparrow, Field Sparrow, Savannah Sparrow, Eastern Meadowlark and Rusty Blackbird. Even more regular in my view are: Eastern Bluebird, American Robin, and Song, Swamp, White-throated, and White-crowned Sparrows.

In winter, we also look for some species that irrupt in larger numbers irregularly. None of these were especially numerous this winter. Northern Shrike was present all season with approximately 60 reports over the period peaking in January. Red-breasted Nuthatch and Cedar Waxwing numbers were both low. Lapland Longspur and Snow Bunting were present but hard to evaluate for numbers with little snow cover to push them to road edges. Winter finches were essentially missing, with only scattered reports of Common Redpoll and Pine Siskin and no others.

One more interesting event was a large gathering of blackbirds in late January in the Town of Rush just west of the village of Honeoye Falls. On 28 January Bob and Sue Spahn noted a male Yellow-headed Blackbird with a large mixed flock and passed along the word. Over that day and the next three days, a second immature male Yellow-headed Blackbird was found and peak counts of blackbirds in the area included 16,000 Red-winged Blackbirds, 1750 Common Grackles, a Rusty Blackbird, and 3000 Brown-headed Cowbirds. This location is less than 5 miles south of a site where many blackbirds, including Yellow-headed, were observed last year and 3 miles SW of Brad Carlson's feeders where similar flocks of blackbirds have been seen in recent, prior years.

For the season, we received about 45,638 eBird "records" plus information from other sources such as geneseebirds, the CBC summaries, the Waterfowl Count, and personal communications. The total species count was approximately 150. Species totals for December and January were near their 10-year averages, while February was about 10% above its 10-year average.

CONTRIBUTORS

Jim Adams, Janet Akin, Cheryl Arnold, Richard Ashworth, John Ballou, Carolyn & Jerry Barnhart, Jessie Barry, Jim & Liz Barry, Sue Barth, Doug Bassett, Doug & Sharon Beattie, Don Bemont, Steven Benedict, Linda Clark-Benedict, Mike Bergin, Lynn Bergmeyer, Barry Bermudez, John Boettcher, Phillip Bonn, Justine Bower, Wes Boyce, George Briggs, Joe Brin, Robert Buckert, Bruce Cady, Brad Carlson (BCI), Steve Carlson, Donna Carter, George Chiu, Jill Church, Jim Cleveland, Kelly Close, Fran Colby, Seaghan Coleman, Clyde Comstock, Andrew Consler (AC), Don Cowley, Kathleen Dalton, Steve Daniel, Doug Daniels, Willie D'Anna, Elaine Dart, Pete Debes, Mark Denecke, Rose DeNeve, Bob Dobson, Jon Dombroski, Crystal Doyle, Tony Dvorak, Wayne Fidler, Daena Ford, George Ford, Drew Fowler, Kurt Fox, Kyle Gage, Liz Galusha, Cathy Gardner, Andy Garland (AGa), Chris Gates, Kristine Genagan, Bill & Linda Gillette, Nathan Goldberg, Charles Goulet, Sheryl Gracewski, Jay Greenberg, Kevin Griffith, Ralph & Georgia Guenther, Michael Gullo, Judy & Lew Gurley, Andrew Guthrie (AG), Chris Guthrie, Richard Guthrie, Anita Geara, Ethan Gyllenhaal, Helen & Chris Haller, David & Vanna Harding, Kim Hartquist, Jim & Allison Healy, Sue Heffner, Monika Hermann-Kokis, Dick Horsey, Bill Howe, IBA Monitoring, Carolyn Jacobs, Nicholas Kachala, Laura Kammermeier, Tom Kerr, Jim Kimball, Kathy Kirsch, Mike Klimeczko, J. Gary Kohlemborg, Hans Kunze, Chris Lajewski, Edith Lank, Tom Lathrop, Leona Lauster, Greg Lawrence (GL), Tim Lenz, Chuck Linn, Joan & Vern Lindberg, Paul Lindemann, Peggy Mabb, Ryan MacLean (official hawk counter), Mary Magistro, Bill Maier, Melissa Mance-Coniglio, Cindy Marino, David Mark, Pat Martin, Lauri Mattle, Dianne McCullough, Kevin McGann, Jay McGowan, Kevin McGowan, Chita McKinney, Ferne Merrill, Jim Miles, Joyce Miller, Adrielle Mitchell, Joseph Mitchell, Celeste Morien, Roy Morris, Brian & Brooke Morse, Sheila Mumpton, Alan Nash, Ann Nash, Tom Nash, Dave Nicosia, Dave Nutter, Sue O'Neill, Joe Ovsiovitch, Kris Palermo, Michael Palermo, Andrea Patterson, Jim Pawlicki, Carol Phillips, Norma Platt, Betsy Potter, Jay Powell, Dave Prill, RBA Field Trips, Carolyn Ragan, Dave Robertson, Michelle Rosenbaum, Vicki Rothman, Wade & Melissa Rowley, Jesse Rubenstein, Jennifer Rycenga, Livia Santana, Michael Scheibel, Zaphir Shamma, Shirley Shaw, Dominic Sherony, Judy Slein, Tom & Pat Smith, Cathy Spahn, Robert & Susan Spahn, Dave Spier, Kathleen Squires, Chris Stanger, Joseph Stevenson, Kim Sucey, Jim Tarolli, Steve Taylor, Mike & Joann Tetlow, Larry Toole, Matt Voelker, Brad Walker, Mike Wasilco, Bridget Watts, Doris Waud, Dave Wheeler, Kinsley Whittum, Tim Wilder, Joseph Wing, Chris Wood, Martha Zettel.

ABBREVIATIONS

BB – Braddock Bay, T Greece, MONR; BB-WS – Braddock Bay – West Spit; CHCBC – Conesus-Hemlock CBC 26 Dec; CL – Conesus L, LIVI; DEP – Durand-Eastman P, MONR; H – T Hamlin, MONR; HBSP – Hamlin Beach SP, MONR; IBO – Irondequoit Bay Outlet, MONR; LSLCBC – Letchworth-Silver L CBC on 20 Dec; MP – Mendon Pd P, MONR; NMWMA – Northern Montezuma Wildlife Management Area, T Savannah, WAYN; PB – Point Breeze, T Carlton, ORLE; RCBC – Rochester Christmas Bird Count on 14 Dec; SB – Sodus Bay, WAYN; SPt - Sodus Pt. WAYN; TCEA – Twin Cedars Environmental Area at Avon DEC offices; WP – Webster Park, MONR.

PHOTO GALLERY
WINTER 2015-16



Barrow's Goldeneye, Pt. Breeze, *Orleans*, 28 Jan 2016, © Doug Daniels.



Lark Sparrow, Jones Beach West End, *Nassau*, 7 Feb 2016, © David Krauss.



Gambel's White-crowned Sparrow, the subspecies breeding in the western boreal forest, occurs rarely but fairly regularly in New York State, apparently most often in late fall and winter. These individuals were nicely documented this winter: an immature at Canoga, *Seneca*, 30 Jan 2016, © Jay McGowan (middle) and an adult near Pine Island, *Orange*, 13 Jan 2016, © M. Ofenloch (bottom).



Western Grebe, Piermont Pier, *Rockland*, 8 Jan 2016, © John Haas.



Barnacle Geese, Riverhead, *Suffolk*, 7 Feb 2016, © Derek Rogers. These two adults and a juvenile appeared to be a family group.



This male *Aythya* at Santapogue Creek, *Suffolk* was thought to be a hybrid Ring-necked Duck x scaup. Photos © Pete Morris, 21 Feb 2016.

WATERFOWL - VULTURES

Greater White-fronted Goose: arr 2 NMWMA(Savannah muck) 8 Dec (W&MR); 2 Mendon Ponds P 30 Jan – 10 Feb (JeB, CW, mob), 1-4 ind seen at different times; 2-3 Kings Bend P, Pittsford 6-11 Feb (D&DS, mob), possibly some overlap with Mendon Ponds; 2 North Ponds P, Webster 6-7 Feb (GF, KH); 6 NMWMA (Carncross Rd) 5 Feb (W&MR, JW); 3 NMWMA (VanDyne Spoor) 28 Feb (W&MR).

Snow Goose: 12,500 Reg 2 sectors of Montezuma CBC WAYN 14 Dec; thousands 37 Reg 2 loc all Jan, 65+ rep; 15,000 Avon 16 Jan (JK); 10,000 Livonia Center LIVI 12 Jan (MW); 7500 CL 12 Jan (MW); 5600-7500 Honeoye Fall area 28-30 Jan (sev); 9500 Hamlin 5 Feb (AGu); 7000 Hamlin 28 Feb (AGu); max 50,000 NMWMA (Railroad Rd) 28 Feb (JGK).

Ross's Goose: arr NMWMA(Savannah muck) 9 Jan (W&MR); West Port Bay WAYN 4 Feb (W&MR).

Cackling Goose: 15+ ind 6 loc 4-23 Dec, 9 rep; max 20 HBSP 1 Jan (AGu); 39 ind sev loc all Jan, 22 rep; 16 ind 10 loc all Feb, 11 rep.

Canada Goose: max 13,875 LSLCBC 19 Dec.

Snow x Canada Goose: NMWMA (Carncross Rd) 5 Feb (W&MR, JW); North Ponds P Webster 7, 9 Feb (KH, JW).

Mute Swan: 48 BB-ES 20 Dec; max 67 Sodus Bay bridge 3 Jan (LL); 47 BB 15 Feb; peak counts down some.

Trumpeter Swan: max 34 T Savannah WAYN 14 Dec; 12 BB-ES 20 Dec (R&CS), record high RCBC; 25 NMWMA (T Savannah) 9 Jan (JMc, LS).

Tundra Swan: 100 CL 1 Dec; max 173 NMWMA (Hidden Marsh) 8 Dec (IBA); 76 BB 28 Feb (RMa).

Wood Duck: 2 DEP 1 Jan (PMar); Van Lare Sewage Treatment Plant Rochester 30 Jan (BriM, sev); Genesee R Rochester 30 Jan (GF); arr BB-WS 21 Feb (JiM, LM).

Gadwall: arr 10-14 BB-WS 21 Feb (B&BM, AGu).

Am. Wigeon: max 20 BB 20 Dec; arr 20 BB 21 Feb.

Am. Black Duck: max 358 CL 17 Jan (MW).

Mallard: max 1150 NMWMA (Hidden Marsh) 8 Dec; total 3576 Waterfowl Count 16- 23 Jan, low.

N. Shoveler: 1-2 sev loc thru, unusual in late winter.

N. Pintail: 37 HBSP 1 Jan (NK), high for Jan; arr 3-22 BB area 21 Feb.

Green-winged Teal: 18 Round Pd Greece 1 Jan (JeB, CW), good count for date; 1-2 sev loc thru, scarce in winter, no spring arrival.

Canvasback: max 35 BB-WS 3 Feb, low peak.

Redhead: max 4761 CL 17 Jan (MW), Waterfowl Count, similar thru season.

Ring-necked Duck: max 700 Hemlock L 14 Jan.

Greater Scaup: max 385 BB-WS 7 Feb, low; peaks other months even lower.

Lesser Scaup: max 272 CHCBC 26 Dec, low.

King Eider: 1 fem BB-WS area 6-19 Feb (EG, GL, mob).

Harlequin Duck: 1 imm m SPT 7 Jan (JW, W&MR).

White-winged Scoter: max 225 BB-WS 20 Feb, scarce except here, PtB, & SPT.

Long-tailed Duck: max 3005 RCBC 20 Dec, numbers good thru; total 3814 Waterfowl Count 16-23 Jan.

Bufflehead: max 357 CHCBC 26 Dec.

Com. Goldeneye: max 850 SPT 30 Jan (AL, NM); total 2417 Waterfowl Count 16-23 Jan.

Barrow's Goldeneye: 1 m PB 5 Dec, 15-30 Jan, 7, 14, & 26 Feb, present sev winters, moves from the edge of Region 1 to a mile or so east into Region 2.

Com. Goldeneye x Hooded Merganser: 1m BB-WS 24 Jan (AGu, ph); BB 20-21 Feb (AGu, B&BM)>

Hooded Merganser: max 227 mostly Silver Lake 19 Dec.

Com. Merganser: max 350 Ontario Beach 20 Feb.

Red-breasted Merganser: max 1600 IBO 3 Dec (JiM); total 2055 Waterfowl Count 16-23 Jan.

Ruddy Duck: max 29 CL 17 Jan, low.

Red-throated Loon: max 14 CL 5 Dec (BH), high for loc; scarce thru.

Com. Loon: max 12 SPT 16 Jan; scarce this winter.

Pied-billed Grebe: max 3 IB 16 Dec (R&SS).

Horned Grebe: max 50 HBSP 5 Dec (AGu); total 108 Waterfowl Count 16-23 Jan.

Red-necked Grebe: 637 HBSP 5 Dec (RS); 436 HBSP 8 Dec (AGu); **1677** off lakewatch HBSP 14 Dec (RS); max **6740** HBSP to Troutburg 14 Dec (DTe), State record high, *intro*; 11 HBSP 1 Jan (AGu), late for number.

Eared Grebe: Pultneyville 6-8 Dec (JW); Honeoye L 26 Dec (RS).

Double-crested Cormorant: max 71 RCBC 20 Dec, CBC record high; 29 IB 16 Dec (R&SS), high for date; 11 Summerville Pier 5 Feb (BCar, JG), high for date.

Turkey Vulture: max 15 Bergen 1 Jan, low max.

HAWKS - ALCIDS

N. Harrier: max 9 Nations Rd IBA 6 Feb, good winter count.

N. Goshawk: N. Wolcott WAYN 30 Jan, 3 Feb (W&MR, DF); only reports.

Red-shouldered Hawk: 3 rep Jan; 8 rep Feb; rep up a bit this season.

Red-tailed Hawk: max 39 BB hawkwatch 28 Feb (MT, GL).

Rough-legged Hawk: total 9 sev loc Dec; total 25 at 21 loc Jan; total 20 sev loc Feb.

Virginia Rail: Turning Pt P, Genesee R 2 Jan (CW); none at Mendon Pd Site.

Com. Gallinule: NMWMA (Van Dyne Spoor) 12 Dec (JMc, LS), approx 15th Reg winter record.

Am. Coot: max 185 CL 17 Jan, low max.

Sandhill Crane: max 67 NMWMA (T Savannah) 4 Dec (KB); 7 CHCBC 26 Dec (sev), CBC record high; 50 NMWMA (T Savannah) 28 Dec; 10 CR 37 n of Honeoye, T Richmond ONTA 1, 3-4 Jan (R,S,&CS, BH); 5 T Clyde WAYN 6 Feb (TL, BWal); not usually present thru.

Killdeer: Seneca P Rochester 20 Dec; last Letsworth SP 22 Dec; arr Hamlin 20 Feb (KS).

Purple Sandpiper: IBO 1-2 Jan (KH, PMar, mob); last 1-2 SPt 5-9 Jan (JW, W&MR, mob).

Long-billed Dowitcher: 1 Salmon Crk, Greece 1 Jan (JeB, CW, *et al.*), Reg record late.

Wilson's Snipe: HANA 14-16 Dec (BCad, *et al.*), late.

Bonaparte's Gull: max 156 Ontario Beach area 1 Jan (JeB, CW), low max; last off Edgemere Dr Greece 31 Jan (BeB, Ji&LB, CW). **Little Gull:** 1 ad BB 13 Dec (GL); 1 ad Ontario Beach area 1 Jan (JeB, CW).

Herring Gull: max 2200 Millseat Landfill T Riga 4 Jan (BriM).

THAYER'S GULL: 1 ad Northrup Crk, Greece 1 Jan (JeB, CW); 1 ad Millseat Landfill T Riga 4 Jan (BriM, ph).

Iceland Gull: approx totals – 6 in Dec, 11 in Jan, & 13 in Feb.

Lesser Black-backed Gull: approx. totals – 13 in Dec, 8 in Jan, & 15 in Feb.

Herring x Lesser Black-backed Gull: IB-S 16 Dec (BriM); Long Pd, Greece 9 Jan (AGu).

Glaucous Gull: totals approx. – 1 in Dec, 6 in Jan, and 7 in Feb.

PIGEONS - PARROTS

EURASIAN COLLARED-DOVE: 1-2 Greenwell farm, Hamlin 10, 30, 31 Jan, 5-28 Feb (AGu, RGu, CW), site of most records recent yrs

E. Screech-Owl: 64 RCBC 20 Dec; 45 CHCBC 26 Dec, good CBC counts.

Snowy Owl: 3+ three loc 13-31 Dec; ~87 rep, 26 ind six loc Jan; Genesee County airport 3, 7, & 22 Feb; BB 28 Feb.

Long-eared Owl: Linear P, Bergen 1 Jan (GL); Owl Woods, Manitou 29 Feb (JCay), early at site.

Short-eared Owl: max 22 DEC (Avon) owls survey 29 Dec; 36 rep, 24+ ind five loc Jan; *intro.*

N. Saw-whet Owl: RCBC, LMP 20 Dec (CM, AP); DEP 9 Jan (MG); rarely reported in winter.

Belted Kingfisher: 12 rep sev loc 2-28 Jan, good number of rep for winter.

Red-headed Woodpecker: no reports. **Yellow-bellied Sapsucker:** total 8 rep sev loc, good number for winter.

Am. Kestrel: 16 rep, 12 ind Feb, low.

Merlin: total - 13 all Dec; 21 all Jan; 10 all Feb.

GYRFALCON: dark morph S. Livonia LIVI 21 Feb (DM, ph).

Peregrine Falcon: total - 6 all Dec; 6 all Jan; 12 all Feb.

FLYCATCHERS - WAXWINGS

E. Phoebe: CL 8 Dec (KC), late.

N. Shrike: totals approx - 13 in Dec, 15 in Jan, & 8 in Feb.

Blue Jay: max 486 CHCBC 26 Dec, good total.

Am. Crow: max 24,000 Ford St bridge, Rochester 8 Dec (SSH), higher than later CBC tally; 1500 Pinnacle Rd, T Rush 3 Feb (NK); 1500 SUNY Genesee campus 3 Feb (SB).

FISH CROW (R2): max 14 Summerville Pier 7 Feb (BCar); IBO 30-31 Jan (JeB, CW, KH, PMar); present all winter.

Com. Raven: max 20 CHCBC 26 Dec, CBC record high.

Horned Lark: max 100 Nations Rd IBA 9 Dec (NK).

Cliff Swallow: 3 Webster P at Lake Ontario 15

Dec (MG, ph), State record late.

White-breasted Nuthatch: 214 CHCBC 26 Dec, very good count.

Winter Wren: Oatka Crk P 8 Feb (JAd), first for year; N Wolcott WAYN 16 Feb (W&MR); only reports.

Marsh Wren: Turning Pt P 20 Dec (KH); Taylor Marsh, T Richmond ONTA 26 Dec (DB); Turning Pt P 2 Jan (CW); rare in winter.

Ruby-crowned Kinglet: Webster P 4 Dec (JW); Beechwoods SP WAYN 23 Dec (NP); Webster P 2 Jan (JeB, CW); Beechwoods SP WAYN 7 Feb (JW); scarce in winter.

Hermit Thrush: totals – 6 in Dec; max 6 Owl Woods, Manitou 2 Jan (CW); 12 seven loc 2-24 Jan; 2 rep 14, 20 Feb.

Gray Catbird: e of Silver Springs 19 Dec (AC, JK); Hamlin 21 Dec (GL, KB); Hemlock L area 26 Dec (BH); N Wolcott WAYN 14, 22 Jan (W&MR); T Huron WAYN 22 Jan (W&MR); scarce in winter.

Am. Pipit: max 40 Nations Rd IBA 1 Dec; T Conesus LIVI 30 Jan (KC); T Rush 30 Jan (KH); arr BB hawkwatch 28 Feb (GL, MT).

Cedar Waxwing: max 160 Webster P (Whiting Rd) 16 Dec (JiM), scarce.

LONGSPURS - WARBLERS

Lapland Longspur: max 80 H 30 Jan (AGu).

Snow Bunting: max 2000 T Kendall ORLE 22 Jan (DB, RS); 250 Nations Rd IBA 23 Feb (BH).

Com. Yellowthroat: IB-S 16 Dec (BriM); NMWMA (Van Dyne Spoor) 26 Dec (NP).

Hooded Warbler: DEP 20 Dec (JPow, MK, JS), State record late.

Yellow-rumped Warbler: total 5 three loc 5-20 Dec; 2 N Wolcott WAYN 20 Jan (W&MR); MP 4 Feb (MG).

SPARROWS - WEAVERS

E. Towhee: T Ogden MONR 15 Feb (LO, ph); RotterdamRd, T Sodus WAYN 14-15 Feb (JW).

Am. Tree Sparrow: max 110 T Penfield 19 Feb.

Chipping Sparrow: Webster 12 Dec (PMab); N Wolcott WAYN 14-15 Feb (W&MR).

Field Sparrow: Whiting Rd, Webster 4 Dec (JiM); Butcher Rd, T Hilton 20 Dec (R&CS).

Savannah Sparrow: 5 Nations Rd IBA 18 Feb (KG), 1 next day.

Fox Sparrow: Mt Hope Cemetery, Rochester 13 Dec (SG), late; Brown Rd, Wolcott WAYN 26 Jan (W&MR), rare in winter.

White-crowned Sparrow: max 21 N Wolcott WAYN 26 Feb (W&MR).

Dark-eyed Junco: max 44 Nations Rd IBA 18 Feb, low max.

Dark-eyed "Oregon" Junco: Webster thru at least 8 Dec (MR, ph).

Red-winged Blackbird: max 16,000 Works Rd & CR 6, T Rush MONR 31 Jan (JeB, CW), high count; 4500 Oak Openings LIVI 30 Jan (JeB, CW), very short distance s on same road as previous record.

E. Meadowlark: Nations Rd IBA 27 Jan (JSt); BB hawkwatch 3 Feb (GL); rare in winter now.

YELLOW-HEADED BLACKBIRD: 1 ad m & 1 subad m Works Rd & CR 6, T Rush MONR 28-30 Jan (R&SS, mob, ph), *intro*.

Rusty Blackbird: 4 BB 13 Dec; 1-2 MP 23 Jan – 11 Feb; Manitou 24 Jan; Works Rd & CR 6, T Rush MONR 30 Jan; 1-2 Victor 13, 24 Jan; typical of winter.

Com. Grackle: max 1750 N Avon Rd T Avon LIVI 30 Jan (5 obs).

Brown-headed Cowbird: max 3000 Works Rd & CR 6, T Rush MONR 30 (JeB, CW).

Baltimore Oriole: imm m DEP 24-26 Dec (SD, DH), rare in winter.

Com. Redpoll: max 85 HBSP 8 Dec (AGu); few other rep.

Pine Siskin: max 65 DEP 26 Dec (JiM), rep scattered thru..



REGION 3—FINGER LAKES

Bill Ostrander

80 Westmont Ave., Elmira, NY 14905

browncreeper9@gmail.com

The winter of 2015-16 was unusually mild with little snowfall and little persistent snow cover, allowing waterfowl and many half-hardy species to linger through the season. At Ithaca, low temperatures averaged 33° F, 13° above normal, and highs averaged 48°, 12° above normal, in December. January was colder, with the average low temperature at 17°, 3° above normal, and the average high at 32°, 1° above normal. Low temperatures in February averaged 18° and highs averaged 37°, both 4° above normal. Total precipitation in December was 2.79", 0.39" above normal; in January, 1.65", 0.43" below normal; and in February, 3.79", 1.81" above normal. Total snowfall in December was 0.8", 11.8" less than normal; 7.6" in January, 10" below normal; and 9.5" in February, 4.7" below normal.

Six Greater White-fronted Geese were at Montezuma NWR for much of December then reappeared on Canandaigua Lake in the latter part of January where they stayed through the end of the season. Snow Geese were present in large numbers, and among them were a few Ross's Geese. Good numbers of dabbling ducks of all sorts were still at Montezuma NWR and elsewhere in the Region through early January. A single Eurasian Wigeon was at Montezuma NWR in mid-December, and another was at Frontenac Park on Cayuga Lake on 28 February. Numbers of diving ducks were generally unremarkable. There were only single reports of Surf and Black Scoters. A **Tufted Duck** was in the northern part of Cayuga Lake in mid-January. Perhaps the same bird was at the south end of the Lake in mid-February and then seen at the north end of Seneca Lake right after that for a couple days.

Notable other waterfowl included a Pacific Loon that Nathan Goldberg and Jay McGowan found on the west side of Cayuga Lake. The annual Eared Grebe was again on Cayuga Lake at Aurora. Neil Paprocki found a **Western Grebe** at Montezuma NWR on 25 December.

The high count of 18 Bald Eagles at Frontenac Harbor Marina and numerous other reports from all parts of the Region indicated that the species continued to have a significant presence in the Region. On the other hand, there were only two reports of Golden Eagle in the Region. Red-shouldered Hawk and Northern Goshawk were also scarce, with only single reports of each.

As many as 50 Sandhill Cranes lingered in the Town of Tyre nearly through the end of December. Killdeer were reported through mid-January. A Long-billed Dowitcher lingered at Montezuma NWR through mid-December. American Woodcocks were reported from two locations in Tompkins County in December.

There were several interesting gull sightings during the season. Observers reported high counts of Iceland (10) and Glaucous (4) Gulls. They also reported Thayer's Gulls at two locations and hybrids of Herring Gull with various other species—Lesser Black-backed, Glaucous, and Great Black-backed Gulls.

A Snowy Owl spent most of the winter in the vicinity of the Fayette-Seneca town line. Short-eared Owl counts were low in the Region.

One Eastern Phoebe lingered near Beebe Lake on the Cornell University campus into early December. Perhaps coincidentally, one was present at the same location from early February through the end of the season. Other lingering songbirds included Gray Catbird, Brown Thrasher, Yellow Warbler, numerous Field Sparrows, Fox Sparrow, Savannah Sparrows, and Baltimore Orioles.

The rarest bird of the season was a **Western Tanager** that appeared on the Cornell University campus on 9 February and stayed in the same small area, where many birders observed it through the end of the season.

CONTRIBUTORS

Janet Akin, Tom Auer, Jessie Barry, Angelika Beckmann, Wes Blauvelt, Philip Bonn, Matthew Brown, Donna Carter, J.B. Churchill, Doug Daniels, Susan Danskin, Ian Davies, Michael DeWispelaere, Jeff Doyle, Andrew Dreehin, Eaton Birding Society, Wayne Fiddler, John Fitzpatrick, Brendan Fogarty, Benjamin Freeman, Nathan Goldberg, Menachem Goldstein, Michael Gullo, Eric Gulson, Ethan Gyllenhaal, Meena Haribal, IBA monitoring, Logan Kahle, Kenneth Kemphues, Dave Kennedy, Max Kirsch, J Gary Kohlenberg, Greg Lawrence, Alexander Lees, Tim Lenz, Mary Magistro, Brian Magnier, Jay McGowan, Kevin McGowan, Bob McGuire, Matthew D. Medler, Ann Mitchell, Brian Morse, Brooke Morse, Diane Morton, Andrea Mott, Nargila Moura, Dave Nutter, Neil Paprocki, Jon Podoliak, Jay Powell, Ken Rosenberg, Livia Santana, A Serpiello, Dan Serpiello, Russ Smiley, Roger Smith, Joshua Snodgrass, Kevin Stewart, Kevin Stewart, Peter Thompson, Sarah Toner, Lee Ann van Leer, Brad Walker, Liam Waters, David Weber, David Wheeler, Alex Wiebe, Chris Wood, Suan Yong.

ABBREVIATIONS

CayL – Cayuga L; Clth – C Ithaca; CU – Cornell University; MNWR – Montezuma NWR; MyPt – Myers Pt, TOMP; TPr – Prattsburg; SenL – Seneca L; SML – Seneca Meadows Landfill, SENE; SPt – Salt Pt; SRC – Stevenson Road Compost, TOMP; TDry – T Dryden; TFay – T Fayette; Thec – T Hector; TIth – T Ithaca; TLan – T Lansing; TSen – T Seneca Falls, TSpr – T Springport.

WATERFOWL - VULTURES

GREATER WHITE-FRONTED GOOSE

(R3): max 6 MNWR 13-27 Dec (DC!) & 6 Canandaigua L 20 Jan thru (mob!), high.

Snow Goose: max 200,000 TFay 2 Jan (EBS), high.

ROSS'S GOOSE (R3): 1-2 MNWR 4-14 Dec (mob!); MyPt 15 Dec (JM!); TDry 3 Jan (JM, KM!, LS); Sapsucker Woods TOMP 4 Jan (CW!); T Canandaigua 30 Jan (DD!).

Snow x Ross's Goose (hybrid): MNWR 12 Dec (NG, JM).

Cackling Goose: max 13 MNWR 12 Dec Dec (NG, JM), high.

Snow x Canada Goose (hybrid): Dryden L TOMP 5 Dec (CW); MNWR 12 Dec-2 Jan (JM, LS); Hibiscus Harbor CAYU 16 Jan (mob); Mud Lock CAYU 20 Jan (LK, TL, ST); T Varick 27 Jan (JM, LS).

Mute Swan: max 8 SenL SP 23 Jan.

Trumpeter Swan: max 20 MNWR 28 Dec (PT), high.

Tundra Swan: max 3000 CayL T Aurelius CAYU 12 Dec (NG, JM), high.

Wood Duck: max 11 Ladoga Pt TOMP.

Gadwall: max 500 MNWR 30 Dec (JM, LS), high.

EURASIAN WIGEON (R3): MNWR 13 Dec (KR, ST, AW); Frontenac P CAYU 28 Feb (mob!).

Am. Wigeon: max 120 Hog Hole TOMP 27 Feb (JGK), high.

Am. Black Duck: max 300 MNWR 2-3 Jan; CayL TSpr CAYU 3 Feb.

Mallard: max 7000 MNWR 30 Dec (LW).

N. Shoveler: max 317 MNWR 14 Dec (PB), high.

N. Pintail: max 180 MNWR 2 Jan (JM, LS), high.

Green-winged Teal: max 26 MNWR 11 Dec (IBA).

Canvasback: max 900 CayL T Aurelius CAYU 6 Feb (LK).

Redhead: max 15,600 East Shore P TOMP 19 Feb (ID).

Ring-necked Duck: max 4000 MNWR 12 Dec (NG, JM), high.

Redhead x Ring-necked Duck (hybrid): CayL Clth 14-17 Jan (JM, DN, LS).

TUFTED DUCK: CayL TSpr CAYU 16-17 Jan (mob!); CayL Clth 14-19 Feb (mob!); SenL SP 20-21 Feb (mob!).

Greater Scaup: max 600 Kozy Kove CayL TSpr CAYU 17 Jan; 600 CayL Canoga CAYU.

Lesser Scaup: max 1800 MNWR 13 Dec (KR, ST, AW), high.

Surf Scoter: SenL Dresden 2 Jan (GL, JoP), only report.

White-winged Scoter: max 19 Long Pt SP CAYU 28 Feb (mob), high.

Black Scoter: max 5 Long Pt SP CAYU 13 Dec (DN), high, only report.

Long-tailed Duck: max 18 East Shore P TOMP 1 Jan.

Bufflehead: max 66 Stewart P CayL TOMP 16 Dec.

Com. Goldeneye: max 400 Ladoga Pt, CayL 31 Jan.

Hooded Merganser: max 195 MNWR 18 Dec (IBA), high.

Com. Merganser: max 1100 Frontenac Harbor Marina T Spr CAYU (AL, NM).

Red-breasted Merganser: max 193 CayL Aurora CAYU 16 Jan (LAvL), high.

Ruddy Duck: max 270 Harris P CAYU 12 Dec (JM), high.

Red-throated Loon: max 2 CayL T Lan TOMP 2 Dec; 2 SPt SCHU 5 Dec.

PACIFIC LOON: CayL T Ovid TOMP 12 Dec (NG, JM!).

Com. Loon: max 125 CayL Sheldrake SENE 13 Dec.

Pied-billed Grebe: max 11 MNWR 18 Dec.

Horned Grebe: max 21 CayL Aurora 2 Feb.

Red-necked Grebe: Ithaca Yacht Club TOMP 5 Dec (TL); SenL Watkins Glen 16 Jan (TL); CayL Aurora 2 Feb (AMi, DN); SenL SP 21 Feb (mob).

EARED GREBE (R3): CayL Aurora 2-25 Jan, 23 Feb (mob!); CayL SP 7 Feb (mob!).

WESTERN GREBE: MNWR 25 Dec (NP!).

Double-crested Cormorant: max 33 Perry Pt YATE (EGy, GL), high.

Great Blue Heron: max 5 MNWR 2 Jan (RuS), low.

BLACK VULTURE (R3): CU 1 Jan (DWe!).

Turkey Vulture: max 34 SRC 12 Dec (KM), high.

HAWKS – LARIDS

Bald Eagle: max 18 Frontenac Harbor Marina CAYU 20 Feb (LK, TL, BW), high.

N. Harrier: max 9 MNWR 27 Dec; 9 Geneva 7 Feb.

N. Goshawk: TPr 27 Feb (LK, TL, BW), only report.

Red-shouldered Hawk: TPr 9 Jan (RoS, ph), only report.

Red-tailed Hawk: max 46 SRC 14 Feb.

Rough-legged Hawk: max 3 Thec 7 Jan, low.

Golden Eagle: TPr 20 Jan (RoS, ph); Stevenson Road Compost 5 Feb (CW!); only reports.

Am. Coot: max 600 MNWR.

Sandhill Crane: max 72 T Tyre 7 Dec (DK), high; last 50 T Tyre 28 Dec; 2 T Tyre 6 Feb (DC).

Killdeer: T Farmington 7 Dec; TDry 7 Jan; MyPt 9-16 Jan; arr Mark Twain SP 20 Feb.

LONG-BILLED DOWITCHER: MNWR 5-16 Dec (mob, ph!).

AM. WOODCOCK (R3): Durland Preserve TOMP 17 Dec (JM!); Tith (KR).

Bonaparte's Gull: max 16 CayL SP 27 Dec; last CayL Tith 14 Feb, late.

Herring Gull: max 8000 CayL TSen 31 Jan (JM, KM), high.

THAYER'S GULL: SenL T Dix 22 Jan (TL, JM!, LS); Van Cleef L SENE 30 Jan (AL, NM!).

Iceland Gull: max 10 SML 31 Jan (TL), high.

Lesser Black-backed Gull: max 3 CayL Ladoga Pt TOMP 31 Jan; 3 SRC 7 Jan; 3 Savannah Mucklands SENE 7 Jan; 3 Tith 21 Feb; 3 SenL THec 27 Jan; 3 Stewart P TOMP 27 Jan.

Herring x Lesser Black-backed Gull (hybrid): Van Cleef L Seneca Falls 30 Jan (AL, NM); CayL TSen 31 Jan (JM, KM); SML 31 Jan (TL).

Glaucous Gull: max 4 CayL TSen 31 Jan (mob); 4 SML 31 Jan (TL, NG), high.

Herring x Glaucous Gull (hybrid): Van Cleef L TSen 30-31 Jan (mob).

Herring x Great Black-backed Gull (hybrid): CayL Clth 24-25 Jan (mob!); Van Cleef L TSen 30 Jan (AL, NM); CayL TSen 31 Jan (mob); SRC 11-12 Feb (TL, BW, CW).

PIGEONS - PARROTS

Snowy Owl: Seybolt Rd TFay SENE 13 Dec-27 Feb; Martin Rd TSen and TFay 13 Dec; MNWR 3 Feb; Finger Lakes Regional Airport 10 & 28 Feb.

Short-eared Owl: max 6 T Milo YATE 4 Feb.

N. Saw-whet Owl: max 2 TDry & 2 Roy H. Park Preserve 26 Jan.

Merlin: many reports.

Peregrine Falcon: many reports.

FLYCATCHERS - WAXWINGS

EASTERN PHOEBE (R3): last Beebe L CU 8 Dec (JD), late; first Beebe L CU 2 Feb thru (BFo, BMa), early.

N. Shrike: T Hopewell 10 Dec-5 Feb; T Addison 12 Dec; T Seneca 2 Jan; T Mentz 17 Jan.

Blue Jay: max 42 T Enfield 29 Dec, low.

Fish Crow: max 25 Elmira Dam CHEM 5 Dec (LK, TL, ST), high.

Com. Raven: max 17 TPr STEU 1 Jan.

Horned Lark: max 450 T Lan 23 Jan.

Black-capped Chickadee: max 115 TDry 1 Jan, low.

Tufted Titmouse: max 22 Tith 1 Jan, low.

Brown Creeper: max 6 TOMP 28 Feb, low.

Marsh Wren: MNWR 6 Dec-7 Feb (mob).

Ruby-crowned Kinglet: SenL SP 8 Dec (DK); SPt TOMP 21 Dec-1 Jan (BFr, JM, LS);

Portland Pt TOMP 1-17 Jan (mob), scarce in winter.

E. Bluebird: max 13 SPt TOMP 21 Dec & 31 Jan, low.

Hermit Thrush: THec 30 Dec-5 Jan; Sapsucker Woods TOMP 20 Feb; T Corning 12 Feb, only reports.

Am. Robin: max 340 Portland Pt TOMP 16 Jan.

GRAY CATBIRD (R3): Commonland TOMP 5-24 Dec (SY!); Portland Pt TOMP 16 Jan (mob).

BROWN THRASHER (R3): Jetty Woods TOMP 14-16 Jan (mob!).

N. Mockingbird: max 3 SPt TOMP 28 Feb, low.

Am. Pipit: max 13 MyPt 9 Jan (AL, NM).

Cedar Waxwing: max 200 Robert Treman SP.

LONGSPURS - WARBLERS

Lapland Longspur: max 40 T Genoa 19 Dec.

Snow Bunting: max 450 T Ovid 23 Jan.

YELLOW WARBLER: Clth 6 Dec (JB, CW).

Yellow-rumped Warbler: max 4 T Lan 3 Jan (mob); last Portland Pt 25 Jan (JM), late.

TOWHEES - WEAVERS

E. Towhee: TDry 13 Dec (CW); T Phelps 27 Jan-16 Feb; T Torrey 28 Feb (MB), only reports.

Am. Tree Sparrow: max 100 Tith 1 Jan.

FIELD SPARROW (R3): MNWR 2 & 18 Dec (DK, ph); SPt TOMP 21 Dec (JM!); Cascadilla Creek TOMP 1 Jan (JF!); Freeville Marshes TOMP 16-17 Jan (JB, JM, CW!).

SAVANNAH SPARROW (R3): 3 MNWR 2 Dec-23 Feb (mob!), high; 2 T Lan 19 Feb (KK, DM!).

FOX SPARROW (R3): TDry 1-30 Jan (mob!).

Song Sparrow: max 36 Cascadilla Creek TOMP 1 Jan (JF).

Swamp Sparrow: max 9 Cascadilla Creek TOMP 1 Jan (JF).

White-throated Sparrow: max 17 T Throop 15 Feb.

White-crowned Sparrow: 3 T Covert 12-24 Jan (JS); 2 TFay 30 Jan (JM, LS); T Genoa 20 Feb (LK, TL, ST), only reports.

Dark-eyed Junco: max 60 TFay 2 Jan, low.

WESTERN TANAGER: CU 9 Feb thru (mob!).

N. Cardinal: max 41 TFay 2 Jan.

Rusty Blackbird: max 3 TDry 5 Dec.

BALTIMORE ORIOLE (R3): SPt TOMP 20-21 Dec (JM, KM!, LAvL); Allan H. Treman State Marine P 2-7 Feb (mob!).

House Finch: max 120 T Horseheads 25 Jan, low.

Purple Finch: max 50 T Horseheads 18 Dec.

Com. Redpoll: 2 Dryden L TOMP 5 Dec (CW); TDry 23 Jan (CW), only reports.

Pine Siskin: max 50 TDry 27 Jan (KM), high.

Am. Goldfinch: max 74 TDry 19 Dec.

===

REGION 4—SUSQUEHANNA

No report was received this season.

=====

REGION 5—ONEIDA LAKE BASIN

Matt Perry

3787 Dawes Ave., Clinton, NY 13323
mperry63@roadrunner.com

David Wheeler

20 Waterbury Dr., North Syracuse, NY 13212
tigger64@aol.com

Wintery weather was off-again, on-again this season and generally mild, in stark contrast with the two previous winters that were characterized by consistent cold temperatures and near-maximum amounts of ice cover. In Syracuse the average temperature in December was 41° F, a notable 12° warmer than average for that month. Precipitation was 1.6" higher than normal and snowfall for December was 30" less than normal for that notoriously snowy city. January was a little more conventional. In Syracuse the average temperature for the month was nearly 26°, 2.3° warmer than normal. Snowfall rebounded in January and totaled 39", which was 4.8" above the average. February was another rollercoaster ride, and though the average temperature was only 1.7° higher than normal, precipitation was 2.74" higher than average and a total of 25" of snow fell, which is typical for that month. In Syracuse the high temperature for the month was 63°, which came on 28 February, and the low was a thoroughly bone-

chilling - 23°, which occurred on 14 February. On that same date even colder temperatures were recorded in the Region's remote rural valleys.

The lakes that did freeze in the Region froze late. Oneida Lake didn't freeze over until 15 January. Except for its shallow bays, Skaneateles Lake never froze over at all. Otisco Lake, which is normally frozen by Christmas day, remained open until 23 January. Neither Onondaga Lake nor Oswego Harbor froze for any length of time, but both the pond and bay at Fair Haven were frozen; typical even in mild winters. The Utica Marsh's shallow pools are typically locked tight with ice by mid-December, but this winter they remained open and available to ducks at least through the start of the New Year. This lack of ice in the Region provided a respite for waterfowl and their allies, which suffered serious deprivations during the previous two winters. Significant ice cover serves to concentrate birds, and conversely the lack of ice allows flocks and individuals to remain widely dispersed and to remain in areas with plentiful food supplies. This could explain why the season's counts of diving ducks, especially *Aythya* species, weren't very high. According to Gary Lee, even in the Adirondacks the lakes didn't freeze over until 5 January. Still somehow two Common Loons, one on 6 January and the other three days later, managed to be taken by surprise. Both had to be rescued from the ice and relocated to open water. Despite relatively mild conditions and seemingly adequate food resources, the data shows a surprising lack of half-hardy songbirds in the Region. Notable exceptions were American Robins and Brown-headed Cowbirds, which collected in large flocks in some areas.

Good numbers of Snow Geese were found throughout the period, indicating they wintered in or near the Region. By February, some optimistic flocks were seen flying along the Ontario Lakeshore making "test" migrations. A small flock of Brant over Limekiln Lake in the Adirondacks on 2 January was unusual and is the only report for that species. A maximum of nine Trumpeter Swans in the vicinity of Fair Haven State Park on 31 January could be considered a respectable number for that species. Numbers of dabbling ducks were generally good this season. A count of 11 Northern Shovelers at the Utica Marsh at the end of December may have been unprecedented for that location, but it's hard to say definitively since the difficult to access site receives poor coverage. Wayne Fidler located a female King Eider at Selkirk Shores State Park on 6 January. The rarity remained through the balance of the month and was observed by many people. A female Barrow's Goldeneye was found at Brewerton on 2 February by Bill Purcell and remained there for a week.

Loons and grebes were fairly easy to come by throughout the period. An **Eared Grebe** at Oswego Harbor on 28 January was an excellent find by Michael Gullo and the first for the Region since 1998. Though Oswego seems an excellent place for the species, this is only the second time the species has been found there and the twelfth Regional record overall. Previously most were at Onondaga and Oneida Lakes. The Eared Grebe remained at the site for five days giving great looks as it dove close to shore. Greg Dashnau picked out a

Western Grebe at Oswego on 16 December, a first in twenty years and only a third Regional record, and first for the winter season. The bird continued for four days and was widely seen and photographed though many reported the bird had become increasingly distant.

Ruth Florey was surprised to find an **American White Pelican** at the inner harbor of Onondaga Lake on 12 January. Local news outlets made a celebrity of the bird, and its every move was covered on some form of social media. Birders and non-birders alike flocked to see this wonderful bird, which could be enjoyed without expensive optics. While this constituted a first winter record of Am. White Pelican in Region 5, it wasn't unprecedented in the northeast this winter. eBird data shows that several other wayward Am. White Pelicans turned up north of their usual range in January. For virtually its entire two week stay, there was a great amount of speculation regarding the state of the pelican's health. According to observers, diving ducks and gulls seemed to be having little trouble securing fish prey, but the pelican was not seen successfully feeding. Ultimately, on 26 January, the bird expired and its body was retrieved by the DEC. An examination revealed that the pelican was emaciated and hosted parasites on its vital organs. Were these picked up here or did it arrive with them? This was a sad end for a charismatic bird that captured the attention of many. The pelican showed few outward signs of distress and thus capture seemed risky, but the authors cannot help but wonder if intervention might have saved it.

Raptor numbers were unremarkable this period. There was only a single report of Golden Eagle, and Rough-legged Hawk sightings were relatively few. It was determined that an adult Red-tailed Hawk from Syracuse brought to a Wildlife Rehabilitator on 3 January had been intentionally shot with a pellet gun. Despite this incident being conveyed to the New York State Department of Environmental Protection and to United States Fish and Wildlife Service, no investigation was initiated.

Single Dunlin were seen at Fair Haven and Port Ontario on 7 and 17 January, respectively. Was it the same bird working its way along the Lake Ontario shoreline? On 6 December one Purple Sandpiper was found at Fair Haven but never relocated. Less expected was a Wilson's Snipe that Greg Dashnau found at Three Rivers on 7 December. The bird lingered for two days. A total of four Black-legged Kittiwakes were seen over Derby Hill. All occurred between 3 December and 3 January. Bonaparte's Gulls persisted half way into the period and sometimes in respectable numbers. Bill Purcell found a lingering Virginia Rail at the Andrews Rd. feeder canal in DeWitt, always a hot spot for unusual half-hardies.

There was no significant influx of Snowy Owls into the Region this period, although the species was present in a few traditional locations. None were seen after 9 February. On 18 January Jason Luscier found a Long-eared Owl in a park in Syracuse. Short-eared Owls were observed in Verona, Baldwinsville, and Manheim in Herkimer County, but apparently none of them lingered or were

found after 20 January. Single Northern Saw-Whet Owls were seen in three locations, though none could be relocated after their initial discoveries.

A Red-headed Woodpecker was seen frequently near the Lake Ontario shoreline between 17 January and 21 February. Yellow-bellied Sapsuckers were found at six locations, but it's conceivable that two of those sightings could represent early spring migrants. In early February pairs of Merlin were thought to be establishing breeding territories at Onondaga Park in Syracuse and at a site in Tully. Resident pairs of Peregrine Falcons in Syracuse and Utica both remained on their breeding territories through the winter. Single Peregrines were observed in three other locations.

Northern Shrikes were difficult to come by this winter and were especially rare in the eastern part of the Region. Three Rivers WMA proved to be the only reliable location to find the species. One shrike was seen there repeatedly between 8 December and 28 February.

Despite the mild conditions, relatively few Winter Wrens wintered in the Region. However, David Nash did find a Marsh Wren at the Clay Marsh on 17 December, which was not the first time one had lingered at that location. There was one report of Hermit Thrush and three reports of Gray Catbird, which is less than one might expect given the mild conditions. There were a handful of Bohemian Waxwing sightings this period, all of them near the Lake Ontario shoreline. Our only Yellow-rumped Warbler reports came from Oswego, and there were none after 17 January. There were one or two reports each of Eastern Towhee, Chipping Sparrow, Field Sparrow, Fox Sparrow, and White-crowned Sparrow, none of which persisted long. All in all our quotient of half-hardies just barely contributed to the "mild" complexion of this period.

One of the season's best birds was a female **Summer Tanager** at a Constantia bird feeder between 30 December and 5 January. The bird was brought to the attention of Wayne Fidler through a post on Facebook that involved a mystery bird showing up at a feeding station for about a week. Fortunately photographs were taken before the homeowner restricted access to the site. This represents the sixth Regional record, with all five previous being in May and the last in 1996.

On 16 January, a female **Dickcissel** was found to be keeping company with a flock of 20 House Sparrows at a feeding station in Fulton. The bird, which was sometimes difficult to discern from its similarly-attired flock mates, stayed in the vicinity until at least 2 February. There was no appreciable invasion of winter finches this winter, though Purple Finches and Pine Siskins were fairly well represented. A smattering of reports of Red Crossbills all came from northern Herkimer County where the species is often found in non-invasion years. Reports of Common Redpolls were scarce; all took place in February and all from Oswego County. There were only three reports of Evening Grosbeaks.

A total of 140 species was found this period, which is 10 more than the most recent decade's average. The highlights included: **Greater White-fronted Goose**, Cackling Goose, **Eurasian Wigeon**, King Eider, **Barrow's Goldeneye**,

EARED GREBE, WESTERN GREBE, AMERICAN WHITE PELICAN, Golden Eagle, Red-shouldered Hawk, Virginia Rail, Dunlin, Purple Sandpiper, Wilson's Snipe, Black-legged Kittiwake, Bonaparte's Gull, **Snowy Owl**, Long-eared Owl, Short-eared Owl, N Saw-whet Owl, Marsh Wren, Bohemian Waxwing, Yellow-rumped Warbler, Chipping Sparrow, Field Sparrow, Fox Sparrow, White-crowned Sparrow, **SUMMER TANAGER, Dickcissel**, and Red Crossbill.

The winter season produced 29,211 eBird records, which were processed by Swan Swan Hummingbird v4.02.

CONTRIBUTORS

Dennis Anderson, Faith Baker, Adam Bleau (ABI), Brenda Best, Sue Boettger, Carla Bregman, Joseph Brin, Matthew Brown, Ken & Rose Burdick (KRB), Andrea Burke, Bernie Carr, Gerald Case, David Cesari, Gary Chapin, Richard Cohen, Jim D'Angelo, Abby Darrah, Greg Dashnau, Rose DeNeve, Wayne Fidler, Ruth Florey, Elizabeth Frascatore, Louise Gomez, Bill Gruenbaum, Michael Gullo, Barbara & Larry Hall (BLH), Eddie Harlow, Jody Hildreth, Teri Holland, Gene Huggins, Jonathan Kresge, William Kuk, Joshua LaCelle (JaL), Josiah LaCelle, Robert LaCelle III, Gary Lee, Jason Luscier (JLu), Mark Magistro (MMA), Mary Magistro (MM), Sue March, Kevin McGann, Gary Meyers, Eric Moody, David Nash, Cody Nichols, Mitch Nusbaum, Kevin Pace, Neil Paprocki, Matt Perry, Bill Purcell, Margaret Rusk, Linda Salter (LSr), Stephanie & Thomas Schmidt, Mickey Scilingo, Tony Shrimpton, Jean Soprano, Chris Spagnoli, Taylor Sturm, Jim Tarolli (JTa), Judy Thurber (JT), Matt Voelker, Drew Weber (DWe), Lisa Welch, Lydia Wells, David Wheeler (DW), Brian White, Robert G. Williams III, Joe Wing, Judy Wright, Matt Young, Ken Zoller.

ABBREVIATIONS

BLNC – Beaver Lake Nature Center, Baldwinsville; Bville – Baldwinsville; Canas – Canastota; Caz – Cavenovia L; CM – Clay Marsh, Clay; Const – Oneida L at Constantia; DB – Ditch Bank Rd & vicinity, T Sullivan/Lenox; DH – Derby Hill, T Mexico; FH – Fair Haven, Little Sodus Bay, and vicinity; GLSP – Green Lakes SP, Fayetteville; Hast – Hastings; HI – Howland I WMA; MCL – Madison County Landfill, T Lincoln; OF – Old Forge; OLC – Onondaga L Creekwalk; OneiL – Oneida L; OnonL – Onondaga L; OswH – Oswego Harbor; OtisL – Otisco L; RCFS – Rice Creek Field Station, Oswego; SFNS – Spring Farm Nature Sanctuary, Kirkland; SH – Southern Highlands of ONON & MADI; Skan – Skaneateles; SNC – Sterling Nature Center; SSSP – Selkirk Shores SP; SVB – Sylvan & Verona Beach; Syr – Syracuse; TR – Three Rivers WMA, Lysander; VBSP – Verona Beach SP; WP – Woodman Pd, Hamilton

WATERFOWL - VULTURES

Greater White-fronted Goose: max 2 Van Buren 3 Dec (JB); 2 BLNC 6 Dec (GD); WP thru 13 Dec (GM, mob).
Snow Goose: max 2895 Belgium 1 Jan; 2045 OshW 2 Feb, flying east.
Snow Goose X Canada Goose: GLSP 24 Jan (JC).
Brant: small flock OF 2 Jan, only report.
Cackling Goose: max 2 Van Buren 4 Dec (MM); singles at 7 other locs; none after 2 Jan.
Canada Goose: max 4000 BLNC 8 Dec; 3400 Mexico 13 Dec; 3500 Pompey 14 Dec.
Mute Swan: 14 OLC 29 Jan; max 29 FH 22 Feb.
Trumpeter Swan: max 9 FH 31 Jan (MM); 8 OshW 9 Feb (WF); 5 SSSP 28 Feb (GD); reports from 4 other locs.
Tundra Swan: max 224 Const 26 Dec (BP); 167 SP 17 Jan; 50 FH 17 Jan; good numbers.
Wood Duck: 3 UM 28 Dec; max 4 Fulton 7 Jan – 22 Feb; 3 Belgium 21 Feb; reports from 6 other locs.
Gadwall: max 75 FH 17 Dec, good number; 11 WP 26 Dec; 9 OnonL 22 Jan.
Eurasian Wigeon: W Loop Rd, MNWR 25 Feb (ABI).
Am. Wigeon: max 26 WP 11 Dec; 22 OLC 21 Feb; 18 Brewerton 25 Feb.
Am. Black Duck: 55 WP 26 Dec; 54 Caz 30 Dec; 40 OnonL 16 Jan.
Mallard: 280 FH 17 Dec; max 800 OnonL 10 Feb; 330 OshW 20 Feb.
Am. Black Duck x Mallard: max 4 WP 3 Jan; singles at 2 other locs.
N. Shoveler: 2 FH 17 Dec; max 11 UM 28 Dec; none after Dec.
N. Pintail: 8 WP 7 Dec; 5 Brewerton 25 Feb; 21 Skan 26 Feb; max 300 W Loop Rd, MNWR 27 Feb.
Green-winged Teal: max 16 Kirkville 6 Dec; 8 Canas 13 Dec; singles at 5 other locs.
Redhead: 300 FH 5 Jan; max 430 OnonL 4 Feb; 300 OshW 26 Feb.
Canvasback: max 13 WP 26 Dec, OshW 27 Feb; 11 OLC 21 Feb.
Ring-necked Duck: 52 Const 26 Dec; 79 WP 15 – 18 Dec; max 109 Hatch L 6 Jan.
Greater Scaup: 210 Const 26 Dec; 200 FH 5 Jan; max 300 OshW 21 – 28 Feb.
Lesser Scaup: 14 Const 26 Dec; max 150 OnonL 16 Jan; 26 OshW 27 Feb.
Greater/Lesser Scaup: max 250 Const 26 Dec.
Aythya species: max 350 OnonL 16 Jan.
King Eider: f SSSP 6 – 31 Jan (WF, mob, ph).

Surf Scoter: f DH 15 Dec; f Warren HERK 15 Dec; m DH 3 Jan; only reports.
White-winged Scoter: 28 DH 3 Dec; 12 FH 17 Jan; max 35 OshW 21 Feb.
Black Scoter: max 4 Port Ontario 23 Dec (KM); 2 OneiL 1 Jan (BP, KM); 2 DH 3 Jan (DW).
Long-tailed Duck: max 350 DH 3 Jan; 105 FH 12 Feb.
Bufflehead: 31 Otisco Lake 5 Dec; max 45 FH 17 Dec; 26 OneiL 9 Jan.
Com. Goldeneye: 88 FH 14 Jan; 182 Otisco Lake 19 Jan; max 230 Brewerton 25 Feb.
BARROW'S GOLDENEYE (R5): f Brewerton 2 – 9 Feb (BP, mob).
Hooded Merganser: 95 Otisco Lake 5 Dec; max 98 DL 10 Dec; 178 New Woodstock CBC 30 Dec, good number; 60 Belgium 22 Jan.
Com. Merganser: 250 Fulton 23 Dec; max 550 OnonL 4 Feb; 450 Phoenix 14 Feb.
Red-breasted Merganser: max 340 FH 24 Dec; 250 OshW 15 Jan; 154 DH 27 Feb.
Ruddy Duck: max 15 WP 2 – 19 Dec; 11 BLNC 4 Dec; 5 OnonL 17 Jan; none after 17 Jan.
Ring-necked Pheasant: 2 TR 20 Dec; 2 Fulton 15 Jan; singles in 5 other areas.
Ruffed Grouse: max 4 Mexico 2 Jan, 1 Feb; 3 Hamilton 7 Feb; most reports south & east of OneiL.
Wild Turkey: 54 Little Falls 29 Dec; 48 Manheim 6 Jan; max 72 SH 30 Jan.
Red-throated Loon: max 8 OshW 12 Dec; 5 Oswego 17 Dec; 3 SVB 26 Dec.
Com. Loon: 5 FH 16 Dec; 3 OF CBC 19 Dec; max 9 OshW 17 Jan; 4 OnonL 16, 17 Jan.
Pied-billed Grebe: 2 BLNC 2 – 21 Dec; max 4 UM 20 Dec; 2 Belgium 29 Jan – 1 Feb.
Horned Grebe: 4 DH 11 Dec; max 8 OnonL 21 Jan; most reports from Lake Ontario.
Red-necked Grebe: 2 OshW 7 – 20 Dec; WP 8 Dec; Otisco Lake 27 Dec.
EARED GREBE (R5): OshW 28 Jan – 2 Feb (MG, mob, ph), 12th Reg rec, only 2nd for Oswego.
WESTERN GREBE: OshW 16 – 20 Dec (GD, mob, ph, NYSARC), 3rd Reg rec, 1st for winter.
Double-crested Cormorant: max 28 OshW 24 Dec, 28 OnonL 1 Feb.
AMERICAN WHITE PELICAN: OnonL 12 – 25 Jan (RF, mob, ph), expired, 1st Reg rec for winter, *intro*.
Great Blue Heron: max 3 WP 26 Dec, 3 OnonL 8 – 25 Jan.

HAWKS - LARIDS

Turkey Vulture: max 28 Fayetteville 6 Dec, good number; arr Belgium 22 Feb.
Golden Eagle: juv Norway 11 Dec (LH, EH), only rep.
Bald Eagle: 6 Minetto 20 Jan; 6 Williamstown 18 Feb; 8 OnonL 27 Feb; max 10 DH 27 – 28 Feb.
N. Harrier: max 2 Cicero 19 Dec; 2 Mindenville, HERK 2 Jan; 2 Dolgeville 11 Jan; 2 Fairfield 6 Feb.
Sharp-shinned Hawk: close to 45 reports of singles.
Cooper's Hawk: about 100 reports of singles.
N. Goshawk: SH 8 - 30 Dec (LS), only rep.
Red-shouldered Hawk: Georgetown 30 Dec (KRB), only rep.
Red-tailed Hawk: 5 TR 13 Dec; 5 HI 14 Dec; ad Syr 3 Jan, shot, expired; max 35 DH 27 Feb.
Rough-legged Hawk: max 3 SH 30 Dec – 10 Feb; 2 Fairfield 30 Dec – 2 Feb; 2 Pulaski 28 Feb; relatively scarce.
Virginia Rail: De Witt 7 Jan (BP).
Am. Coot: 16 UM 20 Dec; max 35 Skan 13 Jan; 13 OnonL 17 Jan.
Killdeer: arr SFNS 23 Feb; Tully 25 Feb; only reports.
Dunlin: FH 7 Jan (JB); Port Ontario 17 Jan (KM, WF).
Purple Sandpiper: FH 6 Dec (GD), only report.
Wilson's Snipe: TR 7 – 9 Dec (GD), only report.
Black-legged Kittiwake: ad DH 3 Dec (BP); 2 imm DH 15 Dec (DW, BP); imm DH 3 Jan (DW).
Bonaparte's Gull: 50 OnonL 10 Dec; 41 FH 16 Dec; max 140 South Bay, OneiL 27 Dec (KM); none after 15 Jan.
Iceland Gull: 2 MCL 29 Dec – 2 Feb; 2 OswH 17 Jan; max 3 DB 6 Feb, 3 OnonL 8 Feb; 2 OneiL 6 Feb.
Ring-billed Gull: 1033 DH 15 Dec; max 2000 OnonL 19 Dec.
Herring Gull: max 100 VBSP 26 Dec; 850 MCL 29 Dec.
Lesser Black-backed Gull: max 2 OneiL 6 Feb (DW); singles at six locs.
Glaucous Gull: max 2 Oswego 17 Jan, 2 OnonL 7 – 19 Feb; singles at 6 other locs.
Great Black-backed Gull: 50 VBSP 26 Dec; max 75 OneiL 6 Feb; 50 OnonL 18 Feb.

PIGEONS - PARROTS

Rock Pigeon: 220 Pheonix 15 Jan; 240 Brewerton 26 Jan; max 367 Cicero 26 Jan.

Mourning Dove: max 96 Dolgeville 18 Jan; 55 Const 15 Feb.

E. Screech-Owl: max 4 Skan 3 Jan; 2 Baltimore Woods 3 Jan; singles at 6 other locs.
Great Horned Owl: 2 Manlius 13 Dec – 19 Feb; 2 Mexico 25 Dec; 2 Hannibal 23 Feb; 2 Skan 3 Jan; 2 TR 4 Feb; 2 Erieville 14 Jan – 6 Feb; pair SNC 28 Feb, nesting in heron rookery; widespread reports of singles.
Snowy Owl: Waterville 2 Dec; max 3 OswH 16 Dec; Fulton 17 Dec; Syr Airport 29 Dec – 3 Jan; last Port Ontario 9 Feb.
Barred Owl: 2 New Haven 6 Jan; 2 Port Ontario 28 Feb; singles at 9 other locs.
Long-eared Owl: Syr 18 Jan (JLu), only rep.
Short-eared Owl: Verona 1 Jan; TR 6 – 7 Jan; Bville 7 Jan; max 2 Manheim, HERK 17 Jan, one thru 20 Jan; only reports.
N. Saw-whet Owl: Mexico 9 Dec (WF); Oswego 20 Dec (KM, WF); Manlius 5 Feb (ABI); only reports.
Belted Kingfisher: 2 UM 20 – 28 Dec; 2 Dewitt 9 – 16 Jan; 2 WP 21 Feb.
Red-headed Woodpecker: Scriba 17 Jan – 21 Feb; FH 21 Feb (DW).
Red-bellied Woodpecker: 5 GLSP 5 Dec; max 7 Memphis 4 Feb.
Yellow-bellied Sapsucker: max 2 GLSP 20 Feb; singles 5 other locs.
Downy Woodpecker: max 10 HI 14 Dec.
Hairy Woodpecker: max 4 SH 2 Dec, 4 TR 23 Dec.
N. Flicker: max 4 HI 14 – 26 Dec, 4 GLSP 19 Dec; widespread reports.
Pileated Woodpecker: 4 GLSP 6 Dec; max 8 HI 26 Dec.
Am. Kestrel: max 2 Mexico 7 Dec; widespread reports of singles.
Merlin: 2 Tully 2 Feb; max 3 Syr 9 Feb; 2 DH 28 Feb; pairs reported setting up territories.
Peregrine Falcon: pairs hold territory Syr & Utica thru; OswH 29 Jan; Fulton 19 Feb; Phoenix 28 Feb.

FLYCATCHERS - WAXWINGS

N. Shrike: TR 8 Dec – 28 Feb; singles in expected areas, low numbers.
Blue Jay: 24 Williamstown 5 Feb; 35 Taberg 6 Feb.
Am. Crow: 1500 Utica 15 Feb; max 6250 Syr 19 Dec; 4452 DH 28 Feb.
Fish Crow: Skan 3 Jan; max 7 OnonL 16 Jan.
Com. Raven: max 8 Norway 13 Dec; 4 Erieville 31 Jan; 4 Const 26 Dec; 4 Hast 29 Feb.
Horned Lark: 50 Fabius 23 Jan; max 85 SH 25

Jan; 40 Skan 20 Feb.

Black-capped Chickadee: max 34 Osw 17 Dec; 33 Memphis 4 Feb.

Tufted Titmouse: max 8 DH 20 Dec, 8 Memphis 4 Feb, 8 Chittenango 12 Feb.

Red-breasted Nuthatch: max 7 Highland Forest 13 Dec, 7 OF 7 Feb.

White-breasted Nuthatch: 7 TR 13 Dec; max 13 HI 14 Dec; 7 Fayetteville 19 Dec; 9 CM 7 Jan.

Brown Creeper: max 3 TR 13 Dec, 3 Mexico 23 Dec, 3 OnonL 16 Jan; 3 DH 17 Jan.

Winter Wren: max 2 Mexico 23 Dec; singles at 4 other locs.

Marsh Wren: CM 17 Dec (DN!), rare in winter.

Carolina Wren: 2 Manlius 14 – 31 Dec; max 3 Camillus 12 Feb; fairly widespread reports of singles.

Golden-crowned Kinglet: 4 TR 13 Dec; max 14 Williamstown 26 Dec; 4 OF 7 Feb.

E. Bluebird: 15 Williamstown 13 Dec; max 17 TR 24 Dec.

Hermit Thrush: max 2 RCFS 17 Dec, only loc.

Am. Robin: 110 SFNS 12 Dec; max 300 Sterling Nature Center 26 Dec.

Gray Catbird: Oswego 17 Dec – 17 Jan; SFNS 4 Jan; Elbridge 8 Jan; only reports.

N. Mockingbird: 2 Elbridge 8 Dec; 2 OswH 16 Dec; 2 Skan 18 Jan; max 3 GLSP 7 Feb.

European Starling: 1100 Tully 7 Jan; max 2000 DB 22 Jan.

Bohemian Waxwing: Oswego 7 Dec; max 42 SSSP 22 Feb; several more reports from vicinity of SSSP.

Cedar Waxwing: 70 TR 19 Dec; 80 SFNS 9 Feb; max 160 SSSP 17 Feb.

LONGSPURS - WARBLERS

Lapland Longspur: Big Moose, HERK 31 Dec; Manlius 4 Jan; max 3 Fabius 23 Jan; SH 25 Jan; Mexico 28 Jan; Pulaski 28 Jan – 20 Feb.

Snow Bunting: max 120 OswH 5 Jan; 75 Bouckville 13 Feb; 80 Fabius 18 Feb.

Yellow-rumped Warbler: max 4 RCFS 17 Dec; last 17 Jan, same loc.

TOWHEES - WEAVERS

E. Towhee: 2 SH 8 Dec (LS), only report.

Am. Tree Sparrow: 56 Oswego 17 Dec; max 58 Dolgeville 23 Feb.

Chipping Sparrow: Verona 1 Jan (BB, MV), only report.

Field Sparrow: SH 30 Dec (BP, KM); Memphis 4 Feb (KB); only reports.

Fox Sparrow: 2 SH 8 Dec (LS); Middleville 12 Feb (STS); only reports.

Song Sparrow: max 7 DB 22 Jan; 5 Fairfield 11 Feb.

Swamp Sparrow: 3 Osw 17 Dec, only report.

White-throated Sparrow: max 25 SFNS 12 Dec; 23 Fayetteville 19 Dec.

White-crowned Sparrow: Skan 24 Jan; Marcellus 12 Feb, one other report.

Dark-eyed Junco: 38 Mindenville, HERK 2 Jan; 31 Sterling 14 Jan.

SUMMER TANAGER: f Const 30 Dec - 5 Jan (WF, ph, NYSARC), 6th Reg rec, 1st for winter.

N. Cardinal: max 21 Cicero 15 Feb; 17 Camillus 16 Feb; 17 CM 22 Feb.

DICKCISSEL (R5): Fulton 16 Jan – 2 Feb (GD, ph, mob).

Red-winged Blackbird: 70 DB 12 Dec; max 711 TR 29 Feb; singles and small flocks thru.

E. Meadowlark: Mindenville HERK 2 Jan, only report.

Com. Grackle: 8 DeWitt 16 Jan; 40 Weedsport 28 Feb; max 150 TR 29 Feb.

Brown-headed Cowbird: 103 Salisbury 30 Dec; 200 DB 31 Dec; max 210 Clinton 29 Jan; large flocks overwinter.

Purple Finch: 20 SH 7 Jan; 8 Wilmurt 8 Feb; max 38 Fabius 21 Feb; 31 Dolgeville 24 Feb; many reports of mostly small flocks.

House Finch: 23 SH 5 Dec; max 26 Phoenix 10 Dec.

Red Crossbill: 5 OF 7 Feb; max 8 Atwell, HERK 20 Feb; all sightings from n. HERK.

Com. Redpoll: max 5 Pulaski 17 Feb; 4 SSSP 27 – 28 Feb; very few reports.

Pine Siskin: 40 SH 30 Dec; 40 BLNC 15 – 18 Feb; max 50 SSSP 28 Feb.

Am. Goldfinch: 120 Cazenovia 30 Dec; 120 Mexico 9 Feb; max 127 Dolgeville 19 – 25 Feb.

Evening Grosbeak: Deruyter 30 Dec; Norway 21 Dec; 3 Fairfield 29 Dec.

House Sparrow: max 60 OnonL 19 Dec, 60 Belgium 22 Jan.

DOMESTICS

Graylag Goose: max 5 West Eaton, MADI thru (mob).

Muscovy Duck: 8 Salisbury 27 Feb.

REGION 6—ST. LAWRENCE

Jeffrey S. Bolsinger

98 State Street, Canton NY 13617

jsbolsinger@yahoo.com

Winter was mild and with much less snow than normal. December was especially warm, with high temperatures exceeding 50° F on 12 days and a maximum of 67° on 14 December. January and February were cooler but mostly mild, with daytime highs mostly in the 20s and 30s interspersed with periodic brief cold snaps during which temperatures were closer to normal. The most sustained cold of the season occurred 11-14 February, culminating in the coldest night of the year on the 14th, when the temperature dropped to -37° in Watertown, which is about as cold as it typically gets in Jefferson County. Snowfall was light all season, but freezing rain was a regular occurrence although there were no major storms.

Waterfowl diversity was better than most years, although maximum counts for some of the most common species were modest. The Snow Goose migration has been occurring progressively later in the year for more than a decade, but was especially late this winter, largely occurring during the last few days of December and first week of January. Until recently Snow Geese were unheard of after December. Rare geese included a single Cackling Goose and two reports of Greater White-fronted Goose. Impressive numbers of waterfowl congregated in Black River Bay during December, including an apparent Regional record count of **1150** Tundra Swans on 19 December. More than 5000 Greater Scaup were on Black River Bay that day as well, more than have been observed here in several years. Among the more significant duck reports were a single female King Eider at Montario Point 15 January and at least two different Barrow's Goldeneye at Fisher's Landing.

Several species of waterbird were present in above average and perhaps unprecedented numbers, most notably Common Loon, with more than 25 reports, many of multiple individuals. The four reports each of Red-throated Loon and Red-necked Grebe is above average. An immature **Great Cormorant** was in the St. Lawrence River in Massena on 6 December.

Except for Bald Eagle, which was widespread, raptor numbers were rather low. It was yet another poor year for Rough-legged Hawk, and Red-tailed Hawk numbers were down as well. Cooper's Hawks were among the bright spots as they seemed to be everywhere this winter, although I suspect many were misidentified as Sharp-shinned Hawks by some observers based on eBird data, which showed nearly identical numbers of Sharp-shinned and Cooper's Hawks. By contrast a survey of a few of the most experienced birders in Region 6 suggests that Cooper's actually outnumbered Sharpies by 4 or 5 to 1.

A late Dunlin at Coles Creek State Park on 6 December was a welcome sight in a Region where any shorebird in winter is noteworthy. It was a rather

strange winter for gulls. Unlike most years, Ring-billed Gulls persisted throughout the winter, especially near Lake Ontario where they were relatively common. White-winged gulls were tough to find, especially Iceland Gull for which there was just one report. Glaucous Gulls also seemed to be scarce, although there were a few reports of multiple individuals from Hawkins Point.

Snowy Owls were much scarcer than the previous two winters and were tough to find away from western Jefferson County. It was also a modest year for wintering Short-eared Owls, although a few individuals apparently made it through the winter. Eastern Screech-, Long-eared, and Saw-whet Owls were all reported, something that doesn't occur most seasons.

The rarest bird of the season was a **Varied Thrush** that visited a Canton feeder briefly each day from early January through the end of the period. The homeowners didn't wish to have the bird advertised, but a few Canton-area birders were lucky enough to see it. Another surprise was a Boreal Chickadee that appeared at a Fort Drum feeder for a few days in January. Otherwise passerine highlights included more half-hardies than usual, most notably Winter Wrens at three locations, a Hermit Thrush at Lakeview WMA, a Nashville Warbler at Upper and Lower Lakes WMA, a Fox Sparrow at Perch River WMA, and a White-crowned Sparrow and an Eastern Meadowlark on Point Peninsula.

Bohemian Waxwings and most species of irruptive finch were present this winter, but mostly in small numbers. Scattered flocks of Bohemian Waxwings were present in central and northern St. Lawrence County but were scarcely reported elsewhere. Unlike the past few winters, Purple Finches were fairly common throughout the winter. Red Crossbills apparently nested in southern St. Lawrence County, but the few reports I received lacked details. A flock of 18 Pine Grosbeaks at Wilson Hill WMA on 31 January and six White-winged Crossbills at Upper and Lower Lakes WMA on 28 February were the only reports for these species. Common Redpolls were nearly as scarce, with one flock of 70 at Coles Creek State Park on 17 January and just three other reports at feeders.

For the season I received reports of 124 species, the highest winter tally in at least a decade and beating the species total from the winter of 2011-12, another unusually warm winter, by just one species. This season's tally was certainly a product of a mild winter, but also of the continuing increase in the number of birders regularly submitting checklists to eBird from nearly all portions of Region 6. The highlight of the season was certainly the Varied Thrush, although it's unfortunate that so few were able to see it. Perhaps the biggest disappointment was the scarcity of finches in a year when nearly every species of irruptive finch came south to some degree.

CONTRIBUTORS

Patricia Aitken, Jim & Marsha Akins, John Barthelme, Adam Bleau, Jeff Bolsinger, Richard & Marion Brouse, Carol Cady, Allison Deshane, Benjamin

Dixon, Lee Ellsworth, Doug & Ann Emlin, Michael Greenwald, Tom Langen, Tim Lenz, Nick Leone, Richard MacDonald, Daniel Miller, Ellen Miller, Elizabeth Morgan, Cody Nichols, Bill Purcell, Mandi Roggie, Robert Scranton, Antony Shrimpton, Gerry Smith, Mary Beth Warburton, Hans van der Zweep.

ABBREVIATIONS

BI – Barnhart I, T Massena; BRB – Black River Bay; BRV – Black River Valley; CCSP – Coles Creek SP; CPSP – Cedar Pt SP; CV – T Cape Vincent; FD – Fort Drum Military Reservation; FL – Fisher’s Landing, T Alexandria; GPSP – Grass Pt SP; HH – Henderson Harbor; HP – Hawkins Pt, T Massena; ICNC – Indian Creek Nature Center, T Canton; KC – Kelsey Creek, T Watertown; LWMA – Lakeview WMA; MP – Montario Pt, T Ellisburg; PilPt – Pillar Pt; PRWMA – Perch River WMA; PtPen – Pt Peninsula; PtSal – Pt Salubrious; RWSP – Robert G. Wehle SP; SBSP – Southwick Beach SP; SLR – St. Lawrence Ri; SLV – St. Lawrence Valley; StPt – Stony Pt, T Henderson; ULLWMA – Upper & Lower Lakes WMA; WI – Wellesley I; WHWMA – Wilson Hill WMA.

WATERFOWL - VULTURES

Greater White-fronted Goose: 2 ICNC 12 Dec (JB); 2 CV 20 Dec (DM, ph).

Snow Goose: bulk of the “fall” migration 30 Dec to 9 Jan, late; max 5000 T Ellisburg 31 Dec.

Cackling Goose: CV 20-26 Dec (TLe, NL), only report.

Mute Swan: max 21 GPSP 31 Jan.

Trumpeter Swan: max 19 ULLWMA 12 Dec; 12 additional reports from PRWMA & Lake Ontario shoreline.

Tundra Swan: max 1150 BRB 26 Dec (JB), Reg record high.

Gadwall: max 104 PRWMA 19 Dec.

Am. Wigeon: max 3 SBSP 20 Dec; last T Orleans 24 Jan.

Am. Black Duck: max 185 BRB 26 Dec.

Mallard: max 285 BRB 19 Dec, low.

N. Shoveler: 5 BRB 19 Dec (JB); ULLWMA 22 Dec (RM); rare in winter.

N. Pintail: max 7 BRB 19 Dec; 7 other reports.

Green-winged Teal: ULLWMA 21 & 22 Dec (RM); PtSal 9Jan (CN); only reports.

Canvasback: max 9 BRB 19 Dec; 10 other reports.

Redhead: max 330 RWSP 25 Jan.

Ring-necked Duck: max 90 PRWMA 19 Dec; StPt 31 Jan to 2 Feb, only reports after Dec.

Greater Scaup: max 5400 BRB 19 Dec.

Lesser Scaup: max 15 PRWMA 20 Dec.

King Eider: f MP 15 Jan (JB), only report.

Surf Scoter: HH & MP 15 Jan, only reports.

White-winged Scoter: max 59 HH 9 Jan.

Black Scoter: PtPen 30-31 Jan & FL 8 Jan, only reports.

Long-tailed Duck: max 620 MP 15 Jan, low for such a mild winter.

Bufflehead: max 125 WI 2 Jan, high.

Com. Goldeneye: max 550 WI 2 Jan.

Barrow’s Goldeneye: f FL 12 Jan to 28 Feb (NL, JB, RB); 1st win m FL 28 Feb (NL).

Hooded Merganser: max 16 BI 3 Dec.

Hooded Merganser X Com. Goldeneye: m & f FL 12 Jan to early Feb (NL).

Com. Merganser: max 750 PilPt 5 Jan; high count 310 CCSP 17 Jan, low.

Red-breasted Merganser: max 481 CV 26 Dec.

Ruddy Duck: FL 22 Jan (NL); StPt 31 Jan (AS); only reports.

Red-throated Loon: HH 1 Dec; StPt 4 Dec; BRB 19 & 26 Dec; only reports.

Com. Loon: max 7 CV 25 Jan (DM), high; 27+ reports more than usual.

Horned Grebe: max 7 StPt 12 Dec.

Red-necked Grebe: 2 BI 6 Dec; HH & StPt 13 -26 Jan; PtPen 20 Jan; CPSP 30 Jan; more than usual.

Double-crested Cormorant: last HH 15 Jan.

GREAT CORMORANT (R6): immature BI 6 Dec (JB).

Great Blue Heron: last KC 15 Feb.

Turkey Vulture: T Brownville 26 Dec (LE, ph), rare in winter; arr T Croghan & T Leray 26 Feb.

HAWKS - LARIDS

Bald Eagle: 85 reports to eBird; widespread.

N. Harrier: many Dec to early Jan; scarce after 15 Jan.

Sharp-shinned Hawk: 15 reports to eBird of which many suspected to be Cooper's Hawks.

Cooper's Hawk: 15 reports to eBird.

N. Goshawk: imm T Canton 21 Dec.

Red-shouldered Hawk: T Parishville 15 Dec (DE, AE, ph), rare but possibly increasing in winter.

Red-tailed Hawk: fewer than most winters.

Rough-legged Hawk: mostly 1-4/day in favored locations; max 12 Line Road T Lisbon & Oswegatchie 21 Jan; another poor year.

Golden Eagle: PRWMA 4 Dec (AB).

Am. Coot: PilPt 6 Jan (AB); CV 15 Jan (NL); only reports.

Dunlin: last CCSP 6 Dec (JB), late.

Bonaparte's Gull: max 39 BRB 26 Dec.

Little Gull: PilPt 7 Dec (NL), only report.

Ring-billed Gull: small numbers persisted Lake Ontario & SLR thru.

Herring Gull: max 230 BI 6 Dec.

Iceland Gull: BI 7 Dec, only report!

Lesser Black-backed Gull: 3 reports BRB & Chaumont Bay 24-26 Dec.

Glaucous Gull: max 10 HP 22 Jan.

Great Black-backed Gull: max 225 HP 23 Jan.

PIGEONS - PARROTS

E. Screech-Owl: 2 reports NW JEFF.

Snowy Owl: many reports 1-2 W JEFF & BRV, scarce elsewhere; many fewer than previous 2 winters.

Long-eared Owl: T Potsdam 24 Dec, only report.

Short-eared Owl: 2-7/day CV thru; T Colton 2 Feb; 4 reports elsewhere W JEFF late Dec & Jan.

N. Saw-whet Owl: 2 PtPen 27 Dec.

Belted Kingfisher: last FL 25 Jan.

Red-headed Woodpecker: none FD, 1st winter since 2011-12.

Red-bellied Woodpecker: 35 reports to eBird mostly W JEFF but several T Canton.

N. Flicker: max 8 PtPen 25 Dec; 22 other reports mostly W JEFF and T Massena.

Am. Kestrel: 21 reports mostly Dec but at least two late Feb suggesting winter survivors.

Merlin: 6 reports, below average for recent winters.

Peregrine Falcon: T Hammond 19 Jan, only report away from T Massena & T Louisville where resident.

FLYCATCHERS - WAXWINGS

N. Shrike: 15 reports; scarce for 2nd consecutive year.

Horned Lark: max 300+ CV Feb (GS).

Boreal Chickadee: at FD feeder 5 Jan (EMO).

Tufted Titmouse: about 50 reports mostly T Watertown & Lake Ontario shore but 5 reports SLV.

Carolina Wren: ICNC 22 Dec; T Croghan 14 & 20 Feb; only reports.

Winter Wren: StPt 20 Dec (TL); MP 29 Jan (NL); ULLWMA 7 Feb (JB); rare in winter.

E. Bluebird: 8 rep Lake Ontario shore & 5 rep central SLV.

Hermit Thrush: LWMA 17 Jan (TL); T Canton late Jan (MG); rare in winter.

Am. Robin: max 585 KC 9 Feb; good numbers T Watertown, Lake Ontario shore, and SLR thru.

VARIED THRUSH: T Canton feeder early Jan thru (JA, MA, ph), *intro*.

Bohemian Waxwing: 20 reports N STLA where max 140 T Madrid 7 Feb; 2 MP 15 Jan & 72 T Lowville 8 Feb, only reports outside STLA.

Cedar Waxwing: max 150 StPt 20 Dec, where relatively common thru; mostly scarce elsewhere.

LONGSPURS - WARBLERS

Lapland Longspur: 8 widely scattered reports; max 6 CV 4 Jan.

Snow Bunting: max 1000 CV Jan (GS).

Nashville Warbler: ULLWMA 21 Dec (RM!), rare in winter.

Yellow-rumped Warbler: 3 reports T Henderson, where max 4 StPt 28 Feb; apparently wintered StPt in small numbers.

SPARROWS - WEAVERS

Am. Tree Sparrow: max 48 PtPen 22 Jan.

Fox Sparrow: PRWMA 28 Feb (JB), rare in winter.

Song Sparrow: more than 20 reports of up to 10/day, more than usual.

White-throated Sparrow: 50+ reports of up to 10/day, good numbers.

White-crowned Sparrow: PtPen 22 Jan (BP), rare in winter.

Dark-eyed Junco: 250+ plus reports including many groups 10-35, more than usual.

Red-winged Blackbird: 12 reports more than usual; max 10 T Croghan 29 Feb, may be early migrants.

E. Meadowlark: sev rep PtPen to 22 Jan.

Com. Grackle: 3 reports, scarce.

Brown-headed Cowbird: 4 reports, max 5 Ogdensburg 14 Feb.

Pine Grosbeak: 18 WHWMA 31 Jan (HVZ), only report.

Purple Finch: 50+ reports; max 32 T Colton 29 Jan; more than most recent winters.

Red Crossbill: sev rep Adirondacks lacked details; 5 T Potsdam 24 Dec (PA), only report outside Adirondacks.

White-winged Crossbill: 6 ULLWMA 28 Feb (JB), only report.

Com. Redpoll: 70 CCSP 17 Jan; only 3 other reports of 1-2 at feeders.

Pine Siskin: many reports of up to 45 at feeders.

Evening Grosbeak: max 11 T Stockholm feeder 2 Jan.

====

REGION 7—ADIRONDACK-CHAMPLAIN

No report was received this season.

====

REGION 8—HUDSON-MOHAWK

Tom Williams

153A Consaul Rd., Albany, NY 12205

trwdsd@fastmail.fm

In Region 8, Winter 2015-2016 will long be remembered for being remarkably warm and snow-free, with bare ground and unfrozen water the rule rather than the exception. At Albany, December 2015 averaged 13.3° F above normal; not a misprint, as fourteen days had a high temperature of 50° or more, and only nine nights fell below freezing. Rivers, lakes, and ponds remained largely ice-free, with 3.67" of precipitation falling as rain for the most part and only 2.2" of measurable snow. 24 December may well have been the warmest day in Albany's recorded meteorological winter (Dec.-Feb.) history, with a high temperature of 72° and a daily mean 32° above normal. January remained warm at 5.1° above the norm, and dry with only 1.24" of precipitation, nearly all in the form of rain. Only 3.3" of snow fell in January, and the ground remained bare for the most part. February had a warm start and finish but also the first real cold spell mid-month. 13-15 February all had below 0° minima, hitting -13°F on the 14th at Albany. Nevertheless, the month averaged 4.7° above normal. Precipitation was well above normal, too, at 4.07", which was nearly two inches more than usual. Snowfall was only 4.8", and a snow depth of an inch or more

was only recorded on four days during the month. The cold spell did finally freeze over many bodies of water, but heavy rain and warmer temperatures towards the end of the month quickly began to open them up again.

Some highlights from the Christmas Bird Count season included: On 15 December, Palm Warbler and Virginia Rail, both at RamsHorn-Livingston Sanctuary in Catskill, Green County, on the Catskill-Coxsackie CBC. On 19 December, Common Yellowthroat at U. of Albany, Albany County, on the Schenectady CBC. On 20 December, American Woodcock and Ruby-crowned Kinglet at Schodack Island SP, Rensselaer County, on the Albany CBC, and eight American Pipits and a Pine Warbler near Saratoga Springs, Saratoga County, on the Saratoga CBC at a very late date for both species. And on 2 January, Winter Wren, Hermit Thrush, White-crowned Sparrow, Common Redpoll, and a **Lark Sparrow** discovered near Brunswick, Rensselaer County, found by Naomi Lloyd and her field party on the Troy CBC. Photos of the Lark Sparrow were submitted with an eBird checklist summarizing their sector effort.

2 January was also Snow Goose migration day, with flocks finally heading southbound throughout the day. Many observers noted several thousand geese overhead, moving in wave after wave, continuing throughout the day.

On 8 January a report of Red Crossbills was received from Rensselaerville SF in Albany County. The birds had been present for some time, and some indications of breeding behavior were noted. Many observers ventured to the area, and, as of the end of February, as many as eight or more were still present. Many thanks to T. Lloyd Williams for alerting the local birding community and for his faithful monitoring of the status of the crossbills. It will be interesting to see what transpires in the coming months.

At Bell's Pond, near Livingston, Columbia County, Richard Nord observed five Tundra Swans on 11 January, quite unusual for the middle of winter. Another Regionally rare sighting was reported by Jamie Glydon on 7 February in three Sandhill Cranes on a private farm in Halfmoon, Saratoga County.

The three winter-visitant gull species seemed to occur in smaller numbers this season, with reports of Lesser Black-backed Gull, Iceland Gull, and Glaucous Gull mostly confined to a few locations in the Cohoes-Crescent corridor along the Mohawk River between Albany and Saratoga Counties. The frequent lack of a substantial ice cover along the river may have been a factor.

Bruce Dudek continued to monitor a now long-staying immature Red-headed Woodpecker near his home in Colonie, Albany County. The bird was last seen in mid-February; hopefully it will stay in the area into the breeding season.

CONTRIBUTORS

Larry Alden, Will Aubrey, Ramona Bearor, Susan Beaudoin, Mike Birmingham, Matt Brunelle, Nancy Castillo, Glen & Malinda Chapman, Steve Chorvas, Jeremy Collison, Bill Cook, Alan Devoe Bird Club recent sightings, Amanda

Dillon, Craig Driggs, Bruce Dudek, Lindsey Duval, Larry Federman, Debra Ferguson, Mark Fitzsimmons, Brianna Gary, Jamie Glydon, Bernie & Chris Grossman, Rich Guthrie, HMBirds Yahoo Group, Larry & Barbara Hall, David Harrison, Ron Harrower, John Hershey, John Kent, Nancy Kern, Bill Lee, Naomi Lloyd, Tristan Lowery, Larry Main, Alan Mapes, Leigh McBride, Thom McClenahan, Steve Mesick, Joyce Miller, Frank Mitchell, Frank Murphy, Jenny Murtaugh, Richard Nord, Ellen Pemrick, Will Raup, Gregg Recer, Neal Reilly, John Roosenberg, Jeanette Roundy, Kathy Schneider, Zach Schwartz-Weinstein, Marian Sole, George Steele, Scott Stoner, Craig Thompson, Alison Van Keuren, Phil Whitney, Tom & Colleen Williams, Donna Wright, Will Yandik, Robert Yunick.

ABBREVIATIONS

APBP – Albany Pine Bush Preserve, ALBA; AR – Alcove Res, ALBA; BCM – Black Creek Marsh, ALBA; BCR – Basic Creek Res, ALBA; BMB – Bog Meadow Brook Nature Trail, SARA; CCGP – Cocksackie Creek Grasslands Preserve, GREE; CF – Cohoes Flats, ALBA; CL – Collins L, SCHE; CRM – Cline Rd. Marsh, FULT; FR – Five Rivers Environmental Education Center, ALBA; FtEG – Ft. Edward Grasslands, WASH; FV – Franklinton Vlaie, SCHO; HP – Huyck Preserve, ALBA; OCA – Ooms Conservation Area, COLU; PRWMA – Partridge Run WMA, ALBA; SNHP – Saratoga National Historical Park, SARA; TR – Tomhannock Res, RENN; VFNHP – Vischer Ferry Nature & Historic Preserve, SARA; WMP – Wilson M. Powell Wildlife Sanctuary, COLU.

WATERFOWL - VULTURES

Snow Goose: max 5600 Troy CBC RENN 2 Jan.
Cackling Goose: Corning Preserve ALBA 9 Jan (TL); max 2 Ft Plain MONT 20 Jan (LBH); Ft Miller WASH 11 Feb (TW).
Tundra Swan: 5 Bells Pond, Livingston COLU 11 Jan (RN), uncommon.
Wood Duck: max 14 Schodack RENN 24 Feb.
Gadwall: max 59 Stanton Pond ALBA 23 Dec.
Am. Wigeon: max 35 Stanton Pond ALBA 9 Dec.
N. Shoveler: Guilderland ALBA 1 Jan.; Stanton Pond ALBA 2 Jan., late.
N. Pintail: max 50 Schodack RENN 25 Feb.
Green-winged Teal: max 6 Schodack RENN 26 Feb.
Canvasback: max 4 Saratoga L SARA 19 Dec.
Redhead: 7 reports 5 Dec - 27 Feb.
Ring-necked Duck: max 850 Loughberry L SARA 5 Dec.
Greater Scaup: max 45 Loughberry L SARA 5 Dec.

Lesser Scaup: max 375 Loughberry L SARA 24 Dec.
Black Scoter: Green I ALBA 7 Jan.
Long-tailed Duck: 3 reports 5 Dec - 4 Feb.
Bufflehead: max 120 Saratoga L SARA 12 Dec.
Com. Goldeneye: max 275 Saratoga L SARA 19 Dec.
Hooded Merganser: max 250 Galway L SARA 9 Dec.
Red-breasted Merganser: 3 reports 12 Dec - 19 Feb.
Ruddy Duck: max 135 Copake L RENN 24 Dec.
Wild Turkey: max 132 Valley Falls RENN 9 Jan.
Red-throated Loon: Blenheim Gilboa Upper Res SCHO 10 Dec; AR 3 Jan
Horned Grebe: 2 reports 5 Dec - 17 Dec.
Red-necked Grebe: 2 reports 5 Dec - 20 Jan.
Double-crested Cormorant: last South Bay WASH 25 Dec.

HAWKS – LARIDS

Black Vulture: max 44 HVCC campus RENN 9 Feb.

Turkey Vulture: last Westmere ALBA 13 Dec; arr Glenmont ALBA 20 Feb.

Golden Eagle: 9 reports 4 Dec - 22 Feb.

N. Harrier: max 10 FtEG 21 Feb.

Virginia Rail: RamsHorn-Livingston Sanctuary GREE 15 Dec, late.

Am. Coot: AR 24 Jan., late.

SANDHILL CRANE (R8): 3 Halfmoon SARA 7 Feb (JG), regionally rare.

Killdeer: arr Selkirk ALBA 25 Feb.

Am. Woodcock: Schodack I SP RENN 20 Dec, late.

Iceland Gull: max 2 Cohoes ALBA 30 Dec - 26 Feb.

Lesser Black-backed Gull: max 2 Cohoes ALBA 28 Dec - 14 Feb.

Glaucous Gull: arr The Crossings ALBA 4 Dec.

PIGEONS – PARROTS

Snowy Owl: 5 reports 2 Dec - 9 Jan.

Short-eared Owl: max 4 FtEG 18 Dec.

N. Saw-whet Owl: 2 reports 2 Jan - 30 Jan.

RED-HEADED WOODPECKER (R8): Old Valley Rd., Colonie ALBA 11 Dec - 12 Feb., continuing regional rarity

FLYCATCHERS – WAXWINGS

E. Phoebe: 5R 4 Dec - 17 Jan., late.

N. Shrike: arr T Broome SCHO 4 Dec.

Horned Lark: max 270 FtEG 30 Dec.

Am. Pipit: 3 reports 20 Dec - 28 Feb.

Bohemian Waxwing: max 6 Hague WARR 23 Jan.

Cedar Waxwing: max 80 FR 20 Dec.

LONGSPURS – WARBLERS

Lapland Longspur: 2 reports 2 Jan - 13 Jan.

Snow Bunting: max 150 Northumberland SARA 2 Jan.

Com. Yellowthroat: U Albany ALBA 14 Dec - 24 Dec (TL), late.

Pine Warbler: Saratoga CBC SARA 20 Dec (SM), late.

Yellow-rumped Warbler: 4 reports 5 Dec - 24 Jan.

SPARROWS – WEAVERS

LARK SPARROW: Troy CBC Brunswick RENN 2 Jan (NL), NYSARC, *intro*

Fox Sparrow: 3 reports 14 Dec - 6 Jan.

White-crowned Sparrow: 2 reports 18 Feb - 21 Feb.

Vesper Sparrow: 2 Ft. Plain CBC MONT 2 Jan.

Red Crossbill: Rensselaerville SF ALBA 8 Jan - 28 Feb, breeding behavior.



REGION 9—HUDSON-DELAWARE

Michael Bochnik

70 Hutchinson Boulevard, Mt Vernon, NY 10552
BochnikM@cs.com

December was the warmest on record. Poughkeepsie averaged 44.3° F, an incredible 13.2° above normal. There were 22 days where the high was 50° or more, six days 60° or higher, and 24 December had a high of 72°. Precipitation was slightly above normal at 3.9", all in the form of rain. White Plains only saw six days with lows below freezing; 29 December was the coldest with only a low of 28°. As expected, most ponds and lakes remained unfrozen.

January was also warm, and averaged 5.9° above normal. Poughkeepsie saw only 1.2" of precipitation, and without any accumulating inches of snow. A major snow storm on 23 January that affected the mid-Atlantic and Northeast states only had impacts on the southern half of Region 9. Westchester had up to

24" of snow, Rockland up to 17", Orange and Putnam up to 12". Snowfall was absent to the north just past the Dutchess County line. Above-average temperatures followed, and the snow cover mostly disappeared within a week.

February was also warm, with twelve days being 50° or warmer and seven days 60° and over. A night of subzero temperatures did arrive mid-month on the morning of 14 February. Poughkeepsie dipped to -6°. Ponds froze momentarily but unfroze when the temperature rose to 58° two days later. The month averaged 5.8° warmer than normal, with 4.5" of precipitation.

There were numerous reports for both Greater White-fronted Goose and Cackling Goose and sites included most of the counties. The overall population of Greater White-fronted Goose is up. The Cackling Goose numbers are due to more knowledgeable birders, but I still caution against runt or small forms of Canada Geese. More photographs are being shared which show many of these reports are correct. Canvasback numbers were way down in December, with lows and misses for many Christmas Bird Counts. The numbers did pick up a bit when normal cold weather finally arrived in January. Many of the other pond ducks overwinter in the southern part of Region 9, but the warm season saw more reports further north than normal due to the open water.

John Haas found and photographed an adult **WESTERN GREBE** off Piermont Pier 7 January. Getting the word out, a number of birders got to view the bird. The bird was present until 10 January and was last seen far out from the pier.

A couple of Ospreys returned much earlier than normal, with two sightings at the end of February. A "Western" Red-tailed Hawk was discovered by Steve Sachs along Skinners Lane in the Black Dirt region of Orange County on 7 January. Photos of the bird were shared with Jerry Ligouri and he confirmed that it is a rufous morph of the subspecies *calurus*. Linda Scrima relocated the bird the following day. At least seven Golden Eagles were in the Dover Plains region of Dutchess County in late January, a high number for recent years.

A Common Gallinule found on the last day of December in Amenia was Dutchess County's second winter record.

A **Black-headed Gull** was once again found on Premium Mill Pond in New Rochelle on 2 January and was seen again on 26 January and 6 February. This could be the same bird that appear here last year. Laughing Gulls lingered in Long Island Sound from December to as late as 20 January. These sightings are the first January records for Westchester County.

Anne Swaim found a light morph **GYRFALCON** along the entrance road of the Shawangunk Grasslands National Wildlife Refuge on 25 December. It was relocated just south in Blue Chip Farm later in the day. This may be the same individual that visited the same area last year. A second Gyrfalcon was photographed at the end of the season at Wallkill River National Wildlife Refuge by Linda Scrima on 26 February. It was seen perched and in flight after being harassed by Northern Harriers.

Three Tree Swallows were found on the Westchester side of the Greenwich-Stamford Count [CTGS] in Wampus Brook Park on 20 December.

The warm winter did not produce many notable warblers, with only Black-and-white Warbler, Common Yellowthroat, and Yellow-breasted Chat reported. There were some early hard freezes in October 2015 which may account for this.

Karen Ohearn discovered and photographed a **Lark Sparrow** at Croton Point Park on 13 December. The bird was seen daily and made it to the Peekskill CBC six days later. It remained through the winter and into the spring. This is Westchester County's tenth record. Very rarely found in winter was a **Lincoln's Sparrow** found along the Harlem Valley Rail Trail in Amenia on 2 and 7 February by Carena Pooth and Herb Thompson.

David Baxter photographed and reported a sub-adult Bullock's Oriole at his feeder in Milton in Ulster County on 18 February. The bird had been around for about a week. It was subsequently seen by many and continued to the end of the month.

Other notable species include Sandhill Crane, Snowy Owl, and Red Crossbill.

Additional highlights from the Christmas Bird Counts are as follows:

The Peekskill CBC [NYPE] found 90 species including the Lark Sparrow in Croton Point Park on 19 December. A Virginia Rail, Marsh Wren, twenty American Pipits, and two Merlins were also found.

East Orange CBC [NYEO] on 19 December found 81 species including a Bonaparte's Gull. High counts were recorded for Snow Goose, 385; Black Vulture, 96; Fish Crow, 1156; and Common Grackle, 2755.

Rockland County CBC [NYRC] on Sunday, December 20, recorded 78 species plus two count week species, Red-shouldered Hawk and Eastern Towhee. New maximum counts were established for Turkey Vulture (105 vs. 78 in 2014), Common Raven (16 vs. 15 in 2014), and American Robin (3701 vs. 1115 in 2009). Typical of the current trends on the counts, there were five notable misses: scaup sp, American Kestrel, Brown Creeper, Yellow-rumped Warbler, and Brown-headed Cowbird. These misses represent the decline of these species on all of the local counts over the last two decades.

Mohonk Lake/Ashokan Reservoir CBC [NYML] found 78 species on 19 December under exceptionally mild and pleasant field conditions. Highlights were two Cackling Geese, associating with a large flock of Canada Geese on Spring Lake off Lucas Avenue in Kingston, and one American Woodcock in full courtship display over a private field in Marbletown. A Northern Shrike was seen count week. High counts were established for Bald Eagle, 18; Cooper's Hawk, 12; Red-bellied Woodpecker, 97; Northern Flicker, 24; Tufted Titmouse, 419; American Pipit, 41; and Fox Sparrow, 7. Twenty-five Common Ravens tied last year's record high count.

The Monticello CBC [NYMT] found 57 species on 20 December and had a high count of 1240 Snow Goose. The Ulster-Dutchess CBC [NYUD] had 86

species on 26 December, including a Snow Goose, American Woodcock, and three White-crowned Sparrows.

The Bronx-Westchester CBC [NYBW] recorded 114 species on 27 December, with 105 species seen in Westchester. Highlights in Westchester were Great Egret in Rye and Black-and-white Warbler in Five Islands Park, New Rochelle. New High counts were set for Snow Goose, Double-crested Cormorant, Merlin, and Fish Crow. An all-time low of 26 was set for American Tree Sparrow and only one Canvasback was found. Once again, Red-bellied Woodpecker outnumbered Downy Woodpecker.

The Putnam County CBC recorded 79 species on 2 January. A possible Broad-wing Hawk was reported by Eric Lind and two others, pending verification. Other highlights were two N. Saw-whet Owls and 435 Eastern Bluebirds, a new high for the count.

CONTRIBUTORS

Julie Aitchison, Ajit Antony, Liza Antony, Kathleen Ashman, Bob & Cyd Averill, Scott Baldinger, David Baxter, Edward Becher, Gail Benson, Michael Bochnik, Matt Britt, Tom Burke, Deborah Busby, Sean Camillieri, Steve Chorvas, Judith Cinquina, Jim Clinton, Jim Coe, Rebekah Creshkoff, Renee Davis, Mark Dedeo, Evan Edelbaum, Menachem Goldstein, Marge Gorton, Melissa Guevara, John Haas, Nick Hawvermale, David Hayes, Jesse Jaycox, Tait Johansson, Tim Johnson, Yong Kong, Deborah Kral, Michael Lavin, Paul Lewis, Eric Lind, Karen Maloy, Liz Martens, Barbara Mansell, Steven Martin, Leigh McBride, John McBride, Mike McBrien, Curt McDermott, Ken McDermott, Dan Mercurio, Michael Newhouse, Bruce Nott, Paul Novak, Suzanne O'Rourke, Karen Ohearn, Gina Palmer, Gerhard Patsch, Carena Pooth, Adrienne Popko, Deborah Powell, Jessica Prockup, Sue Rayano, Steve Ricker, Stacy Robinson, Susan Rogers, Steve Sachs, Larry Scacchetti, Peter Schoenberger, Bob Schriber, Linda Scrima, Jarvis Shirky, Mariam Sole, Barbara Strobino, Anne Swaim, Roxanne Taylor, Herb Thompson, Wendy Tocci, Matt Tozer, Larry Trachtenberg, Michael Turso, Benjamin Van Doren, Lance Verderame, Chet Vincent, Susan Ward, Mike Warner, Carol Weiss, Jim Yates, Matthew Zeitler, Adam Zorn.

ABBREVIATIONS

CPP – Croton Pt P; EGR – Edith G. Read Wildlife Sanctuary; MC – Marshlands Conservancy; RNC – Rye Nature Center; SGNWR – Shawangunk Grasslands NWR.

WATERFOWL - VULTURES

Greater White-fronted Goose: Ryder P, Stanfordville 8, 9 Dec (AP); Blue Chip Farm 1

Dec-29 Feb (MD,SB,JH,KM); Lavelle Road P, Amenia 13 Dec (AP,CV); Middletown 17 Jan (KM,CM); EGR 8,21,22 Jan (TB,BS); Wallkill

24, 25 Jan (MD); Black Dirt Region 29,31 Jan, 10, 17, 21 Feb (JH); Hunn's Lake Stanfordville 5, 6 Feb (AP,DK); Six and a half Station Sanc 6 Feb (KA); Round P, Amenia 11 Feb (CV); Millerton 17 Feb (CV).

Snow Goose: Cross River Res 14 Dec; 950 Bashakill 27 Dec; 169 NYBW 27 Dec, late moving; 300 Blue Chip Farm 2 Jan (JJ); 33 Muscoot Farm 4 Jan; EGR 8 Jan; 800 Wallkill NWR 21 Feb (JS).

Brant: max 275 Five I P, New Rochelle 26 Jan.

Cackling Goose: Round P, Stanfordville 8 Dec (AP); 2 Spring Lake, Kingston 8, 18, 19 Dec (MD); Blue Chip Farm 6 Dec-29 Feb (MM); Six and a Half Station Sanctuary 28 Dec (KA); Spring Lake, Kingston 1 Jan (PS); Redwing 12, 13 Jan (CP); Black Dirt Region 15 Jan, 10, 14, 19, 21 Feb (JH,BN); Wallkill 24 Jan(MD); Amenia 29 Feb (CV).

Tundra Swan: 2 Rhinebeck 23 Feb; 6 Amenia 28 Feb.

Wood Duck: 2 Ulster P 19 Dec; 3 Kingston Pt 21 Feb; 21 Crestwood L, Yonkers 27 Dec; 48 Cross River 24 Jan; 46 Bashakill 29 Feb (JH).

Gadwall: 8 Stone Ridge 19 Dec.

Eurasian Wigeon: Esopus Meadows 22 Feb (JY).

Am. Wigeon: 5 Stone Ridge 19 Dec.

Redhead: North Salem 19,20 Feb.

Ring-necked Duck: max 330 North Salem 19 Feb (TJ).

Surf Scoter: 4 Rye 27 Jan.

White-winged Scoter: max 30 EGR 22 Feb.

Black Scoter: 1-3 EGR 10 Dec-17 Feb.

Long-tailed Duck: Poughkeepsie 23-25 Jan (CP,BM,LMa); max 46 EGR 25 Jan.

Red-breasted Merganser: Newburgh 2 Feb, normal numbers on LI Sound.

Red-throated Loon: max 25 Rye 27 Dec.

C. Loon: max 8 Rye 25 Dec.

Horned Grebe: Mills-Norrie SP 5 Dec; Pawling 20 Jan; CPP 30 Jan; low numbers in LI Sound.

WESTERN GREBE: Piermont Pier 7-10 Jan (JH.mob), ph.

Red-necked Grebe: EGR 25 Dec; West Branch Res 15 Jan; EGR 22 Feb.

N. Gannet: EGR 9, 21, 24, 27 Dec, 1 Jan.

Double-crested Cormorant: 392 NYBW 27 Dec.

Great Egret: Iona I 5 Dec; EGR 5 Dec; MC 10 Dec; Rye 27 Dec.

Black Vulture: 14 CPP 28 Feb.

Turkey Vulture: 175 Croton-on-Hudson 7, 8 Dec.

HAWKS - LARIDS

Osprey: I-87 New Paltz 25 Feb (SRo); Red Hook 25 Feb (MGU), very early.

N. Harrier: max 11 SGNWR 4 Jan.

N. Goshawk: Youngsville 5 Jan; Parksville 7 Jan.

Red-shouldered Hawk: few reports from most counties; not as prevalent as past couple of years.

Broad-winged Hawk: NYPC 2 Jan (EL), some details received.

"Western" Red-tailed Hawk (*B. j. calurus*): Black Dirt region ORAN 8 Jan (SS,LiS,MZ), rufous morph, *intro*.

Rough-legged Hawk: max 5 Black Dirt region ORAN 30 Jan.

Golden Eagle: 2 I-84 Hawk watch 4, 31 Dec; Amenia 8 Dec; Dover 24 Dec-27 Jan; 2 Amenia 28 Dec; Storm King 17, 20 Jan; 7 Dover Plains 19 Jan; Ten Mile River Preserve 21, 22 Jan, 27 Feb; Liberty 30 Jan; Dover Plains 30 Jan, 6, 21 Feb; 2 Storm King 8 Feb; New Paltz 8 Feb; Wingdale 21 Feb.

Virginia Rail: CPP 19 Dec; 2 MC 27 Dec; Liberty Marsh 28 Feb.

Com. Gallinule: Sharon Station Road, Amenia 31 Dec (DK), second DUTCH winter record.

Sandhill Crane: flyover CPP 31 Dec (JM).

Purple Sandpiper: max 11 EGR 17 Dec.

Wilson's Snipe: SGNWR 10 Jan.

Am. Woodcock: displaying Marbletown 19 Dec; arr Mohonk Preserve 3 Feb.

Bonaparte's Gull: 6 EGR 1 Jan; CPP 6 Feb (MN).

Black-headed Gull: Premium Mill Pd 2, 26 Jan, 6 Feb (JCo, TB,GB); Five Island Park 19 Jan (TB).

Laughing Gull: lingered in the LI Sound from Dec to late Jan; MC 3 Dec; EGR 5 Dec; 7 EGR 8, 9, 13 Dec, 1 Jan; max 8 EGR 10 Dec; 6 Rye 27, 31 Dec; EGR 7, 10, 12, 13, 15, 20 Jan.

Iceland Gull: Wallkill 5 Dec (CM); 2 Newburg 19-21 Jan (CM); EGR 4 Feb (TB).

Lesser Black-backed Gull: Wallkill 5 Dec (CM); Newburg 19-21, 26-29 Jan (CM); Tappan Zee Bridge, Tarrytown 18 Jan (MTu); Piermont Pier 12 Feb (CW).

Glaucous Gull: EGR 19 Jan (TB).

PIGEONS - PARROTS

Barn Owl: Wallkill 28 Jan.

Snowy Owl: Indiana Rd, Black Dirt region ORAN 14-15 Jan (MZ); Kingston 27 Jan (PS).

Short-eared Owl: max 6 SGNWR 17 Jan; James Baird SP 4 Jan.

N. Saw-whet Owl: Sloan Gorge 16 Dec, 2 Jan; Saugerties 16, 25 Dec; Accord 19 Dec; Red Hook 26 Dec; Yonkers 27 Dec; Kingston Res 1 Jan; Black Rock Forest 1, 31 Jan; Cornwall 2 Jan; 2 East Kent 2 Jan; Willow 24, 25 Jan; Calicoon 7, 8 Feb.

Red-headed Woodpecker: max 8 Weston Swamp 16 Jan; Middletown 14 Dec; Esopus 6 Jan; 4 Swartekill Creek, New Paltz 8 Feb.

Merlin: 3 NYML 19 Dec; 2 NYPE 19 Dec; 5 NYBW 27 Dec; Ossining 27 Jan; CPP 20 Feb.

GYRFALCON: SGNWR & Blue Chip Farm 25 Dec (AS,KM,AA,KM,LaS,KF), ph, *intro*; Wallkill River NWR 26 Feb (LSc), ph.

Monk Parakeet: 3 Yonkers 27 Dec; 39 New Rochelle 26 Jan.

FLYCATCHERS - WAXWINGS

E. Phoebe: Dover Plains 25 Dec (DK); Forestburgh 25 Dec (JH); Bashakill 29 Feb (JH), very early.

N. Shrike: New Paltz 18 Dec (NYML); Amenia 20 Dec; Livingston Manor 23 Dec (RD, MaGo); Wappingers 31 Feb (B&CA).

Fish Crow: 234 NYBW 27 Dec.

Horned Lark: 60 SGNWR 6 Jan; 200 Millerton 16 Feb.

Tree Swallow: 3 Wampus Brook Park 20 Dec (MW, CTGS).

Marsh Wren: CPP 19 Dec. [Date Dec; can't even call it a tongue-in-cheek March Wren.]

E. Bluebird: 435 NYPC 2 Jan.

Gray Catbird: more winter reports than normal, especially from the northern counties.

Am. Pipit: 41 Lomontville 19 Dec; 20 CPP 19 Dec; 28 CPP 14 Jan; 15 CPP 13 Feb.

LONGSPURS – WARBLERS

Lapland Longspur: Claryville 5 Jan (JH); 2 Pine Island 19-21 Jan (CM); Mohonk Preserve 12 Feb (JC).

Black-and-white Warbler: f Five Island Park, New Rochelle 27 Dec (MT, AS, LT).

Com. Yellowthroat: MC 3 Jan (BS); Muscoot Farm 20 Jan (PL); Kingston Pt 21 Feb (MD, PS).

Yellow-breasted Chat: EGR 7, 8, 17, 19, 21, 22 Jan (AS, RT, SO, TB).

SPARROWS - WEAVERS

Chipping Sparrow: Westmoreland Sanctuary 6 Dec (AZ, SRi); Kingston 19 Dec (MD, NYML); 1-2 CPP 16, 17 Jan (LT, CR), ph; CPP 24 Jan; 12 SGNWR 18 Feb.

LARK SPARROW: CPP 13 Dec – 21 Feb (KO, mob), ph.

Lincoln's Sparrow: Harlem Valley Rail Trail, Amenia 2, 7 Feb (CP, HT), adequate description for this rare over winterer.

White-crowned Sparrow: Amenia 20 Dec; 2 Rhinebeck 26 Dec; 2-3 Wallkill R NWR 15, 17-22 Feb; Millerton 15 Feb.

Dark-eyed "Oregon" Junco: f Shenorock 14 Jan (JA).

E. Meadowlark: EGR 9, 10 Jan; Blue Chip Farm 4 Feb; 3 SGNWR 6, 20 Feb.

BULLOCK'S ORIOLE: Milton 18-29 Feb (DBa, PS).

Red Crossbill: 2 Clinton Corners 23 Feb (JCl).

Com. Redpoll: 2-4 Tanglewood 13-15 Feb; 2-5 Warwick 12, 15, 21, 27 Feb.

Pine Siskin: fewer reports than normal; max 60 MC 9 Jan.

====

REGION 10—MARINE

Derek H. Rogers

PO Box 537, Bayport, NY 11705
drogers0031@gmail.com

Winter weather in Region 10 was dominated by the influence of El Niño, which brought some of the mildest conditions on record. Central Park's weather station recorded a mean temperature of 50.8° F in December, a profound 13.3° above normal. Similarly, Islip recorded a mean temperature of 48.4°, 12.8° above

normal. Precipitation totals for the month at these two stations were 0.72" and 1.27" above the expected.

The exceptional warmth continued into early January, with Robert J. Kurtz noting cherry blossoms blooming on 10 January. Observations like these were commonplace throughout the Region, but as the month progressed winter finally took hold. By the end of January Central Park's mean temperature had dropped to 34.5°, just 1.9° above normal, while Islip recorded a mean temperature of 33.3°, 2.7° above normal. Precipitation totals were 0.83" and 0.76" above the mean, but these slightly higher totals came at the expense of Winter Storm Jonas, which was without question the most memorable weather event of the winter season. Dubbed as one of the great blizzards of the century, the 22-23 January storm deposited record snowfall accumulations in western parts of the Region. Snow totals from the blizzard reached over two feet in certain areas, with Islip recording 25.9" and Central Park recording 27.5", the largest snowstorm recorded in NYC's history.

February did not loosen its grip on the Region. While mean temperatures from Central Park and Islip were 2.4° and 2.9° above normal, respectively, the indelible freeze-out in mid-February recorded a record low temperature of 0° at Islip's weather station on 13 February. The majority of the Region's lingering Great Egrets disappeared after this harsh event leaving many, if not all freshwater and estuarine environments completely frozen.

The record early-season warmth allowed some lingering neotropicals to thrive well into mid-January. Thirteen warbler species were recorded, many of which survived until Winter Storm Jonas. Keeping with the recently observed trend, two Ovenbirds were reported from city parks, one of which was seen through 20 January. Additional notable sightings include a Worm-eating Warbler from Forest Park on 18 December, three Wilson's Warblers, one of which was reported through 20 January at Bronx Zoo, a Prairie Warbler found at Robert Moses State Park on 20 December, and a Yellow Warbler at Floyd Bennett Field that was seen through 15 January. Up to five Common Yellowthroats were reported throughout the Region until 3 January, and, remarkably, at least twenty-eight **Orange-crowned Warblers** were reported, coming from all counties with several remaining until mid-January. After the winter blizzard, the only sighting came from a backyard in Richmond County on 26 January. Yellow-breasted Chat was scarce this winter, with a single bird found in Baldwin on 2 January during a Christmas Bird Count (CBC) and another in Montauk on 7 February. None of the neotropicals persisted through freeze-out of 13 February save for two Baltimore Orioles that were photographed at feeders during the Great Backyard Bird Count (GBBC).

Region 10 produced yet another exciting goose season. Highlights include at least five, possibly six, **Barnacle Geese**, two **Pink-footed Geese**, and three **Ross's Geese** found within the various goose strongholds in central and eastern Long Island. Moderate numbers of Greater White-fronted Geese and large numbers of Cackling Geese were reported during the season, with 11 and 33,

respectively. An apparent “**Gray-bellied**” **type Brant** was photographed among the abundant Atlantic Brant at Point Lookout on 29 December.

Aside from the exceptional numbers of western Palearctic geese, the Region recorded its first ever juveniles, the first being a young Pink-footed Goose found on Millers Pond in Smithtown on 1 January, likely the first juvenile ever recorded in New York State. In addition, what appeared to be a family group of three Barnacle Geese was discovered on Roanoke Avenue in Riverhead on 7 February, consisting of two adults and an immature bird. Subtle markings on the plumage indicated that this trio was also photographed on 3 January in Broad Brook, Connecticut but remained undetected until being discovered on Long Island. Subsequent efforts to relocate the trio were unsuccessful, reminding us that wintering goose flocks can wander extensively and evade detection, even in well-birded areas.

Waterfowl arrivals were somewhat delayed, undeniably the result of the record warmth experienced throughout the Region in December. Nonetheless, concentrations began filling in by late January as more northerly areas began to freeze. By early February there were tens of thousands of Greater Scaup stretched across the Great South Bay. A report on 4 February estimated 17,000 individuals from Gardiner County Park in Bay Shore with subsequent reports of at least 10,000 further east off Blue Point on 12 February. This large influx of scaup would account for at least three, probably four, **Tufted Ducks** along Central Suffolk’s south shore, the first found earlier in the season on 13 December on Lake Capri, and a probable second individual later found on nearby Santapogue Creek on 10 February. Additional Tufted Ducks were seen further east on 12 February in Blue Point and 21 February on Patchogue Lake. Noteworthy is the fact that all four of these individuals appeared to be young males. The latter three Tufted Ducks were seen during a major freeze-out event when inland *Aythya* were fleeing their freshwater haunts in search of open water on the bay. Additional Eurasian waterfowl include a total of 11 drake **Eurasian Wigeon**, with no hens detected, and three “Eurasian” Green-winged Teal.

Three **Eared Grebes** were discovered this season, all within a three-day window. The first was seen and photographed on 27 February at Oak Beach in Babylon, with the others on 28 and 29 February from Jones Inlet and Lake Montauk, respectively.

Despite an overall lack of irruptive raptor species the Region produced two exciting highlights just shortly after the start of the season. A gray morph **Gyr Falcon** was sporadically seen from the parking area at Cedar Beach Marina in Babylon from 8-10 December, a proven reliable location to find this powerful falcon of the north. The raptor highlight of the season was a **Swainson’s Hawk**, discovered soaring above a reclaimed landfill near Fresh Kills Park on Staten Island on 15 December. Restricted access to the site made for some tricky viewing, but sporadic sightings were still enjoyed by several observers through 30 December.

An injured **Common Gallinule** surviving in the Pond at EPCAL/Grumman since the fall season did not make it through the persistent freezing temperatures in early February.

Black-legged Kittiwakes were reported in modest numbers at traditional seawatch sites from Central Suffolk County east to Montauk Point, as well as during a pelagic trip out of Brooklyn. Bonaparte's Gull numbers continue to drop, with small congregations remaining at traditional wintering sites such as Jones Inlet, Gravesend Bay, etc. Once a Bonaparte's stronghold, Shinnecock Inlet produced only one report of eight individuals in mid-December. Nonetheless other rare gulls continue to be found. At least three different **Black-headed Gulls** were reported in Brooklyn, with widespread sightings of at least two first cycle individuals plus an adult. A **Little Gull** was noted off of Montauk Point on 29 February. Iceland, Glaucous, and Lesser Black-backed Gulls were reported in modest numbers, and a very early Laughing Gull was discovered in Long Beach on 20 February. The gull highlight of the season was an apparent **California Gull** photographed at Gravesend Bay on 19 January but not relocated despite some effort.

Warmer than usual ocean surface temperatures may have been a contributing factor to a small handful of shearwaters recorded from land during seawatches. These included two Sooty Shearwaters, a single seen from Shinnecock Inlet on 12 December and another from Amagansett on 18 December. The Amagansett seawatch also produced four **Northern Fulmars**, a species seldom seen from land but perhaps providing evidence of more inshore activity this season. On 9 January an organized pelagic trip out of Brooklyn, NY tallied thirteen Northern Fulmars, some of which were seen as close as 8.5 miles from land. Two Manx Shearwaters were recorded from Robert Moses State Park, a single seen on 1 December plus an additional bird during an intense coastal storm on 10 January. The latter observation date also produced a single shearwater species.

In addition to the above-mentioned tubenoses, the most unexpected report of the winter season came on 15 December when an albatross was viewed for fifteen minutes during a seawatch from Montauk Point. Days later it was concluded that this was an immature **Black-browed Albatross**, a species not previously recorded in the state. Unfortunately no photographs were obtained during the fifteen-minute viewing period; however, written descriptions have been submitted to the New York State Avian Records Committee (NYSARC).

Two **American White Pelicans** first reported in the fall continued at Jamaica Bay Wildlife Refuge's East Pond until 7 January, when presumably the same pair were photographed circling over Fort Tilden. On 16 January two American White Pelicans, possibly the same pair again, were photographed flying west over the ocean at Jones Inlet.

As usual, Montauk Point held most of the interesting alcid activity, the highlight being a **Common Murre** photographed on 1 January. This species remains rare inshore but less so offshore, where another was found during an

organized pelagic trip out of Brooklyn on 9 January. A **Black Guillemot** was photographed on 1 January at Montauk Point, with an additional sighting on 9 January from Camp Hero probably a second individual. There were four reports of Dovekie, three of which came from Montauk Point between 19 December and 1 January. The fourth was photographed at Jones Inlet on 17 February. Four **Thick-billed Murres** were discovered, the first from Culloden Point on 9 Jan. The discovery of another individual at Montauk Inlet on 19 February followed by two more on 21 February from Ditch Plains and Coney Island indicated a small incursion of this increasingly scarce species.

Two *Selasphorus* hummingbirds were documented in Suffolk County. A **Rufous Hummingbird** on private property in the Town of Riverhead persisted through 23 January, but presumably did not survive the blizzard. A second copiously photographed **Rufous/Allen's Hummingbird** from private property in Watermill was seen through 13 December. The latter individual exhibited features suggestive of Allen's Hummingbird, a first record for New York State if accepted by NYSARC.

A well-documented **Ash-throated Flycatcher** was discovered during the Montauk CBC at a cemetery east of Fort Pond. This cooperative bird delighted many observers until shortly after the New Year. Coming off a steady fall influx, resulting from a strong movement of southwest air current, **Cave Swallows** managed to linger into the winter season and were recorded from Jones Beach West End, Montauk Point, and Smith Point County Park into mid-December. Unfortunately none were recorded during any of the CBCs.

Lark Sparrows numbers remained high following a productive fall season for this species, with an unprecedented total of six individuals, the most recorded during a winter season. Only the Jones Beach bird persisted through the season, with most of the others going undetected after the late January blizzard; likely a combination of weather and decreased effort. A **Clay-colored Sparrow** was found at Flushing Meadows Corona Park during the Queens CBC and remained until 30 January. Despite the exceptionally warm December few saltmarsh *Ammodramus* sparrows were detected this winter. Three **Nelson's Sparrows** were photographed on Dune Road on 9 December. A single Saltmarsh Sparrow was discovered during the Southern Nassau CBC on 2 January plus another from the Marine Nature Study Area in Oceanside in mid-February. No Seaside Sparrows were reported. Swamp Sparrows seem to have fared well, with many persisting, even after the noted severe weather events.

Two **Painted Buntings** were recorded. Prospect Park's famous adult male, which made news headlines putting on a colorful show for hundreds of people-birders and non-birders alike—was last seen on 3 January. An immature male/female type Painted Bunting was photographed at Caumsett State Park on 19 December and was not found again, likely in part to the site's remote access and limited relocation effort. A **Dickcissel**, Regionally rare outside of fall migration, spent most of January along the edge of the tennis courts at Southards

Pond Park in Babylon. Keeping with the common theme, this bird was not seen after late January blizzard.

CONTRIBUTORS

Italics: Sent end-of-season report. Robert Adamo, Patricia Aitkin, Seth Ausubel, Andrew Baksh (ABk), Robert Bate, Gail Benson, Bobby Berlinger, Mary Beth Billerman, Shawn Billerman (SBI), Shane Blodgett, Brent Bomkamp (BBo), Thomas W. Burke, Ben Cacace, Vincent Cagno, Sean Camillieri, Chase Cammarota, Keith Cashman, Cesar Castillo (CCa), Anthony Ciancimino (ACi), Anthony Collerton, Mike Cooper, Dale Dancis, Joe DiCostanzo, Patrice Domeischel, Jacob Drucker, Tim Dunn, Andrew Farnsworth, Corey Finger, Brendan Fogarty, Richard Fried, Ken Fuestel, Suzy Fuestel, Doug Futuyma, Arie Gilbert, John Gluth (JGI), Doug Gochfeld, Menachem Goldstein, Isaac Grant, Andy Guthrie, Tim Healy, Mike Higgiston, Bruce Horwith, David Klauber, *Robert J. Kurtz* (RJK), David Lamagna (DLM), Patricia J. Lindsay (PIL), Ethan Maitra, Joshua Malbin, Roberta Manian, *Peter Martin*, Michael McBrien (MMcB), Shaibal S. Mitra (SSM), *Pete Morris* (PMo), Melissa Murgitroyde, Mary Normandia, J. O'Sullivan, N. O'Reilly, Patrick Palladino, Aidan Perkins, Stephane Perrault, Mike Rath, Derek H. Rogers (DHR), Karen Rubinstein, Michael Scheibel (MSc), Eileen Schwinn, John Sepenoski (JSp), Mike Shanley (MSh), John Shemilt, Sean Sime, Nicholas Sly, Nadir Souirgi, *Jordan Spindel*, Jonathon Stocker (JSt), Taylor Sturm, Russell Taylor, Phil Uruburu, Alan Wells, Gabriel Willow, Angus C. Wilson (ACW), Holly Wilson, Phillip Wilson-Camhi, Seth Wollney (SWo)

ABBREVIATIONS

Ama – Amagansett, SUFF; APP – Alley Pd P, QUEE; BLSP – Belmont L SP, SUFF; BRP – Big Reed Pd, SUFF; BBCP – Blydenburgh CP, SUFF; BBP – Brooklyn Bridge Pk, KING; CP – Culloden Pt, SUFF; FMCP – Flushing Meadows Corona P, QUEE; GCP – Gardiner CP, SUFF; GB – Gravesend Bay, KING; JBWE – Jones Beach West End, NASS; OMNSA – Marine Nature Study Area, Oceanside, NASS; Mass – Massapequa Preserve, NASS; MI – Montauk Inlet, SUFF; MP – Montauk Pt, SUFF; Nap – Napeague, SUFF; PP – Prospect Pk, KING; SC – Santapogue Creek, SUFF; SPCP – Smith Point CP, SUFF; WBP – Willowbrook Pk, RICH.

CBC Codes: BKCC – Brooklyn; MKCC – Montauk; SNCC – Southern Nassau.

WATERFOWL - VULTURES

PINK-FOOTED GOOSE: juv Millers Pd, SUFF 1-11 Jan (PU, mob), ph; Riverhead 17 Jan-7 Feb (SSM, PJJ); *intro*.

Greater White-fronted Goose: 11+ ind reported QUEE thru SUFF; 3 ad Hook Pd &

East Hampton vicinity thru 21 Feb (mob); Shorts Pd, SUFF 9 JAN (KR); 3 ad BLSP 3 Dec, ranging throughout area thru 17 Feb (PU, mob); Lake Success, NASS 6 Jan (SP); Lake Ronkonkoma 8 Jan (PJJ); FMCP 21-28 Feb (CF); imm BLSP 16 Feb (Carlos Sanchez).

Snow Goose: multiple reps throughout Region; max migr 1445 JBWR 23 DEC (MG).

ROSS'S GOOSE (R10): Eastport Pd 12-25 Dec (KC, mob); Amityville 2 Jan-2 Feb (Ed Walsh, ph), last seen Bergen Pt GF; Massapequa 9-22 Jan (DHR, ph) ranging to BLSF and as far north as Melville; *intro*.

Brant: max 32,143 SNCC 2 Jan.

"Gray-bellied" Brant: Point Lookout 29 Dec (MMcB, ph).

BARNACLE GOOSE: 6 reps, 5+ ind all SUFF & MARA thru 28 Jan later seen side-by-side with a 2nd ind along Alvahs Lane 19 Dec (JSp); North Babylon ranging as far north as Centerport 10 Jan-16 Feb (Ethan Goodman, BBo, mob); 3 Roanoke Ave, Riverhead 7 Feb (JS, *fide* DHR, ph), 1 imm 2 ad, NYSARC; *intro*.

Cackling Goose: Uplands Farm, SUFF 1 Dec (DHR); MARA thru 11 Jan (mob); 2 FMCP 6 Dec-14 January (CF); 5 Melville 7 Dec (DHR); Oakdale 20 Dec (CPCC); 1 Babylon 30 Dec (PMo); HLSF 31 Dec (mob); Miller Field, RICH 1-16 Jan (SWo); Eastport L 1 Jan (John Gaglione); Baiting Hollow 1 Jan (K&SF); BLSF 7 Jan (DHR); Riverhead 8 Jan (SSM, PJJ); Lake Ronkonkoma 7 Jan (PJJ); Central Islip 9 Jan (DLM & MR); 3 Melville 11 Jan (DHR); 6 Calverton 15 Jan (DHR); Centerport Pd 15 Jan (BBo); Hook Pd 16 Jan (ABk); Riverhead 7 Feb (DHR); Southaven CP 11-28 Feb (K&SF); Eastport L 28 Feb (mob). **Canada Goose:** max 5500 Riverhead 8 Jan (DHR).

Tundra Swan: max 4 ind Hook Pd thru 4 Dec; 1 pr thru (mob); 3 Mount Loretto, RICH 28 Dec (ACi); 11 Hudson River Greenway 24 Jan (Dominic Garcia-Hall).

Eurasian Wigeon: 11 drakes throughout Region, no fem; Centerport thru 17 Jan, later discovered Fort Solonga 1 Feb (BBo), persisted thru; 2 JBWR thru 22 Feb; Mattituck 6 Dec-10 Feb (JSp); Mass 6 Dec (JO); 2 Setauket 12 Dec-22 Feb (mob); BBCP 25 Dec-5 Jan (Sandra Reynolds); Bush Terminals Pier P 31 Dec (RM); Swan L, Patchogue 1-6 Jan (DHR); SMNC 14 Jan-28 Feb (Isabel Conte).

Blue-winged Teal: Bellmore, NASS 5 Dec-10 Jan (mob); 3 JBWE 6 Dec (Nathan O'Reilly).

"Eurasian" Green-winged Teal: Mass 6 Dec (JO); Smith Pd, NASS 2 Jan (EM, Nina Bai); Setauket Mill Pd, SUFF thru.

Canvasback: max 48 Centerport 7 Feb (SSM, PJJ).

Redhead: max 56 Amityville, SUFF 8 Jan (SSM, PJJ).

Ring-necked Duck x scaup sp: SC 27 Jan thru (PMo, ph).

TUFTED DUCK: Lake Capri 13 Dec-6 Jan (JSt); SC, Babylon 10-28 Feb (EM); Blue Point Ave, SUFF, 12-13 Feb (DHR, ph); Patchogue L 21-27 Feb (DHR, ph).

Greater/Lesser Scaup: max 17,000 GCP 4 Feb (KF); 10,000 Blue Point Ave SUFF 12 Feb (DHR), *intro*.

King Eider: ad male MP thru (TS); fem OP 24 Jan-27 Feb (JSp).

Harlequin Duck: max 6 Point Lookout (mob); also at traditional sites such as Montauk, Orient Pt. (OP), Jones Inlet, Long Beach Jetties; two reps RMSP.

Barrow's Goldeneye: ad m Sands Point 25 Jan-24 Feb (SP); fem FH Beach, RICH 8-9 Jan (SWo).

N. Bobwhite: increasingly scarce, most populations now introduced.

Red-necked Grebe: max 4 CP 9 Jan (SSM, PJJ); arr MP 12 Dec (ACW); additional reps from traditional coastal sites thru.

EARED GREBE (R10): 3 reps within 2 days; Oak Beach, Babylon 27-29 Feb (PMo, ph); Jones Inlet 28 Feb (PA, JG); LM 29 Feb (mob).

BLACK-BROWED ALBATROSS: Montauk Pt 15 Dec (AG, PA), reps to NYSARC, *intro*.

N. Fulmar: 4 Ama 18 Dec (ACW), very rare from land; 13 encountered in shelf waters southeast of Brooklyn 9 Jan.

Sooty Shearwater: Shinnecock Inlet 12 Dec (ABk); Ama 18 Dec (ACW).

Manx Shearwater: RMSP 1 Dec (KF); RMSP 10 Jan (SSM, PJJ, PMo).

Shearwater sp: RMSP 10 Jan (SSM, PJJ, PMo); 3 SMCP 10 Jan (DHR).

AM. WHITE PELICAN: 2 JBWR thru 6 Jan (mob, ph); 2 Fort Tilden 7 Jan (DG, SS, ph); 2 JBWE 16 Jan (TH, ph).

Am. Bittern: reps from traditional wintering locs.

Great Egret: few reps after the mid-February freeze.

Green Heron: Nap 19 Dec (CC), very late, 1st MKCC record since 1973.

Black Vulture: reps KING, RICH, BRON, NEWY; single rep SUFF, Huntington Bay 27 Feb (Jessica Donohue).

Turkey Vulture: widespread, multiple reps all counties.

HAWKS - LARIDS

Osprey: Baldwin Harbor P, NASS 2 Jan (SSM, PJJ, HW, PWC); HLSF 12 Jan (Edward Becher); both very late.

N. Goshawk: RMSP 28 Jan (Joan Quinlan).

Bald Eagle: increasing reps all counties.
Red-shouldered Hawk: well-reported in w part of Region (RICH, NEWY, KING, QUEE); few reps NASS & SUFF.
SWAINSON'S HAWK: Freshkills P, RICH 15-30 Dec (Dick Veit & Tom Brown), ph.
Clapper Rail: single reps RICH, KING & NASS; few reps SUFF thru 20 Feb.
Virginia Rail: max 3 BRP 12 Dec thru 17 Jan (mob); RICH 1 Jan (SWo); Arsh 2 Jan (John Brush Jr.); 2 Mass 2 Jan (BF & TH); GCP 12 Jan (K&SF).
Com. Gallinule: EPCAL thru 5 Feb (mob).
Am. Oystercatcher: recorded Jones Inlet thru.
Semipalmated Plover: last JBWE 30 Dec (BA).
Greater Yellowlegs: recorded KING, QUEE, NASS & SUFF thru.
Ruddy Turnstone: recorded RICH, KING, QUEE, NASS & SUFF thru.
Red Knot: very well reported JBWE; max 319 2 Jan SNCC.
Western Sandpiper: JBWE 26 Dec (K&SF).
Long-billed Dowitcher: max 11 Babylon, SUFF thru 19 Jan (PMo, mob), plus a single rep 21 Feb (PMo); also reps from KING; JBWR thru mid-Dec; 3 Broad Channel 17 Jan (CCa).
Wilson's Snipe: single rep QUEE, FMCP 5 Dec (CF); additional reps NASS and SUFF, mostly along south shore, thru 17 Feb.
Am. Woodcock: few reps after late Dec; typical arrlate Feb.
Dovekie: 3 MKCC 19 Dec; MP 31 Dec (SC & MM); MP 1 Jan (AC); JBWE 17 Feb (Jim Pecquex, ph).
COMMON MURRE: MP 1 Jan (SC), very rare inshore, ph; single also noted in shelf waters SE of Brooklyn 9 Jan.
THICK-BILLED MURRE: CP 9 Jan (SSM, PJJ); MI 19-28 Feb (EM); Ditch Plains 21 Feb (SSM, PJJ); Coney Island, 21 Feb (JM); single specimen found on LI Sound, Southold (fide SSM).
Razorbill: arr mid-Dec; max 78 Ama 19 Dec (ACW).
Black Guillemot: MP 1 Jan (SC, MM); MP 9 Jan (TH).
Black-legged Kittiwake: Agawan Lake 12 Dec (DK), unusual location; Ama 13 Dec (ACW); Ama 18 Dec (ACW); 3 RMSP 20 Dec (SSM, PJJ, RT); 15 shelf waters SE of Brooklyn 9 Jan (mob); 3 MP 9 Jan (SBI, MBB, NS); 2 CH 9 Jan (JG, TD); 10 SPCP 10 Jan (DHR); 5 RMSP 10 Jan (SSM, PJJ, PMo); MP 17 Jan (AC); 2 CH 17 Feb (RB, RF).

Bonaparte's Gull: max 400 Fort Wadsworth 11 Jan (IG).
Black-headed Gull: at least 3 ind: sev reps 1st cycle at least 3 loc plus single ad rep; Prospect P 6 Dec (Roberta Manian, mob); BBP 2 Feb (Heather Wolf); ad Bush Terminal Piers 5 Feb (RB); Sheepshead Bay 28 Feb (Kevin Topping, Nathan O'Reilly).
Little Gull: MP 29 Feb (DD).
Laughing Gull: Long Beach, NASS 20 Feb (SS).
CALIFORNIA GULL: GB 19 Jan (Daniel Frazer, ph).
Glaucous Gull: SMCP 13 Dec (DHR); Ama 13 Dec (ACW); Camp Hero 27 Dec (Rafael Campos-Ramirez); MI 9 Jan (SSM, PJJ); Centre Island, NASS 15 Jan (MN); Blydenburgh CP 17 Jan (Sharon and Marc Brody); GB 21 Jan (IG); Brooklyn Army Terminal & vicinity 29 Jan thru (Josh Malbin).

PIGEONS - PARROTS

Barn Owl: Smithtown CBC Dec 27; SNCC Jan 2; Southampton 20 Feb (ABk).
Snowy Owl: small numbers traditional locs across Region.
Long-eared Owl: single rep BRON 12 Feb.
Short-eared Owl: Tobay 2 Jan; 2 EPCAL 9 Jan-28 Feb; Nap 15 Jan.
N. Saw-whet Owl: two reps; NASS 2 Jan; RICH 28 Feb.
RUFIOUS HUMMINGBIRD: present thru 23 Jan, private property, ph.
RUFIOUS/ALLENS HUMMINGBIRD: Watermill thru 13 Dec, present since 25 Nov; ph on private property, report to NYSARC.
Red-headed Woodpecker: WBP thru; BBCP 27 Dec thru (Dick & Beth Cartwright); Mashomack Preserve 27 Jan (MSc).
GYRFALCON: Cedar Beach Marina 8-10 Dec (K&SF).

FLYCATCHERS - WAXWINGS

E. Phoebe: HLSP 5 Dec (BB); Mass 6 Dec (JO); JBWE 1-18 Jan (mob); Nesconset, SUFF 2 Jan (PD).
ASH-THROATED FLYCATCHER: Montauk 19 Dec thru 1 Jan (JGI, ph).
Com. Raven: widely reported throughout Region.
Tree Swallow: persisted JBWE thru; max 43 SNCC.
CAVE SWALLOW: JBWE 9 Dec (DHR, ph); 6 MP 12 Dec (mob); SPCP 18 Dec (DHR, ph).
House Wren: Mass 22 Jan (Eric Miller).
Marsh Wren: undetected after 2 Jan until one late Feb rep; Dune Rd, East Quogue 6 Dec

(ES); Hecksher SP 7 Dec (K&SF); BRP 12 Dec (TD, TS); OMNSA 30 Dec-2 Jan (RB, SSM, PJJ); Van Cortland P 28 Feb (ACW).
Am. Pipit: 200 Southold 11 Jan (MSc), large number.

LONGSPURS - WARBLERS

Cedar Waxwing: 300 Captree SP (K&SF), large number.
Lapland Longspur: Randalls I 31 Jan-2 Feb (Paul Bourdin, ph); Cutchogue, SUFF 11 Feb (Don Bindler, ph).
Ovenbird: BBP 5 Dec (DG); IBM Atrium, NEWY 5-20 Jan (J. Bishop).
Worm-eating Warbler: Forest Park 18 Dec (Karlo Mirth).
Black-and-white Warbler: single rep Central P thru 8 Jan.
Orange-crowned Warbler: 28+ reps from all counties; 2 PP thru 5 Jan (mob); Hook Pond 2 Dec (TS); WBP 3 Dec (ACi); at least 1 rep Central P 5 Dec-Jan 21 (mob); Pelham Bay P 6 Dec (Richard Aracil); JBWE 6 Dec (JGJ); Kissena Park 9 Dec (CCa); FBF 12 Dec (Tom Preston); Richmond Ave, Marine P 14 Dec (Ronald Borque); RICH 16 Dec (DG, SS); Glen Cove 16 Dec (BB); (Canarsie Beach P 19 Dec (GW); FBF 19 Dec (DG, SS); Spring Creek P, QUEE 19 Dec (Sam Stuart, Rhys Marsh); Flushing Airport 20 Dec (CCa); RMSP 20 Dec (RT); Oakdale 20 Dec (Russ Ogden); Southards Pnd 25 Dec (SF); Swindler Cove 1 Jan (NO); JBWE 2 Jan (BF, TH); Randalls I 3 Jan (AF); Wagner College, RICH 4 Jan (IG); Mass 6 Jan (NS); Plum I 7 Jan (JSp); APP 17 Jan (mob); private res RICH 26 Jan (IG).
Nashville Warbler: 10+ ind reported thru 23 Jan throughout region.
Com. Yellowthroat: 2 reps NEWY; single reps from QUEE, KING, and SUFF 20 Dec-3 Jan.
Am. Redstart: Central P thru 4 Dec.
Yellow Warbler: FBF 19 Dec (BKCC), reported thru 15 Jan.
Palm Warbler: 6 reps SUFF; 6 reps KING, last Nap 12 Jan (Joe Giunta).
Pine Warbler: max 4 MKCC, Nap 19 Dec; 16+ reps from across Region.
Prairie Warbler: RMSP 20 Dec (PJJ).

Wilson's Warbler: 3 reps from city parks; Kissena P thru 8 Jan (mob); Bronx Zoo thru 20 Jan (Todd Olson); Central P thru 7 Jan (mob).
Yellow-breasted Chat: Baldwin, NASS 2 Jan (MMCB); MP 7 Feb (ES).

SPARROWS - WEAVERS

Nelson's Sparrow: 3 Dune Road, Triton Lane 9 Dec (VC).
Saltmarsh Sparrow: SNCC during count week; OMNSA 10 February thru (Michael Farina, ph).
Clay-colored Sparrow: FMCP 20 Dec-30 Jan (CCa, mob).
LARK SPARROW: very well reported, incl three reps SUFF: Yaphank 23 Dec-13 Jan (VC); Deep Hollow 27 Dec-1 Jan (K&SF); Riverhead Jan 18; single reps QUEE: FMCP 20 Dec-17 Jan (CCa, mob); KING: East River SP 20 Dec (Adam Bradley); NASS: PL/JBWE 1 Jan thru (AW, mob), *intro*.
Lincoln's Sparrow: FBF 5 Dec (HL).
PAINTED BUNTING: bright ad m Prospect Park thru 3 Jan (KR, mob); imm m/fem Caumsett SP 19 Dec (K&SF, ph).
Dickcissel: Southards Pnd 1-22 Jan (JG, ph), rare in winter.
E. Meadowlark: max 40 EPCAL 14 Jan (ES, MH), most reps from this site; 4 additional single reps SUFF; 2 reps KING.
Rusty Blackbird: max 63 APP 15 Jan (Eric Miller); additional reps at traditional wintering grounds in all counties.
Com. Grackle: 10,000+ Northville 30 Jan (SSM, PJJ).
Boat-tailed Grackle: max 139 SPCP (DG, *et al.*).
Baltimore Oriole: 8+ reps thru 6 Jan, then absent until 2 reps GBBC mid-Feb, at feeders, ph.
Purple Finch: sev reps from all counties; 14 SMSF 7 Dec (Vinny Pellegrino); 12 BBPC 11 Jan (SSM, PMO); 14 Quogue, SUFF 24 Feb (VC).
Com. Redpoll: Montauk 19 Dec (MMCB), only rep.
Pine Siskin: generally low numbers reported; max 20 Dune Road Westhampton 16 Jan (AC).

STANDARD ABBREVIATIONS

Regional rarities appear in **BOLD**; county names are shortened to their first four letters and appear in **UPPER CASE** letters; months are shortened to their first three letters. In species accounts: number of individuals omitted implies that one individual was reported; ! – details seen by Regional Editor; ad – adult; Alt – Alternate plumage; Am. – American; arr – arrival or first of season; BBS – Breeding Bird Survey; BOTS – bird of the season; CBC – Christmas Bird Count; CO – confirmed nesting; Com. – Common; E. – Eastern; FL – fledgling; FY – adult feeding young; I – Island; imm – immature; intro – see introduction to report; juv – juvenile; L – Lake; max – maximum; mob – multiple observers; N. – Northern; NYSDEC – New York State Department of Environmental Conservation; NWR – National Wildlife Refuge; NYSARC – report to New York State Avian Records Committee; P – park; Pd – Pond; ph – photographed; Pt – Point; Res – Reservoir; Ri – River; SP – State Park; spm – specimen; subad – subadult; T – Town of; thru – throughout period; Twn – township; W. – Western; WMA – Wildlife Management Area; y – young.

REPORTING REGIONS

Regional boundaries coincide with county lines, except at:

Region 1-Region 2 in Orleans, Genesee and Wyoming Counties:

the boundary is NY Route 98 from Pt. Breeze to Batavia;
NY Route 63 from Batavia to Pavilion, and NY Route 19
from Pavilion to the Allegany County line.

Region 2-Region 3 in Ontario County:

the boundary is Mud Creek to NY Route 64, NY Route 64
from Bristol Center to S. Bristol Springs, and Route 21
from S. Bristol Springs to the Yates County line.

Region 3-Region 5 in Cayuga County:

the boundary is NY Route 31.

REPORTING DEADLINES

Winter Season: December, January, February

Deadline is 7 March

Spring Season: March, April, May

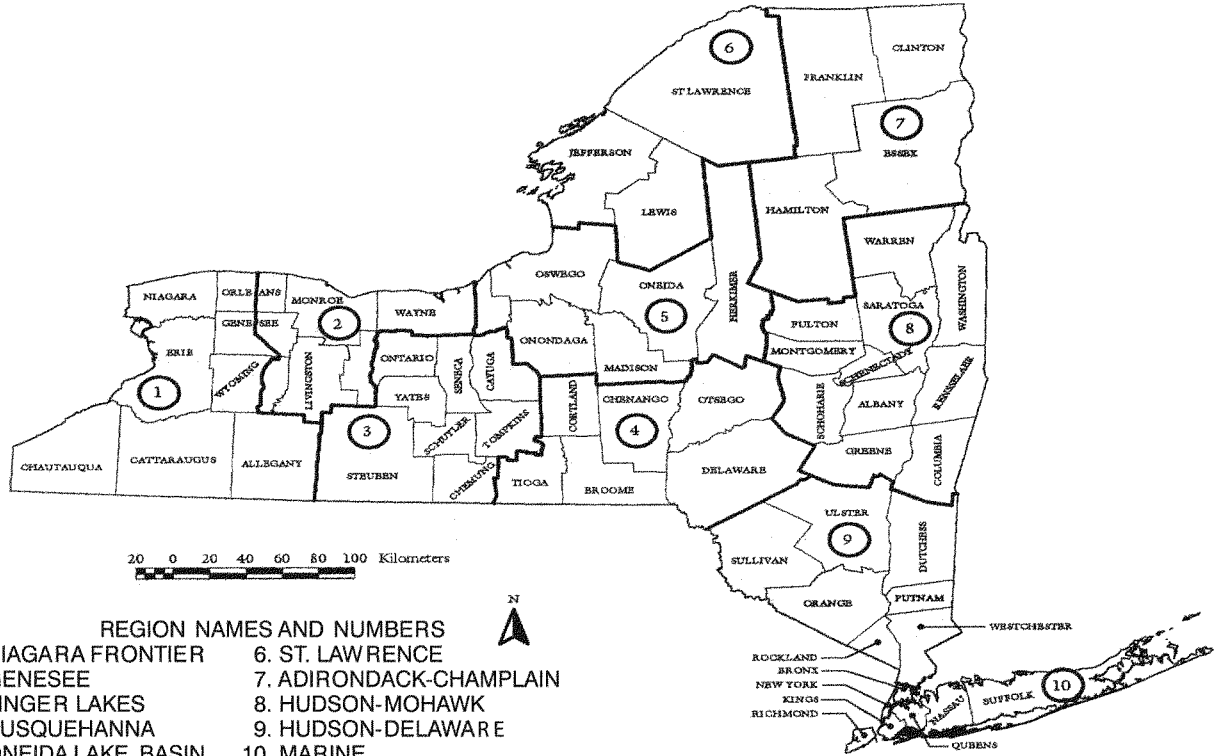
Deadline is 7 June

Summer Season: June, July, August

Deadline is 7 September

Fall Season: September, October, November

Deadline is 7 December



- REGION NAMES AND NUMBERS**
- | | |
|----------------------|-------------------------|
| 1. NIAGARA FRONTIER | 6. ST. LAWRENCE |
| 2. GENESEE | 7. ADIRONDACK-CHAMPLAIN |
| 3. FINGER LAKES | 8. HUDSON-MOHAWK |
| 4. SUSQUEHANNA | 9. HUDSON-DELAWARE |
| 5. ONEIDA LAKE BASIN | 10. MARINE |

Editor of *The Kingbird*

Shaibal S. Mitra—Biology Dept., College of Staten Island
2800 Victory Blvd., Staten Island, NY 10314

Editor of *New York Birders*

Joan Collins—PO Box 556, Long Lake, NY 12847

Appointed Committees

Archives:

Linda Clark Benedict—6701 Miller Rd., Newark, NY 14513

Awards:

William Ostrander—80 Westmont Ave., Elmira, NY 14905

Bylaws:

Berna Lincoln, Chair—P.O. Box 296, Somers, NY 10589

Conservation:

Andrew Mason, Chair—1039 Peck St., Jefferson, NY 12093

Finance:

Michael DeSha, Chair—26 Chestnut St., Franklinville, New York 14737

New York State Avian Records:

Angus Wilson, Chair—4 Washington Sq. Village
#2-I, New York, NY 10012

Send reports to:

Gary Chapin, Secretary for NYSARC
486 High St., Victor, NY 14564; nysarc44@nybirds.org

New York State Young Birders Club:

Carena Pooth, Chair—22 Brothers Rd., Poughquag, NY 12570

Publications:

Seth Ausubel—118-17 Union Tpke, Apt. 16B, Forest Hills, NY 11375

Publicity:

Timothy Baird, Chair—242 E. State St., Salamanca, NY 14779

Research:

Kevin Griffith, Chair—61 Grandview Ln., Rochester, NY 14612

Waterfowl Count:

William Ostrander—80 Westmont Ave., Elmira, NY 14901

Web Site and Information Services:

Carena Pooth—22 Brothers Rd., Poughquag, NY 12570

Elected Committees

Nominating:

Bob Adamo (Chair), Janet Allison, Dominic Sherony

Auditing:

John Cairns (Chair), Irving Cantor, Stephen Chang

