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SPECIAL REPORT OF THE NEW YORK STATE AVIAN RECORDS COMMITTEE: ADDITION OF 17 NEW SPECIES TO THE NEW YORK STATE CHECKLIST

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The number of exciting new species documented in New York has recently outpaced the publication of annual reports by the New York State Avian Records Committee, but NYSARC has been hard at work behind the scenes! The following 17 additions to the *Checklist of the Birds of New York State* have been reviewed and accepted under NYSARC's Accelerated Review Policy that prioritizes well-documented reports of species not previously recorded in the state. In the interest of transparency and communication with the community at large, this special report has been prepared to formally announce these new additions, which bring the state list total to 514 species. Full details of the sightings and criteria for acceptance are provided in the narratives below, organized by year of occurrence.

2024 Reports Accepted

American Flamingo (*Phoenicopterus ruber*)

2024-11-A/D, One, Georgica Pond, East Hampton, Suffolk, 1-13 Jun (Zach Schwartz-Weinstein, Tim Healy, John Gluth, Thomas Gillen, ph Z. Schwartz-Weinstein, T. Healy, J. Gluth), eBird 31 May-1 Jun, 5, 7, 10-29 Jun, 1, 3, 5, 8, 14 Jul

Flamingos are among the most universally recognizable birds in the world. These gangly, rosy-plumed waders are strongly associated in the public consciousness with tropical islands and idyllic lagoons, a far cry from the habitats that typically spring to mind when one thinks of New York State. It should come as little surprise, then, that the discovery of an American Flamingo on Long Island would make headlines in multiple national news outlets. The first observation of the wayward waterbird to become public knowledge was a sighting by East Hampton resident Cathy Blinken at Georgica Pond on 31 May, 2024. Preliminary photos confirmed that the plumage hue and bill pattern were consistent with the American species, rather than the closely related Greater (*P. roseus*) or Chilean Flamingos (*P. chilensis*), which are occasionally found in North America as escapes from captivity. It later came to light that the flamingo had been spotted at Shinnecock Inlet the previous evening, and the restless wanderer was also documented as far west as the marshes near Cedar Beach at the eastern end of Jones Beach Island, with sightings at that location on 5 and 7 June. The bird eventually returned to Georgica Pond, where it remained fairly reliable throughout the rest of June and the first half of July. Dozens, if not hundreds, of curious observers made the pilgrimage from all corners of New York State to search for this most unusual visitor during its extended vacation in the Hamptons.

The core range of American Flamingo is centered around the Caribbean Sea, and there is evidence to suggest that breeding populations may have once existed in southern Florida. Extralimital records of flamingos in North America have historically faced an uphill battle for acceptance as legitimate wild vagrants. Given the longstanding popularity of this species in zoos and menageries, most sightings of free-flying flamingos in the United States were typically dismissed as escapees from captive collections. In fact, New York State itself saw more than half a dozen documented sightings of American Flamingo over the course of the 20th Century, and although none were accepted at the time, many occurred in contexts that seem appropriate for true vagrancy to be the most plausible origin (Shai Mitra, pers. comm.). The birding world's collective understanding of vagrancy potential in this species was restructured dramatically in the wake of Hurricane *Idalia* in late August 2023. The timing and path of this storm, which formed in the Caribbean and subsequently moved up the Gulf of Mexico over Cuba and Florida, led to the displacement of large numbers of American Flamingos across the eastern portion of the continent. In the latter months of 2023, sightings were reported from no less than 18 states, with some birds documented as far afield as Ohio, Pennsylvania, Wisconsin, and Kansas (Davis and Ramirez-Garofalo 2024). Several of the individuals involved in this incursion were confirmed to have been banded at breeding colonies in the Yucatán Peninsula, a population that disperses to Cuba in the nonbreeding season, leaving them well-positioned to be displaced by the passage of *Idalia*.

Good numbers of American Flamingos apparently lingered in Florida and other southeastern states into 2024, and it seems likely that the New York record may represent one of the birds that overwintered, subsequently wandering up the coast with the warming weather. This particular flamingo has demonstrated a remarkable capacity for traveling long distances in short periods of time over the course of the intervening weeks since its initial discovery in New York. The same individual, recognizable due to consistent details of plumage patterns and feather wear, was documented to have made brief forays to Cape Cod, Massachusetts on 3 June and again on 17 July. The bird subsequently settled in Rhode Island on 18 July, where it was last reported on 12 August. Rumored single observer sightings in Connecticut on 4 June and Delaware on 1 July coincide with periods of absence when the New York bird was unaccounted for, and could conceivably pertain to the same individual. The well-documented journey of this peripatetic flamingo, in combination with the broader context of post-*Idalia* vagrancy records, led to the unanimous acceptance of this report by the Committee.

2023 Reports Accepted

Black-chinned Hummingbird (*Archilochus alexandri*)

2023-36-A/D, One, Randall's Island, **New York**, 17-22 Nov (David Jeffrey Ringer, Tim Healy, John Gluth, Scott Dunn, ph D.J. Ringer, T. Healy, J. Gluth, S. Dunn), eBird 17 Nov-2 Dec, 5-10, 12-17 Dec

Although the New York birding community at large first became aware of this record on the afternoon of 17 November, 2023, the initial sighting of this

individual was documented by Randall's Island Park Alliance staff horticulturist Barbara Davaros a few days prior on 15 November. Barbara managed to record a brief cell phone video as the hummingbird foraged among the *Salvia* plantings at the park's Cottage Garden, and the footage was subsequently shared on the Randall's Island Instagram page. The post was promptly noticed by local patch birders, and the late date of the observation combined with the frenetic tail-pumping behavior demonstrated in the video clip were sufficient to raise suspicion regarding the bird's identity. Swift follow-up by hopeful birders confirmed the hummingbird's continuing presence, and a detailed series of diagnostic photographs verified that this individual represented New York State's first documented record of Black-chinned Hummingbird. The bird ended up lingering at the Cottage Garden for a full month, sustained by a substantial crop of late-blooming flowers and a heated sugar water feeder provided by park staff. Hundreds of observers successfully connected with the cooperative little visitor during its stay, with the last documented sightings on 17 December coinciding with the local New Jersey Lower Hudson Christmas Bird Count.

Black-chinned Hummingbird is a common breeding species in western North America, inhabiting a variety of open woodland habitats. Much of the population migrates south to western Mexico for the nonbreeding season, though the proliferation of hummingbird feeders has resulted in increasing numbers of birds overwintering in the Gulf States. In terms of structure and plumage, this species is largely similar to its eastern sister species, the Ruby-throated Hummingbird (*A. colubris*). Though adult males can be readily identified by the black-and-violet colors of their gorget, females and immature birds are best distinguished by the shape of their primary feathers. At rest, the outermost remiges on a Black-chinned Hummingbird's wing show a distinctly broad, club-like shape that contrasts with the tapered, more angular appearance seen in Ruby-throated Hummingbird. Another hint that can prove useful in certain circumstances is behavioral: Black-chins show a tendency to habitually pump and fan their tails while hovering in place, whereas Ruby-throats are generally more apt to keep their tails still apart from making minor positional adjustments. The absence of prior confirmed records of this species in New York is more likely a result of the challenges associated with the identification of out-of-season *Archilochus* hummingbirds rather than a genuine lack of occurrences. Indeed, extralimital records of Black-chinned Hummingbird have been documented in a number of neighboring states and provinces, including Pennsylvania, New Jersey, Connecticut, Massachusetts, and Ontario, and many New York birders considered the species to be long overdue for addition to the state checklist (Gochfeld 2023). Fortunately, the wealth of high-quality media associated with these reports leaves no doubt as to the bird's identity, and the Committee voted unanimously to accept the record.

Allen's Hummingbird (*Selasphorus sasin*)

2023-34-A/D, One, Riverhead Private Residence, **Suffolk**, 21 Oct 2023 - 8 Feb 2024 (John Gluth, Tim Healy, Marybeth Zilnicki, Patricia Lindsay, ph J. Gluth, T. Healy, M. Zilnicki, P. Lindsay), eBird 21, 23-29 Oct, 1, 3-5, 9-10, 18-21, 24, 26, 29-30 Nov, 5, 8, 19, 22, 30 Dec, 1, 4, 6, 8, 18 Jan, 1, 9-11, 25 Feb, 1, 3, 7 Mar

As vagrants, hummingbirds often present a unique set of challenges that can prove frustrating for birders. Field identification of many species can be quite difficult, especially given the frequently fleeting views that are typically associated with these tiny, hyperactive sprites. Furthermore, many extralimital hummingbirds are discovered on private property, visiting gardens or feeders that may not be accessible to the general public. With all of these convoluting factors taken into account, the occurrence of an out-of-range, backyard-favoring hummingbird that is available to be visited and well-documented by a plurality of outside observers over the course of a multi-month stay could be considered to be a most noteworthy rarity among rarities. Such was the case of New York's first Allen's Hummingbird, which successfully overwintered under the dotting care of Marybeth Zilnicki at her Riverhead residence, visiting her flowers and feeders on a daily basis from 21 October, 2023 until 7 April, 2024 (Marybeth Zilnicki, pers. comm.). Although the layout of the surrounding neighborhood was prohibitive to hosting a crush of chasers all at once, the homeowner demonstrated boundless hospitality for her human guests as well, and the gradual leak of the news through the community grapevine permitted dozens of birders to successfully connect with the hummingbird during its tenure.

A denizen of chaparral scrub and open woodlands along the Pacific Coast of North America, Allen's Hummingbird is remarkably similar in all plumages to the more widespread Rufous Hummingbird (*S. rufus*). The structure of the tail feathers is typically cited as the most reliable feature for distinguishing between these species, with Allen's Hummingbird showing comparatively narrower outer rectrices (R3 through R5) in all age and sex classes. The tried-and-true method of assessing this characteristic is with in-hand measurements, but in the modern era of digital photography it is sometimes possible to make an accurate judgment with sufficiently detailed photos. The second rectrix from the middle (R2) also shows a distinctive notch in Rufous Hummingbird, which is lacking in Allen's. Although this field mark is most obvious in adult males, it is usually discernible in immature and female birds. Other plumage characters, such as the overall extent of rufous coloration, likewise vary depending on age and sex.

Like their Rufous congeners, Allen's Hummingbirds show a consistent pattern of vagrancy across eastern North America, with records documented in Massachusetts, Pennsylvania, New Jersey, and a number of other states east of the Mississippi. The full scope of their extralimital occurrences is clouded by the challenges associated with identification, with records of wayward *Selasphorus* hummingbirds best treated as Rufous/Allen's by default. Indeed, there have been a number of prior records in New York State over the years that were flagged as potential Allen's candidates, but up until now none had been documented thoroughly enough to confidently rule out Rufous. The Committee wishes to express its gratitude to hummingbird bander Sheri Williamson, who contributed her expertise to the review of the photos associated with this report. Williamson was kind enough to provide the Committee with unpublished reference materials from her upcoming field guide, which supported her assessment of this individual as a hatch-year female Allen's Hummingbird (Sheri Williamson, pers. comm.). In light of this ringing endorsement, which was echoed by a number of other experts

who were consulted during the review process, this carefully considered record was eventually accepted via a unanimous vote.

Heermann's Gull (*Larus heermanni*)

2023-21-A, One, Sodus Point, Sodus Bay, **Wayne/Monroe**, 19 May (Jay McGowan, ph J. McGowan), eBird 19-20 May

An afternoon visit to the Lake Ontario shoreline at Sodus Point on 19 May, 2023, originally intended as a brief check for migrant shorebirds, took an unexpected turn when Jay McGowan spotted a subadult Heermann's Gull resting on the breakwall amidst a flock of expected gull species. Jay promptly alerted the birding community, which permitted many other observers to successfully make chase later that evening and early the next morning. The gull did not stay long, however, disappearing shortly after dawn on 20 May only to resurface [three](#) hours later and 31 miles to the west at Ontario Beach and Charlotte Pier in Monroe County. By late morning the bird had vanished yet again, continuing on its westward trajectory. There were no further reports of this individual following the lucky few who connected with it in Monroe. The identity of this distinctive species was never in doubt, and the Committee accepted the record unanimously.

Heermann's Gull is an iconic denizen of North America's West Coast, with the bulk of the global population breeding at Isla Rasa in the Gulf of California. This species had been on the shortlist for potential additions to the state checklist for some time, but many birders would likely have wagered on one of the counties on the Atlantic Coast being the first to claim the prize (Gochfeld 2023). Indeed, sightings of Heermann's Gulls up and down the Eastern Seaboard have become more regular in recent years, owing to a small handful of individuals that have established themselves on this side of the continent. One wandering bird in particular was single handedly responsible for first state records in Massachusetts, Rhode Island, New Jersey, Georgia, and South Carolina over the course of 2021. It is nigh certain that this individual passed through New York on its way to and from New England, but it evidently managed to slip by undetected both times. Fortunately, this missed opportunity was rectified just two years later thanks to the 2023 observations on the Ontario lakefront. First records of this species were also documented for North Carolina, Maryland, and Quebec in 2022.

Glaucous-winged Gull (*Larus glaucescens*)

2023-14-A, One, Orchard Beach, Pelham Bay Park, **Bronx** 31 Mar (Gary Chapin, ph G. Chapin) eBird 31 Mar

On the evening of 31 March, 2023, Gary Chapin was surprised by the discovery of an unfamiliar second-cycle gull at the Orchard Beach parking lot in Pelham Bay Park. The bird's appearance immediately struck him as unusual, and he managed to secure a series of photographs for later review and consultation with experts. Subsequent study of these images, in combination with details noted during in-flight views of the bird in the field, pointed towards Glaucous-winged Gull as the most likely identification for this individual. While the taxonomy and field identification of large *Larus* gulls is infamously vexed, this particular bird

appears consistent in terms of structure and plumage with a phenotypically “pure” Glaucous-winged Gull. A heavy, dark, bulbous-tipped bill and relatively stout build with limited primary projection set this individual apart from other, more common pale-winged species like Glaucous Gull (*L. hyperboreus*) and Iceland Gull (*L. glaucoides*), as do the faint touches of gray on the primaries. When the first round of second opinions came back in favor of the gull’s proposed identity, Gary quickly put out a public alert about the sighting, but the bird was not seen by any subsequent searchers.

The specter of hybridization is always a concern with this genus, as frequent gene introgression between species can produce a dizzying array of variable offspring. One potential confusion candidate, Herring Gull (*L. argentatus*) x Glaucous Gull (a combination often referred to as “Nelson’s Gull” by dedicated larophiles), can be ruled out in this instance by the lack of a Glaucous-like bicolored bill and the smaller overall size of the bird. Glaucous-winged Gull has itself been documented to hybridize with a number of other *Larus* species, and the Committee took pains to adequately address all of the possible “partial” Glaucous-wing combinations when reviewing this report. Hybrids of Herring Gull x Glaucous-winged Gull (“Cook Inlet Gull”) tend to show more streaking than smudging on the head, and the wingtips would be decidedly darker than the mantle. Glaucous Gull x Glaucous-winged Gull (“Seward Gull”) would likely present as appreciably larger than the associated Herring Gulls, with paler wingtips and more light coloration on the bill. The rarer combination of Slaty-backed Gull (*L. schistisagus*) x Glaucous-winged Gull (“Commander Gull”) typically shows darker coloration on both the wingtips and the mantle. The most abundant and well-known intergrade involving this species is Western Gull (*L. occidentalis*) x Glaucous-winged Gull (“Olympic Gull”), a hybrid swarm with an extensive range of occurrence centered on southern British Columbia, Washington, and Oregon (Howell & Dunn 2007). While backcrosses and individual variation result in a complex spectrum of phenotypes between the two parent species, even in this age class most hybrids typically show darker markings on the primaries when compared to the shade of the mantle, which also tends to be darker than that of a standard Glaucous-winged Gull. The Committee’s final decision was supported in part by the expertise of gull authorities like Amar Ayyash, Alvaro Jaramillo, and Steve Hampton, who publicly voiced their endorsement of this individual as a “slam dunk” Glaucous-winged Gull upon reviewing the available photographs. After a thorough discussion, this record was unanimously accepted by the Committee.

Reports of this Pacific Ocean species appear to be increasing in frequency, whether in terms of actual occurrence or overall detection rate, in the eastern portion of the continent, with first records for Ohio in 2023, Pennsylvania in 2022, and Ontario in 2020. Intriguingly, a potential second state record of this species arrived less than a year after the appearance of the first, with an apparent third-cycle individual documented along the Hudson River waterfront in Orange and Dutchess Counties from 20-25 January, subsequently observed in both Ulster County (26 January) and Tompkins County (4 and 5 February). There has been some conjecture within the community as to whether the 2024 sightings pertain to the same individual as the 2023 Bronx record, given the consistent age

progression and the established propensity of vagrant gulls to return to the same general region in consecutive years, but this supposition is purely speculative. This latest occurrence has yet to be formally reviewed by NYSARC.

Short-tailed Shearwater (*Ardenna tenuirostris*)

2023-37-A/B, One, Derby Hill Hawkwatch, **Oswego**, 7 Nov (Matthew Brown, David Wheeler, ph M. Brown), eBird 7 Nov

Many of the most celebrated globetrotters in the avian world are found among the ranks of the seabirds. Tubenoses in particular are renowned for their impressive journeys far from the isolated islands and archipelagos where they nest, with some species traveling tens of thousands of miles over the course of the nonbreeding season. For birds that measure their time away from shore in months, a vagrancy record at an inland location is a marvel of the most singular sort. On 7 November, 2023, an already productive lakewatch along the shores of Lake Ontario secured its place in the annals of New York birding history when a shearwater rocketed past the northern lookout of Derby Hill. David Wheeler, Matthew Brown, and several other birders in attendance managed to capture a series of photos which illustrate the finer details of the bird's field marks. Remarkably, the details of plumage and structure visible in the images proved to be consistent with Short-tailed Shearwater rather than any of the Atlantic species that might be considered more "expected" in the Great Lakes region.

Short-tailed Shearwater is a bird of the Pacific and Indian Oceans, nesting on islands off the coasts of Tasmania and southern Australia. In the nonbreeding season, they regularly wander as far north as the Bering Sea. Although this species is regular in season off the West Coast, it has only been documented in the East a handful of times, with accepted records from Massachusetts and Florida. The proposed identification of this individual was adamantly supported by Paul Lehman, Alvaro Jaramillo, and a number of other West Coast pelagic experts who were consulted for their input. Salient characteristics for distinguishing this species from Sooty Shearwater (*A. grisea*) include the smaller bill and more rounded head shape, the paler throat contrasting with a darker cap, and the more uniformly grayish underwings, lacking the contrast between prominent silvery panels on the coverts and darker flight feathers typically seen in Sooty. It seems plausible that the increased presence of open water in the Northwest Passage during the warmer months of the year could lead to increased frequency of vagrant seabirds crossing between the Atlantic and the Pacific, which could explain how this bird came to find itself on the Great Lakes. In any event, the available documentation for this report was deemed satisfactory by the Committee, who voted unanimously to accept the record.

2022 Reports Accepted

Mottled Duck (*Anas fulvigula*)

2022-6-A/C, One, Ketcham's Creek Freshwater Wetland, Amityville, **Suffolk**, 8 Apr (John Gluth, Tim Healy, Shai Mitra, ph J. Gluth, T. Healy, S. Mitra), eBird 5, 8, 10, 12, 14-15, 17-20, 23-24 Apr, 15 May, 18-24 Oct, 4, 8-13, 15 Nov

New York's first Mottled Duck was initially sighted by Ernst Mutchnick during a routine survey of his neighborhood patch, Ketcham's Creek in Amityville, on the afternoon of 5 April, 2022. Although the appearance of this adult drake was unfamiliar to him, Ernst rightly presumed that it appeared out of the ordinary for the expected local waterfowl species, and he thoroughly documented the duck with a series of photographs. After initial review pointed towards the possibility of a surprising vagrant, he reached out to Shai Mitra in an effort to corroborate the putative identification. The duck was nowhere to be found on the following two days, but it eventually reappeared on 8 April, and news of the discovery was swiftly spread throughout the community alert channels. This individual proved to be consistently inconsistent, showing regularly at the wetlands alongside its Mallard (*A. platyrhynchos*) mate but often vanishing into the vegetation for long periods of time or flying off to unknown secondary sites. After being seen somewhat sporadically for most of April, the bird made only a brief appearance in mid-May before disappearing for the summer. Unexpectedly, the Mottled Duck resurfaced at the same location in October and November. The saga continued well into 2023, when presumably the same male was observed associating with a different female Mallard at Avon Lake, less than half a mile northwest of the previous year's haunt, from March through April.

Mottled Ducks occur in two disjunct populations across the Southeast United States, one in peninsular Florida and another along the western Gulf Coast. This species was introduced to South Carolina for sport hunting in the 1970s, subsequently expanding south through Georgia and connecting to the northern edge of the Floridian population (Weng 2006). Vagrants from both populations have been detected well north of their typical range, with confirmed records as far afield as the Dakotas in the interior and New England along the coast.

The taxonomy of the "Big Brown Ducks" in the genus *Anas* is a notoriously complex web of uncertain species limits, which confounds the field identification of vagrant individuals in particular. Most notably, in-depth analyses suggest that the Florida (*fulvigula*) and Gulf Coast (*maculosa*) subspecies of Mottled Duck are quite distinct genetically (Peters *et al.* 2016). This matter is further complicated by the introductions of *maculosa* birds in South Carolina, which has led to a degree of admixing between populations of Mottled Ducks alongside the extensive introgression of Mallard with Mottled Duck (Weng 2006). The individual involved with this record appears most consistent with the phenotype of the nominate *fulvigula*, showing extensive paler chevrons on the contour feathers of the body and buffy, unmarked plumage on much of the face and throat. The bright yellow bill and prominent black gape spot, in combination with the aforementioned features, help to distinguish this bird from American Black Duck (*A. rubripes*), Mallard, and Mexican Duck (*A. diazi*). Common indicators of hybridization with Mallard, such as bolder white borders on the speculum, increased white in the tail, and markedly curled central rectrices were absent in the New York specimen as well. As a result, the Committee unanimously voted to accept this record as a first for the state checklist. Curiously, the drake documented at Avon Lake in spring 2023 seemed to show a slight rectrix curve that was a bit more pronounced than the aspect of the 2022 bird, but otherwise

appeared largely identical in terms of structure and plumage. Reports associated with this later observation are currently under review.

Limpkin (*Aramus guarauna*)

2022-19-A/B, One, Niagara River, Lewiston, **Niagara**, 16 Nov (Tim Healy, Shai Mitra, ph T. Healy, S. Mitra), eBird 15-18 Nov

News of this record first reached the birding community on 15 November, 2022 via Willie D’Anna, who received an email from acquaintance Connie Adams detailing a curious bird observed by fisherman Frank Campbell along the banks of the Niagara River in Lewiston a week prior. The subject of the attached photos was unmistakably a Limpkin, and prompt follow-up by Willie confirmed that the bird was still present in the hillside brush near the boat launch. Birders converged from all over New York State, partaking in the incongruous scene of this southern swamp-dweller strutting about within view of the Canadian border. The Limpkin was observed to capture and devour grove snails (*Cepaea nemoralis*) at a remarkable rate, but there was still some concern about how this wayward individual might fare with winter’s worst rapidly bearing down on the region. After some understandable hemming and hawing over the appropriate course of action, local rehabbers successfully captured the Limpkin ahead of an oncoming snowstorm on the evening of 18 November. The bird was found to be dramatically underweight, but it soon began feeding well in captivity and regaining its strength. Transportation was arranged to deliver the Limpkin to more agreeable climes in the southern states, culminating in a successful release on Thanksgiving morning in South Carolina (D’Anna 2023). This distinctive and well-documented bird was accepted unanimously by the Committee.

A decade ago, the suggestion of a Limpkin showing up in New York might have seemed borderline ludicrous. However, this species has undergone a dramatic range expansion in recent years, a phenomenon detailed in Willie’s article in the March 2023 *Kingbird*. As an exemplar of the dizzying pace of this population surge, Texas documented its first-ever record of Limpkin in 2021, voted to remove the species from the review list some 30 records later in 2022, and confirmed successful breeding at multiple sites within the state by 2023. The rapid proliferation of Limpkins in the American Birding Association (ABA) Area seems to be driven, at least in part, by the ever-increasing numbers of introduced giant apple snails (*Pomacea maculata*) across the Southeast. The invasive gastropods have not yet reached the Empire State themselves, but by early 2022 it had become clear that the spread of the birds had outpaced that of the snails that provisioned their advance. A recent survey of New York birders on the next 10 species to be added to the state checklist saw Limpkin handily claiming the top spot, a prediction that was borne out before the carefully crafted article even went to print (Gochfeld 2023). As if to drive the point home, New York’s second Limpkin showed up less than a year after the first, this time along the Chemung River in Elmira, Chemung County in late October 2023. Although no formal submissions have been reviewed in this case, the Committee has accepted the record on the basis of well-documented 2023 eBird records.

Bermuda Petrel (*Pterodroma cahow*)

2022-26-A/B, One, at sea over the outer Hudson Canyon (39°12'.543N, 072°00'.672W), **Pelagic**, 17 Oct (Tim Healy, Sean Sime, ph T. Healy, S. Sime)
eBird 17 Oct

Pelagic birding is always something of a gamble. Every voyage is a roll of the dice, with diehard seabird aficionados testing their luck against mercurial sea conditions and volatile weather forecasts whenever scheduling allows. The New York pelagic community has undoubtedly suffered through its share of setbacks in recent years, largely centered around a forced hiatus brought on by the pandemic. The dissolution of See Life Paulagics in 2021 was a substantial obstacle to the speedy return of boat-based birding, but the seasoned guides associated with this perennially reliable organization worked tirelessly to establish new partnerships in the interest of providing regularly scheduled outings once again. By 2022, pelagic operations out of New York had resumed in earnest under the mantle of American Princess Cruises. A twice-rescheduled overnight tour on 17 October of that year solidified its place in the annals of birding history when a stunning Bermuda Petrel, initially spotted by Jason Denesevich, spent three entire minutes investigating the morning chum slick, prompting raucous celebration from the assembled birders aboard the vessel.

Commonly known by the onomatopoeic alternative name Cahow, the Bermuda Petrel is perhaps the rarest extant seabird in the Atlantic Ocean. Following the colonization of Bermuda, the pressures of land development, introduced rats and pigs, and active harvesting exacted a heavy toll on this burrow-nesting species. By 1620, it was believed that the archipelago had lost its last remaining endemic seabird. Whispers of the bird's continued existence began to stir in the early 20th century, but it was not until 1951 that the formal rediscovery of a small number of survivors was announced to the world. Intensive conservation efforts, spearheaded by Bermudian biologist David Wingate and his successor Jeremy Madeiros, have aided the gradual recovery of the Cahow over the course of the intervening years. As of 2024, the breeding population is estimated at more than 185 pairs, a remarkable achievement for a species which had been presumed extinct for over 300 years (Madeiros 2024).

At-sea observations of Bermuda Petrel away from their nesting grounds are sparse, but tracking studies have revealed that the birds make use of a vast expanse of the Atlantic stretching from the Canadian Maritimes to the Azores (Campioni *et al.* 2023). Most records come from the Gulf Stream waters off North Carolina, where dedicated pelagic coverage has turned up Cahow sightings on a nearly annual basis, with single records for South Carolina in 2009 and Virginia in 2013. This species has also been documented north to Nova Scotia in 2014, Massachusetts in 2019, and New Jersey in 2022. A 2014 observation at the continental shelf edge off Ireland is particularly noteworthy. The New York bird fits well with the established pattern of occurrence, and the identification was easily settled in comparison with other expected *Pterodroma* species like Black-capped Petrel (*P. hasitata*), Trindade Petrel (*P. arminjoniana*), and Fea's Petrel (*P. feae*) based on the cowled appearance with no obvious white collar, the limited

white on the uppertail coverts, and the bold black ulnar bars on otherwise pale underwings. This celebrated record was accepted unanimously by the Committee.

Scopoli's Shearwater (*Calonectris diomedea*)

2022-182e, One, at sea off Montauk Point (40°51'45.2N 71°47'05.3W), **Suffolk**, 10 Aug (Jay Rand, ph J. Rand), eBird 10 Aug

2022-183e, One, at sea off Montauk Point (41°04'38.4N 71°50'50.2W), **Suffolk**, 29 Aug (Anthony Macchiarola, ph A. Macchiarola), eBird 29 Aug

2022-184e, One, at sea off Montauk Point (40°54'32.3N 71°54'04.8W), **Suffolk**, 31 Aug (Patrick Markee, Elias Markee-Ratner, ph E. Markee-Ratner), eBird 31 Aug

2012-232e, One, at sea off Montauk Point (40°40'50.3N 71°52'31.1W), **Suffolk**, 1 Aug 2012 (Jacob Drucker, Lila Fried, Anthony Collerton, ph A. Collerton), eBird 1 Aug 2012

This species is added to the State checklist as a result of a taxonomic split, from Cory's Shearwater. In addition to five specimens of this taxon collected on Long Island 1902-1938 (Bull 1974), several recent observations have already been formally accepted, per the Committee's policy of reviewing reports of distinctive subspecies as well as full species.

For more than a decade, pelagic aficionados in New York have been keeping a weather eye out for Scopoli's Shearwaters during seawatches and offshore excursions, resulting in a multitude of eBird reports which are presently under NYSARC review. A handful of submissions from August 2022, coincidentally all documented in the waters off Montauk Point, have already been assessed and accepted. The earliest record currently recognized by the Committee comes from a whale watching vessel off Montauk on 1 August, 2012, but there are more than a dozen other reports of this newly christened species from the 2010s and 2020s that are currently on the agenda for review.

With regards to structure, plumage, and overall aspect under field observation conditions at sea, Scopoli's Shearwater is broadly similar to Cory's Shearwater (*C. borealis*), and the two have been split only recently by the American Ornithological Society and eBird's Clements Checklist. Other authorities have recognized the split for several years, which helped to put the finer points of the identification challenge on the radar for North American birders. The breeding ranges of these two species are largely separate, with Scopoli's nesting at a number of Mediterranean islands and most Cory's colonies based at archipelagos of the northeastern Atlantic, though there is some documented overlap in the western Mediterranean. The constantly growing body of data from pelagic expeditions up and down the East Coast indicates that Scopoli's Shearwater is scarce but regular wherever Cory's Shearwaters can be found, and in some regions around the waters of the Gulf Stream they can be reasonably abundant.

These similar looking species are most reliably distinguished by the markings on the underside of the wings (Sutherland 2022). Scopoli's Shearwater typically shows extensive white "fingers" on the primaries, resulting in more extensive white in the wingtips in comparison to the mostly dark "hands" of Cory's Shearwater. Dark "thumbprint markings" on the greater primary undercoverts are

another indicator: Scopolio's typically shows only one such mark on the P10 covert, while most Cory's show markings on the coverts of both P10 and P9. Structural differences are even more slight, with Scopolio's averaging just a bit smaller than Cory's, with thinner wings and a more slender bill. Given the subtlety and variability of these characters, it is generally recommended to make this identification based on clear photographs rather than impressions in the field. Fortunately, the majority of reports reviewed by the Committee thus far have been accompanied by strongly supportive media, but there is still much to be learned about the frequency of occurrence for this species in New York State waters.

Zone-tailed Hawk (*Buteo albonotatus*)

2022-5-A, One, Green-Wood Cemetery, **Kings**, 2 Apr (Seth Barr, ph S. Barr)
eBird 2 Apr

This serendipitous sighting was nicely documented by a contingent of watchful observers who happened to find themselves in the right place at the right time on the morning of 2 April, 2022. Several groups of birders independently picked up on an unusual raptor circling over Green-Wood Cemetery in Brooklyn, noting its superficial resemblance to a Turkey Vulture (*Cathartes aura*) but astutely recognizing that something was amiss. The bird was in view for a relatively short period of time before a Red-tailed Hawk (*Buteo jamaicensis*) pursued it to the west and out of sight, but multiple observers were able to successfully secure photographs before it disappeared. These images were promptly disseminated to the community via alert groups, and the subject was quickly recognized as an adult Zone-tailed Hawk. Hopeful New York City birders throughout the five boroughs immediately took to scanning the skies in the hopes of catching a glimpse of this unexpected vagrant, but the bird was not definitively seen again after this initial observation. The photos obtained during this brief encounter were more than sufficient to rule out potential confusion candidates like dark morph *Buteo* species or *Buteogallus* black hawks, nicely showcasing salient field marks such as a broad white tail band, grayish flight feathers with bold black trailing edges, and bright yellow bare parts. This record was unanimously accepted by the Committee.

Zone-tailed Hawk is a largely Neotropical species found throughout Central and South America, with the northern limits of its range reaching the Southwestern United States. Instances of vagrancy in the East are limited to a handful of observations that likely involve a fairly small number of distinct individuals, with several records demonstrably pertaining to the same specific bird. This is perhaps best exemplified by a string of sightings in autumn 2015, when a single Zone-tailed Hawk, readily recognizable due to an obviously worn rectrix, was documented moving down the coast from Rhode Island to New Jersey to Virginia. Notably, this trajectory presumably took the bird through New York airspace undetected at some point, rendering the absence of this species from the state checklist a conspicuous blank space that was fortuitously filled by the spring 2022 observation.

Sulphur-bellied Flycatcher (*Myiodynastes luteiventris*)

2022-17-A/C, One, Wave Hill, Riverdale, **Bronx**, 9 Oct (John Haas, Gabriel Willow, Sean Sime, ph J. Haas, G. Willow, S. Sime) eBird 9 Oct

On the morning of 9 October, 2022, Gabriel Willow was actively guiding a monthly bird walk at the Wave Hill estate in the Bronx. As his group explored the northern boundary of the property, the sight of a large, streaky passerine with a distinctly reddish tail was quick to draw his attention, and upon taking a closer look he instantly recognized the bird as a *Myiodynastes* flycatcher. The alarm was sounded via appropriate alert channels, with promptly provided photos allowing for the specific identification of Sulphur-bellied Flycatcher to be confidently determined. The bird proved to be frustratingly elusive for subsequent searchers, moving extensively throughout the surrounding neighborhood and typically remaining hidden in the dense vegetation of private yards. Several lucky observers were successful in their efforts to observe the flycatcher over the course of the day, but many other hopeful birders failed to connect with their quarry. An extensive search of the area the following day, 10 October, proved fruitless.

The primary identification challenge in this case was the elimination of the congeneric Streaked Flycatcher (*M. maculatus*), a plausible vagrant from the Neotropics that has not yet been definitively documented within the ABA Area. Various images of this individual confirmed crucial differentiating field marks, such as the relatively smaller bill, prominent dark plumage on the malar and chin, and distinctive yellow wash on the lower belly. Briefly heard vocalizations, described by observers as a wheezy squeak, were also consistent with Sulphur-bellied over Streaked. Other broadly similar Neotropical species, like Piratic Flycatcher (*Legatus leucophaeus*) and Variegated Flycatcher (*Empidonomus varius*), can be ruled out by details of structure and plumage. The Committee eventually accepted this remarkable record with a unanimous vote.

Sulphur-bellied Flycatcher occupies a broad range from southern Arizona to central Bolivia. Beyond its normal range, records have come mostly from coastal California and states bordering the Gulf of Mexico, between September and November. In the Northeast, Ontario and New Brunswick both have multiple documented records, and New Jersey and Nova Scotia each has one. Thus, in hindsight, this species was perhaps not wholly unexpected, but it was nevertheless a surprising discovery that will not soon be forgotten by those who were fortunate enough to experience it.

2021 Reports Accepted

Tundra Bean-Goose (*Anser serrirostris*)

2021-9-A/B, One, Saratoga Lake State Marine Park/Stillwater, **Saratoga**, 14, 16 Mar (Gregg Recer, Gary Chapin, ph G Recer, G. Chapin, Eric Tepper), eBird 12, 14, 16 Mar

The story of this record began on the afternoon of 12 March, 2021, when David DiSiena spotted an unusual goose in a flock of Canada Geese (*Branta canadensis*) on the Hudson River just south of Mechanicville, Rensselaer County. The bird's

identity was not able to be confidently resolved from the initial images, but it was eventually rediscovered two days later by Cathy Graichen and Gregg Recer near the boat launch at Saratoga Lake, less than 10 miles to the north in Saratoga County. Photos were circulated within the local birding community for additional input, and consensus quickly coalesced around the specific identification of Tundra Bean-Goose. A number of rapid responders were able to successfully view the goose as it grazed on the lawns along the lakeshore over the course of the afternoon. The bird was observed on the morning of the 16th, after which it was not seen again. Examination of plumage characters and the distinctive color pattern on the bill suggested that this individual was the same bean-geese that spent the winter of 2020-2021 in the Philadelphia area, which was presumed to be the bird previously documented in Ontario during southbound migration with its adopted flock in November 2020.

Tundra Bean-Goose is a Palearctic breeding species and a rare vagrant to North America. Most documented sightings within the ABA Area hail from western Alaska, with a handful of additional records on both coasts in the Lower 48 and Canada, and nearly all individuals associated with “carrier flocks” of other geese (Howell *et al.* 2014). The true abundance of this species as a visitor to this continent is confounded somewhat by its marked similarity to Taiga Bean-Goose (*A. fabalis*), which is still considered conspecific by some authorities. A number of records of bean-geese are perhaps best left unidentified, but with sufficiently close views and clear photographs the two species can usually be distinguished by the coloration and relative size of the bill. The 2021 New York individual proved consistent with the classic Tundra phenotype, with a shorter, less dramatically sloping bill that showed less extensive orange patterning. As a result, the record was accepted by the Committee with a unanimous vote. The state’s second occurrence of Tundra Bean-Goose was documented at several sites in Seneca and Wayne Counties in March 2022, this time associating with a flock of Snow Geese (*Anser caerulescens*). This record has also already been reviewed and accepted by NYSARC.

Snowy Plover (*Anarhynchus nivosus*)

2021-26-A/D, One, Sandy Pond Outlet, Sandy Island Beach State Park, **Oswego**, 13-16 Sep (Richard Guthrie, Sarah Forestiere, Shai Mitra, Dennis Anderson, ph R. Guthrie, S. Forestiere, S. Mitra), eBird 13-16 Sep

While surveying Piping Plovers (*Charadrius melodus*) and other shorebirds on the morning of 13 September, 2021, Sarah Forestiere and Kennedy Sullivan discovered an atypical plover at Sandy Pond Outlet on the shores of Lake Ontario. The identity of the bird was quickly confirmed and announced to the community at large, prompting a mass twitch for this first state record of Snowy Plover. Access at this site is notoriously tricky for visitors due to the geography of the spit and the logistics of private property boundaries, but a number of birders were able to successfully chase the plover by scoping from strategic vantage points or launching kayaks from a nearby marina and paddling out to the beach. The bird lingered cooperatively at the Outlet for at least four days before departing, serving as a delightfully cooperative prize for those who made the trek to seek it out.

Snowy Plover has a somewhat irregular distribution in North America, occupying a wide range of open habitats near water across its disjunct range. Populations on the coasts of the Pacific Ocean and the Gulf of Mexico are nonmigratory, favoring barrier island dunes and sandy beachfront. Interior populations nest at riverine sandbars or the barren flats around saline or alkaline lakes, migrating to coastal regions for the nonbreeding season. In the Northeast, vagrants are more regularly documented around the Great Lakes than they are along the Atlantic Coast, consistent with the discovery at Sandy Pond Outlet. Many extralimital sightings appear to be spring overshoots, but an autumn 2004 observation from Connecticut set a precedent for the New York record. Although the pale, dry-sand-hued upperparts of Snowy Plover resemble the coloration of Piping Plover, the species is more closely related, and structurally similar, to the darker Wilson's Plover (*A. wilsonia*). The Kentish Plover (*A. alexandrinus*) of Eurasia is a conceivable vagrant to the eastern portion of the continent, though it has only recently been added to the ABA checklist via a 2023 record from Alaska (ABA 2024). Snowy Plover can be distinguished from this species by its paler grayish legs, distinctly white lores, and drab crown with no obvious rufous tones. With the identification of this individual resolved beyond any reasonable doubt, a unanimous vote by the Committee led to the prompt acceptance of this record.

Ferruginous Hawk (*Buteo regalis*)

2021-3-A/C, One, Black Dirt Region, **Orange**, 16, 17 Jan (John Haas, Carena Pooth, Linda Scrima, ph J. Haas, L. Scrima) eBird 16-23, 25, 27-28, 30-31 Jan, 3-8, 10, 12-14, 17, 19-21, 24-26 Feb, 2, 4, 6-7, 10, 13 Mar

The most surprising discovery of the annual New York Waterfowl Count on 16 January, 2021 turned out to be a raptor. When Linda Scrima spotted an unfamiliar *Buteo* during her rainy morning survey efforts, she made a point to snap a series of photos for later review before continuing her circuit. Looking over her pictures later that evening, she came to suspect its identity as an immature Ferruginous Hawk, sharing the images with the Raptor ID page on Facebook and several other local birders to confirm her suspicions. The bird was relocated in the same general area the following day, and it continued to entertain visiting birders with an extended game of hide-and-seek over the course of the next two months. The nature of the hawk's chosen winter territory, a network of expansive farm fields intersected by a limited number of mostly private roads, meant that seeing it required patience and no small amount of luck. Many observers were happy to settle for distant views as the bird scanned for prey from a treetop perch or a slightly elevated clod of dirt, while others were treated to chance close flyby encounters. The last confirmed observation on eBird was reported on 13 March.

A number of features that distinguish Ferruginous Hawk from more expected *Buteo* species, like Red-tailed Hawk (*B. jamaicensis*) and Rough-legged Hawk (*B. lagopus*), were readily apparent in the very first images that were shared online. The distinctly feathered tarsi and dark-masked, pale-headed appearance quickly ruled out the former contender, while the burly build and heavy bill with a long gape line eliminated the latter from consideration. Subsequent observations revealed other crucial details, such as the uniformly whitish undersides of the

fairly tapered wings and the prominent pale base on the dorsal surface of the tail. The identification of this individual was soundly established from the moment its discovery became public knowledge, and the Committee later accepted the record with a unanimous vote.

Ferruginous Hawk inhabits open prairies across western North America, breeding as far north as the Canadian Great Plains and wintering south to Mexico. Sightings east of the Mississippi River are fairly rare, mostly clustering around the Great Lakes and the Midwest, typically during migration or in winter. A notable instance of vagrancy in this species involved an individual rehabbed in Ontario in May 2023, subsequently outfitted with a Motus transmitter and tracked on its continuing journey through Michigan, Indiana, Ohio, West Virginia, and Pennsylvania, with the latter two states adding first records thanks to birders who successfully located the wandering hawk (Lenoir 2023). To date, the 2021 New York bird represents the easternmost record yet documented.

Violet-green Swallow (*Tachycineta thalassina*)

2021-22-A, One, Vischer Ferry Nature and Historic Preserve, **Saratoga**, 22 Apr (John Hershey, ph J. Hershey) eBird 22 Apr

Somewhat surprisingly, this bird and the 2023 Glaucous-winged Gull represent the only records out of the dozen new state checklist additions covered in this report that were seen by single observers. Indeed, New York's first documented occurrence of Violet-green Swallow was not even fully recognized as such in the field. On the morning of 22 April, 2021, John Hershey was out birding at Vischer Ferry Nature and Historic Preserve near the Mohawk River. When he paused to photograph a small flock of swallows roosting on a limb along a towpath connecting to the Old Erie Canal, his images fortuitously captured an unusual individual perched among the assembled Northern Rough-winged Swallows (*Stelgidopteryx serripennis*). Upon reviewing his pictures more closely a few hours later, John quickly noticed the odd bird out and recognized that it was something out of the ordinary. The photos were shopped around to other birders to confirm his presumed identification of Violet-green Swallow. Subsequent search efforts later that day and the next morning, by John and others, regrettably failed to relocate the bird.

The core range of Violet-green Swallow lies west of the Rocky Mountains, extending north to Alaska during the breeding season and regularly wintering as far south as Costa Rica. Records in the eastern portion of the continent are fairly rare, with patterns of occurrence showing a slight bias towards springtime over summer and fall. Observations from states and provinces bordering New York include one for Connecticut, two for Ontario, two for Pennsylvania, two for Massachusetts, and six for New Jersey. When seen well, this species is readily distinguished from the closely related Tree Swallow (*T. bicolor*) due to its rich green upperparts, the violet sheen on the rump, and the more extensive white around the eyes and the sides of the rump. Based on the diagnostic photos accompanying John's report, the Committee voted to accept this record unanimously.

Gray-breasted Martin (*Progne chalybea*)

2021-10-A/D, One, Prospect Park, **Kings**, 1-3 Apr (John Gaglione, Tim Healy, Doug Gochfeld, Shai Mitra, ph J. Gaglione, T. Healy, D. Gochfeld) eBird 1-4 Apr

Undoubtedly one of the most remarkable New York records in recent history, it is safe to say that Gray-breasted Martin was not on anyone's radar as a potential addition to the state checklist (Gochfeld 2023). Indeed, this species has scarcely been considered as a plausible vagrant to the United States, being notably absent from Howell's *Rare Birds of North America* (save for passing mentions in the introduction and the header of the aerial landbirds section) and represented on the ABA checklist only by virtue of a pair of historical specimens from the late 19th century in Texas (Howell *et al.* 2014). This perceived unlikelihood of recurrence is due not to the probability of this species reaching the ABA Area, but rather a result of the challenges associated with the identification of tropical *Progne* martins under typical field conditions. Nevertheless, a report of an intriguing martin discovered by Doug Gochfeld at Prospect Lake on 1 April, 2021 soon captured the attention of the entire North American birding community, with Gray-breasted Martin quickly emerging as the proposed frontrunner for the identity of the bird.

The identification of this shocking rarity proved to be a fascinating case study for curious birders to sink their teeth into. The martin, an immature female, was staggeringly cooperative by swallow standards, lingering at Prospect Park for nearly four full days. The bird spent much of its time foraging low over the Lake, often fairly close to shore, which allowed for the acquisition of a wealth of media for in-depth analysis. The only expected *Progne* species in New York, Purple Martin (*P. subis*), was ruled out with relative ease due to the distinctly smaller size, unstreaked white underparts, shallow tail fork, and reduced contrast of patterning on the forehead and collar of the subject bird. Cuban Martin (*P. cryptoleuca*) and Caribbean Martin (*P. dominicensis*), themselves at best exceedingly rare potential vagrants to the United States, are similar in size and silhouette to Purple Martin, and thus quite unlike the daintier Prospect Park bird despite their broadly similar plumage patterns. The enigmatic Sinaloa Martin (*P. sinaloae*) of western Mexico reportedly averages slightly smaller than Cuban and Caribbean, but like those species shows a deeply forked tail and high contrast, sharply defined boundaries between the dark plumage of the throat, upper breast, and flanks and the white plumage of the belly. The small size, notched tail, and gradual gradient from dusky and pale plumage of the mystery martin were conspicuously at odds with each of the alternative candidate species, but wholly consistent with the nominate population of Gray-breasted Martin, which ranges from Central America through northern South America. Audio samples captured by Doug were also compared to a suite of recordings for every *Progne* species, likewise proving to best fit *P. c. chalybea* both by ear and by spectrogram. Though there are arguably no true "experts" on distinguishing between martins in the way that there are for gulls or hummingbirds, this identification was backed by several members of the International Purple Martin Working Group, who collectively share a great deal of field experience working with multiple species of this genus in the Neotropics.

It is incredibly fortunate, for birders and recordkeepers alike, that this astonishing vagrant was observed at a migratory stopover site where close and prolonged study was possible. Had it occurred instead as a passing flyover, there would have been little hope of satisfactorily resolving its identity, even if it had been flagged as a potentially unusual bird. One might be justified in wondering how many possible extralimital records of this species may have slipped through the cracks across the continent over the years, undetected amongst the hordes of more common Purple Martins. In this particular instance, at least, there is adequate evidence available to support the identification of this individual as a Gray-breasted Martin. After careful consideration, the Committee finally accepted this most extraordinary record with a unanimous vote.

The author acknowledges the generous assistance of Gary Chapin, Patricia Lindsay, Shai Mitra, Mike McBrien, and Willie D'Anna in preparing this special report. It is based on the painstaking work of the Committee over the past several years, including those just named, as well as Shawn Billerman, Shane Blodgett, Thomas W. Burke, Doug Gochfeld, Curt McDermott, Jay McGowan, and Derek H. Rogers.

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RECENT CHANGES TO THE REVIEW LIST OF THE NEW YORK STATE AVIAN RECORDS COMMITTEE

The New York State Avian Records Committee has revised the Review List to clarify which species and contexts require documentation for acceptance. These recent changes in review status are presented here.

Black-bellied Whistling-Duck – removed from review list

Pink-footed Goose – removed from review list

Black-necked Stilt – removed from review list

Baird's Sandpiper – (S) Spring dates specified: 1 Feb to 30 Jun (statewide)

Western Sandpiper – (S, U) Spring dates specified: 1 Feb to 31 May; (U – upstate all year)

Long-tailed Jaeger – changed from P (outside pelagic zone) to D (downstate only)

Thick-billed Murre – changed from N (statewide) to U (upstate only)

Atlantic Puffin – changed from N (statewide) to P (outside pelagic zone)

Sabine's Gull – (S) Spring dates specified 1 Feb to 30 Jun; (D – downstate all year)

Bridled Tern – changed from N (statewide) to P (outside pelagic zone)

Pacific Loon – removed from review list

White-faced Storm-Petrel – changed from N (statewide) to P (outside pelagic zone)

Black-capped Petrel – changed from N (statewide) to P (outside pelagic zone)

Scopoli's Shearwater – added; split from Cory's – N (statewide)

Sargasso Shearwater – split from Audubon's and replaces Audubon's on this list – P (outside pelagic zone)

Brown Booby – changed from N (statewide) to U (upstate only)

White-faced Ibis – removed from review list

Mississippi Kite – removed from review list

Swainson's Hawk – changed from N (statewide) to D (downstate only)

Ash-throated Flycatcher – changed from N (statewide) to U (upstate only)

Western Flycatcher – lump of Pacific-slope and Cordilleran Flycatchers; replaces Pacific-Slope on this list

Say's Phoebe – removed from review list

Cave Swallow – removed from review list

All Redpoll taxa have been lumped, now collectively known as Redpoll:

Redpoll *Acanthis flammea rostrata/islandica* (Greater Common) (N)

Redpoll *A. f. exilipes/hornemanni* (Hoary) (D)

Redpoll *A. f. hornemanni* (Northern Hoary) (N)

Lark Sparrow – removed from review list

Western Tanager – removed from review list

Painted Bunting – removed from review list

New species recently approved by NYSARC, all thereby added to the Review List, statewide:

Tundra Bean Goose
Mottled Duck
Black-chinned Hummingbird
Allen's Hummingbird
Limpkin
Snowy Plover
Heermann's Gull
Glaucous-winged Gull

American Flamingo
Bermuda Petrel
Short-tailed Shearwater
Zone-tailed Hawk
Ferruginous Hawk
Sulphur-bellied Flycatcher
Violet-green Swallow
Gray-breasted Martin



JANUARY WATERFOWL COUNT 2024

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More than 396 volunteers went into the field 12-24 January 2024 and conducted the New York State Ornithological Association's January Waterfowl Count. The volunteers logged more than 1115.45 party-hours and counted 529,440 waterfowl. The methodology of the count was described by B. L. Swift in 2007 (January waterfowl counts, 2005-2007, and some observations on long-term trends. *Kingbird* 57: 198-213).

WEATHER CONDITIONS

Daily high temperatures in January leading up to the count period were mostly above freezing throughout the state, but most lows were at or below freezing. Plattsburgh recorded a low of 12° F on 5 January. In most of the state, there was little or no snow cover before 13 January, except in the Great Lakes plain. At Buffalo, snow cover varied from zero to four inches through 12 January. During the official count dates of 13-21 January, the weather took a turn for the worse as temperatures began to plummet on 13 January. Even in Islip, the daily highs were only above freezing on three days. During the count period, snow was mostly a problem in the Great Lakes plain with snow beginning to fall on 13 January and continuing to fall through most of the period. In Buffalo, maximum snow depth was 21 inches on 19-20 January. Some counters, anticipating the change in weather on 13 January opted to count on 12 January. Some other counters delayed counting in hopes of improved weather and didn't finish until 24 January.

Table 1. Regional totals for the 2024 January Waterfowl Count.

Species/Region	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	Total
Snow Goose	0	3,350	36,447	0	566	1	1,146	0	8,202	604	50,316
Ross's Goose	0	1	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	2
Gr. White-fr. Goose	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	3	1	4
Pink-footed Goose	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Brant	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	242	14,682	14,924
Cackling Goose	0	14	7	0	2	0	0	0	4	14	41
Canada Goose	13,601	32,513	24,344	4,542	10,875	5,281	2,012	11,902	28,412	51,473	184,955
Mute Swan	12	338	28	0	56	78	0	0	409	752	1,673
Trumpeter Swan	0	5	11	0	31	12	0	0	0	0	59
Tundra Swan	566	856	338	0	299	48	0	0	0	0	2,107
swan species	0	0	14	0	0	136	0	0	0	0	150
Wood Duck	2	0	1	2	2	0	0	0	24	7	128
Blue-winged Teal	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Northern Shoveler	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	10	1,174	1,185
Gadwall	91	74	83	39	6	11	3	0	282	1,364	1,953
Eurasian Wigeon	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	1
Am. Wigeon	13	4	90	0	10	2	1	0	34	490	644
Mallard	2,493	3,572	4,022	856	2,172	2,219	1,891	652	3,270	6,763	27,910
Am. Black Duck	167	251	666	177	131	407	185	82	821	3,015	5,902
Mallard X Black Duck	1	303	3	0	0	8	3	0	4	67	389
Northern Pintail	18	12	3	0	8	33	7	0	19	113	213
Green-winged Teal	11	5	14	10	1	0	0	0	41	429	511
Canvasback	9,970	10	178	0	6	3	0	0	2	41	10,210
Redhead	4,024	3,955	43,218	54	1,032	216	5	0	6	81	52,591
Ring-necked Duck	9	852	3,897	56	1,021	263	40	10	2,559	334	9,041
Tufted Duck	0	0	1	0	11	0	1	0	0	0	13
Greater Scaup	8,301	246	1,274	17	798	1,938	1,960	0	1,138	15,697	31,369

Species/Region	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	Total
Lesser Scaup	6	557	3,303	83	570	184	4,449	2	299	1,464	10,917
scaup species	24	288	970	26	840	0	567	0	0	4,144	6,859
King Eider	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	1
Common Eider	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	172	172
Harlequin Duck	0	1	0	0	2	0	1	0	0	13	17
Surf Scoter	0	0	0	0	3	0	0	0	0	715	718
White-winged Scoter	1,309	244	56	0	203	15	0	0	0	2,043	3,870
Black Scoter	2	1	0	0	1	10	0	0	0	5,906	5,920
scoter species	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	30,720	30,720
Long-tailed Duck	1,037	1,803	0	1	481	791	6	0	213	3,080	7,412
Bufflehead	3,093	174	734	188	188	189	65	0	1,314	5,675	11,620
Com. Goldeneye	2,675	1,698	2,268	298	1,155	2,200	2,845	151	476	707	14,473
Barrow's Goldeneye	0	0	0	0	0	1	2	0	2	0	5
Hooded Merganser	247	232	276	311	403	160	34	72	1,047	1,689	4,471
Com. Merganser	1,768	1,068	487	2,192	1,515	1,595	839	290	2,631	59	12,444
Red-br. Merganser	1,245	4,058	244	9	227	949	30	0	186	2,719	9,667
Ruddy Duck	7	18	24	1	2	0	0	0	251	4,287	4,590
Pied-billed Grebe	3	0	5	1	4	0	0	0	14	19	46
Horned Grebe	3	5	8	1	7	2	23	0	45	133	227
Red-necked Grebe	0	2	0	0	0	0	0	0	2	2	6
Fared Grebe	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Western Grebe	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1
Am. Coot	35	103	546	35	55	1	1	0	364	202	1,342
Red-throated Loon	3	24	0	0	1	0	0	0	15	149	192
Common Loon	1	18	7	0	5	11	21	0	30	408	501
Great Cormorant	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	66	65	131
Dbl.-cr. Cormorant	23	27	7	0	7	2	0	0	12	466	544
Other/Unidentified	5,578	102	76	0	14	176	1	0	286	50	6283
TOTALS	56,338	56,785	123,651	8,900	22,710	16,942	16,138	13,161	57,735	162,080	529,440

RESULTS

In this summary, I will compare the 2024 numbers with the average annual numbers from the decade, 2013-2022. The total number of waterfowl counted this year, 529,400, was 150,148 (40%) more than the average for the 2013-2022 decade. Snow Geese, Canada Geese, and diving ducks accounted for the excess over the average. Contributing to the diving duck count were the highest ever counts for Redhead, Ring-necked Duck, Lesser Scaup, unidentified scoter, and Hooded Merganser.

Most species had higher counts than the 2013-2022 decade average. It seems likely that the unusually mild weather leading up to the count period allowed these species to linger in the state in higher numbers. Species that had counts lower than the decade average were Greater White-fronted Goose, Brant, Trumpeter Swan, Eurasian Wigeon, American Black Duck, Mallard, Blue-winged Teal, King Eider, Common Eider, White-winged Scoter, Long-tailed Duck, Pied-billed Grebe, Horned Grebe, Red-necked Grebe, and Eared Grebe.

LONG-TERM TRENDS

In the 2022 report, possible long-term trends in New York State's winter waterfowl populations were identified by comparing the averages for the periods 1973-2000, 2001-2010, and 2013-2022. Species listed as having possible long-term increases were Snow Goose, Canada Goose, Brant, Trumpeter Swan, Tundra Swan, Wood Duck, Gadwall, Eurasian Wigeon, Northern Shoveler, Redhead, Ring-necked Duck, Common Eider, Harlequin Duck, Long-tailed Duck, Hooded Merganser, and Red-breasted Merganser. Of these, the 2024 numbers continue these trends for Snow Goose, Canada Goose, Tundra Swan, Wood Duck, Gadwall, Northern Shoveler, Redhead, Ring-necked Duck, Hooded Merganser, and Red-breasted Merganser. Long-term decreases were listed as American Wigeon, American Black Duck, Northern Pintail, Green-winged Teal, scaup (sp.), White-winged Scoter, Common Merganser, and Great Cormorant. As was the case in 2023, the 2024 counts only continued the downward trend for American Black Duck. The 2024 count of American Black Duck was 5,902. That was 1,072 less than the 2023 count.

FUTURE COUNTS

You can help with the 2025 count by contacting your Regional compiler. Compiler contact information, and also historical data, are available online at: <http://nybirds.org/ProjWaterfowl.htm>

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: 18-26 January 2025 (target date Sunday, January 19) and 17-25 January 2026 (target date Sunday, January 18).

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

Thanks to everyone who participated in the 2024 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	Debra Suggs	6	Jeff Bolsinger
2	Robert Spahn	7	Ellie George
3	Christina Hoh	8	Bryan Swift
4	Gail Kirch	9	Sean Camillieri
5	Bill Purcell	10	Clifford Hagen

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PATCH BIRDING
PLUMB BEACH

Peter Paul
Brooklyn, NY

I’ve eBirded from Plumb Beach 443 times. Tomorrow, it’ll be 444 (and next week, it’ll likely be 450). That’s sort of how it goes as a teacher with the summers off. Plumb is an interesting place. “Special”, “unique”, the euphemisms abound. If you’ve been there, you know what I’m getting at. If you haven’t...well....

It’s my favorite place to go birding. But let’s not sugar coat anything—it’s somewhat of a dump. The final line in the Wikipedia article about it reads:

“It has had a reputation as a lover’s lane and as a cruising location.” I won’t go into detail, as this is a family publication, but this description is accurate, and there are daily activities that happen at Plumb that don’t relate to rare sandpipers.

There are also, at times, many dog walkers, some kite surfers, and other disturbances given its NYC location and relatively easy access.

But, to be sure, there are also birds.

Plumb Beach is a an exceptional place, which I have been birding for the whole of my (just over) ten year career in the hobby (more frequently in recent years than I did when I first started birding). It is an excellent park year round, with some species that breed in few or no other places in Brooklyn. It has important habitat for passing migrants, and hosts a few specialties in the winter as well.

Below I will outline some of the expected birds that one can see at this unique location, as well as some of the amazing birds that have shown up over recent years.

Plumb Beach is a relatively small area off the Belt Parkway in southern Brooklyn that is made up of a stretch of sandy beach, a tidal mudflat, and a saltmarsh, the latter two of which are separated by a patch of dunes. The beach stretches for almost exactly one mile, and is divided by three jetties, but the marsh and the mudflats are both to the east of the last jetty which is right around the middle of that mile. This half mile area on the east end of the park is where I have spent so many hours over the past few years.

Looking over the water from the beach, the view is of Breezy Point (Queens) to the south, Dead Horse Point to the east, and Kingsborough Community College to the west. In between Plumb Beach and Jamaica Bay is Floyd Bennett Field (a location that would require an article or two all of its own). So Plumb is not exactly in Jamaica Bay, and with Breezy to the south, doesn't face open ocean either. It's nestled into the Rockaway Inlet and has habitats (mostly the tidal mudflats and the dunes) that are unlike any nearby natural areas. And it's placed in the middle of so many of these other habitats—right underneath birds moving in all seasons, in any direction, making it a perfect stopover or just flyby destination.

So much about Plumb Beach is dependent on the tides. At high tide, Plumb is very small—a slim stretch of sand, the dunes, and a small bit of marsh that can be seen from the dunes, but not really navigated. At low tide, Plumb becomes much larger; the beach expands (slightly), the mudflats are large (relatively), and the water in the marsh recedes, opening up pools with muddy shoreline around them, and the bases of the marsh grasses. The significant change in habitat from tide to tide is part of what makes Plumb such a great spot. Plumb, and the rest of the bay, is dynamic, constantly in flux. So birds are moving in and out hour to hour as the tides shift.

The expected—Most summers some combination of Clapper Rails, Boat-tailed Grackles, Willow Flycatchers, and Willets breed in the marsh, and a single pair of American Oystercatchers have bred (by some miracle) at the edges of the dune grasses. At certain times during the summer, a visitor would not have a hard time getting a look at fuzzy black Clapper Rail chicks, and the adults are easy to see pretty much any time, all summer. The Black Skimmers, Common Terns, and Least Terns that breed at Breezy visit the mudflats and feed in the inlet during the day. The skimmers can be seen skimming in the pools in the marsh, and along the shallow water at the edge of the mudflats. A lucky observer of the marsh may see a visiting Gull-billed Tern looking for food over head. But the other terns are there daily, and later in the summer can be seen feeding begging young on the flats, and fishing in the water.

In the past few years, Bank Swallows have found suitable habitat to make burrows in the steeper sections of sand along the beach, and as the summer goes on, young Bank Swallows spend their days over the marsh pools. Mockingbirds, Catbirds, Song Sparrows, Eastern Towhees, Yellow Warblers also use some of the trees and other denser vegetation as their summer homes and nesting sites.

In the winter, gulls use the mudflats and sandbars to roost. The dunes host “Ipswich” Sparrows (the only reliable place to see this subspecies of Savannah Sparrow in Brooklyn). And on good days Northern Harriers can be seen hunting

over the dunes. On really good days, a Short-eared Owl might use the dunes to roost. In irruption years, the dune grasses at Plumb are possibly the best place to see Redpolls, and Snowy Owls can end up on the beach. A lucky observer may see Horned Larks or Snow Buntings, or the occasional Lapland Longspur.

During migration, especially in October, the marsh grasses are one of the best places (the best place?) around to see Nelson's, Saltmarsh, and Seaside Sparrows. These birds can be seen in large numbers on the right day, and careful observers will find themselves sorting through Nelson's subspecies, and even looking for possible hybrid birds. Through both migrations, passerines end up to the north of the marsh and in the trees near the parking lot.

But at this point, I've buried the lede a little bit—Plumb is Brooklyn's shorebird go-to hotspot. Personally, I like shorebirds, gulls, and terns quite a lot. While nearby Queens County has specialty spots for these families of birds (Jamaica Bay Wildlife Refuge and Breezy Point), Brooklyn has only Plumb Beach. But Plumb delivers.

Spring migration is fast, but it hosts migrant shorebirds and terns for the day as they pass through the city, heading north. As the Semipalmated Sandpiper numbers grow, I look out for breeding plumaged White-rumped and Western Sandpipers mixed in. Throughout shorebird migration, almost all expected shorebirds can be seen at Plumb, the exception being those fresh water-preferring species (Long-billed Dowitcher, Stilt Sandpiper, American Avocet, Wilson's Phalarope, to name a few), which are all rarer there. But every other common shorebird will be found on the right day, either feeding on the mudflats, in the wrack line, or in the marsh somewhere.

Fall shorebird migration begins around mid-July, and lasts through November. This works well for me because, as I said earlier, I'm a teacher and I don't work in July and August. So I have spent my last four or five summers at Plumb Beach in a fairly dedicated way. As in the Spring, all of the shorebirds pass through here, but the Fall migration is so much longer, and I'm able to cover it more in those earlier two months.

As the summer progresses (and I go back to work), some of the expected visitors begin to change. In late August/early September Baird's and Buff-breasted Sandpipers become possible visitors, the Baird's very often staying for days. Godwits become more likely (though still rare). American Golden-Plovers are an uncommon, but regular specialty on the mudflats in October/November.

The unexpected—Doug Gochfeld's record of Eastern Yellow Wagtail (the only North American record on eBird east of Nevada, roughly) was at Plumb Beach. I've never turned up anything like that, personally. But birding it with as much dedication as I've given it over the years has turned up some good birds. One day this summer I was getting ready to leave when I saw a small and unfamiliar gull approaching me—before seeing it in binoculars, something seemed strange. Looking through binoculars, I didn't even have time to be shocked or nervous upon realizing what it was, I immediately began to take photos of it until, in mere seconds it was flying away, and gone. That bird was Brooklyn's first Sabine's Gull since 1926 (Bull 1964: *Birds of the New York Area*, p. 243). About three weeks later, I was walking on the beach early one morning, when I noticed a bird

that was roughly tern sized, but not a tern, sitting on the sand. To my complete shock, there was a Little Gull sitting on the developing sandbar, as the tide fell. It's been a good summer.

One mid-May day years ago, I was looking through Common Terns, and found New York City's first record of Arctic Tern mixed in with them (aside: somewhat unbelievably, six years *to the day* later Brooklyn's second record of adult Arctic Tern showed up at Plumb!). And the next year in early June after looking through terns at Nickerson Beach, some friends and I stopped by Plumb and heard the deep croak of a Sandwich Tern hoping to land on a sandbar—the first record of this species in Brooklyn that wasn't directly related to a hurricane. Sadly, this bird—and we—suffered the fate of so many at this location. On the day of my observation I wrote: “we could see that a dog walker was approaching the same area, and knew that it wouldn't stay very long”. [The day before beginning to write this, Plumb Beach produced Brooklyn's third ever Sandwich Tern, discovered by a photographer later that evening.]

Other highlights that I have been lucky enough to see, some due to weather, but some just stopping by with seemingly no other explanation, have included: a Black-legged Kittiwake sitting on the sandbar one Halloween morning, a few Roseate Terns over the last few years (expected in Queens, but rare in Brooklyn), presumably visiting from Breezy, seven Black Terns sitting on the beach after Tropical Storm *Henri*, Brown Pelicans (increasingly each year), and other more expected but still uncommon shorebirds like Marbled and Hudsonian Godwits and Whimbrel. Two more notable species that Plumb has delivered in recent years (that I didn't see) were a LeConte's Sparrow one October morning, as well as Brooklyn's only record of Ruff.

The magic—I've hinted at it a little, but will try to explain more clearly: many of the birds at Plumb are ephemeral. Be it dogs, shifting tides, Peregrine Falcons, or beach walkers, birds come and go. That's just how it works there. But it's also a destination for birds that have left an area of the bay or nearby park, due to shifting tides, disturbance, or that same Peregrine scaring birds away from a different spot.

It could be said for any location, but seems to be true to a whole different degree that the birds one can see at Plumb Beach are completely different day to day, and even minute to minute. Truly anything seems possible there given the dynamic, constantly shifting nature of the habitat and the nearby bay. The best days are those when it is clear that there are birds in the general area, and that they are moving around. What will fly in next? Some of the best birds I've seen there never even touched the sand. But they were drawn to the location long enough for me to be lucky enough to witness them.

But it is also true that the habitat at Plumb Beach is such that some birds don't leave right away—some very much are drawn to the park and stick around for the day, or for days. Even larger birds like Whimbrel have been known to stick around for multiple days. It is clearly a special place that so many birds rely on, with important sources of food and space for rest.

Only months after I started birding, I learned about a Northern Wheatear that Shane Blodgett had found in the marsh at Plumb. A couple of months earlier, Shane had found a King Eider just off the mudflats as well! I didn't see either of

those birds, and I certainly didn't see Doug's wagtail. But I feel lucky to have had the time and ability over the course of the past few years to continue in the shadows of Shane and Doug and many others, to be among those birders monitoring the beach, and to attempt to add to the records of rare birds that this unique habitat seems to continue to attract.

So, in the end, Plumb hosts an excellent diversity of predictable species depending on the time of year. But it is also a magnet for uncommon to even some very rare birds.

To visit Plumb and "see what's there" would likely only take about an hour or less. It's really not a very big place. But the magic of Plumb beach is more about *what is about to arrive* than it is about what is present when a birder arrives. To anyone reading this who has never visited this location but wants to, I'd give two pieces of advice:

1. Stay for a little while and just see what happens
2. Don't look down

Who knows what will turn up next? But I hope to photograph whatever it is.

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HIGHLIGHTS OF THE SEASON—WINTER 2023-24

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Year after year, the predominate winter birding story in New York State centers in the weather, and this winter was no different. Every Region reported above average temperatures for all three winter months; in many cases these averages were five degrees or more above normal. Precipitation was above average nearly everywhere for December and January, and below average everywhere in February.

Coming on the heels of a warm fall season, the high numbers of "half-hardy" species, those tending to linger beyond the normal wintering range, was not very surprising. Among the "classic" half hardies, Hermit Thrush was recorded in 9 Regions, Brown Thrasher in 6, Gray Catbird and Marsh Wren in 9, Winter Wren and Eastern Phoebe in 7. In many cases, Regional editors commented that there were multiple records of these birds within their areas. Under Yellow-bellied Sapsucker, for example, the Region 1 comment reveals that there were 49 eBird reports, and there were 23 reports in Region 2 in December.

Highlighting this phenomenon of species now occurring in numbers when formerly even one or two would be noteworthy is Jeff Bolsinger's comment in the Region 6 report. "Some birds that were formerly very rare in winter but now occur with some regularity were notable for the high numbers reported, for instance at least 12 Belted Kingfishers, 10 Yellow-bellied Sapsuckers, seven Winter Wrens, four Marsh Wrens, three Hermit Thrushes, seven Swamp Sparrows, two Field

Sparrows, and five Eastern Meadowlarks. Not that many years ago more than one or two individuals of any of these species would have been considered exceptional.” Similar comments come from many other Regions around the state.

The warm temperatures also encouraged early returns of species that winter just to our south. There were widespread reports of blackbirds, Eastern Phoebe, American Woodcock, and Killdeer. A Wilson’s Snipe at Fort Drum in Region 6 on 27 February beat the previous arrival record by eleven days.

Waterfowl were able to linger on the open water in areas where they normally would have been frozen out. The January 2024 Waterfowl Count, conducted from 12 to 24 January, happened to coincide with some of the lowest temperature days of the winter season. Even so, the total count for individuals was 40% higher than the previous ten-year average. Record high counts were made for several diving duck species, and most species were recorded in above average numbers.

Canada Geese accounted for 35% of all individuals tallied on the waterfowl count. For this downstate birder, it was also interesting to note that the second highest species total was for Redhead, with more than 52,000 birds mostly concentrated in Region 3. Also interesting is the distribution of scoter species across the state. Away from Region 10, virtually all scoters are White-winged, while along the coast the split is more even, but favoring Black. Regional tallies nicely demonstrate that Long-tailed Duck really is quite a rarity away from the Great Lakes and the tidewater areas.

Overall reports from around the state indicated that dabbling and diving duck numbers were up in many areas, with positive comments coming from Regions 1, 3, and 5. Joel Strong’s comments from Region 1 summed up what several editors were observing: “Dabblers were more common than most winters, with most species reported in all three winter months and also arriving earlier than usual.” Bill Ostrander in Region 3 wrote “The continued mild weather in February allowed the *Aythya* numbers to peak in the middle of the month.”

Among the waterfowl rarities, highlights included an adult male King Eider in Region 1 and others in Regions 2 and 5. Seven Regions reported Harlequin Ducks, while Tufted Ducks were recorded from five. Barrow’s Goldeneyes were recorded from six Regions, with a remarkable eight birds found on Lake Champlain in Region 7! Remarkably, hybrid Common x Barrow’s Goldeneyes were reported from no fewer than six Regions.

Among the “duckaloids,” a Western Grebe was reported by both Regions 1 and 2 in the waters off Point Breeze on Lake Ontario, and both Regions 1 and 3 recorded Eared Grebes. Region 10 also recorded Western Grebe. An excellent one-day count of 646 Red-necked Grebes was made at Hamlin Beach in Region 2 on 16 December.

A very hardy Purple Gallinule lingered into early January at Braddock Bay in Region 2. Widespread flocks of Sandhill Cranes were topped off by an estimated 1000 birds at Montezuma NWR in Region 3. This is a species that was only removed from the rarities review list in the year 2000. One in Region 7 provided a first winter record there.

The warmer than average weather also benefited some species of shorebirds and waders. Killdeer and Dunlin were noted as lingering in Region 1 and elsewhere, as were Purple Sandpipers and even a late Red Phalarope. A Lesser

Yellowlegs found on 24 December was a very late addition to the Letchworth-Silver Lake CBC in Region 2.

Interesting waders taking advantage of the open water included a Black-crowned Night-Heron in Region 2 and a Cattle Egret in Region 5.

There was general agreement that gull numbers and variety were down, with a few scattered Black-legged Kittiwake and just a handful of Little Gull reports from Region 1. White-winged gull numbers were spotty. By far the best of the group was the second New York State record for Glaucous-winged Gull, first found on 20 January in Region 9 and apparently the same bird relocated on 4- 5 February in Region 3. A Magnificent Frigatebird passed by two eastern Long Island locations on 18 December.

Region 10 hit the hummingbird trifecta, with Rufous, Black-chinned, and Allen's all well documented with photos, the latter two providing the first documented records for the state.

Golden Eagles are obviously expanding throughout the state, with multiple observations in nine Regions. Rough-legged Hawks put in a fairly decent appearance with representation in all Regions. In Region 6 a Gyrfalcon was observed catching a Common Merganser! That must have been quite a spectacular experience. Short-eared and Northern Saw-whet Owls also seemed to be present in better than average numbers, as opposed to Snowy Owls, which staged their worst showing in many years. Several Regions included positive comments regarding Northern Shrike numbers, and Region 9 also recorded one Loggerhead—quite a rare bird anywhere in the state these days.

Winter finches were generally regarded as down this year, with a couple of exceptions. Pine Siskins were widely spread around and in decent numbers, especially in Region 7 where Derek Rogers labelled them as his Bird of the Season. Three of these were noted as belonging to the enigmatic “green morph.” Red Crossbills were also fairly widespread, albeit in smaller numbers. Observers in Regions 6 and 7 were able to break them out into several different call types.

As one might expect given the warm weather, there were a number of other very good passerine records around the state. Among those that are rare enough to not qualify as “normal” half-hardies would be Baltimore Oriole—recorded from six Regions, with reports from 20 different locations in Region 10 alone; Tennessee Warblers in Regions 5 and 9, Cape May Warblers in Regions 5 and 10, Northern Parula in four Regions and Yellow Warblers in three. Three warbler species that would be rare at any time included three Townsend's, one in Region 4 and two in Region 10; a first Regional record for Black-throated Gray in Region 6; and two MacGillivray's, both in Region 10. Twenty-one species of warblers were recorded state-wide, and that doesn't include the “Audubon's” Yellow-rumped at Jones Beach in Region 10.

Among the non-warblers, Regions 6 and 10 recorded Blue-headed Vireos, a White-eyed was found in Region 4, which also recorded Say's Phoebe. Harris's Sparrows visited Regions 5 and 9. Region 10 hosted two Mountain Bluebirds and a very unseasonal Veery, while Rose-breasted Grosbeaks visited feeders in four Regions. Western Tanagers were reported in Regions 9 and 10.

The winter season of 2023-2024 had more than its share of great bird records. As usual, it is difficult to select one bird as the Bird of the Season, but in

this case, I think I'm going to give it to the first state record Black-chinned Hummingbird on Randall's Island in Region 10. This cooperative bird showed well for several weeks, allowing for detailed observation and photography of feather details allowing identification.

Thanks for reading and go find some great birds!

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REGIONAL REPORTS, WINTER 2023-24

Much of the data in the Regional reports is sourced from eBird:
eBird Basic Dataset. Version: EBD_relFeb-2024. Cornell Lab of Ornithology,
Ithaca, New York. Feb 2024.

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REGION 1 – NIAGARA FRONTIER

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December 2023 was mild and with little snow. The average temperature was 39.3° F, 1.3° above average. Rainfall was 3.87", 0.6" above average and snowfall was only 5.7", a staggering 10" below average. January was cloudy and wet, with considerably more snow compared to December. The average temperature of 29.4° was 3.9° above average. The 5.7" of precipitation was 2.3" above average. Persistent lake effect snow throughout the month led to a total of 45.6" of snow, which was 18.9" above average. February of 2024 tied with February of 2017 as the warmest February on record. The average temperature of 34.8° was 8.4° above average. The 1.0" of precipitation was 1.7" below normal and the 6.0" of snowfall was 12.1" below normal. The higher-than-average temperature for all three months made this winter the second warmest on record.

The mild winter temperatures resulted in geese and dabblers lingering in the Region throughout the winter season as well as earlier spring arrivals. Snow Geese were more abundant than normal, pushing further west from their traditional Atlantic flyway, as large numbers rarely reach Region 1 in either migration season. Flocks numbering as high as 8,000 were reported along with a handful of the diminutive Ross's and Cackling Geese. Greater White-fronted Geese were a little harder to come by, with only two winter reports. Up to 167 overwintering Tundra Swans were counted in the Niagara River and multiple flocks of 200-400 birds were seen migrating during the end of February. Dabblers were more common than most winters, with most species reported in all three winter months

and also arriving earlier than usual. Despite the abundance of open water in the Region and beyond, we still enjoyed large flocks of *Aythya* species on the Niagara River, with maximum Canvasback and Greater Scaup counts of 3,500 and 6,000, respectively. Aiden Haley found the Region's only King Eider, a male in alternate plumage photographed at Fort Niagara SP on 20 February. We enjoyed a nice showing of Harlequin Ducks this winter with a handful seen along Lake Ontario and the Niagara River at Buffalo.

Several double-digit counts of Horned Grebes were made, including an impressive 47 from Chautauqua Lake. There were just six Red-necked Grebe reports, the highest of which was four. An Eared Grebe found by Devin Banning at Barcelona Harbor on Lake Erie in November continued into the winter season for one day. A Western Grebe was an exceptional find by Sarah Bacon and Aaron Smith at Point Breeze, where it remained from 8-13 January in the company of Long-tailed Ducks.

A large flock of 63 Sandhill Cranes was reported from Iroquois NWR on 15 December followed by another nice count of 37 on 12 January. Owing to the mild winter, we saw Killdeer reports as late as January and Dunlin reports as late as 22 December. Gale VerHague found a late migrating Red Phalarope along Lake Erie in Chautauqua County on 1 and 5 December. Purple Sandpipers can be hard to come by in the Region, but this winter we enjoyed some nice counts of up to five birds along the Niagara River at Buffalo. Wilson's Snipe overwintered in Cattaraugus County with the first migrants arriving rather early on 27 February. American Woodcock arrived early as well, with the first report on 12 February.

The gull season was rather paltry this season with rather low abundance and diversity compared to most winters. The only rarity was Black-legged Kittiwake, represented by three reports. The highest Bonaparte's Gull count was 5,000, from the Niagara River in Buffalo with a maximum Little Gull count of three from Lewiston, while also worth noting that river-wide counts are not conducted, and only occasional flypast counts are attempted by local birders. The highest Iceland Gull count was 13 from Devil's Hole SP, and three "Thayer's" Gull reports were properly documented. There were scattered reports of Glaucous Gulls during the winter from Chautauqua Lake and the Niagara River, with fewer around than most winters. The highest Red-throated Loon count was 21 from Point Breeze and Common Loons were more abundant than usual this season.

Black-crowned Night-Herons lingered through the season along the Buffalo River and the Lewiston vulture roost produced up to 12 Black Vultures and 37 Turkey Vultures during the winter season.

Sandy Geschwender and Dawn Van Leuven each found Golden Eagles in February from Iroquois NWR and Orleans County, respectively. These are unusual locations for winter as most winter Golden Eagle sightings occur in the Southern Tier. There were also some nice counts of Bald Eagles in January with eight each from Iroquois NWR and Erie County. Sadly, no American Goshawks were reported. Rough-legged Hawks were fairly reliable during winter with 10, 17, and 14 reports in December, January, and February, respectively, with up to three individuals reported at some locations.

There were more winter owl reports this year than the previous winter season. There was just one Snowy Owl report from the reliable Erie Basin Marina.

A continuing pair of Long-eared Owls was reported from Niagara County in January and February, and another was reported from Golden Hill SP on 26 January. Short-eared Owls were reported from several locations within the Region, though at lower numbers than normal at their usual locations. There was a nice showing of Northern Saw-whet Owls, with reports from six separate locations in January and February, one of which was of two birds.

There were reports from four locations of overwintering Red-headed Woodpeckers, which is more than usual, a likely result of the mild winter. Yellow-bellied Sapsuckers showed a similar trend with single-bird reports from five locations.

Eastern Phoebe arrived on the early side, with the first report on 15 February. Northern Shrikes were reliable all winter with reports from an impressive 15, 14, and 17 locations in December, January, and February, respectively. A nice count of 10 Fish Crows was reported at Tifft NP in December and again in January, as this species is becoming more established in the Region in recent winters. Common Ravens have also increased in the Region and a maximum seasonal count of seven from Chautauqua County is consistent with this trend.

A late Marsh Wren held out until 17 December at Iroquois NWR and both Winter and Carolina Wrens were fairly common throughout the winter season. Gray Catbirds remained in the Region throughout the entire season with several reports in December and February and a single report in mid-January. Two mid-winter Brown Thrasher reports occurred on 15 and 21 January. Rounding out the “half-hardy” species for the winter season were reports of four, five, and four reports of Hermit Thrush in December, January, and February, respectively; a nice showing for this species.

It was a light season for finches, with no reports of Evening or Pine Grosbeak, and only two Common Redpoll reports. There was one report of a single Red Crossbill in both December and January, and then Karl Schmidt found nine at Hanging Bog WMA on 28 February. Ian Campbell had 14 White-winged Crossbills at Keaney Swamp WMA on 15 December, with the only other reports from Krull County Park with two in December and one in late February.

Field birds peaked when the heavy snows of mid-January pushed them to roadsides and likely concentrated them. American Pipit was reported in the highest frequency of any winter, with a spike of reports in mid-January, and a record winter maximum of 18 found by Karl Schmidt in Allegany County. Horned Lark, Lapland Longspur, and Snow Bunting showed similar mid-January peaks of 100, 85, and 500, respectively.

With the mild weather there were more Field, Fox, and Swamp Sparrow reports than usual, as well as Eastern Towhee reports and numbers of White-throated Sparrows. An “Oregon” Junco appeared at Celeste Morien’s feeder in Shelby in early January.

Blackbird reports and numbers were higher than usual for mid-winter and the warmth of February brought earlier migrants and good numbers evident by the end of the period. Three Eastern Meadowlarks at Stockton in January and three in Yates mid-February seem more likely to have wintered and we tabbed a 29 February sighting as the first arrival, but hard to really know. A Baltimore Oriole

lingered at a feeder in East Amherst until 9 December, and an immature Rose-breasted Grosbeak was a surprise on 2 December when photographed by Bill Massaro at Wendt Beach County Park.

Four warbler species in winter is a good showing for Region 1 where only Yellow-rumped Warbler is an annual occurrence. A Palm Warbler at Niagara Falls SP lingered late on 9 December, as found by Matt Bossert. A Common Yellowthroat photographed by John Sojda at Batavia WWTP on 23 December seemed to find a good place for the season. The most unusual was a Yellow-throated Warbler that visited a private backyard feeder 19 December - 2 January in Grand Island.

CONTRIBUTORS

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ABBREVIATIONS

ACNC – Audubon Community Nature Center, Jamestown, CHAU; **AISP** – Allegany SP, CATT; **BeSP** – Beaver I SP, ERIE; **BMAC** – Beaver Meadow Audubon Center, WYOM; **BuffH** – Buffalo Harbor, ERIE; **BuSP** – Buckhorn I SP, ERIE; **BWWTP** – Batavia Wastewater Treatment Plant, GENE; **ChauL** – Chautauqua L, CHAU; **CSWMA** – Conewango Swamp WMA, CATT; **DH** – Dunkirk Harbor, CHAU; **DHSP** – Devil's Hole SP, NIAG; **EvSP** – Evangola SP, ERIE; **FLC** – Forest Lawn Cemetery, Buffalo, ERIE; **FNSP** – Fort Niagara SP, NIAG; **GHSP** – Golden Hill SP, NIAG; **HBWMA** – Hanging Bog WMA, ALLE; **INWR** – Iroquois NWR, GENE/ORLE; **JWWMA** – John White WMA, GENE; **Krull CP** – Krull CP, NIAG; **LBSP** – Lakeside Beach SP, ORLE; **NF** – Niagara Falls, NIAG; **NFSP** – Niagara Falls SP, NIAG; **NPP** – Niagara Power Project on Niagara R, NIAG; **NR** – Niagara R; **OOWMA** – Oak Orchard WMA, GENE/ORLE; **PB** – Point Breeze, ORLE; **PG** – Point Gratiot, CHAU; **RWNP** – Reinstein Woods Nature Pres, ERIE; **Tift NP** – Tift Nature Pres, ERIE; **TRWMA** – Tillman Rd WMA, ERIE; **TWMA** – Tonawanda NWR, GENE/NIAG; **WBSP** – Woodlawn Beach SP, ERIE; **WTSP** – Wilson-Tuscarora SP, NIAG.

Snow Goose: 700 INWR 25 Dec; 4 Porter NIAG 27 Dec; Forestville CHAU, Sanborn NIAG 1 Jan; 2700 PB 13 Jan (CW); max 2500, 8000 Newfane NIAG 18, 28 Feb (JSt), good numbers for Reg 1.

Ross's Goose: Belfast ALLE 5 Dec (IC); BWWTP 9, 10 Dec (AHe, AG); INWR 6-13 Jan (CM); Findley L CHAU 24-26 Feb (GE, mob); good showing.

Greater White-fronted Goose: 3 Oakfield GENE 10 Dec (AG); DH 18 Jan (GV); only reports.

Cackling Goose: 5 Lyndonville ORLE 2 Dec; max 16, 15 Oakfield GENE 10 Dec, 7 Jan; 5 Waterport ORLE 1 Jan; 3 DH 8 Jan.

Canada Goose: max 8000 Oakfield GENE 10 Dec.

Mute Swan: 9 WTSP 12 Dec; 9 Lewiston NR 13 Dec; max 11 Waterport ORLE 1 Jan; max 11 Joseph Davis SP NIAG 3 Jan; 2 N Harmony CHAU 15 Feb.

Trumpeter Swan: max 8 INWR 2, 17 Dec; BeSP 19 Jan.

Tundra Swan: 65 Mayville ChauL 3 Dec; 100 NF 27 Dec; 70 INWR 27 Dec; 167 BeSP 20 Jan; 155 Wilson NIAG 31 Jan; 355 NF, 208 N Collins ERIE, 250 Tift NP 26 Feb, good flight day; max 400 INWR, 228 Wilson NIAG 28 Feb.

Wood Duck: 3, 2 Silver Creek CHAU 9 Dec, 23 Jan; FLC 17 Dec; 2 BWWTP 17 Dec; 2 Orchard P ERIE 11 Jan; NF 20 Jan, 19 Feb; Grand I ERIE 20 Jan; DH 27 Jan; WTSP 3 Feb; Cuba ALLE 12 Feb; 2 INWR 24 Feb; more wintered than usual and arrived early.

Northern Shoveler: max 240, 8, 10 BWWTP 2 Dec, 1 Jan, 1 Feb; 12 Tift NP 30 Dec; 4, 1 Unity I NR 5 Jan, 10 Feb; 17 Celoron ChauL 12 Jan; arr 2 DH 18 Feb; 4 INWR 28 Feb.

Gadwall: 36 Tift NP 17 Dec; 50 Lakewood ChauL 21 Dec; max 82 Celoron ChauL 3 Jan; 30 NF 2 Feb; 15 Buffalo ERIE 23 Feb.

American Wigeon: max 30, 10 NFSP 6 Dec, 25 Feb; 5, 13 Celoron ChauL 31 Dec, 26 Feb; 5, 18 INWR 7 Jan, 24 Feb; 4 PB 10 Jan; 4, 3 Cuba L ALLE 11 Jan, 12 Feb; 15 Barcelona CHAU 15 Jan.

Mallard: max 300 DH 15 Jan.

American Black Duck: 19 Cuba L ALLE 20 Dec; 27 Oakfield GENE 24 Dec; 20 Tift NP 2 Jan; 25 CSWMA 14 Jan; 20 Celoron ChauL 23 Jan; max 29 DH 18 Feb.

Northern Pintail: 5 Findley L CHAU 7 Dec; 6 BWWTP 10 Dec; 5 Lyndonville ORLE 22 Dec; 5 CSWMA 14 Jan; 7 BeSP 29 Jan; max 63, 201 INWR 15, 25 Feb; earlier arrivals.

Green-winged Teal: 3, 1 BWWTP 1 Jan, 10 Feb; 8 Cuba L ALLE 14 Jan; 2 Barcelona CHAU 15 Jan; 3 Sheridan CHAU 15 Jan; 2 BeSP 30 Jan; max 10 Cherry Creek CHAU 27 Feb.

Canvasback: max 1500, 2375, 3500 NF 19 Dec, 13 Jan, 2 Feb; 200, 740 DH 24 Jan, 23 Feb; 600 BufH 20 Feb.

Redhead: 375 Lakewood ChauL 16 Dec; 451 DH 20 Jan; max 500 BuSP 22 Jan; max 500 BufH 3 Feb; 200 Mayville ChauL 16 Feb; 300 NFSP 17 Feb.

Ring-necked Duck: 50 NFSP 2 Dec; 55 South P L ERIE 29 Dec; 64 OOWMA 3 Jan; max 168 Wheatfield NIAG 4 Jan; 107 BufH 8 Jan; 64 Celoron ChauL 23 Feb; 40 Rushford ALLE 27 Feb; 77 BWWTP 28 Feb.

Greater Scaup: 500, 1000 NF 2 Dec, 2 Jan; 5 Olean CATT 3 Dec; 216 DH 3 Dec; max 6000 BufH 21 Jan.

Lesser Scaup: max 325 Lakewood ChauL 16 Dec; 100 NF 19 Dec; 50 DH 22 Jan; 35, 50 BufH 29 Jan, 3 Feb; 22 BeSP 3 Feb.

King Eider: FNSP 20 Feb (AHA), only report.

Harlequin Duck: 1, 2 Olcott NIAG 4-6 Dec, 3, 27 Jan, 5 Feb (JSt, mob); 1, 2 Buffalo NR 6 Dec - 1 Jan, 27 Jan, 5 Feb (ZA, mob); NFSP 18 Feb (MR); FNSP 21 Feb (PM); good showing.

Surf Scoter: BWWTP 3 Jan; Cassadaga L CHAU 3 Jan (GV); Buffalo NR 6 Jan; 4 DH 27 Jan; max 6 FNSP 6 Feb; 2 PB 6 Feb.

White-winged Scoter: max 1000, 1200 FNSP 27 Jan, 4 Feb.

Black Scoter: Buffalo NR 1 Dec; max 2, 2, 8 FNSP 27 Dec, 27 Jan, 22 Feb; PB 12 Jan; BufH 25 Jan; 2 EvSP 27 Jan.

Long-tailed Duck: 220 Buffalo NR 31 Dec; 500 BufH 29 Jan; max 1000 FNSP 30 Jan; 150 PB 3 Feb; 175 Lewiston NR 23 Feb.

Bufflehead: 94 Lakewood ChauL 17 Dec; 1100 Buffalo NR 29 Dec; max 1360 BufH 20 Jan; 500 BeSP 1 Feb.

Common Goldeneye: 500 NF 3 Dec; 480 Silver Creek CHAU 3 Dec; 400 Barcelona CHAU 8 Dec; 500 BeSP 27 Jan; max 750 BufH 29 Jan; 500 BuSP 13 Feb.

Hooded Merganser: 75 AISP 4 Dec; 75 Cuba L ALLE 7 Dec; max 194 Lakewood ChauL 17 Dec; 60 Unity I NR ERIE 29 Dec; 170 Celoron ChauL 3 Jan; 180 DH 15 Jan.

Common Merganser: 162 NFSP 3 Dec; 400 Buffalo NR ERIE 18 Dec; 220 DH 15 Jan; 330 Unity I NR 20 Jan; max 500 BeSP 24 Feb.

Red-breasted Merganser: 6 Dayton CATT 2 Dec; 9 Cuba L ALLE 7 Dec; max 1800 DH 9 Dec; 1400 Buffalo NR ERIE 17 Dec; 300 Sturgeon Pt ERIE 27 Jan.

Ruddy Duck: max 310, 57, 10 BWWTP 2 Dec, 3 Jan, 10 Feb; 42 Bemus Pt ChauL 8 Dec; 2 South P L ERIE 29 Dec; 10 Chautauqua ChauL 8 Jan; 8 DH 1 Feb.

Wild Turkey: max 50 Sheldon CHAU 31 Jan.

Ruffed Grouse: max 3 Little Genesee ALLE 24 Jan.

Ring-necked Pheasant: max 4 BMAC 23 Dec.

Pied-billed Grebe: max 3 DH 7 Feb.

Horned Grebe: max 47 Lakewood ChauL 8 Dec; 26 EvSP 24 Dec; 20 Olcott 26 Dec; 10 DH 7 Jan; 6 Sturgeon Pt ERIE 27 Jan; 7 FNSP 23 Feb.

Red-necked Grebe: Barcelona Harbor CHAU 9 Dec; max 4, 5 GHSP 23 Dec, 1 Jan; Yates ORLE 23 Dec; PB 1 Jan; FNSP 3 Feb; WTSP 12 Feb.

Eared Grebe: Barcelona Harbor CHAU 1 Dec (DBa), continued from Nov.

WESTERN GREBE: PB 8-13 Jan (SaB, AS, mob), rare.

Rock Pigeon: max 200 NF 9 Dec.

Mourning Dove: max 55 Alexander GENE 22 Dec.

American Coot: max 100 Celoron ChauL 7 Dec; 65 Ashford ChauL 1 Jan; 57 DH 4 Feb.

Sandhill Crane: max 63, 37 INWR 15 Dec, 12 Jan (PH, WD); 2 Conewango CATT 7 Jan; 4 Sherman CHAU 4 Feb (JC); ACNC 23 Feb.

Killdeer: Gaines ORLE 8 Jan (DBe); Rushford ALLE 31 Jan (KS); arr BeSP, Elma ERIE, BufH 21 Feb.

Dunlin: 2 NFSP 13 Dec (PM); last WBSP 22 Dec (SBa); only reports.

Purple Snapper: 2, 5, 3 Buffalo NR 24, 29 Dec, 15 Feb (JJ, AHu, JRa, mob), good numbers.

American Woodcock: arr 2, 4 Grand I ERIE 12, 27 Feb (PM), early; Dayton CATT 23 Feb; 2 E Aurora ERIE 27 Feb; Jamestown CHAU 28 Feb.

Wilson's Snipe: Ischua CATT 1, 26 Jan, 3 Feb (JRe), has wintered at this location before; arr Grand I ERIE 27 Feb (PM), early.

Red Phalarope: Silver Creek CHAU 1, 5 Dec (GV); only report.

Black-legged Kittiwake: BeSP 10 Dec (BS); Barcelona Harbor CHAU 18 Dec (GB); Buffalo NR 15 Jan (PY); only reports.

Bonaparte's Gull: 1200 Silver Creek CHAU 8 Dec; max 2400 BeSP 12 Dec; 300, 600 Lewiston NR 13 Dec, 3 Feb.

Little Gull: Barcelona Harbor CHAU 1 Dec; 2 NFSP 2 Dec; Unity I NR 1 Jan; FNSP 29 Jan; max 3 Lewiston NR 4 Feb.

Herring Gull: max 1500 NFSP 3 Dec.

Iceland Gull: 1-2 NFSP 2-31 Dec; Krull CP 16 Dec; Evans ERIE 1 Jan; DH 6 Jan; PB 9 Jan; 10 NPP 21 Jan; max 13 DHSP 5 Feb (TK); Chautauqua ChauL 16 Feb; 2 WBSP 21 Feb. **"Thayer's" Iceland Gull:** 1, 1, 1 NFSP 25 Jan, 17, 18 Feb (JSt!, TJM, DSi, mob); different birds.

Lesser Black-backed Gull: 4 Barcelona Harbor CHAU 1 Dec; 6 Lewiston NR 3 Dec; 4 Cuba L ALLE 7 Dec; 3 Bemus Pt ChauL 21 Dec; 1, 2 DH 3, 27 Jan; max 10, 10 NFSP 20 Jan, 18 Feb; Stockton CHAU 28 Jan; 2 Chautauqua ChauL 16 Feb; Hamburg ERIE 23 Feb.

Glaucous Gull: Buffalo NR 1 Dec; DH 4, 11 Dec, 8 Jan, 7 Feb; 1, 2 NFSP 9, 11 Dec; WBSP

8 Jan; 2 NPP 21 Jan; Stockton CHAU 28 Jan; Chautauqua ChauL 16 Feb; BeSP 17 Feb; Hamburg ERIE 27 Feb.

Great Black-backed Gull: max 31 WBSP 21 Feb.

Red-throated Loon: 4, 1 Krull CP 16 Dec, 3 Jan; max 21 PB 12 Jan (AG); 3 GHSP 4 Feb.

Common Loon: 1-3 DH 2-31 Dec; max 4 Grand I NR 26 Dec; 2 BuSP 6 Jan; Celoron ChauL 30 Jan; 3 PG 31 Jan; PG 7 Feb; 2 NFSP 18 Feb; Olcott NIAG 28 Feb; more than usual in Jan, Feb.

Double-crested Cormorant: max 60 Buffalo NR 9 Dec.

Great Blue Heron: max 16 TNWR 25 Feb.

Black-crowned Night-Heron: 1-2 BufH 2 Dec thru (SS).

Black Vulture: max 12, 6 Lewiston NIAG 27 Dec, 27 Feb, regular location.

Turkey Vulture: 29 Newfane NIAG 24 Dec; 37 Lewiston NIAG 27 Dec; many arrivals in Feb.

Golden Eagle: INWR 12 Feb (SG ph!); Albion ORLE 27 Feb (DVL ph!), unexpected locations for winter.

Northern Harrier: max 2, 3, 3 Conewango CATT 13 Dec, 11 Jan, 10 Feb; max 3 JWWMA 27 Dec; max 3 Royalton NIAG 28 Jan; max 3 Krull CP 27 Feb.

American Goshawk: no reports.

Bald Eagle: max 8 INWR 12 Jan; max 8 Chaffee ERIE 21 Jan.

Red-shouldered Hawk: 94 reports in eBird, mostly Southern Tier; max 3 Busti CHAU 11 Feb.

Red-tailed Hawk: max 13 Middleport NIAG 27 Dec.

Rough-legged Hawk: reports from 10, 17, 14 locations Dec, Jan, Feb; max 3, 3 Conewango CATT 5 Jan, 26 Feb.

Snowy Owl: BufH 9 Dec (SS); only report.

Barred Owl: 105 eBird reports.

Long-eared Owl: 2 Appleton NIAG 6 Jan, 3 Feb; GHSP 26 Jan; only reports.

Short-eared Owl: 2, 1 Medina ORLE 6 Dec, 14 Feb; 1-3 Jamestown Airport CHAU 8 Dec - 3 Feb; 2 NF Airport NIAG 23 Dec, 3 Jan; JWWMA 27 Dec; 2 Conewango CATT 5 Jan, 10 Feb; 1, 2 INWR 7 Jan, 19 Feb; 2 Middleport NIAG 24 Feb; Alabama GENE 26 Feb; lower counts in mostly regular locations.

Northern Saw-whet Owl: Emery CP ERIE 29 Jan, 11, 13 Feb (CaC); Little Valley CATT 3-

12 Feb (GD); Ashford CATT 5-26 Feb (JRo); Forestville CHAU 21 Feb (GV); 1-2 BMAC 23-26 Feb (TK); Genesee CP GENE 24 Feb (BC); good showing.

Red-headed Woodpecker: 2 EvSP 30 Dec; LBSP 6 Jan; 2 Wendt Beach CP ERIE 7 Jan; Fredonia CHAU 31 Jan; FNSP 23 Feb; more winter reports than usual.

Yellow-bellied Sapsucker: 49 eBird reports; increasing in winter.

Eastern Phoebe: arr BufH 15 Feb (IC ph!), early; RWNP 27 Feb (CH).

Northern Shrike: reported from 15, 14, 17 locations in Dec, Jan, Feb.

American Crow: max 1600 Jamestown Airport CHAU 3 Feb.

Fish Crow: max 10, 10, 8 Tift NP 4 Dec, 11 Jan, 14 Feb.

Common Raven: 7 Boutwell Hill SF CHAU 14 Dec; max 11 NF Airport NIAG 3 Feb.

Horned Lark: 75 Warsaw WYOM 7 Jan; max 100 N Collins ERIE, max 100 Bethany GENE, 75 Yates ORLE 20 Jan; max 100 Middleport NIAG 21 Jan; 94 Royalton NIAG 17 Feb.

Tree Swallow: arr 2 INWR 28 Feb (AHa), early.

Ruby-crowned Kinglet: NFSP 11 Dec; Forestville CHAU 24 Dec; South P L ERIE 28 Dec; max 2 Chautauqua CHAU 9 Feb (TwL).

Bohemian Waxwing: no reports.

Cedar Waxwing: max 315 BWWT 1 Dec.

Winter Wren: 38 eBird reports; more than usual.

Marsh Wren: five Dec reports INWR & OOWMA.

Gray Catbird: Canadaway Creek WMA CHAU 5 Dec; Belfast ALLE 6 Dec, 3 Jan; BWWT 24 Dec; Tift NP 25 Dec; BuSP 16 Jan; Porter NIAG 1 Feb; Randolph CATT 3 Feb; BeSP 17 Feb; Somerset NIAG 17 Feb; Sturgeon Pt ERIE 20 Feb; GHSP 27 Feb; good showing.

Brown Thrasher: Arkwright CHAU 15 Jan (GV); BeSP 21 Jan (DSh); only reports.

Eastern Bluebird: 13 Dunkirk Airport CHAU 9 Dec; max 25 Middleport NIAG 27 Dec; 20 TRWMA 29 Dec; 13 East Aurora ERIE 30 Dec; good showing.

Hermit Thrush: 4, 5, 4 reports Dec, Jan, Feb; good showing.

American Robin: max 175 Somerset NIAG 10 Feb.

American Pipit: 1, 2 BufH 1, 8 Dec; max 9 Wendt Beach CP ERIE 19 Dec; Lyndonville NIAG 14 Jan; 3 Belfast ALLE 16 Jan (KS); Kiantone CHAU 19 Jan; BeSP 20 Jan, 17, 19 Feb; 2 CSWMA 20-21 Jan; 18 New Hudson ALLE 30 Jan (KS), impressive count; good showing.

Evening Grosbeak: no reports.

Pine Grosbeak: no reports.

House Finch: max 49 Medina ORLE 6 Jan.

Purple Finch: max 11 Newfane NIAG 24 Feb.

Common Redpoll: Jamestown CHAU 3 Feb; 2 BMAC 4 Feb; only reports.

Red Crossbill: Krull CP 16 Dec (JSt, RW); Buffalo ERIE 10 Jan (PY); max 9 HBWMA 28 Feb (KS).

White-winged Crossbill: 14 Keeney Swamp WMA ALLE 15 Dec (IC); 2, 1 Krull CP 16 Dec, 22-26 Feb (JSt, RW, PM); only reports.

Pine Siskin: 15 New Albion CATT 2 Dec; 36 East Aurora ERIE 30 Dec; max 40, 52 Jamestown CHAU 26 Jan, 17 Feb; 30 Randolph CATT 1 Feb; 20 Celoron CHAU 2 Feb.

American Goldfinch: max 108 INWR 22 Feb.

Lapland Longspur: Middleport NIAG 7 Dec; Warsaw WYOM 7 Jan; max 85, 14 Yates ORLE 20 Jan, 17 Feb (JSt); Dunkirk Airport CHAU, 2 N Collins ERIE 20 Jan; Kiantone CHAU 22 Jan; 3 Jamestown Airport CHAU 23 Jan; 2 Shelby ORLE 16 Feb; 8 Somerset NIAG 17 Feb; Wilson NIAG 22 Feb.

Snow Bunting: 140, 250 Yates ORLE 7 Dec, 21 Jan; 195 Alexander GENE 22 Dec; 200 Shelby ORLE 7 Jan; max 500 Wilson NIAG 17 Jan; 140 Kiantone CHAU 23 Jan.

Chipping Sparrow: Shelby ORLE 16, 17 Jan (CM); BMAC 21 Feb; only reports beyond Dec.

Field Sparrow: Belfast ALLE 5 Dec; Krull CP 16, 27 Dec; Lancaster ERIE 26 Dec; 2 Sheridan CHAU 30 Dec; Forestville CHAU 17 Jan; 3 Fillmore ALLE 25 Jan; 2 Pomfret CHAU 23 Feb; more than usual.

Fox Sparrow: RWNP 15-16 Dec; Darien GENE 15 Jan; Hamburg ERIE 19 Jan; WTSP 19 Feb; more than usual.

American Tree Sparrow: max 110 Royalton NIAG 17 Feb.

“OREGON” DARK-EYED JUNCO: Medina ORLE 5 Jan (CM ph!), rare.

White-crowned Sparrow: 4 Olcott NIAG 25 Dec; 3 Basom GENE 27 Dec; 2 Alexander GENE 31 Dec; max 8, 7 Portland CHAU 17 Jan, 18 Feb; 3 DH 21 Jan.

White-throated Sparrow: more than usual.

Swamp Sparrow: 4 RWNP 14 Dec; 4, 2 BMAC 23 Dec, 27 Jan; 3 BWWT 24 Dec; 4 INWR 28 Dec; 2 Randolph CATT 4 Jan; 2 Tiffi NP 16 Jan; 2 OOWMA 21 Jan; 2 BeSP 21 Jan; 2 Jamestown CHAU 25 Jan; good showing.

Eastern Towhee: Elma ERIE 31 Dec; Amherst ERIE 14 Jan; 2 Portland CHAU 15 Jan; Belfast ALLE 19 Jan; Villanova CHAU 19 Feb; more than usual.

Eastern Meadowlark: 3 Stockton CHAU 25 Jan (GV); 3 Yates ORLE 19 Feb; arr Rushford ALLE 29 Feb.

Baltimore Oriole: Clarence ERIE 1-9 Dec (KLL), continued from Nov.

Red-winged Blackbird: 36 Belfast ALLE 3 Jan; 20 Buffalo ERIE 17 Jan; 10 BusP 22 Jan; 15 Gowanda ERIE 22 Jan; 21 INWR 31 Jan;

more than usual Jan; arrivals in large numbers in late Feb.

Brown-headed Cowbird: max 80 Collins ERIE 20 Jan.

Rusty Blackbird: 5 Belfast ALLE 19 Jan; max 8 BuSP 22 Jan; Jamestown CHAU, Tonawanda ERIE 29 Feb.

Common Grackle: 4 Portland CHAU 28 Dec; BuSP 3 Jan; 2 Amherst ERIE, Shelby ORLE 14 Jan; BMAC 18 Jan; E Aurora ERIE 26 Jan; arrivals widespread by late Feb.

Common Yellowthroat: BWWT 23 Dec (JSo ph!); only report.

Palm Warbler: NFSP 9 Dec (MB ph!), late.

Yellow-rumped Warbler: 2 INWR 8 Dec; max 4 Krull CP 25 Dec; Kenmore ERIE 25 Dec; 2 Grand I ERIE 2 Jan; Forestville CHAU 26 Jan; NFSP 7 Feb; BuSP 8 Feb; 2 Lockport NIAG 17 Feb; 2 OOWMA 23 Feb.

Yellow-throated Warbler: Grand I ERIE 19 Dec - 2 Jan (CoC ph!), very rare for winter.

Rose-breasted Grosbeak: Wendt Beach CP ERIE 2 Dec (BM ph!), late.

REGION 2—GENESEE

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The meteorological winter of 2023-2024 was officially the warmest on record for Rochester, surpassing the winter of 1931-1932 by 0.4 °F. December 2023 was warm with back-to-back storm systems. Temperatures averaged 39.9°, 7.9° above average, ending as the second warmest December for Rochester (records go back to 1871). Just two days were recorded with below-average temperatures. The Region recorded four new record warm nightly minimums. Precipitation totaled 2.91", 0.24" above average; most of which fell as rain. The longest dry stretch was only two days on 15-16 December. The airport recorded a weak 5.3" of snow, most of which fell in two events on 6-7 December and 18-19 December.

January 2024 was exceptionally cloudy. January was also very mild, with temperatures averaging 30.1°, 3.9° above average. The month was divided into three distinct sections, starting mild, turning cold in the middle, and finishing mild. Temperatures turned colder on 13 January following the passage of back-to-back wind events and a cold front. Rochester was mostly spared from the lake effect machine of that weekend, but a foot of snow fell the following weekend across most of the Region. Precipitation totaled 4.18", 1.63" above average.

Snowfall totaled 25.6", just a couple of inches below average. The sun finally showed itself on the last day of the month.

February 2024 was the second warmest February ever, surpassed only by February 2017. Temperatures averaged 34.7°, 7.3° above average. The thermometer peaked at 73° on 27 February, tying the highest temperature ever recorded in Rochester during February (21 February 1997). The month's lowest temperature of 14° was the second warmest February monthly minimum ever, with only 1927 having a higher monthly minimum (16°). Four record highs were set in February. February was also a dry month. The Rochester airport recorded a measly 0.68" of precipitation. In fact, February 2024 was the driest month since May 2007. 18 days were completely precipitation-free. Snowfall measured 8.1", most of which fell in the middle of the month with the highest being 2.2" on 15 February.

Three Christmas Bird Counts (CBCs) were conducted with count circles contained entirely within Region 2. The Letchworth-Silver Lake CBC (LSLCBC) on 16 December recorded 82 species. The Rochester CBC (RCBC) on 17 December recorded 94 species (97 for count week). The Conesus-Hemlock CBC "Little Lakes" on 30 December recorded 84 species (85 for count week). New high counts or ties were: LSLCBC – Lesser Yellowlegs (1, new bird for the count), Carolina Wren (34), Eastern Bluebird (63); RCBC – Ruddy Duck (62), Red-bellied Woodpecker (228), Gray Catbird (3, tie), Fox Sparrow (1, tie), White-crowned Sparrow (16); CHCBC – Lesser Black-backed Gull (1, tie), Red-bellied Woodpecker (94).

The general impression of December and January, through solicited feedback, was that the mild temperatures contributed to above-average numbers of half-hardies. The snow in the middle part of January forced many of these half-hardies to the roadsides and feeders, giving greater insight into just how many were around.

February's species count (134) is tied for highest ever with 2021 (monthly totals start in 1974). Open country field birds were incredibly scarce without snowfall. Birders reported a decent scatter of other half hardies, although nothing strikingly above the baseline of birds already around from the earlier winter months.

The effort at the Hamlin Beach State Park Lakewatch dipped off in December, which was expected given the harsher conditions along the lakeshore. Among the rarer waterfowl included a Ross's Goose in the fields of Hamlin on 12-14 December. Andy Guthrie reported a female King Eider from Hamlin Beach on 11 December and two more females on 29 December. Jim Miles picked out a female King Eider from Rigneys Bluff on 23-24 January. Lori VanKirk reported a female King Eider at Sodus Point on 3 February. 60 reports showed this bird present through at least 25 February. Two Harlequin Ducks continued from November at Mill Creek Outlet in Webster Park throughout December, with one individual reported through 8 January. Additional scattered reports of Harlequin Duck included one past Hamlin Beach on 7 December, an adult male at Chimney Bluffs SP on 12 January, and another adult male at West Port Bay in Wayne County on 12-13 February. Ryan McGinty found an adult male **Tufted Duck** on Braddock Bay on 2 February, which was reported through 20 February.

Warmer temperatures kept ice levels low into January and February, consequently keeping more dabbling ducks around. Overwintering Gadwall continue to increase in numbers year after year, with a high count of 47 reported from Buck Pond on 6 January. Warmer temperatures and southerly winds in early February brought an elevated number of dabblers to the Region by the middle of the month, slightly early, with numbers of American Wigeon and Northern Pintail increasing, especially in the NMWMA.

Snow Goose flocks in the thousands were again found along the lake plain in western Monroe County and eastern Orleans County. Singular Ross's Geese were observed in several mixed goose flocks throughout the western lake plain. Cackling Geese were remarkably scarce, with only 20 reports in February and a maximum count of one on all 20 reports. Canada Goose numbers seemed down, especially into February.

The annual New York State Ornithological Association (NYSOA) winter waterfowl count was conducted on 9-21 January, with 14 January as the target date. Most species were slightly below average in Region 2, but Canada Goose set a record high of 32,513. Ross's Goose was a new species for the waterfowl count in Region 2.

Andy Guthrie tallied 646 Red-necked Grebes on 16 December from Hamlin Beach SP and counted more than 100 on four additional days after 16 December. Sarah Bacon reported a **Western Grebe** at Point Breeze on 8 January, which was reported through 13 January in waters belonging to both Region 1 and Region 2. The Western Grebe was also a new species for the NYSOA waterfowl count in Region 2. Pied-billed Grebes were slightly more abundant than normal this winter, surely a factor of the warmer temperatures and open water. Common Loon and Red-throated Loon seemed scarcer than normal, especially by February.

The large numbers of Sandhill Cranes in Montezuma stuck to Seneca County (*Kingbird* Region 3) this season. Remarkably, the **Purple Gallinule** found by Mitchell Barry in November continued through 3 January in the reeds on the north end of Braddock Bay, with the last reports occurring before a sharp decline in weather. A surprise came with a Black-crowned Night-Heron photographed at LaSalle's Landing Park on 23-24 February.

One to three Dunlin remained around Braddock Bay through 24 December. Robert Buckert captured a video of a Lesser Yellowlegs on the mudflats of Silver Lake on the LSLCBC; a very late date for this species anywhere in New York State. Braddock Bay's East Spit hosted Purple Sandpiper on and off throughout December, usually one individual, but Andy Guthrie and Jim Miles recorded two on the RCBC and Karl Schmidt photographed four on 19 December. Three Killdeer were reported in January, including one report by Bill Howe of one being picked apart by a Merlin near Honeoye Lake. Dave Tetlow reported four Wilson's Snipes at a traditional overwintering location in the Town of Ogden. One or two Purple Sandpipers were consistently reported starting on 9 January from Sodus Point, seen through 21 February. Killdeer arrived consistently on 22 February for the spring. The first American Woodcock of spring migration was reported on 27 February—early.

Gull numbers were light this season and even dismal by the end of February, surely a factor of the warmer temperatures and lack of ice. Region 2 received its

first Glaucous Gull of the fall/winter on 19 December, from the East Spit—very late—and the only individual reported for the rest of the month. The eBird download for Glaucous Gull for January and February contained only a handful reports, likely the same few individuals. Analyzing the locations, timing, and ages of Iceland Gull reports yielded at least nine individuals in January and five in February—mostly adults. There were no reports of rarer gulls, such as Little Gull or Black-legged Kittiwake.

Neal Reilly observed a flyover Golden Eagle in the Town of Rush on 6 December. Mike Gullo photographed a flyover Golden Eagle in Williamson on 26 December. Overwintering Bald Eagle numbers built around Irondequoit Bay, growing from a maximum of 14 in January to 36 by early February. Dave Tetlow reported two different **American Goshawks**; one was seen from Buck Pond in Greece on 1 January and the second in the Town of Lyons on 5 January. The winter of 2023-2024 fared slightly better than the winter of 2022-2023 for Rough-legged Hawks, with 10 individuals spread throughout the Region in December, 10 in January, and 14 more in February (including four migrants from the Hawk Watch). Volunteers staffed the Braddock Bay Hawk Watch platform on 9, 23, and 27-29 February and tallied 158 raptors between those days. 25 Bald Eagles counted from the hawk watch on 9 February was noteworthy. Four migrant Golden Eagles were observed in February, with the first on 18 February.

Last winter was dismal for Snowy Owls, so it was much to the surprise of many when one showed up on 24 December on the piers of Sodus Point. Northern Saw-whet Owls were found on the CHCBC on the south end of Hemlock Lake on the morning of 30 December and reported through the end of February. The winter of 2023-2024 seemed above average for reports of overwintering Northern Saw-whet Owls, with birds reported at multiple spots throughout the western Finger Lakes and spots just beyond the Region 2 boundaries.

Passerine numbers and diversity were low in December, contributed to by the poor birding conditions and lack of snow. The saving grace for December was that it was to be a good season for Northern Shrike, with at least six individuals reported Regionwide. Overwintering Yellow-bellied Sapsucker continues to become a more common phenomenon locally, with 23 unique individuals reported throughout the Region, indifferent to inland or near the lakeshore. Andy Guthrie reported a Baltimore Oriole from Newco Drive in Hamlin on 7 December, a species that borders half-hardiness and genuine rarity in winter. Doug Bassett reported three Rusty Blackbirds from Taylor Marsh on the Honeoye Creek on the CHCBC, another borderline rarity for the winter season. Dave Tetlow and Andy Guthrie reported an Orange-crowned Warbler near Hogan Point Road on 3 December.

Observers reported 10 individual Northern Shrikes in January. Interestingly, a reliable report of three Northern Shrikes in one tree came from the Nations Road IBA. With snow cover essentially restricted to the middle of the month, there were fewer reports of Snow Bunting and Lapland Longspur, with maximums of 200 and five, respectively. The extremely mild start to the month resulted in elevated reports of half-hardies such as Ruby-crowned Kinglet (3 individuals), Marsh Wren (1), Gray Catbird (12), Brown Thrasher (1), Hermit Thrush (25), American Pipit (9), Fox Sparrow (6), Eastern Towhee (3), Chipping Sparrow (2), Eastern

Meadowlark (6), Orange-crowned Warbler (1), and Pine Warbler (1). Chris Wood reported a singular Common Redpoll from the Cook Road and Redman Road area in Hamlin on 13 January, the only winter finch report for the entire month. Despite the mild conditions, there were no reports of large flocks of blackbirds within the Region. A true surprise came out of Perinton on 7-25 January when Mike Tetlow photographed a female Rose-breasted Grosbeak at his feeders.

At least 10 Northern Shrikes continued into February. Birds such as Snow Bunting and Lapland Longspur were exceptionally scarce. A lack of snow cover meant these species were not restricted to foraging alongside plowed roads—the bias of road birding. However, no reports of large (100+) flyover flocks of Snow Buntings indicates there very well might have been fewer present. Most field bird observations occurred from 16-19 February, during a snowfall event. The mild conditions allowed many of the half-hardies from January to continue. Counts of half-hardies were: Ruby-crowned Kinglet (3), Marsh Wren (1), Gray Catbird (5), Hermit Thrush (13), American Pipit (2), Chipping Sparrow (1), Fox Sparrow (1), Field Sparrow (9), Savannah Sparrow (2), Eastern Towhee (1), and Yellow-rumped Warbler (~24). Five Common Redpolls, photographed, were a surprise at Owl Woods on 3 February as were two Red Crossbills at Letchworth State Park on 13 February.

CONTRIBUTORS

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Many other observers contributed eBird data, but all cannot be listed here.

ABBREVIATIONS

BB – Braddock Bay, T Greece, MONR; **BB-ES** or **WS** – East Spit or West Spit at the mouth of Braddock Bay; **CHCBC** – Conesus-Hemlock CBC 30 Dec; **CL** – Conesus L, LIVI; **DEP** – Durand-Eastman P, MONR; **ED** – off Edgemere Dr, G; **HBSP** – Hamlin Beach SP, MONR; **IBO** – Irondequoit Bay Outlet, MONR; **IB** – Irondequoit Bay; **IB-S**, Irondequoit Bay, south end including LaSalle Landing P area; **IB-W** – west side of Irondequoit Bay including some parklands; **LSLCBC** – Letchworth-Silver Lake CBC on 16 Dec; **LSP** – Letchworth SP, LIVI, WYOM; **MP** – Mendon Ponds P, MONR; **NMWMA** – Northern Montezuma WMA, T Savannah, WAYN; **NMWMA (CR)** – Carncross Rd area flooded fields; **NMWMA (VDS)** – woods and wetlands along Van Dyne Spoor Rd; **RCBC** – Rochester CBC on 17 Dec; **SPt** – Sodus Pt, WAYN; **TCEA** – Twin Cedars Environmental Area at Avon DEC offices, LIVI.

Snow Goose: max 20,000 31 Dec T Bloomfield.
Ross's Goose: max 1 occasional to L Ontario plain all season.
Greater White-fronted Goose: TCEA 7 Dec (BCar) – only rep.
Cackling Goose: max 12 T Liecester 19 Dec.
Canada Goose: max 6,300 TCEA 3 Jan.
Mute Swan: max 200 BB-WS 21 Jan.
Trumpeter Swan: max 50 NMWMA (VDS) 27 Feb.
Tundra Swan: max 1,000 NMWMA 26 Jan.
Northern Shoveler: max 12 NMWMA (CR) 18 Feb.
Gadwall: max 60 BB-WS 11 Feb.
American Wigeon: max 300 NMWMA (VDS) 27 Feb.
Mallard: max 950 NMWMA (CR) 14 Jan.
American Black Duck: Max 167 CL 15 Jan.
Northern Pintail: max 1,500 NMWMA (CR) 23 Feb.
Green-winged Teal: max 20 NMWMA (VDS) 27 Feb.
Canvasback: max 220 BB 7 Feb (A Garland).
Redhead: max 3,809 CL 15 Jan.
Ring-necked Duck: max 832 TCEA 2 Jan.
Tufted Duck: ad m BB Feb 2-20 (RMc + mob).
Greater Scaup: max 270 BB 8 Feb.
Lesser Scaup: max 295 BB 2 Feb.
King Eider: f HBSP 11 Dec (AGu); 2 f HBSP 29 Dec (AGu); f Rigney Bluffs MONR 23-24 (JMi); f SPt 3-25 Feb (LV).
Harlequin Duck: ad m & ad f 1 Dec thru 8 Jan T Webster; HBSP 7 Dec (AGu); ad m Chimney Bluffs SP 12 Jan; ad m West Port Bay WAYN 12-23 Feb.
Surf Scoter: max 8 HBSP 7 Dec.
White-winged Scoter: max 175 SPt 10 Feb.
Black Scoter: max 10 SPt 10 Feb.
Long-tailed Duck: max 1,200 SPt 31 Jan.
Bufflehead: max 102 Silver L WYOM 16 Dec.
Common Goldeneye: max 270 BB 2-3 Feb.

Hooded Merganser: max 83 CL 15 Jan.
Common Merganser: max 643 IB 17 Jan.
Red-breasted Merganser: max 2,561 IB 17 Jan.
Ruddy Duck: max 62 Long Pd T Greece 17 Jan.
Pied-billed Grebe: max 4 TCEA 26 Dec.
Horned Grebe: max 23 Bear Creek Harbor T Ontario 7 Feb.
Red-necked Grebe: max 646 HBSP 16 Dec (AGu.).
WESTERN GREBE: Point Breeze 8-13 Jan (SBa + mob).

Virginia Rail: max 4 MP 21 Jan, high.
American Coot: max 130 IB 9 Jan.
PURPLE GALLINULE: imm m BB 26 Nov thru 3 Jan (MB + mob).

Sandhill Crane: max 42 NMWMA (VDS) 2 Dec.

Killdeer: scattered winter reps., arr 22 Feb.

Dunlin: last BB 25 Dec.
Purple Sandpiper: max 4 BB 19 Dec (KS); consistent 1-2 SPt Jan 9 thru 21 Feb.
American Woodcock: arr 27 Feb T Mendon & T Hamlin.
Wilson's Snipe: 4 T Ogden 5 Jan.
Lesser Yellowlegs: Silver L WYOM 16 Dec (RBu) – very late.

Bonaparte's Gull: max 203 IB-S 12 Dec.
Little Gull: no reports.
Ring-billed Gull: max 2,670 SPt 19 Feb.
Herring Gull: max 1,400 Buck Pd T Greece 3 Feb.
Iceland Gull: low numbers.
Glaucous Gull: very low numbers.
Great Black-backed Gull: max 19 Bear Creek Harbor T Ontario 31 Jan.

Red-throated Loon: max 71 HBSP 16 Dec.
Common Loon: max 6 L Ontario shore, throughout season.

Double-crested Cormorant: max 46 IB – Newport Marina, 4 Dec.

Great Egret: last T Byron 26 Dec.
Black-crowned Night-Heron: imm IB-S 23-24 Feb (CD).

Turkey Vulture: max 37 T Livonia 5 Jan.

Golden Eagle: T Rush 6 Dec; T Williamson 26 Dec; four after 18 Feb (Lakeshore).
American Goshawk: Buck Pd T Greece 1 Jan (DT); T Lyons 5 Dec (DT).
Bald Eagle: max 36 IB-S 22 Feb.
Rough-legged Hawk: ~10 indiv Dec, ~10 indiv Jan, ~14 indiv Feb.

Snowy Owl: SPt 24 Dec (MGU + 3 others).
Short-eared Owl: max 7 Nations Road IBA T Avon 16 Jan.
Northern Saw-whet Owl: multiple spots late Dec thru Feb, especially western Finger Lakes.

Red-headed Woodpecker: imm Nations Road IBA T Avon Dec thru early Feb.
Yellow-bellied Sapsucker: 23 indiv Dec, trailing off in Jan & Feb.

Northern Shrike: 6 indiv Dec, 10 indiv Jan, 10 indiv Feb – Regionwide.

American Crow: max 19,750 RCBC Crow Roost Count 17 Dec.
Fish Crow: max 25 IBO 25 Feb (GLaw) – high.
Common Raven: max 12 T Rush 13 Jan.

Horned Lark: max 200 Jones Bridge Rd. T Mount Morris 7 Dec.

Ruby-crowned Kinglet: 3 indiv Jan; 3 indiv Feb.

Cedar Waxwing: max 142 Beechwood SP 3 Jan.

Marsh Wren: 3 indiv Dec, 1 indiv Jan, 1 indiv Feb.

Gray Catbird: 12 indiv Jan, 5 indiv Feb.
Brown Thrasher: MP 15 Jan (TD).

Hermit Thrush: 25 indiv Jan, 13 indiv Feb.
American Robin: max 200 DEP 22 Dec, very low.

American Pipit: max 4 T Portage 20 Jan.

Common Redpoll: max 5 BB Owl Woods 3 Feb.
Red Crossbill: 2 LSP 13 Feb (KS).
Pine Siskin: max 95 HBSP 8 Dec.
American Goldfinch: max 80 Lagrange Rd. WYOM 5 Jan.

Lapland Longspur: max 19 HBSP 15 Dec.
Snow Bunting: max 450 Jones Bridge Rd. 7 Dec.

Fox Sparrow: 1 indiv Dec; 6 indiv Jan; 1 indiv Feb.
American Tree Sparrow: max 60 Nations Road IBA T Avon 21 Jan.
Dark-eyed Junco: max 75 T Greece 17 Dec.
White-crowned Sparrow: max 26 Genesee Valley Greenway Chandler Rd. 23 Dec.
White-throated Sparrow: max 31 T Mount Morris 16 Dec.
Eastern Towhee: 3 indiv Jan; 1 indiv Feb.

Eastern Meadowlark: max 6 Nations Road IBA T Avon 21 Jan.
Baltimore Oriole: ad m Newco Dr. T Hamlin 7 Dec (AGU).
Red-winged Blackbird: max 1,400 ED 7 Dec.
Brown-headed Cowbird: max 250 Quaker Rd. T Wheatland 3 Dec.
Rusty Blackbird: max 10 Quaker Rd. T Wheatland 3 Dec.
Common Grackle: max 110 T Genesee 20 Jan, low.

Orange-crowned Warbler: Hogan Pt T Greece 3 Dec & 2 Jan (DT, AGU).
Pine Warbler: Reed Rd T Bergen 23 Dec thru 18 Feb (MM-C).
Yellow-rumped Warbler: max 15 Rix Hill Rd T Livonia 30 Dec.
Rose-breasted Grosbeak: ad f T Perinton 7-25 January (M&JT).

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REGION 3—FINGER LAKES

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At Ithaca, the winter of December 2023 through February 2024 was warmer than normal. December and January were wetter, and February was drier than normal. Snowfall, all three months, was below normal, although January's was only slightly below.

The average low temperature in December was 30.1° F, 8.1° above normal. The average high was 42.2°, 6° above normal. A total of 4.6" of precipitation fell, 2.03" above normal. The maximum snow depth was 2", attained 11 December. The average snow depth for the month was 0.2". Measurable snow cover was only present on five days.

In January, the average low temperature was 22.3°, 7.7° above normal. The average high was 33.3°, 2.3° above normal. Total precipitation was 4.09", 1.85" more than normal. Total snowfall was 16.1", just 0.5" less than normal. The maximum snow depth was 6", accumulated on 8 January. Average daily snow depth was 1.7". Snow cover was present on 16 days.

February was often springlike. The average low temperature was 22.1°, 7.0° above normal. The average high temperature was 40.4°, 7.3° above normal. Only 0.95" of precipitation fell, 1.03" less than normal. Total snowfall was 4", 10.5" less than normal. The maximum snow depth was 2", present 17-19 February. Average daily snow depth was 0.3" and measurable snow cover was present on just those three days.

Interesting goose reports included several of single Ross's Geese including Chemung County's second record. Two Greater White-fronted Geese made appearances in Waterloo, Seneca Falls, and Canandaigua from late December through mid-January. Six were at Montezuma NWR in early to mid-February. The single report of Brant was of a small number in the Town of Owasco in early January.

The mild temperatures allowed dabbling ducks to linger on smaller waterbodies. A good example was the flock of Green-winged Teal on a small pond in Union Springs. Wood Ducks were reported from four locations. The group of five in the Town of Potter in late February was probably a flock of early spring migrants.

The mild weather also allowed the maximum count of Ring-necked Ducks to occur at Montezuma NWR in mid-January. The continued mild weather in February allowed the *Aythya* numbers to peak in the middle of the month. These included a high count of Redheads. Among the *Aythya* flocks was at least one Tufted Duck on Cayuga Lake for most of the winter with February appearances on Seneca Lake. Also, among the *Aythya* flocks were several interesting hybrids of various species including a Tufted Duck x scaup sp. hybrid.

A Harlequin Duck was on Skaneateles Lake in mid-December. All three scoter species were reported, although the reports included only two of Surf Scoter

and one of Black Scoter. Reports of small numbers of Long-tailed Duck were numerous.

Many Hooded Mergansers lingered all winter throughout the Region. There was a high count of Red-breasted Mergansers at Aurora in early February. Despite the mild winter, Pied-billed Grebes were scarce and because of the mild weather, as were Red-necked Grebes which only show up in numbers when it is cold enough for widespread freezing of the Great Lakes.

The mild winter can also be credited for the numerous reports of Killdeer, the December occurrence of American Woodcock and Wilson's Snipe, and the arrival of American Woodcock in early February. High counts of American Woodcock came from two locations in Tompkins County in late February.

A Bonaparte's Gull was at Sampson State Park in early December and a couple more were on Cayuga Lake in mid-December. The only Glaucous Gulls were one at Van Cleef Lake and another at Stevenson Road Compost Piles, both in mid-January. Also at Stevenson Road Compost Piles was a Herring x Glaucous Gull hybrid through the middle of February. And it was here that Kiegan Case and Gwen Gallagher found the Region's first and the state's second **Glaucous-winged Gull** in early February. (See species account for details.) A high count of Lesser Black-backed Gulls was at Stewart Park in late February.

Although not records, an estimated 1000 Sandhill Cranes in mid-December and a count of 27 Great Blue Herons in mid-February are noteworthy. Certainly weather-related were the two reports of Great Egret in December.

Northern Harriers and Short-eared Owls hunted many fields in the Region. All five Golden Eagle reports came from Tompkins County. Two Northern Goshawks took advantage of a chicken farm in the Town of Newfield. The maximum count of Red-tailed Hawks was low and Rough-legged Hawks seemed scarce. The mild weather may have allowed members of both species to linger farther north. The pair of Peregrine Falcons that nest at Taughannock Falls State Park were seen in the area in December and February. Single Long-eared Owls were heard calling in Tompkins County in early January and in Seneca County through most of February.

Many observers enjoyed the high count of two Red-headed Woodpeckers at Cayuga Lake State Park through most of the winter. The only woodpecker with a high count was Pileated Woodpecker with six at Bear Swamp State Forest.

A great many songbirds took advantage of the mild winter to stay in the Region. Lingering passerines included several Eastern Phoebes, Ruby-crowned Kinglets, Marsh Wrens, Gray Catbirds, Hermit Thrushes, American Pipits, Chipping, Field, White-crowned, Savannah, and Swamp Sparrows, Eastern Towhees, various blackbirds, and two Brown Thrashers.

Resident songbird species with high counts were Blue Jay, Tufted Titmouse, Golden-crowned Kinglet, White-breasted Nuthatch, and Carolina Wren. Largish flocks of Red-winged Blackbirds, Brown-headed Cowbirds, Rusty Blackbirds, and Common Grackles appeared in late January, apparently taking advantage of the mild weather to stage a very early migration. Among them was a Yellow-headed Blackbird. An Eastern Meadowlark also arrived early on 28 February.

Winter finches were all scarce except for good numbers of Pine Siskins. Red Crossbills were present all winter in the Town of Van Etten but were otherwise

scarce. No one reported Evening Grosbeaks, Pine Grosbeaks, or White-winged Crossbills. The lone Common Redpoll was heard calling as it flew over Summerhill State Forest.

The Region had several interesting warbler reports including two that were first winter records for the Region—a Northern Parula at the Ithaca Farmers Market in late December to early January and a Wilson’s Warbler at Sapsucker Woods on the Ithaca Christmas Bird Count on New Year’s Day. Other warblers were Common Yellowthroats at three locations, Yellow-rumped Warblers scattered around the Region, including several reports from the Ithaca area, and a Yellow-throated Warbler in the Town of Phelps on New Year’s Day.

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ABBREVIATIONS

CLSP – Cayuga L SP; **CygH** – Cayuga Heights; **CygL** – Cayuga L; **HH** – Hog Hole, TOMP; **IFM** – Ithaca Farmers Market, TOMP; **ITA** – Ithaca Tompkins Airport, TOMP; **MNWR** – Montezuma NWR; **QCM** - Queen Catharine Marsh, SCHU; **SavM** – Savannah Mucklands, SENE; **SLSP** – Seneca L SP; **SRCP** – Stevenson Rd Compost Piles, TOMP; **StP** – Stewart P, TOMP; **TCar** – T Caroline, TOMP; **TDry** – T Dryden, TOMP; **TFay** – T Fayette, SENE; **Tlth** – T Ithaca, TOMP; **TLan** – T Lansing, TOMP; **TOv** – T Ovid, SENE; **TPhe** – T Phelps, ONTA; **TSF** – T Seneca Falls, SENE; **TTyr** – T Tyre, SENE; **TUly** – T Ulysses, TOMP; **TVE** – T Van Etten, CHEM.

Snow Goose: max 80,000 TOv 13 Dec.
Ross's Goose: TIth 6 Dec; MNWR 10 Dec; Deans Cove State Marine P 22 Dec; T Erin CHEM 1 Jan; StP 10 Jan; Northeast College of Health Sciences SENE 12 Jan; arr TOv 12-13 Feb.
Snow x Ross's Goose: Waterloo 18 Dec (SR, ph).
Greater White-fronted Goose: max 6 MNWR 3-11 Feb.
Brant: 5 T Owasco CAYU 10 Jan (RF!).
Cackling Goose: max 14 Van Cleef L SENE 22 Dec.
Canada Goose: max 38,500 TOv 27 Feb.
Mute Swan: max 40 TFay 17 Feb.
Trumpeter Swan: max 52 N Montezuma WMA 10 Feb (KaP), high.
Tundra Swan: max 1500 SavM 3 Feb.
Wood Duck: Allan H Treman State Marine P TOMP 14 Dec; Eldridge P CHEM 1 Jan thru; 2 TVE 7 Jan; 1-2 Mud Lock CAYU 13-22 Jan; 2 SavM 10 Feb; arr & max 5 T Potter YATE 23 Feb.
Northern Shoveler: max 20 MNWR 28 Feb.
Gadwall: max 50 Factory Street Pd CAYU 21 Jan.
Eurasian Wigeon: 2 MNWR 21 Feb (LCB, AP!).
American Wigeon: max 155 N Mill Pd CAYU 27 Dec.
Mallard: max 2300 SavM 10 Feb.
American Black Duck: max 250 MNWR 22 Dec.
Northern Pintail: arr 20 SavM 2 Feb (KS, DW), early; max 1010 SavM 10 Feb.
Green-winged Teal: max 18 N Mill Pd CAYU 2 Jan.
Canvasback: max 12,000 CLSP 17 Feb.
Redhead: max 35,000 CLSP 17 Feb (JM!, LSA), high.
Canvasback x Redhead (hybrid): CygL TOMP 14-19 Jan (MFis!, JM, ph).
Ring-necked Duck: max 1800 MNWR 14 Jan.
Redhead x Ring-necked Duck (hybrid): 1-2 CygL TOMP 7 Dec-19 Jan (mob, ph).
Tufted Duck: CygL TOMP 23 Dec-27 Jan (mob, ph); Seneca L SENE 3 Feb (Afa, ph); Perry Pt YATE 3-4 Feb (JM,ph; LSA).
Greater Scaup: max 1500 CLSP 17 Feb.
Lesser Scaup: max 2500 CLSP 17 Feb.
Redhead x scaup sp. (hybrid): CygL TOMP 19-27 Jan (JM).
Ring-necked Duck x scaup sp. (hybrid): CygL TOMP 19 Jan (JM!).
Tufted Duck x scaup sp. (hybrid): CygL CAYU 24 Dec (LJ, ph); CygL TOMP 11-19 Jan (mob, ph).
Harlequin Duck: Skaneateles L CAYU 20 Dec (JM).

Surf Scoter: 2 SLSP 3 Dec; 3 SLSP 14 Dec.
White-winged Scoter: max 56 CygL CAYU 13 Jan.
Black Scoter: 1-5 SLSP 2-14 Dec.
Long-tailed Duck: max 12 Canandaigua L ONTA 27 Jan; 12 Allan H Treman State Marine P TOMP 27 Jan.
Bufflehead: max 155 CygL CAYU 13 Jan.
Common Goldeneye: max 700 Aurora High Banks CAYU 13 Jan.
Hooded Merganser: max 80 HH 24 Jan.
Common Merganser: max 1000 SLSP 22 Jan.
Red-breasted Merganser: max 350 Aurora Bay Boathouse CAYU 3 Feb (S. Anthony, CT-H!), high.
Ruddy Duck: max 43 Newark Res ONTA 17 Dec.
Wild Turkey: max 52 TCar 10 Jan.
Ruffed Grouse: max 7 Ridgeway Road Rail Trail 15 Dec.
Ring-necked Pheasant: max 6 TFay 15 Jan.
Pied-billed Grebe: max 3 Keuka L YATE; 3 HH, low.
Horned Grebe: max 11 Long Pt SP 23 Feb.
Red-necked Grebe: max 2 E Shore P TOMP 7 Jan; Seneca L SENE 30 Jan-4 Feb; Long Pt SP 23 Feb.
Eared Grebe: CygL CAYU 27-28 Dec (JM!).
Rock Pigeon: max 200 T Canandaigua ONTA 30 Dec; 200 TDry 6 Jan.
Mourning Dove: max 100 T Lodi SENE 8 Dec.
American Coot: max 350 CLSP 2 Dec.
Sandhill Crane: max 1000 MNWR 13 Dec (JGo!).
Killdeer: arr T Thurston STEU 9 Feb; max 5 Tileyard Rd Pds ONTA 28 Feb.
American Woodcock: last TCar 9-16 Dec; arr ITA 7 Feb; max 4 Volcano Wetlands TOMP 26 Feb (CCE, CKJ!); 4 ITA 27 Feb (GG, ER!), high.
Wilson's Snipe: last Mt Pleasant TOMP 18 Dec (CuH, DrW!), late.
Bonaparte's Gull: Sampson SP 3 Dec; Hibiscus Harbor CAYU 13 Jan; 2 CygL TOMP 14-15 Jan.
Ring-billed Gull: max 2650 TOv 26 Feb.
Herring Gull: max 3500 StP 17 Jan.
Iceland Gull: max 3 SRCP 10 Feb.
Lesser Black-backed Gull: max 15 StP 25 Feb (JM!), high.

GLAUCOUS-WINGED GULL: SRCP 4-5 Feb (KC, GG!, ph), first Reg record; apparently same bird from R9 in Jan, 2nd state record.

Glaucous Gull: Van Cleef L SENE 17-22 Jan; SRCP 17-24 Jan.

Herring x Glaucous Gull (hybrid): SRCP 6-21 Feb (mob, ph).

Great Black-backed Gull: max 150 StP 17 Jan.

Red-throated Loon: Holiday Harbour ONTA 10-15 Dec; HH 13-17 Dec; Sheldrake Pt SENE 25-30 Dec; max 2 Ladoga P TOMP 13 Jan.

Common Loon: max 22 Cornell University 11 Dec.

Double-crested Cormorant: max 32 TOv 19 Feb.

Great Blue Heron: max 27 Frontenac Pt CAYU 16 Feb.

Great Egret: Elmira Dam 5 Dec (BO, ph); T Addison STEU 16 Dec (JO!).

Black Vulture: max 4 Ithaca 4 Dec-5 Feb; 4 SRCP 13 Dec-15 Feb; 4 TOv 27 Feb.

Turkey Vulture: max 50 TULY 14 Jan.

Golden Eagle: Ithaca 11 Dec; Tlth 1 Jan; Sapsucker Woods TOMP 9 Feb; Sweedler-Lick Brook Pres TOMP 20 Feb; Fidlers Pd TOMP 25 Feb.

Northern Harrier: max 13 TPhe 3 Dec.

Sharp-shinned Hawk: max 2 MNWR 27 Dec.

Northern Goshawk: max 2 T Newfield TOMP 5 Jan (fide DH, ph), high.

Bald Eagle: max 20 SavM 2 Feb.

Red-tailed Hawk: max 10 T Lindley STEU 16 Dec, low.

Rough-legged Hawk: max 2 Willard WMA SENE 24 Jan; 2 TULY 27 Jan; 2 T Bath STEU 23 Feb.

Great Horned Owl: max 3 T Waterloo SENE 30 Dec.

Barred Owl: max 3 T Baldwin CHEM 23 Jan; 3 T Baldwin CHEM 20 Feb.

Long-eared Owl: TOMP 3 Jan (S. Yong!); SENE 12-23 Feb (RSt!, mob!).

Short-eared Owl: max 16 TPhe 7 Jan-19 Feb.

Northern Saw-whet Owl: max 3 T Newfield TOMP 11 Feb.

Red-headed Woodpecker: max 2 CLSP 22 Dec-24 Feb (mob, ph), high.

Red-bellied Woodpecker: max 10 Ellis Hollow Pres TOMP 14 Dec; 10 CygH 1 Jan.

Yellow-bellied Sapsucker: max 2 Kashong Conservation Area TOMP 9 Feb.

Downy Woodpecker: max 16 TDry 1 Jan; 16 CygH 1 Jan.

Hairy Woodpecker: max 10 TDry 1 Jan.

Northern Flicker: max 12 TTyr 24 Dec.

Pileated Woodpecker: max 6 Bear Swamp State Forest CAYU 16 Dec (MDM!), high.

Merlin: max 2 The Parkway TOMP 7-25 Feb; 2 Genung Nature Pres TOMP 6 Dec; 2 Tareyton P TOMP 26 Feb.

Peregrine Falcon: max 2 Taughannock Falls SP 4 Feb; 2 TULY 17 Feb.

Eastern Phoebe: Beebe L TOMP 9 Dec (DB!); Taughannock Falls SP 26 Dec (JSe); HH 5 Jan (JGe); Cornell University 21 Jan (JSa, ph); Dryden L TOMP 4 Feb (JeC!).

Blue Jay: max 60 T Danby TOMP 31 Dec (RR!), high.

American Crow: max 60,000 Auburn 10 Feb.

Fish Crow: max 18 Tlth 9 Feb.

Common Raven: max 19 TCar 7 Feb.

Black-capped Chickadee: max 112 CygH 1 Jan.

Tufted Titmouse: max 46 CygH 1 Jan (BiH, KR!), high.

Horned Lark: max 254 TPhe 29 Jan.

Ruby-crowned Kinglet: max 4 IFM 25-27 Dec.

Golden-crowned Kinglet: max 24 Hammond Hill State Forest TOMP 2 Dec (Cce, CKJ!), high.

Cedar Waxwing: max 200 QCM 31 Dec.

Red-breasted Nuthatch: max 9 Roy H Park Pres TOMP 1 Jan.

White-breasted Nuthatch: max 32 CygH 1 Jan (BiH, KR), high.

Brown Creeper: max 6 TVE 26 Jan.

Winter Wren: max 3 QCM 31 Dec.

Marsh Wren: max 2 MNWR 16 Dec (mob!), high.

Carolina Wren: max 14 Cayuga In TOMP 1 Jan (PA), high.

Gray Catbird: max 2 Lighthouse Pt Natural Area TOMP 17 Dec (JGa!), high.

Brown Thrasher: TCar 2-14 Jan (MWi, ph); TDry 26 Feb (TH!).

Northern Mockingbird: max 4 TFay 30 Dec.

PHOTO GALLERY
Winter 2023-24



Glaucous-winged Gull, Newburg Waterfront, Orange, 20 Jan 2024, © Bruce Nott.



MacGillivray's Warbler, Riverdale, *Bronx*, 23 Dec 2023, © Patrick Horan.



"Audubon's" Yellow-rumped Warbler, Jones Beach, *Nassau*, here 26 Feb 2024,
© Jeanne Cimorelli.



Townsend's Warbler, Anson Road, *Broome*, 24 Dec 2023, © David Nicosia.



Black-throated Gray Warbler, Fort de la Presentation, *St. Lawrence*, 21 Dec 2023, © Ari Weiss.



Common x Barrow's Goldeneye (hybrid), Crown Point State Historic Site, *Essex*, 12 Feb 2024, © Derek Rogers.



Common x Barrow's Goldeneye (hybrid), Farmers Turnpike, *Ulster*, 26 Jan 2024, © Karen Maloy Brady.

This hybrid type was reported from six different Regions during this winter season.

European Starling: max 3000 T Waterloo
SENE 1 Feb.

Eastern Bluebird: max 25 QCM 31 Dec.
Hermit Thrush: max 2 TDry 1 Jan.
American Robin: max 600 ITA 6 Feb.

House Sparrow: max 70 Ithaca 30 Dec, low.

American Pipit: max 43 Salt Pt Natural Area
TOMP 7 Jan (TB!), high.

House Finch: max 67 TOv 7 Jan-26 Feb.
Purple Finch: max 16 TVE 27 Feb.
Common Redpoll: Summerhill State Forest
CAYU 30 Dec (JM).
Red Crossbill: max 20 TVE 26 Jan.
Pine Siskin: max 300 Bosque Neimi TOMP 24
Dec; 300 Bosque Neimi TOMP 23 Feb.
American Goldfinch: max 167 TDry 1 Feb.

Lapland Longspur: max 3 TFay 18-20 Jan; 3
TPhe 18 Feb.
Snow Bunting: max 250 TFay 5 Feb.

Chipping Sparrow: IFM 24 Dec - 5 Jan;
CygH 1 Jan; Newman Municipal Golf Course
TOMP 31 Jan; TPhe 1-4 Feb; T Manchester
ONTA 18 Feb.
Field Sparrow: max 6 Tlan 18 Feb (JM),
high.
Fox Sparrow: arr 2 TCar 21 Feb (EM-G!),
high.
American Tree Sparrow: max 100 Seneca
Meadows Wetland Pres 2 Dec.
Dark-eyed Junco: max 93 CygH TOMP 1 Jan.
White-crowned Sparrow: max 6 Tlan 18
Feb.

White-throated Sparrow: max 50 TDry 23
Jan (CCe, CKJ!), high.
Savannah Sparrow: max 6 Tlan 18 Feb (AM,
DN!), high.
Song Sparrow: max 16 QCM 27 Jan.
Swamp Sparrow: max 5 Ridgeway Rd Rail
Trail TOMP 15 Dec; 5 Dryden L TOMP 6 Jan;
5 Sperr Memorial P CHEM 5 Feb.
Eastern Towhee: max 2 Tareyton P TOMP 1-
23 Dec (KR!); 2 Ellis Hollow Pres TOMP 9
Dec (CHi), high.

Yellow-headed Blackbird: TTyr 27-31 Jan
(DSu!, mob, ph).
Eastern Meadowlark: T Ledyard CAYU 26
Dec; T Bath STEU 27 Dec; Steam Mill Fen
TOMP 21 Jan; arr TOv 28 Feb (RS!), early.
Red-winged Blackbird: arr 17 TTyr 27 Jan
(DA, TW!), early; max 1093 TDry 27 Feb.
Brown-headed Cowbird: arr 250 TTyr 28 Jan
(KG), early; max 1000 TSF 31 Jan.
Rusty Blackbird: arr 2 TTyr 28 Jan; max 45
TSF 29 Jan.
Common Grackle: arr 60 TSF 27 Jan (DA,
TW!), early; max 2200 TTyr 20 Jan.

Common Yellowthroat: Jennings Pd TOMP
13 Dec; Cass P TOMP 17 Dec-13 Feb; QCM
31 Dec.
Northern Parula: IFM 29 Dec - 7 Jan (EMu,
ph; mob, ph), first Regional winter record.
Yellow-rumped Warbler: max 8 Louis
Agassiz Fuertes Bird Sanctuary 1 Jan.
Yellow-throated Warbler: TPhe 29 Jan-9 Feb
(BCa, ph; mob, ph).
Wilson's Warbler: Sapsucker Woods TOMP
1 Jan (KG, ph), first Regional winter record.
Northern Cardinal: max 41 CygH 1 Jan.

REGION 4—SUSQUEHANNA

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El Niño dominated the state this winter, and Region 4 was no exception with a warm, sometimes wet winter. Weather data obtained from the National Weather Service Binghamton Station showed a high of 54° F on 12 December and a low of 16° on 22 December. The average temperature was 36.7°, 8.6° above normal and the second warmest on record for the station. Snowfall was 6.8" which was

11.3" below normal and snow depth trace to none throughout most of the month. Precipitation was 5.99", 2.91" above normal and the third wettest on record. The Susquehanna River USGS gauge in Binghamton crested up to 14.63' on 18 December.

The high temperature for January was 59° on 26 January and the low was 4° on 17 January. The average temperature was 28.0°, 5.5° above normal and marking the tenth warmest January for the Binghamton Area station. Precipitation was 4.62", 2.0" above normal. Snowfall totaled 25.4" which was 4.8" above average. Significant snowfall events occurred on 6-7 January, 16 January, and 28 January, although no events or standing snowpack totaled over one foot.

February continued the warm winter with a high temperature of 64° on 27 February and a low of only 10° on 25 February. The average temperature was 32.1°, 7.6° above normal and the second warmest on record for the Binghamton Area. Unlike December and January, however, precipitation was only 1.66", 0.75" below normal with 0.94" of that falling on 28 February. Snowfall was sharply lower, totaling only 4.2" which was 15.5" below average.

The warm winter prompted many birds to linger in the Region longer than they would have been able to otherwise. This included notable species such as Orange-crowned Warbler, Northern Parula, Blue-gray Gnatcatcher, and Baltimore Oriole. A **Ross's Goose** that initially seemed like a one time wonder ended up staying almost three weeks for many birders to enjoy in the Binghamton Area. Most spectacularly of all, and easily the bird of the season for the Region, was a lovely **Townsend's Warbler** found by David Nicosia. While often uncooperative, dozens of birders were able to connect with this (almost certain) Regional first before it eventually vanished.

The Cortland CBC produced two particularly exciting species, a **White-eyed Vireo** in Scott that lingered for several days, and a **Say's Phoebe** in Homer which sadly did not linger for anyone else to see. A **Harlequin Duck** spotted at the south end of Skaneateles Lake shortly after added to the impressive haul for a rather poorly covered county. After all, it's impossible to believe that there were zero Barred or Great Horned Owls present the entire winter in Cortland County despite the lack of eBird records.

Finch activity was less exciting than the previous winter; however, there were many Pine Siskins in the Region, along with a typical smattering of Purple Finches and small numbers of Red Crossbills. The warmer winter also delayed the freezing of water bodies throughout the northeast, perhaps leading to less waterfowl diversity and movement than can sometimes be expected during cold snaps driving species to unfrozen pockets. In fact, much of the Region did not have a single low temperature below zero, and the diminished snowfall totals during much of the winter did not help push species out onto roadsides and feeders as effectively. As is typical nowadays, northward migration was already evident in mid-February, with species such as Killdeer, Red-winged Blackbird, Wood Duck, and Snow Geese making return appearances. And to cap off the season a couple of interesting hybrids came to light, including a **Common x Barrow's Goldeneye** hanging out with the other ducks that concentrate below the Cannonsville Reservoir dam as well as what is believed to be an **intergrade Yellow-rumped Warbler** persisting at a feeder in Sherburne for several months.

CONTRIBUTORS

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ABBREVIATIONS

ALk – Allen L, OTSE; **BPd** – Boland Pd, BROO; **BrickPd** – Brick Pd Wetland Pres, T Owego, TIOG; **CaHo** – Cannon Hole, T Barton, TIOG; **CanL** – Canadarago L, OTSE; **CannR** – Cannonsville Res, DELA; **CG** – Carantouan Greenway, T Barton, TIOG; **CGP** – Cortland Gravel Pits, CORT; **ChenL** – Chenango L, T New Berlin, CHEN; **CVSP** – Chenango Valley SP, T Fenton, BROO; **FMHW** – Franklin Mt Hawkwatch, DELA; **GLSP** – Glimmerglass SP, OTSE; **HCP** – Hillcrest Pits, Port Dickinson, BROO; **HickP** – Hickories P, T Owego, TIOG; **LHNC** – Lime Hollow Nature Center, T Cortlandville, CORT; **MurP** – Murphys Pits, BROO; **NSpM** – N Spencer Marsh, T Spencer, TIOG; **PRes** – Pepacton Res & outflow, DELA; **SkaL** – Skaneateles L, CORT; **StPd** – Stupke Pd, T Cortlandville, CORT; **ULCP** – Upper Lisle CP, T Triangle, BROO; **WPres** – Whitney Pt Res, BROO.

Snow Goose: max 2000 NSpM 7 Jan (SCo); southbound migration; scattered reports from all counties in Region with S movement Dec-Jan and beginning N movement late Feb.

ROSS'S GOOSE (R4): Union BROO 19 Dec (GW); refound 23 Dec nearby and seen by MOB until 11 Jan.

Cackling Goose: StPd 14 Dec (DG); Whitney Pt NY-79 Gravel Pit BROO 19 Dec (JC); Nichols TIOG 23 Dec (DG); CGP 30 Dec (JG); Mead Pd CHEN 31 Dec (MD).

Canada Goose: max 4460 CGP 30 Dec (JG); many reports throughout Region.

Mute Swan: Springfield OTSE 3 Jan (Anonymous).

Trumpeter Swan: BPd regular seen by MOBs throughout winter.

Tundra Swan: 5 Scott CORT 5 Jan (PH); LHNC 18 Jan (DG); 4 Spencer Lake TIOG 23 Feb (SCo); 12 WPres 26 Feb (DW); 5 ULCP 27 Feb (SK).

Wood Duck: lingering individuals in TIOG, CHEN (2 Dec-3 Jan); arr MurP 23 Feb (DW).

Northern Shoveler: Springfield OTSE 3 Jan (Anonymous); Sherburne CHEN 13-14 Dec (MD, JMcK).

Gadwall: scattered reports from BROO, DELA, OTSE.

American Wigeon: reports from BROO, DELA, TIOG.

Mallard: max 125 HCP 15 Jan (JW); many reports throughout Region.

American Black Duck: max 65 CannR 17 Jan (LV); many reports throughout Region.

Northern Pintail: max 40 NSpM 29 Feb (SCo); reports from BROO, CORT, TIOG.
Green-winged Teal: scattered reports in all counties except OTSE.
Redhead: max 40 HCP 21 Jan (K. Arvin); scattered reports in Region except CHEN.
Ring-necked Duck: max 700 ALk 20 Dec (TB); reports from all counties in Region with larger concentrations in Dec and Feb.
Greater Scaup: max 10 CanL 3 Jan (JAS, TS); reports from BROO and OTSE.
Lesser Scaup: max 80 CanL 14 Jan (JAS, TS); reports from BROO, CHEN, OTSE, TIOG.
HARLEQUIN DUCK (R4): SkaL 20 Dec (JMcG).
Long-tailed Duck: PRes 17 Jan (LV).
Bufflehead: max 150 Lake Front P OTSE 14 Jan (L. Kilty); reports throughout Region except CORT.
Common Goldeneye: 48 CanL 14 Jan (JAS, TS); reports from BROO, CORT, DELA, OTSE.
Common x Barrow's Goldeneye (hybrid): CannR 21-26 Feb (LV).
Hooded Merganser: max 73 ChenL 7 Dec (MD); many reports throughout Region.
Common Merganser: max 1496 CanL 14 Jan (JAS, TS); many reports throughout Region.
Red-breasted Merganser: SkaL 20 Dec (JMcG); scattered reports BROO.
Ruddy Duck: HCP 20-21 Jan (DN, SD, VL, SK, SR); River Rd Endwell BROO 4-19 Feb (LHo, JH, GW).

Wild Turkey: max 72 Oxford CHEN 21 Feb (CP); many reports throughout Region.
Ruffed Grouse: scattered reports throughout Region
Ring-necked Pheasant: single reports from CORT, DELA.

Pied-billed Grebe: reports from BROO, CHEN, OTSE.
Red-necked Grebe: WPres 18-19 Feb (AlTr, DN, VL).

Rock Pigeon: many reports throughout Region
Mourning Dove: max 100 Unadilla OTSE 30 Dec (MD); many reports throughout Region.

American Coot: WPres 5 Dec (DN); max 64 Lake Front P OTSE 23 Jan (SSu); BPd 14 Jan-29 Feb (many obs); HCP Jan 21-4 Feb (many obs).

Sandhill Crane: Pitcher CHEN 23 Feb (S. Otto), unconf.

Killdeer: arr ULCP 23 Feb (JH); scattered reports later in Feb from BROO and TIOG.

Greater Yellowlegs: WPres 4 Dec (DN).

Ring-billed Gull: max 160 Walton DELA 22 Feb (SCa); many reports throughout Region.
Herring Gull: max 425 Dwyer Memorial P CORT 10 Feb (JC); scattered reports throughout Region.
Great Black-backed Gull: Lake Front P OTSE 6-8 Dec (Anonymous, ML); Scott CORT 3 Jan (PH); 2 Dwyer Memorial P CORT 10 Feb (JC).
Lesser Black-backed Gull: 2 Homer CORT 16 Dec (DMcC, MY); StPd 28 Jan (ChWo); 2 Dwyer Memorial P CORT 10 Feb (JC).

Red-throated Loon: WPres 4 Dec (DN).
Common Loon: scattered reports from CORT, DELA, OTSE, BROO; gap in reports between 8 Jan and 19 Feb.

Double-crested Cormorant: HCP 17 Dec (DG); seen by MOBs until 21 Jan.

Great Blue Heron: scattered reports throughout Region, few lingering into Feb.

Black Vulture: Cortland CORT 12 Dec (LG); Vestal BROO 27 Feb (SD).

Turkey Vulture: scattered reports throughout Region primarily arr in mid-late Feb.

Golden Eagle: max 9 FMHW 15 Dec (TS); scattered reports throughout Region except CHEN with several overwintering individuals.
Northern Harrier: scattered reports throughout Region except DELA.
Sharp-shinned Hawk: scattered reports throughout Region.

Cooper's Hawk: many reports throughout Region.

American Goshawk: NSpM 7 Feb (SCo).

Bald Eagle: max 23 CannR 22 Dec (SCa); many reports throughout Region.

Red-shouldered Hawk: several reports in BROO and CHEN.

Red-tailed Hawk: many reports throughout Region.

Rough-legged Hawk: scattered reports throughout Region except CORT.

Eastern Screech-Owl: scattered reports throughout Region except TIOG.

Great Horned Owl: scattered reports throughout Region except CORT.

Barred Owl: scattered reports throughout Region except CORT.

Short-eared Owl: 2 Castle Hill Rd, CHEN 31 Jan (HH, MD); up to 3 seen until 11 Feb.
Northern Saw-whet Owl: GISP 1 Jan (Anonymous, PF, C. Staley); Hancock DELA 6 Jan (LV); Hartwick DELA 27 Jan (ML); Sherburne CHEN 27 Jan (MD).

Belted Kingfisher: many reports throughout Region.

Red-bellied Woodpecker: many reports throughout Region.

Yellow-bellied Sapsucker: Davenport DELA 9 Dec (S. Denenberg); CaHo 26 Dec (JG); Vestal BROO 17 Jan (D. LaBelle); Scott CORT 17-23 Jan (PH).

Downy Woodpecker: max 12 MurP 16 Dec (GK); many reports throughout Region.

Hairy Woodpecker: max 6 CVSP 16 Dec (WK); many reports throughout Region.

Northern Flicker: max 5 Scott CORT 16 Dec (JG, LG, SH); scattered reports throughout Region.

Pileated Woodpecker: many reports throughout Region.

American Kestrel: scattered reports throughout Region except DELA.

Merlin: scattered reports throughout Region except DELA and OTSE.

Peregrine Falcon: regular reports in/near Binghamton BROO, occasional reports elsewhere in CORT, DELA, and CHEN.

Eastern Phoebe: Downsville DELA 25 Jan (LV).

SAY'S PHOEBE (R4): Houghton Hill Rd CORT 16 Dec (GB).

WHITE-EYED VIREO (R4): SkaL 16 Dec (JG, LG, SH); seen by MOBs until 20 Dec.

Northern Shrike: scattered reports throughout Region except DELA.

Blue Jay: many reports throughout Region.

American Crow: max 400 Sherburne CHEN 8 Jan (MD); many reports throughout Region.

Fish Crow: max 10 Union BROO 4 Jan (MJ); scattered reports along Susquehanna River in BROO and TIOG.

Common Raven: max 27 Broome County Landfill BROO 18 Feb (DN); many reports throughout Region.

Black-capped Chickadee: many reports throughout Region.

Tufted Titmouse: many reports throughout Region.

Horned Lark: max 200 Edwards Hill Rd BROO 5 Dec (GW); scattered reports throughout Region except TIOG.

Ruby-crowned Kinglet: SkaL 16 Dec (JG, LG, SH); HickP 26 Dec (JG); Smithboro TIOG 26 Dec (JG); NSpM 27-28 Dec (SCo); Barton TIOG 21 Jan (D. Apker).

Golden-crowned Kinglet: many reports throughout Region.

Cedar Waxwing: max 65 CG 19 Feb (MB); scattered reports throughout Region.

Red-breasted Nuthatch: max 8 Milford Center OTSE 17 Feb (S. Graham); scattered reports throughout Region.

White-breasted Nuthatch: max 18 WPres 1 Jan (DN); many reports throughout region.

Brown Creeper: scattered reports throughout Region.

Blue-gray Gnatcatcher: 2 MurP 16 Dec (GK).

House Wren: BPd 3 and 15 Dec (DN).

Winter Wren: scattered reports throughout Region except OTSE.

Marsh Wren: BPd 27 Jan (DN).

Carolina Wren: many reports in BROO, TIOG, CORT; scattered reports in CHEN, DELA, OTSE.

Gray Catbird: reports from BROO, CORT, TIOG in Dec; BrickPd 23 Jan (C. Schneider).
Northern Mockingbird: scattered individuals in BROO, CHEN, OTSE, TIOG.

European Starling: max 4000 Houghton Hill Rd CORT 17 Dec (JMcG); many reports throughout Region.

Eastern Bluebird: max 21 Springfield OTSE 11 Jan (SSu); scattered reports throughout Region.

Hermit Thrush: reports from BROO, CORT, TIOG.

American Robin: max 87 North Norwich 26 Feb (JMcK); scattered reports throughout Region.

House Sparrow: max 68 MurP 16 Dec (GK); many reports throughout Region.

American Pipit: Mt Hunger Rd BROO 16 Dec (GW); Smith Hill Rd BROO 27 Dec (JMcK).

House Finch: max 30 BrickPd 27 Dec (DG); many reports throughout Region.

Purple Finch: max 24 Solon CORT 13 Feb (MY); scattered reports primarily from feeders throughout Region.

Common Redpoll: Delhi DELA 23 Dec (P. Dorr).

Red Crossbill: Smyrna CHEN 16 Dec (K. Harpp, D. Harpp) type 1 audio; 5 Bainbridge 22 Dec (RB) gritting along roadside; 2 Burlington OTSE 6 Jan (PF); 3 ULCP 25 Feb (DN, DW).

Pine Siskin: many reports throughout Region except DELA; reports primarily from feeders.

American Goldfinch: many reports throughout Region.

Lapland Longspur: Edwards Hill Rd BROO 14 Dec (DN, DW); Mt Hunger Rd BROO 16 Dec (GW); Smith Hill Rd BROO 23 Dec (SK).

Snow Bunting: scattered reports from BROO, CHEN, CORT, OTSE.

Chipping Sparrow: Sherburne CHEN 18 Feb (D. Dushko).

Field Sparrow: ULCP 15 Jan (DN).

Fox Sparrow: Deposit DELA 14 Dec (LV).

American Tree Sparrow: max 35 ULCP 31 Dec (DN); many reports throughout Region.

Dark-eyed Junco: many reports throughout Region.

White-crowned Sparrow: two reports TIOG Dec, one report BROO Dec.

White-throated Sparrow: max 50 BrickPd 30 Dec (DG); many reports throughout Region.

Savannah Sparrow: NSpM 23 Feb (SCo).

Song Sparrow: max 15 BrickPd 27 Dec (DG); many reports throughout Region.

Swamp Sparrow: max 7 NSpM 29 Dec (JG, M. Iliff); scattered reports throughout Region except DELA.

Eastern Towhee: reports from TIOG, BROO.

Baltimore Oriole: Chenango Forks BROO 12 Dec (LHa); visiting feeder.

Red-winged Blackbird: max 220 Kolb Rd BROO 21 Feb (JW); many reports throughout Region.

Brown-headed Cowbird: max 51 Scott CORT 16 Dec (JMcG, K. McGowan, N. Sly); scattered reports throughout Region.

Rusty Blackbird: 14 LHNC 19-21 Jan (PH).

Common Grackle: scattered reports throughout Region almost all reports in Feb.

Orange-crowned Warbler: Chugnut River Walk BROO 2 Dec (MJ); seen by MOBs until 13 Jan; BPd 3 Dec (DN); Downsview DELA 31 Dec (LV).

Northern Parula: Conklin BROO 31 Dec (M.A. Modrak); visiting feeder.

Yellow-rumped Warbler: Sherburne CHEN 11 Jan (DaMi); **intergrade hybrid** lingering at feeders through Feb into Mar.

TOWNSEND'S WARBLER: Anson Rd Endicott BROO 24 Dec (DN); seen by MOBs until 2 Jan.

Northern Cardinal: many reports throughout Region.

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REGION 5—ONEIDA LAKE BASIN

David Wheeler

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Winter 2023-24 was considered exceptionally mild by birders, birds, and the National Weather Service alike. December's average maximum of 44.1° F was 7.0° above the recent 30-year average (1991-2020) for Syracuse. The average daily minimum was a whopping 9.5° above expected at 33.2°, these temperatures even more impressive since the climate-normal is based only on relatively recent years. Only two days failed to reach the freezing mark, eight fewer than usual, while 13 overnights dropped below 32°, only half of normal. Rain was 1.9" high at 5.1" and with so little cold, snow was very scarce at 4.8" vs. the 25.8" December

typically contributes to the annual total. Cloudy days numbered 25 with two labeled 'fair'. The month finished second warmest and second least snowfall behind only 2015, based on 122 years of record-keeping.

January continued the trend, especially where overnights were concerned, and sported 30 cloudy days and none fair. This is the most overcast the Editor has seen reported by NWS in six years of monitoring this measure. Average maximum temperature was 34.2°, 2.5° above usual, with the lack of cold, clear night skies producing an average minimum of 24.9°, 8.4° above normal. Snowfall was only half expected at 17.6" with rain 1.6" high at 4.2". February would be record-setting at 43.4° as the average maximum temperature, 9.8° higher than the recent 30-year climate-normal. Average minimum was 25.5°, 8.0° above usual, these numbers besting the previous record from 1981 by almost a full degree. Only six days failed to reach freezing, seven fewer than expected. The snow total of 17.7" was off the typical pace of 30.3", rain similarly low at 1.39". Most bodies of water had only intermittent freezing throughout the season, often restricted to sheltered bays and opening quickly after brief cold snaps.

Mild winters cause birds (especially half-hardies and short-distance migrants headed just to the Region's south) to linger into December, sometimes spending the whole winter here, and moving northbound on the first warmup in February. Unusual numbers of American Wigeon, Northern Pintail, Green-winged Teal, and Northern Shoveler were found in January. Dabbler migration began in the third and fourth weeks of February with Pintails leading the charge. Snow Goose were seen in good numbers over Canastota during the Oneida CBC on 1 January and their migration began in the second week of February without much conspicuous buildup at the usual hotspots. Ross's Goose was found at Oswego Harbor on 1 December by Gregg Dashnau and Oneida Lake on the 14th by Bobby Wilcox and the 16th by Dennis Anderson. John Killiany picked three out of a flyby flock of Snows on 12 January. Greater White-fronted Goose was represented by two at Sylvan Beach on 24 December, while at Oswego, Kayla, Bob, and Melinda Fisk found a pair on 24 January. These stayed four days and were seen by many. Kevin Smith added two from Verona on 10 February.

All three of the area's rare-but-regular ducks were found, beginning with a flyby King Eider seen at Derby Hill on 18 December by Sam Denenberg. While censusing Onondaga Lake for the DEC's annual Winter Waterfowl Count, David Wheeler and Kennedy Sullivan found two Harlequin Duck that ended up staying all season. Open water on Little Sodus Bay produced a Barrow's Goldeneye for Mike Gullo on 22 January. Several exciting hybrids were also seen. The Common Goldeneye x Hooded Merganser returned to waters of the Oneida River in Schroepel, while at the Liverpool marina Drew Weber observed a Canvasback x Redhead on 28 January. Last but not least, Wheeler found a Common x Barrow's Goldeneye on 30 January at Selkirk Shores State Park amid a good concentration of scoters and other diving ducks, surprisingly a first Regional record of this well-known combination.

Sandhill Crane numbers have increased dramatically in the Upstate NY area over the last 20 years, hundreds now possible at Montezuma in November. These linger until forced out by deep snow, which never came this year. Two were spotted in West Monroe on 5 January while the Loop Road floodlands along the

Seneca River had 22 on the 14th, an unprecedented number for the middle of winter. Killdeer lingered with one present at Onondaga Lake in mid-late January with 27 February giving six migrating birds during an excellent early-season flight day at Derby Hill. The breakwall at Port Ontario held a Purple Sandpiper for Matt Brown on 18 January, while two Purple Sandpiper were seen off and on at Fair Haven during the second half of the month. The species is very rare in January. Dave Nash found an American Woodcock at Hamlin Marsh on 21 January and a Wilson's Snipe was seen at Onondaga Lake on 16 January during the Syracuse CBC.

Lakewatching at Derby Hill on 11 December produced a Black-legged Kittiwake for David Wheeler and Kennedy Sullivan. It proved to be a dull season for gulls with so much open water and thus little to concentrate them. White-winged gull numbers were poor. The **Western Cattle Egret** near Canastota continued from November until 12 December. Black-crowned Night-Heron was not reported from the Inner Harbor or Creekwalk area of Onondaga Lake, somewhat surprising given such a mild winter.

Black Vulture continued at known locations, with an unexpected bird found by Lonnie Mast's group in the southern part of the Oneida CBC circle during the count on 1 January. Migrant Turkey Vulture arrived by mid-February. John McKay photographed three Golden Eagle near Richfield Springs on 3 February and two at Verona Beach State Park on 25 February, a very unusual location for the species. Mast's group also found one during the CBC. Derby Hill had an excellent pre-season hawk flight on 27 February featuring a Golden Eagle, 13 Northern Harrier, nine Cooper's Hawk, five Red-shouldered Hawk, 26 Red-tailed, and eight Rough-legged Hawk. It was another terrible year for Snowy Owl, the only report coming from Kevin Topping in Salisbury on 17 December.

The three Adirondack-specialty species are presumed resident in the northern parts of Herkimer County but rarely reported at any time of year. Elizabeth Frascatore found a Boreal Chickadee near Old Forge on 9 February. It was not an invasion year for Bohemian Waxwing but Kevin Topping noted one on 3 December and 18 on 18 February for the Region's only sightings. The Syracuse CBC on 16 December gave Dave Nash four Marsh Wren at the Hamlin Marsh. Another was seen on Onondaga Lake's west shore. Kennedy Sullivan found two Gray Catbird in Sandy Creek on 27 January. A single American Pipit was photographed at the end of the Onondaga Lake Creekwalk on 19 January, a nice find for the month by Keith Pflieger, Andy Saunders, and Emma Brunell. After an excellent Fall flight of Pine Siskin (see previous report), a good number wintered in the Region. Best count was 76 at Green Lakes State Park found on 3 February by Dennis Anderson. Otherwise, it was not an irruption year for winter finches including Evening Grosbeak and Common Redpoll. Red Crossbills were not reported from Morgan Hill but a good flock of 19 were in Boyleston for Martin Mau on 5 December while on 16 December Gregg Dashnau had five at Selkirk, both observers getting audio recordings.

An unusual number of Fox Sparrow was reported this season including one in Constantia beginning on 13 February for Mickey Scilingo, presumably a nearby winterer. Carol Adams hosted an '**Oregon**'-type Dark-eyed Junco at her feeders in Whitesboro, obtaining excellent photos of the bird during its long stay. The bird

sported all the field marks of this western subspecies. Nonetheless, substantial variation exists in 'Slate-colored' and it is useful to consider what is meant when identifying out-of-range forms. In order to be truly an 'Oregon' type it would need to have been hatched by 'Oregon' parents, presumably in the range of the subspecies, and then vagrated to NY. We cannot know the history of these birds of course, but many (if not most) reported in the eastern US would probably not meet these criteria. Other western species occupying a similar range but which are more easily identifiable are far rarer in the east, suggesting some (if not many) 'Oregon' reports may result from variation in 'Slate-colored' and the uncertainty that results. The best we can do (and the basis of submissions to eBird) is for the bird to have "field marks of" the taxon we submit. In this respect the Whitesboro individual seems an excellent candidate.

Miranda Thompson got video of an adult **Harris's Sparrow** in Clinton on the 21st of January, an awesome find and the 11th Regional record but first for Oneida County. The largest of our sparrows, the species undergoes a long migration from high-latitude breeding grounds through central North America to midwestern wintering areas. It is often found in our Region around feeders in winter and sometimes flock with House Sparrows. Individuals likely arrive during the Fall season but only become conspicuous when they reach backyards as the weather turns to winter and food becomes scarce. Janet Clarey photographed a Baltimore Oriole in Clinton on 17 February, likely a first Regional record for the month. The author reminds observers to carefully study any out-of-season orioles encountered (and try to get photographs) as western vagrants are possible. Ditch Bank Road yielded 200 Red-winged Blackbird on 1 January. The species arrived as northbound migrants during the second week of February and 15,000 were estimated going by Derby Hill during the big movement on the 27th.

Winter reports don't often feature five species of warbler! Scott Peterson found and photographed a Tennessee Warbler on Onondaga Lake's west shore on 17 December and it was still present on 1 January for an incredible New Year's Day bird. Dave Nash turned up two Common Yellowthroat at the Hamlin Marsh on 16 December. A Cape May Warbler was photographed in Camillus on 20 January by Bill Hastings, who noted it on the ground and at a heated bird bath. Onondaga Lake came through again with a Yellow Warbler for Bob McGuire and James Goetz on 16 December, with another possibly different bird for David Wheeler and Kennedy Sullivan during the Winter Waterfowl Count on 12 January. Yellow-rumps rounded out the warbler sightings with 10 for Santos Rodriguez on 30 December at Oneida Shores, a good number and unusual location. A Rose-breasted Grosbeak continued through 6 December in Baldwinsville for Betsy Berglund.

Region 5 currently has five operating MOTUS stations located at Derby Hill, Three Rivers WMA, Rome WMA, Utica Zoo, and a site four miles south of Williamstown known as 'Fassler'. These register radio-tagged birds that fly through their 15-km-diameter circle of detection. As one might expect, winter is a slow time for our receivers. A Hermit Thrush flying by Derby Hill on 6 December was the only bird detected. It had been tagged in Montreal on 26 October and left there during the last week of November. It was last heard from southwest of Elmira on 16 December.

This season a total of 148 species and four hybrids were reported, which is 11 above the recent 10-year average for the Region. Highlights included: **Ross's Goose**, **Greater White-fronted Goose**, King Eider, Harlequin Duck, Canvasback x Redhead hybrid, Common x Barrow's Goldeneye hybrid, Sandhill Crane, Purple Sandpiper, Black-legged Kittiwake, **Western Cattle Egret**, Black Vulture, Snowy Owl, Boreal Chickadee, **Bohemian Waxwing**, American Pipit, Fox Sparrow, **Dark-eyed Junco (Oregon)**, **Harris's Sparrow**, Baltimore Oriole, Tennessee Warbler, Common Yellowthroat, Cape May Warbler, Yellow Warbler, and Rose-breasted Grosbeak.

Winter 2023-2024 produced 63,691 eBird records on 8011 checklists for Region 5, and were processed by Swan Swan Hummingbird v6.2. Reports were submitted by 633 people. With so many submitting to eBird, the Editor would like to share how the 'Contributor' names below are compiled. Names appear in the list if at least one of the following four criteria are met: (1) a person's initials are used in the 'Synopsis' section; (2) a person submits a written list of sightings to the Editor; (3) a person is the only one contributing from a part of the Region that would otherwise have no reports; or (4) a person submits above a 'participation threshold' number of eBird records which varies by season and was set at 200 for this report. Most listed below qualified under (4) but rest assured that all submissions contribute to this report.

CONTRIBUTORS

Carol Adams (CAD), Dennis Anderson (DAn), Dave Baldrini, Doug Batt, Sam Beguin, Betsy Berglund (BBE), Sue Boettger, Carla Bregman, Joseph Brin, Brandon Brogle, Matthew Brown (MBR), Emma Brunell (EBR), Ken Burdick, Mark Burns, Lori Burritt, Martin Cain, Bruce Carpenter, Jerry Case, Katie Cassidy, Roger Chambers, Janet Clarey (JCL), Richard Cohen, Karl Curtis, Jim D'Angelo, Gregg Dashnau (GDa), Sam Denenberg (SDe), Deborah Dohne (DDo), Daniel & Joan Emlin, Jane Fagerland, Kaye Fenlon, Kayla Fisk (KFi), Robert Fisk (RFi), Melinda Fisk (MFi), Elizabeth Frascatore (EFr), Marianne Friers, James Goetz (JGo), Mike Gullo (MGU), Carmen Gumina (CGu), Mary Harkola, Bill Hastings (BHa), Kristen Haynes, Harmon Hoff, Courtney Jett, John Killiany (JKi), Renee Kittleman, Alison Koccek, Gary Lee, Fred Leff, Lydia Loan, Jason Luscier, Lonnie Mast (LMa) & on behalf of Madison County Amish Community (MCAC), Martin Mau (MMA), Kevin McGann, Jay McGowan, Bob McGuire (BMc), John McKay (JMy), Tom McKay (TMc), Gary Meyers, Alan Middleton, Andy Miller, John Moore, Kevin Murphy, Margaret Napoleon, David Nash (DNa), Joanne Oliver, Kevin Pace, Aidan Perkins, Matt Perry, Scott Peterson (SPe), Keith Pflieger (KPf), Bill Purcell (BPu), Carter Riley, Jaime Rodriguez, Santos Rodriguez (SRo), John Rogers, Ian Rosenstein, Peter Roy (PRo), Bryan Rutledge, Roberta Sampere, Andy Saunders (ASa), Benjamin Schlabach, Mickey Scilingo (MSc), Paul Shanahan, Tony Shrimpton, Kevin Smith (KSm), Barbara Stith, Reuben Stoltzfus, Kennedy Sullivan (KSU), Ian Tahmin, Faith Thompson, Miranda Thompson (MTh), Judy Thurber, Kevin Topping (KTo), Scott Trefz, Matt Voelker, Drew Weber (DWe), David Wheeler (DWh), Terry White, Robert Whitman, Bobby Wilcox (BWl), Robert G. Williams III, Tim Wing, Kim Zahno.

ABBREVIATIONS

BLNC – Beaver L Nature Center, Baldwinsville, ONON; **Brew** – Oneida L & R at Brewerton, ONON; **Const** – Oneida L at Constantia, OSWE; **DB** – Ditch Bank Rd &

vicinity, T Sullivan/Lenox, MADI; **DH** – Derby Hill, T Mexico, OSWE; **FH** – Fair Haven SP, Little Sodus Bay, and West Barrier Bar, CAYU; **Fult** – Fulton area including Oswego R, Indian Pt, L Neatahwanta, OSWE; **GLSP** – Green Lakes SP, Fayetteville, ONON; **HI** – Howland Island WMA, CAYU; **HM** – Hamlin Marsh, Clay, ONON; **IH** – Inner Harbor, Syracuse, ONON; **LoopR** – Loop Rd, Montezuma NWR, CAYU; **MCL** – Madison County Landfill, MADI; **MH** – Morgan Hill State Forest, Fabius, ONON; **OF** – Old Forge, HERK; **OneiL** – Oneida L OSWE/ONEI; **OnonL** – Onondaga L, ONON; **OLC** – Onondaga L Creekwalk, ONON; **OLP** – Onondaga Lake P (east and west shore), ONON; **OSP** – Oneida Shores P, Brewerton, ONON; **Osw & OswH** – Oswego & Oswego Harbor, OSWE; **PV** – Pleasant Valley Preserve, T Onondaga, ONON; **SB** – Sylvan Beach, ONEI; **SKan & SKanL** – Skaneateles & Skaneateles L, ONON; **SP** – Sandy Pd and vicinity, OSWE; **SSSP** – Selkirk Shores SP, OSWE; **TR** – Three Rivers WMA, Lysander, ONON; **VBSP** – Verona Beach SP, ONEI; **WP** – Woodman Pd, Hamilton, MADI.

Snow Goose: nums 2nd week Dec; max 10000 Canastota 1 Jan; mig begins 2nd week Feb.

Ross's Goose: OswH 1 Dec (GDa); OneiL 14, 16 Dec (BW, DAn); 3 Cazenovia 12 Jan (JKi); only reps.

Greater White-fronted Goose: 2 SB 24 Dec (DWh); 2 OswH 24-27 Jan (KFi, RFi, MFi); 2 Verona 10 Feb (KSm); only reps.

Cackling Goose: max 4 FH 25 Feb; 1-3 var typ locs/dates.

Canada Goose: max est 4000 WP 1 Jan.

Mute Swan: most reps OnonL, SP, & FH areas; max 115 FH 25 Jan.

Trumpeter Swan: 1-9 var expected locs; max 28 SSSP 1 Dec.

Tundra Swan: max 250 Cato 8 Feb; good nums OneiL/typ locs.

Wood Duck: max 8 Webster Pd Syr 2 Feb; few singles; mig arr mid-Feb.

Northern Shoveler: last FH 13 Dec; sev locs Jan & early Feb; arr & max 2 OnonL 20 Feb.

Gadwall: max 44 FH 24 Jan.

American Wigeon: small groups thru; max 50 WP 2 Dec; arr 3rd week Feb.

Mallard: max 650 OnonL 22 Jan.

American Black Duck: max 114 FH 24 Jan.

Mallard x American Black Duck (hybrid): sev reps/locs.

Northern Pintail: small groups Dec-Jan incl 10 sev locs 10 Jan; max 116 Fult 27 Feb; arr 2nd week Feb var locs.

Green-winged Teal: small nums Dec-Jan incl 10 Richfield Springs 14 Jan; max 17 Verona 1 Jan, good num; arr 4th week Feb sev locs.

Canvasback: max 16 OnonL 2 Feb.

Redhead: max 3520 OnonL 28 Jan.

Canvasback x Redhead (hybrid): OnonL 28 Jan (DWe), 1st Reg rec.

Ring-necked Duck: max 650 WP 6 Dec.

Greater Scaup: max 500 FH 25 Jan.

Lesser Scaup: max 800 OnonL 25 Feb.

Greater/Lesser Scaup: max est 3500 OneiL 5 Dec.

aythya sp: max 3200 OneiL 31 Dec.

King Eider: DH 18 Dec (SDe), only rep.

Harlequin Duck: OnonL 12 Jan thru (DWh, KSu); only rep.

Surf Scoter: max 5 SB 1 Dec & SSSP 25 Jan.

White-winged Scoter: max 300 SSSP 24-27 Jan.

Black Scoter: max 4 SSSP 25 Jan.

Long-tailed Duck: max 1100 FH 25 Jan.

Bufflehead: max 100 FH 22 Feb.

Common Goldeneye: max 500 FH 28, 30 Jan.

Barrow's Goldeneye: ad m FH 22-27 Jan (MGU, ph, mob).

Common x Barrow's Goldeneye (hybrid): SSSP 30 Jan (DWh, ph), 1st Reg rec.

Hooded Merganser: max 184 Brew 3 Jan.

Common Goldeneye x Hooded Merganser (hybrid): Oneida R 30 Jan (DWh), returning.

Common Merganser: max 2000 OnonL 17, 25 Feb.

Red-breasted Merganser: max 250 FH 28 Jan.

Ruddy Duck: 1-2 sev locs thru incl max 19 WP 6 Dec.

Northern Bobwhite: 2 TR 27 Feb, presume released.

Wild Turkey: max 60 Perryville 5 Dec.

Ruffed Grouse: small nums var locs.

Ring-necked Pheasant: 1-3 rep 5 locs.

Pied-billed Grebe: max 4 OnonL 10 Jan & 25 Feb.

Horned Grebe: max 18 Scriba 25 Dec.

Red-necked Grebe: OnonL 3 Dec & 2 Jan; max 5 OnonL 9 Dec; only reps.

Rock Pigeon: flocks widespread.

Mourning Dove: widespread; max 100 Red Crk 28 Jan.

American Coot: max 50 OnonL 15-22 Jan & SkanL 18 Feb.

Sandhill Crane: 2 W Monroe 5, 11 Jan; max 22 LoopR 14 Jan, exc num/date; arr 2 Red Crk 27 Feb; only reps.

Killdeer: last 2 OLP 16 Dec; OLP 15-22 Jan; Oriskany 9 Feb; DB 20 Feb; max 6 DH 27 Feb, early for num.

Purple Sandpiper: last 2 FH 1-5 Dec; 1-2 FH 22-30 Jan (MGU, mob); Port Ontario 18 Jan (MBr); only reps.

American Woodcock: last TR 15 Dec (GDa); HM 21 Jan (DNa); arr 2 Canastota 18 Feb; only reps.

Wilson's Snipe: OLP 16 Dec (DDo), only rep.

Black-legged Kittiwake: DH 11 Dec (DWh, KSu); only rep.

Bonaparte's Gull: max 35 Brew 8 Dec; last OnonL 14 Jan.

Ring-billed Gull: max est 800 DB 30 Dec.

Herring Gull: max est 2000 MCL 14 Dec.

Iceland Gull: max 6 MCL 23 Dec; scarce Feb.
Lesser Black-backed Gull: max 3 DB 23 Dec; 1-2 typ locs, none after 3 Feb.

Glaucous Gull: max 2 OswH 17 Dec, 23 Jan; low num esp MCL; scarce Feb.

Great Black-backed Gull: max 38 IH 20 Jan.

Red-throated Loon: max 4 OnonL 8 Dec.

Common Loon: max 8 DH 11 Dec.

Double-crested Cormorant: max 50 OnonL 11 Jan.

Great Blue Heron: max 5 DeWitt 22 Jan & OLC 28 Jan.

WESTERN CATTLE EGRET (R5): Canastota 5-12 Dec, cont from Nov; 2nd Reg rec winter.

Black-crowned Night-Heron: no reports.

Black Vulture: singles/small groups known locs Jamesville, Oneida, Little Falls; T Fenner 1 Jan (LMa), unusual loc; max 9 Jamesville 23 Dec & 12 Little Falls 29 Dec, good nums.

Turkey Vulture: max 75 Fayetteville 15 Dec, wintering population; mig arr 3rd week Feb, fairly common 4th week, early; 15 DH 27 Feb.

Golden Eagle: 1-2 sev locs Hamilton; 3 Richfield Springs 3 Feb (JMy, ph); T Fenner 1 Jan (LMa); arr 2 VBSP 25 Feb (JMy, ph), unusual loc; DH 27 Feb.

Northern Harrier: max 13 DH 27 Feb, early mig, exc num.

Sharp-shinned Hawk: max 2 DH 27 Feb.

Cooper's Hawk: max 9 DH 27 Feb.

American Goshawk: no reports.

Bald Eagle: max 44 OnonL 7 Feb.

Red-shouldered Hawk: last Bridgeport 16 Dec; arr Fult 10 Feb; max 5 DH 27 Feb.

Red-tailed Hawk: 16 DH 21 Feb; max 26 DH 27 Feb, good num.

Long-legged Hawk: max 8 DH 27 Feb, good num; singles var locs thru.

Eastern Screech-Owl: singles/pairs typical locs.

Great Horned Owl: widespread resident.

Snowy Owl: Salisbury 17 Dec (KTo), only rep.

Barred Owl: widespread resident.

Long-eared Owl: no reports.

Short-eared Owl: 1-2 var 9 locs/dates; max 3 Fort Plain 30 Dec.

Northern Saw-whet Owl: Waterville 23 Feb (JMy), only rep.

Belted Kingfisher: widespread; max 2 var locs/dates.

Red-headed Woodpecker: Noyes S 25 Dec; 1-2 SB 26 Dec – 1 Jan; only reps but may have wintered at other exp locs.

Red-bellied Woodpecker: widespread resident.

Yellow-bellied Sapsucker: singles var locs/dates thru.

Black-backed Woodpecker: no reps but presumed resident N HERK.

Downy Woodpecker: widespread resident.

Hairy Woodpecker: widespread resident.

Northern Flicker: max 12 HI 18 Dec.

Pileated Woodpecker: widespread resident.

American Kestrel: 1-2 var locs/dates thru.

Merlin: 1-2 typ locs thru.

Peregrine Falcon: 1-2 exp locs thru.

Eastern Phoebe: BLNC 8 Dec (GDa), only rep.

Northern Shrike: singles var locs/dates thru.

Canada Jay: no reps but presumed resident N HERK.

Blue Jay: max 39 Osw 17 Dec.

American Crow: max est 10000 DH 27 Feb, migrating.

Fish Crow: max 10 IH 12, 31 Dec; reps typ locs.

Common Raven: max 7 Salisbury 20 Feb; widespread reps.

Black-capped Chickadee: widespread resident.

Boreal Chickadee: OF 9 Feb (Efr); only rep but presumed resident N HERK.
Tufted Titmouse: widespread resident except N HERK & N ONEI.

Horned Lark: max 150 Munnsville 18 Feb.

Ruby-crowned Kinglet: 1-2 sev locs apparently wintering.
Golden-crowned Kinglet: max 12 MH 20 Dec.

Bohemian Waxwing: Salisbury 3 Dec & 18 same loc 18 Feb (KTo); only reps.
Cedar Waxwing: max 125 Skan 31 Dec.

Red-breasted Nuthatch: small groups typ locs; max 12 MH 23 Dec.
White-breasted Nuthatch: widespread resident.

Brown Creeper: max 8 MH 23 Dec.

Winter Wren: singles 15 locs var dates thru, more reps than usual.
Marsh Wren: 4 HM 16 Dec (DNa); OLP 9, 16 Dec (mob); only reps.
Carolina Wren: typ locs southern part of Reg.

Gray Catbird: singles 6 locs/dates incl 2 Sandy Crk 27 Jan (KSu); small num winter.
Northern Mockingbird: singles/pairs typ locs, mostly ONON.

European Starling: max est 2700 MCL 12 Dec.

Eastern Bluebird: max 40 Minetto 17 Dec.
Hermit Thrush: few reps typ locs thru; small num winter.
American Robin: widespread; max est 1200 PV 23 Feb roost flight (MMA).

House Sparrow: flocks widespread resident.

American Pipit: OLC 19 Jan (KPf, EBr, ASa, ph), only rep.

Evening Grosbeak: Hastings 17 Feb (BPu); only rep.
House Finch: widespread resident; max 88 OLP 13 Jan, good num.
Purple Finch: max 26 Salisbury 18 Feb; most reps southern/eastern part of Reg.
Common Redpoll: several heard-only reps in non-irruption year.
Red Crossbill: max 19 Boyleston 5 Dec (MMA, audio); 5 SSSP 16 Dec (GDa, audio); Rome Sand Plains 4 Feb (PRo); only reps.

White-winged Crossbill: no reports.
Pine Siskin: max 76 GLSP 3 Feb (DAn), exc num for loc/date; flocks var locs/dates thru, good num after strong mig flight in fall.
American Goldfinch: flocks common & widespread; max 111 OLP 6 Jan.

Lapland Longspur: Peterboro 23 Jan (MCAC); Richland 8, 18, 19 Jan (MBr); only reps.
Snow Bunting: max est 250 Munnsville 19 Feb.

Chipping Sparrow: 2 VBSP 9 Dec; Mexico 14 Dec; Marcellus 20 Jan, 22, 26 Feb; only reps.

Field Sparrow: OLP 23 Feb (BW), only rep.
Fox Sparrow: Baldwinville 2, 6 Dec; Dolgeville 13 Dec; Fayetteville 16 Dec; Salisbury 13 Jan (KTo); Const 13 Feb thru (MSc), arr or winterer?; more reps than usual.
American Tree Sparrow: max 62 OLP 29 Dec.

Dark-eyed Junco: max 75 Rome 8 Jan.

“OREGON” DARK-EYED JUNCO:

Whitesboro thru (CA, ph); *intro*.

White-crowned Sparrow: 1-5 var locs/dates thru; small num winter.

HARRIS'S SPARROW: ad Clinton 21, 24 Jan (MTH, ph); 11th Reg rec, 1st ONEI, *intro*.

White-throated Sparrow: max 42 GLSP 16 Dec.

Song Sparrow: max 12 OLP 16 Dec.

Swamp Sparrow: 1-4 few typ locs thru; small num winter.

Eastern Towhee: GLSP 16 Dec; Onondaga 22 Jan & 18 Feb; Osw 10, 23 Feb; only reps.

Baltimore Oriole: Clinton 17 Feb (JCI, ph), 3rd Reg rec winter.

Red-winged Blackbird: 200 DB 1 Jan, good num for date; few winter typ locs; mig arr 2nd week Feb in good nums; max est 15000 DH 27 Feb.

Brown-headed Cowbird: max 220 Baldwinville 3 Feb.

Rusty Blackbird: DeWitt 17 Jan (TMc, ph), only rep.

Common Grackle: small num winter; mig arr 2nd week Feb in lesser nums than RWBL; max est 500 Cazenovia 28 Feb.

Tennessee Warbler: OLP 17 Dec & 1 Jan (SPe, ph), 1st Reg rec winter, *intro*.

Common Yellowthroat: 2 HM 16 Dec (DNa), only rep; occ in winter.

Cape May Warbler: Camillus 20 Jan (BH, ph), on ground and heated bird bath; 3rd Reg rec winter, 1st for Jan; *intro*.

Yellow Warbler: OLP 16 Dec (BMc, JGo, ph); OLC 12 Jan (DWh, KSu), ad m, pres diff bird; 2nd & 3rd Reg rec winter, 1st for Jan, *intro*.
Yellow-rumped Warbler: 1-4 var locs/dates, small num winter; max 10 OSP 30 Dec (SRo), good num.

Northern Cardinal: widespread resident.
Rose-breasted Grosbeak: Baldwinsville, cont to 6 Dec (BBc).



REGION 6—ST. LAWRENCE

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It really wasn't much of a winter. December was mild and wet, with a mean temperature in Watertown that was 6.6° F warmer than average. The 5.1" of precipitation that fell in December was 0.7" above normal and mostly fell as rain, with the Watertown area receiving just 1.9" of snowfall for the month. Much of Region 6 had little or no snow cover until January, especially starting 15 January when during a four-day span Watertown received 49" of snow, more than 60% of the season's total. This period of snow was immediately followed by the winter's only real cold snap, during which temperatures dropped to between -5° and -7° for three consecutive nights, the only sub-zero nights of the winter. January ended up being the coldest month of the season relative to normal but the mean temperature for the month was still 3.7° warmer than average. High temperatures rose above freezing on seven of the last eight days in January, and the snowpack rapidly dwindled, with light and spotty snow cover for the rest of the winter. What little snow cover there was disappeared during two late winter warm spells, the first 9-11 February, when temperatures reached the low 50s each day, and then last six days of the season when the temperature climbed to as high as 66° on 28 Feb. The mean temperature for February was 7.6° above normal, which isn't very surprising given how spring-like much of the month was.

Lake Ontario and the St. Lawrence River were largely ice-free for most of the winter. Alternating cold and mild spells that played out all season resulted in many bays repeatedly icing over then opening back up, and most large bodies of water were open throughout the winter. A lack of any prolonged cold stretch this winter resulted in many smaller lakes and ponds having relatively little ice cover, and what ice there was disappeared during late February's warm weather.

After a fall season in which Snow Geese seemed to avoid Region 6, a significant southward movement started on 6 December, with numbers peaking around 10 December and movements continuing into early January. Two **Ross's Geese** over Fort Drum were among the first wave of white geese. Canada Geese were unusually abundant along the St. Lawrence River all winter, with up to five **Cackling Geese** among the large goose flocks in Ogdensburg from 8 December until mid-January. The 58 Trumpeter Swans at Upper and Lower Lakes WMA on

25 February is a Regional record high count, and this species continues to increase in all seasons. Tundra Swans were historically scarce on Lake St. Lawrence, but have steadily increased since about 2015, with a maximum this season of 71 at Whalen Park on 1 January and smaller numbers lingering well into February. In western Jefferson County, the stronghold for Tundra Swans in Region 6, small groups were observed in many locations all winter after a mid-December high count of 430 on Black River Bay.

Many ducks were relatively abundant through mid-January, but despite the presence of extensive open water throughout the season most dabbling ducks seemed to depart during the short mid-January cold snap. For instance double-digit counts of Northern Pintail were typical at two locations until the beginning of the January cold snap, after which no pintails were observed in the Region until the end of February when northbound migrants arrived. It initially seemed like many diving ducks left the Region at the same time, but a raft of 2300 Greater Scaup seen on 4 February at Reed's Bay off Pillar Point, in an area usually entirely iced over by this date, suggest that many birds may have moved to locations that would normally not be accessible to them by mid-January. As several participants in the mid-winter waterfowl count noted, finding ducks is a lot more work when all of the water along Lake Ontario and the St. Lawrence River is open than when it is mostly iced over as is often the case. Duck highlights of the season included all three scoters, up to four Canvasbacks per day at Snowshoe Bay in January, and Barrow's Goldeneye at Cape Vincent on 19 January and Fisher's Landing 9 February. Nick Leone has a knack for finding hybrid ducks, this winter's example being a male Common X Barrow's Goldeneye hybrid off Pillar Point on 20 January.

The last Pied-billed Grebe of the year was at Fort Drum on 4 December, but it is not clear whether one Dick Brouse and Rachel Lewis found at Perch River WMA on 16 February was an overwintering bird or an early northbound migrant. Nine Horned Grebes off Robert Wehle State Park 8 February is a good winter tally, and the three Red-necked Grebes reported this winter is about average. Four Sandhill Cranes were reported in two locations in Canton independently by two groups of birders on 16 December. Presumably these two sightings were of the same group of cranes; in any case they represented the last cranes of the year and the only reports of the season. Eight Common Loons off Coles Creek State Park on 15 January is a high tally for mid-winter and loons were seen widely to at least 19 February, some presumably present for the entire winter.

White-winged gulls have been unusually scarce the past two winters, but this was the first winter in at least 15 years that none were reported. Presumably mild weather and a resulting lack of ice kept most Iceland and Glaucous Gulls to our north. Extensive open water also likely accounts for the modest numbers of Ring-billed Gulls that were present along the St. Lawrence River all winter; typically Ring-bills completely abandon most of the river by mid-January. Lesser Black-backed Gulls were reported on both Lake Ontario and the St. Lawrence River on 16 December, with the only other report coming from Grass Point State Park in mid-February.

Immature Golden Eagles were in Croghan and along the Canton-Potsdam border in late January, the latter bird occurring where one spent much of the

previous winter. It certainly appears that small numbers of Golden Eagles overwinter annually in Region 6, although the Golden observed in Pitcairn on 25 February could have been a migrant. A Red-shouldered Hawk, another species that now appears to be annual in winter, was in Pinckney on 30 January. The season's only American Goshawk was seen in Piercefield in the Adirondacks on 18 February. Surely the raptor highlight of the season came on 19 January, when Richard MacDonald observed a **Gyr Falcon** capture a Common Merganser on the St. Lawrence River in Ogdensburg. Winter raptor numbers in northwest Jefferson County were relatively low with no significant concentrations of Northern Harriers or Rough-legged Hawks noted.

It was the worst year for Snowy Owls in quite some time, with just two sightings from St. Lawrence County farm country in February. Short-eared Owls put on a good show in and near Cape Vincent, with up to 11 individuals observed daily. Most of the Short-eared Owls were in a traditional wintering area near Favret Road, where the extent of suitable habitat has progressively dwindled over the past decade, primarily from conversion of hayfields to cornfields. One or two Short-eared Owls were also observed in Hammond in late December and early January, the only sightings away from northern Jefferson County. On 27 January Steven Litwhiler found a dead Long-eared Owl on a logging road in Lorraine, and I found a live individual in the red cedar woodlands on Stony Point on 9 February. On 24 February Carol Cady and I heard two very vocal Northern Saw-whet Owls along the southern boundary of Upper and Lower Lakes WMA in Canton.

A nice mix of irruptive finches was present this winter. Perhaps most exciting was the presence of at least three Red Crossbill types, 2, 4 and 12, confirmed by Matt Young from recordings. Courtship feeding and other breeding behaviors were noted from several locations on Fort Drum, mostly appearing to involve Type 12 individuals, and the season's largest flock of 42 was there on 2 February. During the first half of the winter Red Crossbills were mostly observed feeding on white pine cones, but by late January had switched to primarily red pine, with some birds even also feeding on Scots pine cones. Pine Siskins were widely reported, with particularly large flocks in Colton in the northern Adirondacks. Other irruptive finches were scarce, for instance just one Pine Grosbeak in the Black River Valley on 12 December, a single flock of 32 White-winged Crossbills at Massawepie Mire on 6 January, and only three Common Redpoll reports. Bohemian Waxwings were also unusually scarce with just four reports, and a flock of 100 Betsy Miner found in Lawrence on 30 January was the only flock of any size.

A **Black-throated Gray Warbler**, a first for Region 6, was photographed at Fort de la Presentation in Ogdensburg by Troy Parla on 7 December, and he promptly posted it to iNaturalist. Quickly relocated on 8 December, this western warbler was observed by scores of birders until it presumably succumbed to the elements in early January. Amazingly, while Ben Dixon and I searched for the Black-throated Gray on 9 December we encountered a Regional first for winter Yellow Warbler, and on 20 December Reuben Stoltzfus saw a Yellow-rumped Warbler in the same area. Despite many hours of effort by large numbers of birders searching this relatively small patch of habitat, neither of these latter warblers were seen after their initial detection. A Common Yellowthroat I found

in a small marsh in Hermon on 16 December that was still present 3 January makes three consecutive winters with a yellowthroat in Region 6, the only winter yellowthroats ever reported in the Region. The season's wood-warbler tally of four species breaks the previous Regional winter warbler record of three species set during the previous winter!

Aside from warblers, the most surprising passerine of the season was a Blue-headed Vireo Tristan McKnight found on the St. Lawrence University campus during the Canton-Potsdam Christmas Bird Count. Some birds that were formerly very rare in winter but now occur with some regularity were notable for the high numbers reported, for instance at least 12 Belted Kingfishers, 10 Yellow-bellied Sapsuckers, seven Winter Wrens, four Marsh Wrens, three Hermit Thrushes, seven Swamp Sparrows, two Field Sparrows, and five Eastern Meadowlarks. Not that many years ago more than one or two individuals of any of these species would have been considered exceptional. Other notable sightings of songbirds that occur less than annually in winter include a Vesper Sparrow in Potsdam on 1 December, a White-crowned Sparrow in Ogdensburg 8-9 December, an American Pipit in Canton on 8 January, and a Gray Catbird in Potsdam on 22 January. Most of the more regularly occurring half-hardies were present in about average numbers, although American Robin seemed scarcer than usual and Eastern Bluebird slightly more common than usual.

Spring migration got off to an exceptionally early start, with geese and blackbirds trickling north as early as 10 February. Migration really picked up during the warm spell that ended February, with Snow Goose, Canada Goose, several species of duck, Ring-billed Gull, and Red-winged Blackbird moving in significant numbers. The early arrival of both Killdeer and American Woodcock on 28 February was not unexpected, as these shorebirds have returned to northern New York at similar dates during several winters that ended with warm spells. More unexpected was a Wilson's Snipe on Fort Drum on 27 February, eleven days earlier than the previous record early date for Region 6.

For the season I received reports of 132 species, considerably higher than the most recent ten-year mean of 118.4 species and probably the highest winter tally ever recorded in Region 6, although many historic reports did not include seasonal totals. The Black-throated Gray Warbler was clearly the bird of the season, especially given how cooperative it was. The winter's unusually high bird diversity was another high point. The biggest disappointment was the lack of some iconic winter birds, as Snowy Owl was barely detected and white-winged gulls were missed entirely. Despite missing a few species, though, birders were able to enjoy plenty of birds and unusually pleasant weather for most of the winter.

CONTRIBUTORS

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ABBREVIATIONS

ADK – Adirondacks; **AFWMA** – Ashland Flats WMA, JEFF; **BI** – Barnhart I, STLA; **BPWMA** – Black Pd WMA, JEFF; **BRB** – Black Ri Bay, JEFF; **CCSP** – Coles Creek SP, STLA; **CV** – T Cape Vincent, STLA; **FD** – Fort Drum Military Reservation, JEFF & LEWI; **FdIP** – Fort de la Presentation, STLA; **FL** – Fisher’s Landing, JEFF; **GPSP** – Grass Pt SP, JEFF; **HH** – Henderson Harbor, JEFF; **HP** – Hawkins Pt, STLA; **ICNC** – Indian Creek Nature Center, STLA; **JCSP** – Jacques Cartier SP, STLA; **JEFF** – Jefferson Co; **KC** – Kelsey Creek, JEFF; **LEWI** – Lewis Co; **LWMA** – Lakeview WMA, JEFF; **MM** – Massawepie Mire, STLA; **PilPt** – Pillar Pt, JEFF; **PRWMA** – Perch River WMA, JEFF; **PtPen** – Pt Peninsula, JEFF; **RBP** – Red Barn Pres, STLA; **RLT** – Richard’s Landing Dike trail, STLA; **RMSP** – Robert Moses SP, STLA; **RWSP** – Robert G. Wehle SP, JEFF; **SBSP** – Southwick Beach SP, JEFF; **ShBy** – Sherwin’s Bay, JEFF; **SLR** – St. Lawrence Ri; **SnBy** – Snowshoe Bay, JEFF; **STLA** – St. Lawrence Co; **StPt** – Stony Pt, JEFF; **ULLWMA** – Upper and Lower Lakes WMA, STLA; **WBSP** – Westcott Beach SP, JEFF; **WHWMA** – Wilson Hill WMA, STLA; **WP** – Whalen P, STLA.

Snow Goose: southbound max 5000 WHWMA 10 Dec; last southbound PtPen & Ogdensburg STLA 6 Jan; northbound arr ICNC & T Lowville 10 Feb; max 1500 KC 23 Feb & FD 27 Feb.

Ross’s Goose: 2 FD 6 Dec.

Cackling Goose: 3 FdIP 8 Dec (JSB, B. Dixon) where numerous reports 1-5/day thru 13 Jan (mob).

Canada Goose: widespread L Ontario & SLR thru; midwinter max 2500 CCSP 1 Jan.

Mute Swan: max 40 GPSP 21 Feb.

Trumpeter Swan: max 58 ULLWMA 25 Feb, high, increasing.

Tundra Swan: max 430 BRB 16 Dec; 71 WP 1 Jan high for STLA.

Wood Duck: T Massena 23 Dec (ACh, J. Stein) & ULLWMA 8 Jan (B. Dixon), only reports before presumed arr BPWMA 22 Feb.

Gadwall: max 26 BI 28 Jan.

American Wigeon: max 4 PRWMA 14 Feb; reports from 4 other loc L Ontario & SLR.

Mallard: max 370 ShBy 21 Jan.

American Black Duck: max 131 WP 2 Jan.

Northern Pintail: max 69 WP 9 Dec where double-digit counts to 15 Jan; highest count elsewhere 21 LWMA 6 Jan; no reports after 15 Jan until widespread arr 27 Feb.

Green-winged Teal: 2 CCSP & WP 9 Dec; T Lyme 2 Jan.

Canvasback: up to 4/day SnBy 6-19 Jan only reports.

Redhead: max 250 SnBy 8 Jan.

Ring-necked Duck: max 260 SnBy 6 Jan.

Greater Scaup: max 2300 Reeds Bay PilPt 4 Feb.

Lesser Scaup: max 200 SnBy 8 Jan.

Surf Scoter: 2 CCSP 1 Dec; max 4 WBSP 27 Jan; only reports.

White-winged Scoter: max 68 WBSP 13 Feb.

Black Scoter: max 3 JCSP 9 Dec; 3 other reports.

Long-tailed Duck: max 370 SBSP 14 Dec.

Bufflehead: max 171 PilPt 23 Feb.

Common Goldeneye: max 675 PtPen 24 Feb.

Barrow’s Goldeneye: m CV 19 Jan (N.

Leone); f 9 Feb (JSB).

Common x Barrow’s Goldeneye (hybrid): PilPt 20 Jan (N. Leone).

Hooded Merganser: max 30 RMSP 15 Jan.

Common Merganser: max 540 SLR T Louisville 1 Jan.

Red-breasted Merganser: max 170 BI 9 Dec.

Pied-billed Grebe: FD 4 Dec (JSB); PRWMA 16 Feb (RBr, RL), rare winter.

Horned Grebe: max 9 RWSP 8 Feb (R. Spahn).

Red-necked Grebe: max 2 CCSP 1 Dec where last 9 Dec; BI 28 Jan only other report.

American Coot: SnBy 19 Jan (N. Leone) only report.

Sandhill Crane: 4 in 2 loc T Canton 16 Dec (B. Berg, H. Ellingsen, K. Gage, B. Carlson) only reports.

Killdeer: spring arr FD 28 Feb (JSB) early.

American Woodcock: spring arr T Leray 28 Feb (JSB) early.

Wilson's Snipe: FD 27 Feb (JSB) record early.

Bonaparte's Gull: 3 Dexter Marsh JEFF 20 Dec only report.

Ring-billed Gull: widespread reports mostly < 10 thru mid-Feb incl SLR where usually scarce by early Jan; influx throughout starting 22 Feb.

Herring Gull: max 820 BRB 16 Dec.

Lesser Black-backed Gull: BRB (JSB) & JCSP (B. Carlson, K. Gage) 16 Dec; GPSP 9 Feb (JSB)

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

Red-throated Loon: CCSP 1 & 9 Dec (B. Dixon, JSB) only reports.

Common Loon: max 12 CCSP 1 Dec (B. Dixon) where 8 still present 15 Jan (JSB) high for winter; widespread reports 1-3 SLR & L Ontario to at least 19 Feb.

Double-crested Cormorant: max 10 HH 14 Dec where last 6 on 12 Jan; last SLR Ogdensburg STLA 27 Jan.

Great Blue Heron: 13 singles thru 30 Jan.

Turkey Vulture: arr KC 27 Feb.

Golden Eagle: T Canton & T Potsdam 28 Jan (N. Aldritch, JSB, E. Wheeler); T Croghan 29 Jan (M. Roggie); T Pitcairn 25 Feb (M. Epstein); all imm.

Northern Harrier: max 4-9/day CV thru; elsewhere widespread N JEFF 1-2/day thru; only 5 reports STLA & 1 LEWI after Dec.

Sharp-shinned Hawk: 14 reports.

Cooper's Hawk: 46 reports.

American Goshawk: T Piercefield STLA 18 Feb (J. Garrett, E. Griffiths) only report.

Bald Eagle: 290 reports but no significant concentrations; max 7 CCSP 1 Jan.

Red-shouldered Hawk: T Pinckney LEWI 30 Jan (R. Brouse, R. Lewis, photos!); becoming annual in winter.

Red-tailed Hawk: 2-6/day NW JEFF.

Rough-legged Hawk: max 7 CV 9 Feb; modest numbers.

Eastern Screech-Owl: reports from 4 loc JEFF thru; different loc T Canton STLA 27 & 30 Jan.

Snowy Owl: T Lisbon STLA 16 Feb (I. Terry) & T Stockholm STLA 20 Feb (H. Whitehead) only reports.

Long-eared Owl: dead T Lorraine JEFF logging road 27 Jan (S. Litwhiler); StPt 9 Feb (JSB).

Short-eared Owl: max 11 CV 8 & 23 Jan where present thru (mob); T Alexandria JEFF 11 Jan; Calumet I JEFF 25 Feb; only loc away from NW JEFF Conger Rd T Hammond STLA 23 Dec to Jan 18 (J. Collison, JSB, B. Dixon) where 2 on 1 Jan (B. Berg).

Northern Saw-whet Owl: 2 Irish Settlement Rd T Canton STLA 24 Feb (JSB, C. Cady).

Belted Kingfisher: 23 reports from 12 loc thru.

Yellow-bellied Sapsucker: 13 reports from 10 loc thru.

Northern Flicker: max 5 RMSP 8 Feb.

American Kestrel: 1-2/day NW JEFF thru; 10 reports rest of R6.

Merlin: 21 reports from 11 loc.

GYRFALCON: captured Common Merganser SLR Ogdensburg STLA 19 Jan (R. MacDonald).

Peregrine Falcon: multiple reports 1-2 from known or suspected nesting sites RMSP & T Watertown JEFF thru; FdIP 9 Dec only other report.

Blue-headed Vireo: St. Lawrence U campus T Canton STLA 29 Dec (T. McKnight) first winter record.

Northern Shrike: 36 reports from 26 loc.

Canada Jay: 2 T Fine STLA 1 Feb only report.

Fish Crow: FdIP 9 Dec only report.

Boreal Chickadee: 2 MM 6 Jan; SUNY-ESF Ranger School T Fine STLA 17 Feb; only reports.

Horned Lark: max 41 T Orleans JEFF 23 Jan.

Bohemian Waxwing: singles RMSP 9 Dec & T Potsdam STLA 14 Jan; max 100 T Lawrence STLA 30 Jan; 3+ T Potsdam STLA 5 Feb; only reports.

Cedar Waxwing: max 75 T Potsdam STLA 23 Dec.

Winter Wren: max 3 BRB 16 Dec where one 6 Jan (JSB); LWMA 6 Jan (JSB); BPWMA (E. Campbell) & SUNY-ESF Ranger School T Fine STLA 23 Jan (J. Fogden); KC thru 10 Feb (R. Brouse, R. Lewis, B. Miller); high for winter.

Marsh Wren: Tracy Rd marsh T Lisbon STLA 30 Dec (JSB); 2 FD 3 Jan where last 31 Jan (JSB); Jonesville Rd marsh T Hermon STLA 3 Jan (JSB).

Carolina Wren: 52 reports from 16 loc; max 2 KC 28 Jan; increasing after several years of scarcity.

Gray Catbird: SUNY-Potsdam campus T Potsdam STLA 22 Jan (H. Ellingsen) only report.

European Starling: max 1000 CV 10 Feb.

Eastern Bluebird: max 20 T Hammond STLA 17 Feb; 30 additional reports 1-6 thru.

Hermit Thrush: FD 20 Dec (JSB); T Orleans JEFF 23 Jan (R. Brouse); PtPen 26 Jan (J. Lang); now present most winters.

American Robin: max 80 StPt 6 Jan where several double-digit counts; otherwise few reports of >10.

American Pipit: T Canton STLA 8 Jan (B. Dixon) rare winter.

Pine Grosbeak: T West Turin LEWI 12 Dec (J. Akin) only report.

House Finch: mx 30 PtPen 23 Jan.

Purple Finch: max 16 T Fine STLA 17 Feb.

Common Redpoll: max 15 T Worth LEWI 9 Jan; 3 Pleasant L SF STLA 8-10 Jan & T Pierrepont STLA 19 Feb only other reports.

Red Crossbill: max 42 FD 2 Feb where nesting confirmed or suspected in several loc; reports from another 17 widely scattered loc throughout R6; Types 2, 4, & 12 confirmed by M. Young from recordings; *intro*.

White-winged Crossbill: 32 MM 6 Jan (S. Quadt, P. Roy, T. Maron, S. Denenberg) only report.

Pine Siskin: 60 JCSP 9 Dec largest flock outside ADK; max 680 on 20-km stretch road T Colton STLA 4 Feb where largest flock 240; widely scattered remainder R6.

American Goldfinch: max 120 T Gouverneur STLA 18 February.

Lapland Longspur: max 2 T Louisville STLA 9 Dec; T Oswegatchie STLA 21 Jan & PtPen 23 Jan only other reports.

Snow Bunting: max 400 T Louisville STLA 9 Dec.

Field Sparrow: T Alexandria JEFF 21 Dec (B. Purcell, K. McGann); AFWMA 6 Jan (JSB); rare winter.

American Tree Sparrow: max 42 T Stockholm STLA feeder 20 Feb.

Dark-eyed Junco: widespread reports up to 30/day; max 95 Line Road T Oswegatchie & Lisbon STLA 20 Jan.

White-crowned Sparrow: ad FdIP 8 Dec (JSB, B. Dixon) & nearby Ogdensburg STLA 9 Dec (N. Kachala, R. Buckert); only reports.

White-throated Sparrow: max 21 KC 18 Feb.

Vesper Sparrow: T Potsdam STLA 1 Dec (B. Dixon) scarce winter.

Song Sparrow: about 25 reports mostly singles; max 5 RBP 15 Dec.

Swamp Sparrow: RBP 15 Dec; Muskellunge Bay & ShBy 16 Dec; Jonesville Rd marsh T Hermon 16 & 21 Dec; different loc FD 20 Dec & 27 Feb; T Potsdam 30 Dec (all JSB) more than usual.

Eastern Meadowlark: T Brownville 21 Jan (R. Brouse, R. Lewis); 4 RMSP 29 Jan (R. & D. Scranton) high.

Red-winged Blackbird: 6 widely scattered reports 1-2 each before mid-Feb; small trickle migrants beginning 11 Feb mostly 1-7/day until widespread arr 28 Feb.

Brown-headed Cowbird: max 110 T Louisville & T Waddington farm; 19 additional widely scattered reports of 1-12; more than usual.

Common Grackle: RLT 10 Dec & T Canton 16 Jan only reports before trickle of early migrants arr starting 10 Feb; max 6 T Rutland 27 Feb.

Common Yellowthroat: Jonesville Road marsh T Hermon 16 Dec & 3 Jan (JSB) rare winter.

Yellow Warbler: FdIP 8 Dec (JSB, B. Dixon, photos!) first Reg winter record.

Yellow-rumped Warbler: FdIP 20 Dec (R. Stoltzfus); CV 25 Dec (R. Booth); 2 StPt 6 Jan (JSB); only reports.

BLACK-THROATED GRAY WARBLER: FdIP 7 Dec to 3 Jan (T. Parla, mob, photos!) first Reg record.

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REGION 7—ADIRONDACK-CHAMPLAIN

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The winter season began and ended with temperatures well above average. Across three months, the Plattsburgh weather station averaged 5.96° F above normal and the Saranac Lake Weather station averaged 7.6° above normal.

	Plattsburgh Area			Saranac Lake Area		
Temp	Mean	Normal	Deviation	Mean	Normal	Deviation
Dec	32.4°	26.4°	+6.0°	29.1°	20.7°	+8.4°
Jan	24.3°	19.1°	+5.2°	20.8°	13.6°	+7.2°
Feb	27.7°	21.0°	+6.7°	22.5°	15.3°	+7.2°

Precip	Total	Normal	Deviation	Total	Normal	Deviation
Dec	4.53"	1.76"	+2.77"	4.33"	2.20"	+2.13"
Jan	2.52"	1.41"	+1.11"	2.09"	1.94"	+0.15"
Feb	0.13"	1.22"	-1.09"	0.35"	1.50"	-1.15"

Precipitation totals diverged minimally with the greatest deviation in December where both weather stations recorded total amounts between 2 and 3 inches above normal. January and February totals stayed within 0 to 1 inches of normal. The warmer temperatures resulted in a considerable amount of open water on Lake Champlain, with an almost entirely unfrozen lake north of Port Henry. This resulted in fewer gull staging areas in and around the edges of the Lake’s ice pack where birders could normally sift through hundreds of loafing larids. In addition, waterfowl concentrations seemed more widespread but with primary winter gathering areas still mostly situated in and around Port Henry, mostly in Bulwagga Bay along the edge of the ice pack. This shallow, southern Lake Champlain bay tends to freeze over more quickly and for a longer duration than other sections of the Lake. Given Bulwagga Bay’s southern orientation, it tends to catch large groups of waterfowl as they travel south, often remaining for prolonged periods. Seeing open water here in late February was certainly unsettling but did provide comfortable access to the mixed flock of waterfowl that built up along this area.

Despite the warm temperatures, the smaller western lakes and ponds did indeed freeze over, which drove most of the goose activity to the open waters of Lake Champlain. The Snow Goose high count this season was rather low considering the warm temps with a maximum count of 7500 individuals in the Reynolds Road farm fields, just west of Monty Bay in Clinton County. No Ross’s Geese were recorded this winter. A single **Cackling Goose** and **Greater White-fronted Goose** spent the second half of December in North West Bay in Westport, viewed from the Westport Boat Launch and the adjacent Hoisington Brook Outlet.

Lake Champlain continues to annually host **Tufted Duck** at historic locations. This year, winter sightings were restricted to Essex County with a

handsome drake that delighted observers from 28 December to 15 January as it ranged from the Westport Boat Launch south to Bulwagga Bay amongst large flocks of scaup and other mixed waterfowl species. In addition to the drake, an interesting Tufted Duck/scaup was seen and photographed in Bulwagga Bay from 10-12 February. In all respects, this individual seemed to fit the physical characteristics of Tufted Duck; however, its tuft was quite nub-like, resembling a hybrid. Viewing distance was greater than ideal, which prevented quality images for a more thorough assessment. Lake Champlain also remains as one of the best locations in the state for **Barrow's Goldeneye** with a total of eight individuals spread amongst Clinton and Essex Counties. A **Common x Barrow's Goldeneye** was photographed off of Crown Point State Historic Site on 12 February and was last seen on 17 February. Although still considered scarce, **Harlequin Duck** has become more regular in recent years than in the past, perhaps due to an increase in observer effort. A female-type was seen in Bulwagga Bay from 14 January through 29 February. This is the seventh winter season record in eBird of Harlequin Duck in Region 7.

Red-necked Grebe had a comparatively good showing this season with a total of four reports, possibly due to the lack of ice on Lake Champlain.

The Region's first winter record of **Sandhill Crane** took place on 7 December at the Malone-Dufort Airport. This coincides with what appears to be an overall recent increase in numbers of Sandhill Crane in Region 7.

A very early **American Woodcock** was found in Ticonderoga on 28 February. This is just three days later than the historic early date for woodcock, but nonetheless, still well earlier than the Region 7 average arrival date of 23 March.

As described above, the winter gull season was partially hindered by the record warm temperatures, leaving Lake Champlain essentially completely unfrozen. This prevented the development of near shore ice edges, where gulls often roost allowing for observers to carefully sift through them in search of oddities. Without these ice edges, most gulls roost on offshore islands well out of observation range. Regardless, Region 7 still managed a record high count of **Iceland Gulls** on 9 January at the Clinton County Landfill with a total of 12 individuals. While public access is prohibited at this location, fortunately most of the gulls that spend the day feeding here tend to roost at the nearby Cadyville Beach, and along the Plattsburgh waterfront at publicly accessible locations where ice builds up at the Saranac River Mouth. Two **Glaucous Gulls** were found this season, which included an adult, a rare age class in Region 7, which was photographed at the landfill on 9 January. A total of three adult, or near adult, **Lesser Black-backed Gulls** and a **Herring x Great Black-backed Gull** rounded out the gull highlights of the season.

Short-eared Owl had fairly good widespread representation and was detected in three of the four Region 7 counties. Most observations came from the Malone-Dufort Airport where at least four individuals put on a consistent show for most of the winter season. The thousands of acres of open agricultural lands in Clinton, Essex, and Franklin Counties most certainly hold more Short-eared Owls than are actually detected. Like most discoveries in this vast Region, success often comes down to effort and coverage.

It was an exciting season for winter finches, despite the low numbers of redpolls and lack of Pine Grosbeaks. On 22 January, a magnificent flock of 631 **Bohemian Waxwings** arrived in Keene. As the days progressed, the flock dispersed into smaller, yet still significant subflocks and were seen south to Keene Valley, on and off through late February. Residents and visitors were also treated to studying vocalizations of the various **Red Crossbill** types. Four different types were documented, which included Type 1, Type 2, Type 4 and the expected Type 12 Red Crossbills. But without question, **Pine Siskin** won the award for “Bird of the 2023/2024 Winter.” It was nearly impossible to be outdoors and not see or hear Pine Siskins. There was a max count of 500 individuals in Port Henry, but also many observations of flocks containing several hundred individuals in all counties. It was a tremendous irruption for this species. White cedar cones provided at least one of their preferred major sources of food as noted by observers. As a result of the huge crush of siskins, three “**green morph**” **Pine Siskins** were documented. It is still unknown as to whether these birds simply represent individual variation, aberrant plumage, or perhaps a true “morph.” But regardless, it’s always a fun challenge to seek out these mysterious individuals and to contribute to their ongoing study.

122 species were reported in the Region this season.

CONTRIBUTORS

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ABBREVIATIONS

AMWMA – Ausable Marsh WMA, CLIN; **BB** – Bloomingdale Bog, FRAN; **BBB** – Bulwagga Bay Beach, ESSE; **BuB** – Bulwagga Bay, ESSE; **CPSHS** – Crown Point State Historic Site, ESSE; **CuB** – Cumberland Bay, CLIN; **Ess** – Town of Essex, ESSE; **HBO** – Hoisington Brook Outlet, ESSE; **LkCh** – Lake Champlain; **MDA** – Malone-Dufort Airport, FRAN; **MBWMA** – Monty’s Bay WMA, CLIN; **SRWF** – Split Rock Wild Forest,

ESSE; **Ti** – Ticonderoga, ESSE; **TFBL** – Ticonderoga Ferry and Boat Launch, ESSE, **TL** – Tupper L, FRAN; **PtAR** – Point Au Roche SP; **PH** – Port Henry, ESSE; **SRM** – Saranc Ri Mouth, CLIN; **WRS** – Webb Royce Swamp, ESSE; **WBL** – Westport Boat Launch, ESSE; **WMWMA** – Wickham Marsh WMA, ESSE; **WiPt** – Willsboro Pt, ESSE.

Snow Goose: max 7500 Reynolds Rd CLIN 8 Dec (JPol), *intro*.

Greater White-fronted Goose: HBO/WBL 14-31 Dec (StR, mob); *intro*.

Cackling Goose: HBO/WBL 21-28 Dec (StR), *intro*.

Canada Goose: max 10,530 PH 3 Dec (StR).

Trumpeter Swan: 2 AMWMA 20-22 Feb (SB, mob).

Wood Duck: one rep, HBO 31 Jan - 11 Feb (StR, mob).

Northern Shoveler: CuB 7 Dec (StR).

Gadwall: max 5 Moriah ESSE 14 Dec (StR).

American Wigeon: 2 HBO 15 Jan - 29 Feb (mob); 3 AMWMA 29 Feb (DaR).

Mallard: max 810 HBO 15 Jan (StR).

American Black Duck: max 101 CPSHS 5 Jan (A. Fish, J. Peckham).

Northern Pintail: max 25 AMWMA 29 Feb (DaR).

Green-winged Teal: Moffitt Rd CLIN 2 Dec (BMc, CV); CuB 7 Dec (StR); 2 CPSHS 5 Jan (A. Fish, J. Peckham).

Canvasback: max 7 CPSHS 25 Feb (mob).

Redhead: max 10 WBL 31 Jan (StR).

Ring-necked Duck: max 350 AMWMA 25 Jan (StR).

TUFTED DUCK (R7): drake, WBL south to BuB 28 Dec - 15 Jan (A. Denton, mob); BuB 10-12 Feb (StR, KF, SFeu), apparent drake with short tuft., *intro*.

Greater Scaup: max 3000 AMWMA 25 Jan (StR).

Lesser Scaup: max 2500 WMWMA 6 Jan (J. Enck, K. Snyder).

Harlequin Duck: fem, BuB 14 Jan - 29 Feb (StR, mob).

White-winged Scoter: max 5 BuB 2 Dec (StR).

Black Scoter: BuB 2-14 Dec (StR), Schroon L ESSE 5 Dec (ElG).

Long-tailed Duck: max 30 BuB 2 Dec (StR).

Bufflehead: max 122 LkCh across from WMWMA 7 Dec (StR).

Common Goldeneye: max 1240 BuB 14 Jan (StR).

Barrow's Goldeneye: at least 2 LkCh across from WMWMA 7 Dec - 1 Feb (mob); Kings Bay CLIN 28 Dec (StR); at least 5 from HBO south to BuB 14 Dec - 12 Feb (mob), *intro*.

Common x Barrow's Goldeneye (hybrid): BuB 3 Jan (StR); CPSHS 12-19 Feb (DHR, StR, MR), *intro*.

Hooded Merganser: max 14 AMWMA 7 Dec (StR).

Common Merganser: max 630 Kings Bay, CLIN 7 Dec (StR).

Red-breasted Merganser: max 18 Treadwell Bay CLIN 18 Jan (StR, BK).

Ruddy Duck: AMWMA 21 Jan - 1 Feb (C. Malin, mob); TFBL 1 Jan (GaCh).

Wild Turkey: max 146 Gabriels FRAN 15 Feb (NM).

Ruffed Grouse: max 6 Minera ESSE 30 Dec (L. Cain, M. Cain, S. Calzada, L. Loan).

Ring-necked Pheasant: WRS 4 Dec (StR); Keene ESSE 5 Dec (J. Jones).

Horned Grebe: max 11 HBO 4-14 Dec (StR).

Red-necked Grebe: Cole Bay, ESSE 21 Dec (StR); CuB 25 Dec (JaSt, ACh); AMWMA 25 Dec (JaSt, ACh); WBL 5 Feb (StR).

Rock Pigeon: max 90 SRM 3 Jan (BMc); 90 TL (W. Haugh).

Mourning Dove: max 50 Sulphur Spring Rd FRAN 1 Jan (NM).

American Coot: WBL 19 Jan - 29 Feb (mob).

Sandhill Crane: 2 MDA 7 Dec (L. Erb, D. Scranton, R. Scranton).

American Woodcock: Ti 28 Feb (GaCh); very early.

Ring-billed Gull: max 750 WBL 24 Feb (DHR).

Herring Gull: max 2,000 Morrisonville CLIN 9 Jan (DHR).

Iceland Gull: 12 Morrisonville 9 Jan (DHR); R7 high count, *intro*.

Lesser Black-backed Gull: 2 SRM 9-20 Jan (BMc, DHR); Morrisonville CLIN 9 Jan (DHR), *intro*.

Glaucous Gull: juv, SRM 22 Dec - 20 Jan (DHR, mob); ad, Morrisonville CLIN 9-12 Jan (DHR), rare age class, *intro*.

Great Black-backed Gull: max 21 CuB 18 Jan (StR, BK).

Herring Gull x Great Black-backed Gull (hybrid): SRM 27 Jan (DHR).

Red-throated Loon: BB 14 Dec (StR); only rep.

Common Loon: max 8 HBO 4 Dec (StR).

Double-crested Cormorant: 2 PtAR 3 Dec (J. Mitchell).

Great Blue Heron: max 2 Malone Memorial Recreation P FRAN 8 Dec (D. Reisch); 2 WBL 23 Jan (GaCh); 2 AMWMA 1 Feb (StR).

Black Vulture: max 30 Ti 15 Jan (ElG, GlCh, MaCh).

Turkey Vulture: North Hudson ESSE 9 Feb (J. A. Preston, T. Preston, K. O'Hearn).

Golden Eagle: Ess 14-21 Dec (StR); Speculator HAMI 24 Feb (R. Zucker, D. Salas, D. Benvent, H. Truong).

Northern Harrier: 4 CLIN; 5-7 ESSE; 2-3 FRAN.

Sharp-shinned Hawk: 4 CLIN; 3 ESSE; 1 FRAN; 1 HAMI.

Cooper's Hawk: multiple reps in CLIN, ESSE and FRAN.

American Goshawk: TL 24 Dec (A. Retzloff, ph); BB 28 Dec (K. Topping, ph); Malone, FRAN 18 Jan (RH).

Bald Eagle: widespread with 3 max counts of 4 in ESSE.

Red-shouldered Hawk: no reps.

Red-tailed Hawk: widespread with 3 max counts of 4 in ESSE.

Rough-legged Hawk: 6 CLIN; at least 6 in ESSE; 2 FRAN.

Eastern Screech-Owl: 2 Dudley Rd ESSE 16 Dec (StR); WiPt 16 Dec (DHR); Essex, ESSE 22 Dec (D. Miller).

Great Horned Owl: 2 SRWF 16 Dec (StR); Port Henry, ESSE 23 Dec - 3 Feb (StR); Ti 22 Jan (GaCh); ADK Ecological Interpretive Center ESSE 5 Feb (M. Roos); Ti 19 Feb (MaCh).

Barred Owl: multiple reps in all 4 counties.

Short-eared Owl: 4 MDA 1 Dec - 8 Feb (mob); Banker Rd CLIN 8 Dec (JPol); Angier Hill Rd ESSE 1 Jan (StR); CPSHS 28 Jan (J. Rothe), *intro*.

Northern Saw-whet Owl: TL 17 Jan (J. Garrett, E. Griffis).

Belted Kingfisher: 1 CLIN; 7 ESSE; 1 FRAN.

Red-bellied Woodpecker: widespread in lower valleys.

Black-backed Woodpecker: max 3 BB 25 Dec (S. Miller); Roosevelt Truck Trail 12 Jan (N. Logan).

Downy Woodpecker: max 7 Hope HAMI 9 Dec (L. Cain, S. Calzada).

Hairy Woodpecker: max 4 Franklin FRAN 19 Jan (R. Ellard); 4 Schroon ESSE 17 Feb (L. Conley, N. Conley); 4 BB 17-22 Feb (P. Roy, J. LoTiempo, C. Eisenbach, Y. Levchinsky); 4 Duane FRAN 19 Feb (RH).

Northern Flicker: 7 reps. Fort Covington FRAN 21 Dec - 5 Jan (W. Lester); Westville FRAN 1 Jan (NM); WiPt 3 Jan (DHR); Altona CLIN 6 Jan (A. Bedard); Peru CLIN 12 Jan (A. Douglas); Ess 28 Jan (D. Lansing); CPSHS 9 Feb (D. Cartwright).

Pileated Woodpecker: multiple max counts of 2 inds in CLIN, ESSE, FRAN & HAMI.

American Kestrel: 4-5 reps. Harrietstown FRAN 12 Dec (AlBe); Whallonsburg ESSE 14 Dec (StR); Westport ESSE 1 Jan (BMc); Angier Hill Rd ESSE 8 Jan (StR); Middle Rd ESSE 8 Jan (StR); Whallons Bay Rd ESSE 15 Feb (DHR).

Merlin: MBWMA 7 Dec (StR); Champlain, CLIN 23 Dec (J. L. Langley); CPSHS 29 Dec - 5 Jan (K. Garrett).

Peregrine Falcon: 4 CLIN, 6 ESSE.

Northern Shrike: 1 CLIN; 8 ESSE; 10 FRAN; 1 HAMI.

Canada Jay: max 11 BB 28 Dec (KT); 11 Sabattis Bog HAMI 2 Dec - 27 Jan (Cheryl D., M. Fischer, M. Scheibel, J. Collins).

Blue Jay: max 30 Inlet HAMI 22 Jan (GL).

American Crow: max 7200 MDA 19 Jan (NM).

Fish Crow: 2 Morrisonville CLIN 9 Jan (DHR); 2 Plattsburgh CLIN 4 Feb (C. Malin).

Common Raven: max 8 Wilmington ESSE 15 Feb (R. Roth).

Black-capped Chickadee: max 60 Wolf Pd ESSE 2 Dec (Cheryl D., M. Fischer).

Boreal Chickadee: max 7 Blue Ridge Rd ESSE 18 Feb (J. Collins, K. Ellington).

Tufted Titmouse: max 6 Ti 21 Jan (GlCh, MaCh); 6 CPSHS 8 Feb (K. Dylan);

Horned Lark: max 100 MBWMA 7 Dec (StR).

Ruby-crowned Kinglet: AMWMA 25 Jan - 1 Feb (StR).

Golden-crowned Kinglet: max 15 SRWF 16 Dec (JaSt, ACh).

Bohemian Waxwing: max 631 Keene ESSE 22 Jan (DHR); widespread with reps in all 4 counties, *intro*.

Cedar Waxwing: max 75 Crown Pt ESSE 1 Jan (StR); 75 Ess 20 Feb (DHR)

Red-breasted Nuthatch: max 25 Malone FRAN 25 Dec (P. McNeil).
White-breasted Nuthatch: max 11 SRWF 16 Dec (JaSt, ACh).

Brown Creeper: max 8 SRWF 16 Dec (JaSt, ACh).

Carolina Wren: max 3 Ti 27 Feb (EIG).
Northern Mockingbird: SRM 22 Dec -2 3 Feb (DHR, mob), established location; Ti 1 Feb (GaCh).

European Starling: max 2000 Morisonville CLIN 22 Feb (L. Loan).

Eastern Bluebird: max 10 AMWMA 11 Jan (N. Pultorak).
American Robin: max 16 Keene ESSE 4 Feb (J. Schiavone).

House Sparrow: max 21 Ti 2 Jan (StR).

Evening Grosbeak: 5 Newcomb ESSE 21 Dec -2 4 Feb (C. Demers); 5 TL 15 Jan (R. MacDonald); 3 Malone FRAN 3 Feb (R. Robinson); 6 North Elba ESSE 8 Jan (J. Amsellem).

House Finch: max 15 Wilcox Dock CLIN 30 Dec (C. Malin).
Purple Finch: widespread, max 50 Saranac L FRAN (S. Forbes).

Common Redpoll: BBB 2 Dec (StR); 55 Duane Center FRAN 19 Jan (D. Votta); 25 BB 8-25 Feb (JPol, D. Cartwright, M. Brown, M. Mau); Owls Head FRAN 13 Feb (D. Votta).
Red Crossbill: max 40 Roosevelt Truck Trail ESSE 30 Dec (L. Cain, M. Cain, S. Calzada, L. Loan).

Red Crossbill “Appalachian”/Type 1: Ensign Pd Rd ESSE 14 Feb (StR).

Red Crossbill “Ponderosa Pine”/Type 2: 3 Westport ESSE 17 Jan (DHR); Bloomingdale 27 Jan (NM); North Hudson ESSE 4 Feb (NM, M. Young); Ensign Pd Rd ESSE 14 Feb (StR); Chilson ESSE 15 Feb (StR).

Red Crossbill “Douglas-fir”/Type 4: 13 ESSE; 4 FRAN.

Red Crossbill “Northeastern”/Type 12: widespread.

White-winged Crossbill: max 33 Bloomingdale 7 Jan (mob).

Pine Siskin: max 500 PH 24 Jan (StR); widespread and abundant throughout the Region, *intro*.

Pine Siskin (green morph): Bigelow Rd FRAN 31 Jan (StR, ph); PH 10 Feb (StR); Walker Rd ESSE 20 Feb (DHR, ph), *intro*.

American Goldfinch: max 115 Angier Hill Rd ESSE 24 Jan (StR).

Lapland Longspur: 16 MBWMA 7 Dec (StR); Chazy ESSE 11 Jan (StR); 2 CPSHS 15 Jan (R. MacDonald); 11 Peru CLIN 20 Jan (BMc, JB, CV).

Snow Bunting: max 300 MBWMA 7 Dec (StR).

American Tree Sparrow: max 45 Westville FRAN 15 Jan (P. McNeil).

Dark-eyed Junco: max 40 Keene ESSE 3 Feb (J. Garrett).

White-throated Sparrow: several single reps from CLIN, ESSE & FRAN. max 3 PH 10 Dec (StR); 3 Westport ESSE 21 Dec (StR).

Savannah Sparrow: 2 Cross Rd ESSE 4 Dec (StR); Whallon Bay ESSE 18 Jan (BMc, JaSt); 2 Shanahan Rd, ESSE 23 Feb (GaCh).

Song Sparrow: 3 CLIN; 19 ESSE; 1 FRAN.

Red-winged Blackbird: max 75 Ti 29 Dec (StR); 75 (G.F. Gratton).

Brown-headed Cowbird: max 100 9 Dec Chazy CLIN (BeM).

Rusty Blackbird: Lewis, ESSE 16 Dec (D. Nickerson).

Common Grackle: 5 FRAN; 10 ESSE.

Yellow-rumped Warbler: 2 New Russia ESSE 2 Feb (A. Cassella).

Northern Cardinal: max 8 Saranac L FRAN 23 Feb (JaSt); 8 Peru CLIN 26 Feb (S. Wunderlich).

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REGION 8—HUDSON-MOHAWK

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	Albany			Glens Falls		
Temp	Mean	Normal	Deviation	Mean	Normal	Deviation
Dec	37.6°	30.4°	+7.2°	33.8°	26.6°	+7.2°
Jan	30.1°	24.4°	+5.7°	25.0°	19.7°	+5.3°
Feb	33.8°	26.8°	+7.0°	29.4°	21.9°	+7.5°

Precip	Total	Normal	Deviation	Total	Normal	Deviation
Dec	5.68"	3.26"	+2.42"	5.31"	3.01"	+2.30"
Jan	5.10"	2.60"	+2.50"	4.05"	2.56"	+1.49"
Feb	0.45"	2.28"	-1.83"	0.44"	1.95"	-1.51"

Temperatures were far above normal throughout the 2023-2024 winter season in Region 8. Precipitation was well above average in December and January, but it then turned extremely dry in February with less than half an inch of rain/melted snow for that month. Seasonal snowfall totals were barely one-third of normal, with 3.2" of snow recorded at Albany in December, 16.3" snow in January, and a meager 1.3" snow in February. Waterbodies remained unfrozen for much of the winter, with only a one-week cold spell in mid-January creating a short-lived solid freeze over.

A **Greater White-fronted Goose** spent a week in a flock of Canada Geese that moved back-and-forth from Wrights Loop to the Hudson River in Saratoga County during the second half of December. A second **Greater White-fronted Goose** was seen at Summit Reservoir in Columbia County on Christmas Eve. The Albany County Christmas Bird Count on 17 December produced a very unusual late record with a flyover group of 29 **Brant**. It was a first for that venerable CBC. David Halm found a **Green-winged Teal (Eurasian)** on the Mohawk River in Niskayuna on 16 February. **Canvasback** ducks made a decent showing around the Region, with sightings from Saratoga Lake (as many as five individuals), Vischer Ferry Nature and Historic Preserve, Snyder's Lake in Rensselaer County, and the lower reservoir at Mine Kill State Park in Schoharie County. **Redheads** were similarly distributed in low numbers. John Hershey discovered a **Tufted Duck** among a large raft of waterfowl on Saratoga Lake on 4 January. With the unusually warm weather and lack of ice cover for the most part, presumably that same duck stayed the rest of the winter months moving around the lake, being seen well into March. Scoters were nearly absent from the Region, with two early-December reports of **White-winged Scoter** the only sightings.

A juvenile **Northern Gannet** dropped from the sky on 29 November along Glenwood Road in Menands, Albany County, adjacent to the Hudson River just to the east. It was retrieved by rehabilitators and released into the Hudson River at Fort Miller, Washington County on 2 December. Photos of the bird in captivity

were posted to the local listserv by the rehabber to make the birding community aware of this late report.

A group of at least five **Virginia Rails** was reported from Knox Wetland in Albany County on 28 February, a known breeding location for the species. Whether these vocalizing birds had newly arrived, or perhaps overwintered given the remarkably warm weather, is open to speculation.

Only a single report of **Glaucous Gull** was received during the period, a juvenile bird at Saratoga Lake on 8 December. A couple of **Lesser Black-backed Gulls** were observed in the winter gull flocks along the Mohawk River near Amsterdam, Montgomery County, and in the Cohoes-Crescent corridor north of Albany, along the same waterway.

Red-throated Loon was noted in two locations during the period, one at Saratoga Lake on 1 December, and one on Lake George in Warren County on 16 December.

A **Snowy Owl** was spotted on an ice shelf off of Brown's Beach, Saratoga Lake on 9 January. It later moved north and was seen from the Marine Park at the north end of the lake. This one-day wonder was the only sighting this winter season. As many as six **Short-eared Owls** were reported during the period from Ft. Edward in the Washington County Grasslands, as well as in Sprakers, Montgomery County. Those locations are both traditional winter roost areas. An additional sighting of a Short-eared Owl was reported from the agricultural fields in the Town of Knox, Albany County on 31 December. Reports of **Northern Saw-whet Owl** were more numerous than in recent winters, with five Regional counties (Albany, Columbia, Saratoga, Schenectady, Warren) represented. **Northern Shrike** observations were also more frequent and widespread than usual.

On 1 December a **Bohemian Waxwing** was observed in a large flock of Cedar Waxwings near Broadalbin, Fulton County, at the southern end of the Great Sacandaga Lake. A flyover **Evening Grosbeak** heard on 16 December near Ballston Spa, Saratoga County was the only report of that species for the winter season. Similarly, a sighting of a single **Pine Grosbeak** eating sumac berries in Galway, Saratoga County, was the only report this winter.

A female **Yellow-headed Blackbird** traveling with a group of Brown-headed Cowbirds was an excellent find by Jim de Waal Malefyt near Fort Plain, Fulton County on 14 February. **Common Yellowthroat** was an unexpected New Year's Day bird at Stockport Flats, Columbia County, although given the continuing mild winter weather conditions up to that point, not a big surprise. A lingering male **Wilson's Warbler** was a surprise, however, for a homeowner near Copake Falls, Columbia County. The bird spent several weeks in mid-December foraging under bird feeders and visiting a water garden in their backyard. A birdfeeder in Delanson was visited by a male **Rose-breasted Grosbeak** from 8-15 January following a snowfall and the only real cold air intrusion during the month.

141 species were reported during the period.

CONTRIBUTORS

Susan Beaudoin, Gary Chapin, Jeremy Collison, Bill Cook, Brianna Denoncour, Alan Devoe Bird Club recent sightings, Jim de Waal Malefyt, Craig Driggs, Lindsey Duval, Cindy Edwardson, Scott Fackenthall, Debra Ferguson, Mark Fitzsimmons, Marianne Friers, Rich Guthrie, HMBirds Groups.io, David Halm, David Harrison, Ron Harrower, Julie Hart, John Hershey, John Kent, Nancy Kern, Cheyenne Lee, Naomi Lloyd, Tristan Lowery, Thom McClenahan, Frank Mitchell, Gregg Recer & Cathy Graichen, Robert & Rita Reed, Stacy Robinson, John Roosenberg, Daniel Schlaepfer, Kathy Schneider, Kate Schnurr, Zach Schwartz-Weinstein, Marian Sole, Scott Stoner, Alison Van Keuren, Rich White, Tom & Colleen Williams, Will Yandik, Robert Yunick, Lachlan Ziegler. Also, checklists from other eBird users.

ABBREVIATIONS

B&BCMP – Bob & Betty Cummings Memorial P, WASH; **BCR** – Basic Creek Res, ALBA; **CL** – Collins L, SCHE; **DLSCA** – Drowned Lands Swamp Conservation Area, COLU; **FR** – Five Rivers EEC, ALBA; **FtEG** – Fort Edward Grasslands, WASH; **RoundL** – Round L, SARA; **SL** – Saratoga L, SARA; **SPd** – Stanton Pd, ALBA; **VFNHP** – Vischer Ferry Nature & Historic Pres, SARA. **WL** – Wrights Loop, SARA.

Snow Goose: max 239 B&BCMP 9 Dec.

Greater White-fronted Goose: WL 19-26 Dec; Summit Res COLU 24 Dec.

Brant: max 29 Delmar ALBA 17 Dec.

Cackling Geese: max 3 Copake COLU 29 Feb.

Canada Goose: max 13,145 B&BCMP 5 Dec.

Mute Swan: max 12 Nassau L RENS 19 Feb.

Wood Duck: max 12 CL 27 Feb.

Northern Shoveler: max 2 SL 1 Dec.

Gadwall: max 64 SPd 28 Feb.

American Wigeon: max 12 BCR 9 Dec.

Mallard: max 500 WL 21 Dec.

American Black Duck: max 200 WL 21 Dec.

Northern Pintail: max 57 VFNHP 29 Feb.

Green-winged Teal: max 18 BCR 9 Dec.

Canvasback: max 5 SL 14 Feb.

Redhead: max 5 BCR 9 Dec; 5 Snyder's L RENS 26 Dec.

Ring-necked Duck: max 900 BCR 4 Dec.

Tufted Duck: SL 4-15 Jan.

Greater Scaup: max 200 SL 15 Jan.

Lesser Scaup: max 530 SL 13 Jan.

White-winged Scoter: max 3 Great Sacandaga L FULT 1 Dec.

Long-tailed Duck: singletons in mult loc.

Bufflehead: max 100 SL 7 Dec.

Common Goldeneye: max 430 SL 2 Jan.

Barrow's Goldeneye: SL 1-7 Dec.

Hooded Merganser: max 200 SL 6 Jan.

Common Merganser: max 3000 South Bay WASH 14 Dec.

Red-breasted Merganser: max 5 SL 6 Jan; 5 Peebles I SP SARA 2 Feb.

Ruddy Duck: max 350 BCR 9 Dec.

Wild Turkey: max 83 Feura Bush ALBA 2 Dec.

Ruffed Grouse: max 8 Hunter GREE 24 Dec.

Pied-billed Grebe: max 2 SL 12 Dec.

Red-necked Grebe: SL 21 Dec.

Rock Pigeon: max 260 Northumberland SARA 8 Jan.

Mourning Dove: max 93 Ghent COLU 24 Dec.

Virginia Rail: max 5 Knox Wetland ALBA 28 Feb.

American Coot: Cambridge WASH 2 Dec; Collins L SCHE 20 Dec.

Killdeer: max 6 Cocksackie GREE 9 Jan.

American Woodcock: max 5 Ancram COLU 26 Feb.

Wilson's Snipe: max 2 Ghent COLU 10 Feb.

Bonaparte's Gull: Silver Bay WARR 5 Dec; Cocksackie GREE 19 Dec; Mine Kill SP SCHO 21 Dec; WL 25 Dec; Stockport COLU 14 Jan.

Ring-billed Gull: max 350 RoundL 13 Dec.

Herring Gull: max 300 T Colonie Landfill ALBA 15 Jan.

Iceland Gull: SL 1 Dec; T Colonie Landfill ALBA 22 Dec; Schaghticoke RENS 24 Dec; Schoharie Crossing MONT 25 Dec.

Lesser Black-backed Gull: max 2 T Colonie Landfill ALBA 30 Jan.

Glaucous Gull: SL 8 Dec.

Great Black-backed Gull: max 60 T Colonie Landfill ALBA 15 Jan.

Red-throated Loon: max 3 B&BCMP 4 Dec.

Common Loon: max 8 SL 8 Dec.

NORTHERN GANNET (R8): released at Ft Miller WASH 2 Dec, *intro*.

Double-crested Cormorant: max 2 South Bay WASH 9 Dec; RoundL 13 Dec; Ft Miller WASH 21 Dec.

Great Blue Heron: max 4 Clifton P SARA 30 Dec.

Black Vulture: max 72 Greenport COLU 1 Jan.

Turkey Vulture: max 35 Hudson COLU 22 Feb.

Golden Eagle: max 2 Copake COLU 16 Dec.

Northern Harrier: max 13 Overmountain Cons Area COLU 26 Jan.

Sharp-shinned Hawk: max 2 Waterford SARA 30 Dec.

Cooper's Hawk: max 3 Waterford SARA 30 Dec.

American Goshawk: Edinburg SARA 28 Jan.

Bald Eagle: max 23 B&BCMP 28 Feb.

Red-shouldered Hawk: max 3 Richmondville SCHO 10 Jan.

Red-tailed Hawk: max 18 Brunswick RENS 30 Dec.

Rough-legged Hawk: max 2 mult loc.

Eastern Screech-Owl: max 2 mult loc.

Great Horned Owl: max 3 mult loc.

Snowy Owl: SL 9 Jan, only report.

Barred Owl: max 3 mult loc.

Short-eared Owl: max 6 FtEG 15 Jan; Sprakers MONT 29 Jan.

Northern Saw-whet Owl: max 4 FR 12 Feb.

Belted Kingfisher: max 3 mult loc.

Red-bellied Woodpecker: max 23 N Greenbush RENS 23 Dec.

Yellow-bellied Sapsucker: max 3 Stockport COLU 9 Jan.

Downy Woodpecker: max 25 N Greenbush RENS 23 Dec.

Hairy Woodpecker: max 9 Nassau RENS 23 Dec.

Northern Flicker: max 13 VFNHP 2 Dec.

Pileated Woodpecker: max 6 L Taghkanic SP COLU 12 Dec.

American Kestrel: max 3 FtEG 2 Feb; 3 T New Scotland ALBA 17 Feb.

Merlin: max 3 FR 27 Jan.

Peregrine Falcon: max 2 mult loc.

Eastern Phoebe: Cambridge WASH 25 Feb.

Northern Shrike: max 2 T Knox ALBA 15 Jan.

Blue Jay: max 71 Rensselaer Tech P RENS 31 Dec.

American Crow: max 4000 FtEG 24 Feb.

Fish Crow: max 80 RoundL 25 Feb.

Common Raven: max 12 Ghent COLU 8 Feb; 12 VFNHP 28 Feb.

Black-capped Chickadee: max 76 N Greenbush RENS 23 Dec.

Tufted Titmouse: max 53 N Greenbush RENS 23 Dec.

Horned Lark: max 450 T Northumberland SARA 8 Jan.

Ruby-crowned Kinglet: max 2 VFNHP 27 Feb.

Golden-crowned Kinglet: max 11 Malta SARA 8 Feb.

Bohemian Waxwing: max 9 Bolton WARR 6 Feb.

Cedar Waxwing: max 100 Caroga L FULT 17 Dec.

Red-breasted Nuthatch: max 12 T Colonie ALBA 16 Dec.

White-breasted Nuthatch: max 34 Nassau RENS 23 Dec.

Brown Creeper: max 10 Woods Hollow NP SARA 11 Feb.

Winter Wren: max 3 mult loc.

Marsh Wren: VFNHP 5 Dec; Stuyvesant COLU 16 Dec; Mud Creek ELC COLU 25 Dec.

Carolina Wren: max 12 Clifton P SARA 30 Dec.

Gray Catbird: max 2 VFNHP 16 Dec; 2 Champlain Canal Trl SARA 17 Dec.

Brown Thrasher: T Knox ALBA 21 Jan, only report.

Northern Mockingbird: max 6 Waterford SARA 30 Dec.

European Starling: max 5000 T Schodack RENS 23 Dec.

Eastern Bluebird: max 35 Saratoga Springs SARA 14 Dec.

Hermit Thrush: max 2 Pachaquack Pres COLU 5 Dec; 2 Garnsey P SARA 26 Dec; 2 Veterans Mem P SARA 3 Jan.

American Robin: max 550 Stockport COLU 16 Dec.

House Sparrow: max 211 N Greenbush RENS 23 Dec.

American Pipit: max 175 Ancram COLU 6 Dec.

Evening Grosbeak: Ballston Spa SARA 16 Dec, only report.

Pine Grosbeak: Galway SARA 6 Feb, only report.

House Finch: max 43 Rensselaer Tech P RENS 23 Jan.

Purple Finch: max 15 Petersburg RENS 30 Jan.

Red Crossbill: max 40 W Fulton SCHO 20 Dec.

Pine Siskin: max 150 Broadalbin FULT 28 Dec.

American Goldfinch: max 200 Stillwater SARA 12 Dec.

Lapland Longspur: max 18 Northumberland SARA 21 Jan, high count.

Snow Bunting: max 80 Fultonville MONT 9 Jan; 80 Schuylerville SARA 20 Jan.

Chipping Sparrow: Schodack RENS 9-15 Jan, only report.

Field Sparrow: max 2 Greenport COLU 13 Jan; 2 Ghent COLU 17 Jan.

Fox Sparrow: singletons in mult loc thru winter.

American Tree Sparrow: max 55 T Knox ALBA 27 Jan.

Dark-eyed Junco: max 168 Nassau RENS 23 Dec.

White-crowned Sparrow: max 5 Minden MONT 30 Dec.

White-throated Sparrow: max 54 Nassau RENS 23 Dec.

Savannah Sparrow: max 8 T Northumberland SARA 20 Jan; 8 Livingston COLU 21 Jan.

Song Sparrow: max 35 Mohawk-Hudson Bike-Hike Trl—Niskayuna SCHE 10 Jan.

Swamp Sparrow: max 10 DLSCA 24 Dec.

Eastern Towhee: singletons in mult loc.

Yellow-headed Blackbird: Ft Plain FULT 14 Feb.

Eastern Meadowlark: Whitehall WASH 14 Dec, only report.

Red-winged Blackbird: max 1000 Castleton RENS 29 Feb.

Brown-headed Cowbird: max 350 FR 12 Feb.

Rusty Blackbird: 4 Ancram COLU 18 Dec.

Common Grackle: max 2000 Hunter GREE 1 Dec.

Common Yellowthroat: Stockport Flats COLU 1 Jan.

Yellow-rumped Warbler: max 2 Stockport Flats COLU 16 Dec.

Wilson's Warbler: Copake COLU 7-24 Dec.

Northern Cardinal: max 30 Waterford SARA 30 Dec.

Rose-breasted Grosbeak: T Knox ALBA 8-15 Jan.



REGION 9—HUDSON-DELAWARE

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December was a warm wet month with a high of 64° F on 18 December and a low of 17° on 22 December for an average of 38.4°, 6.3° above normal. There was a total of 6.9" of precipitation, 3.39" above normal, most of it falling as rain. January was a month of extremes with a high of 59° on 13 January and a low of 1° on 21 January for an average of 30.9°, 3.8° above normal. There was a total of 5.28" of precipitation, 2.82" above normal with a mix of snow and rain depending on elevation, making it a wet month. February was warmer and dryer than usual. There was a high of 62° on 27 February and a low of 12° on 20 February for an average of 34.1°, 4.9° above normal. Once again, these numbers were along the Hudson. The low in Sullivan and Ulster Counties on 20 February was 8°. There was a total of 1.43" of precipitation, .74" below normal.

There were many records of Cackling Geese around the Region, and the continuing Greater White-fronted Goose that winters on Bowman Avenue Pond/Edith G. Read Nature Center in Westchester was only the first of several reports of this species this winter. On 31 December Sean Camillieri picked a **Barnacle Goose** out of a flock of Canada Geese on Lake Gleneida in Putnam County. The very cooperative bird continued through 6 January. This was the second record for that county. On 4 February Evan Schumann photographed a Ross's Goose flying over the platform at the Wallkill River NWR. The following day the bird was photographed by Kyle Knapp at the Sunflower Farm on Lower Road. A second Ross's was found among a flock of Canada Geese soon thereafter.

On 31 January Cassie Luke discovered a Trumpeter Swan on Lake Tappan in Rockland County. The bird continued through the end of the period. On 25 February Renee Davis spotted a distant swan on Filippini Pond in Sullivan County which turned out to be a Trumpeter Swan as well. It was gone the following morning. Trumpeter Swan has become nearly annual in the Region. On 6 December Chris Chappell photographed five Tundra Swans flying down the Hudson River. They weren't seen again.

On 2 December Jim Yates spotted a female Barrow's Goldeneye on River Road in Ulster County. The bird was seen between there and Kingston Point Beach throughout the month with a second bird joining it in late December. Both were seen throughout the period. On 9 February Derek Stoll photographed an adult male Barrow's at West Point Foundry Preserve, a first record for Putnam County.

Several Iceland Gulls arrived at the Newburgh Waterfront early in the period, but it wasn't until 1 January that the first Lesser Black-backed Gull arrived. As usual, Bruce Nott found the birds. A real surprise was an Iceland Gull found by the author on 4 January at Woodbourne in Sullivan County. It was exactly ten years since the last record in Sullivan. Ultimately, two more would be found at this location. An Iceland Gull frequented Glen Island Park in Westchester, rare for the county, all of these resulting in the most reports submitted in the Region

in many years. Without question, the most amazing find of the period occurred on 20 January when Bruce Nott spotted a gull he didn't recognize on the Newburgh Waterfront. He had to consult a guide to identify it and was astounded to find it was a **Glaucous-winged Gull**! Bruce got the word out and a small group of birders were able to see it that afternoon before the gulls flushed just before dark. The following day it was relocated on the Beacon Waterfront near the train station where it was seen by an abundance of birders. This is only the second New York State record if approved by NYSARC. It continued through 26 January. On 26 January Peter Schoenberger found the bird on Mohonk Road in Ulster County. A first record for that county, it was relocated later in the day by the author on Rt. 299 just outside of New Paltz. Unfortunately, it was not seen thereafter.

On 12 December an American Bittern was seen at the Wallkill River NWR on Oil City Road in Orange County. The bird would continue through 30 January.

On 13 December Daniel Martinez spotted a flycatcher in his yard that turned out to be an **Ash-throated Flycatcher**, an extreme rarity for the Region; it was seen through 11 January.

Northern Shrikes were seen throughout the Region during the period. The **Loggerhead Shrike** was not reported for most of the period but was seen again on 27 January and continued through the end of the period.

On 16 December Silas Wareham discovered a very vocal wren on Hurley Mountain Road in Ulster County. He was able to get recordings and photos which proved it to be a **Sedge Wren**! A rare bird for Ulster at any time of year but especially so in December.

Red Crossbill numbers continued to increase in Sullivan County culminating in a total of 68 being seen by the author on 28 December, on the Monticello CBC. On 22 January, Jeanne Cimorelli and Ronnie DiLorenzo confirmed their breeding in yet another block when they photographed a long-staying pair on McCormick Road in Sullivan County with a fledged chick. There were reports from both Orange and Ulster Counties as well.

Renee Davis spotted a sparrow on Gabel Road in Sullivan on 9 January and was surprised to see it was a Grasshopper Sparrow. Rare at any time, it was the first winter record for the county.

On 15 December Peter Schoenberger found a Clay-colored Sparrow on Posquiello Creekside Road in Ulster County. A second Clay-colored was found in Westchester on 26 December. Yet a third was found by John Askildsen in Millbrook, Dutchess County which remained for several weeks.

On 11 January Leon Meintjes found a **Harris's Sparrow** on private property in Mamaroneck, Westchester County. He was able to get access for a few people, but the site was otherwise restricted. The bird remained through 14 January.

On 15 January Peter Schoenberger was scanning a flock of blackbirds in Catskill Park in Ulster County when he came upon a female/juvenile male Yellow-headed Blackbird. He was able to take some photos, but the bird was unfortunately not seen again.

Once again Bruce Nott found an interesting warbler on the Newburgh Waterfront. First spotting the bird on 24 December, it took a few days to determine that it was an immature Wilson's Warbler. Right on the heels of that warbler,

Bruce found a Yellow-throated Warbler on 28 December. Ultimately, a Tennessee Warbler and several other species of warblers overwintered there as well.

On 25 December Brian Krulish noticed a bird he'd never seen before at his feeders in Putnam County, ultimately identifying it as an adult male **Western Tanager**. He invited a few lucky birders to see the bird but due to the logistics of the home location, was unable to open it to the public. This was a second record for the county and a rare record for the Region. A second, or perhaps the same Western Tanager was discovered in Sloatsburg, Rockland County on 19 January by Mike Kravatz at his feeding station where it was easily seen for a couple of weeks.

CONTRIBUTORS

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ABBREVIATIONS

AR – Ashokan Res, ULST; **BCF** – Blue Chip Farm, ULST; **BSWMA** – Bashakill State WMA, SULL; **BW** – Beacon Waterfront, DUTC; **CIOES** – Cary Institute of Ecosystem Studies, DUTC; **CMACS** – Constitution Marsh Audubon Center and Sanctuary, DUTC; **CPP** – Croton Pt P, WEST; **EGR** – Edith G. Read Wildlife Sanctuary, WEST; **GlynF** – Glynwood Farm, PUTN; **GV** – Great Vly WMA, ULST; **KL** – Kiamesha L, SULL; **KP** – Kingston Pt, ULST; **MB** – Millbrook, DUTC; **MC** – Marshlands Conservancy, WEST; **NW** – Newburgh Waterfront, ORAN; **OCBDR** – Orange County Black Dirt Region, ORAN; **PP** – Piermont Pier, ROCK; **PCR** – Posquiello Creekside Rd, ULST; **RLSP** – Rockland L SP, ROCK; **RR** – Rondout Res, SULL; **SGNWR** – Shawangunk Grasslands NWR, ULST; **SHSR** – Six and a Half Station Rd, ORAN; **WRNWR** – Wallkill Ri NWR, ORAN; **WPFP** – West Point Foundry Pres, PUTN; **WL** – Wickham L, ORAN; **ws reps** – widespread reports.

Snow Goose: max 8000 OCBDR 7 Dec-11 Feb.

Ross's Goose: WRNWR 4 Feb; max 2 OCBDR 5-11 Feb, *intro*.

Greater White-fronted Goose: EGR/Bowman Ave Pd WEST 1 Dec - 29 Feb; Denniston Rd ULST 13 Jan; OCBDR 23-24 Jan; 3 BCF 30 Jan.

Brant: max 73 EGR 1 Dec - 29 Feb.

BARNACLE GOOSE: Lake Gleneida PUTN 31 Dec - 6 Jan (S.Camillieri, m.ob), *intro*.

Cackling Goose: Overlook P ULST 1-2 Dec; Lockenhurst Pd ORAN 13 Dec; MB 17 Dec; Bowman Ave Pd WEST 20 Dec-29 Jan; BCF 30 Dec - 2 Feb; Camel Farm ORAN 5 Jan; Mill Pd ULST 11 Jan; 2 Denniston Rd ULST 13 Jan; Tamarack L DUTC 4-5 Feb; Rockland Psychiatric Center ROCK 9-11 Feb.

Trumpeter Swan: Blauvelt ROCK 31 Jan - 29 Feb; Filippini Pd SULL 25 Feb, *intro*.

Tundra Swan: 5 Sand Dock Rd Trail DUTC 6 Dec; Esopus Meadows P ULST 23 Jan, *intro*.

Northern Shoveler: 25 Congers L Memorial P ROCK 5 Dec-28 Feb.

Godwall: 15 Teakettle Spout L PUTN 4 Dec; 15 Beaver Pd ORAN 11 Dec; ws reps.

American Wigeon: 17 Franklin D Roosevelt SP WEST 14 Dec; few reports.

Northern Pintail: max 26 Strever Farm Rd DUTC 1-11 Dec; ws reps.

Green-winged Teal: 16 BSWMA 2 Dec; ws reps.

Canvasback: max 48 PP 1-29 Jan; max 17 Glasco Mini P ULST 8-21 Jan; 42 The Landing Dobbs Ferry WEST 14 Jan; 4 WL 16 Jan; max 10 EGR 25-27 Jan.

Redhead: SHSR 2 Dec; 14 WL 16 Jan; max 18 Greenwood L ORAN 17-29 Jan; 3 Lake Mahopac PUTN 17 Jan; St. Anthony's Pd ORAN 18-20 Jan; Beaver Dam L ORAN 18 Jan; ws reps.

Ring-necked Duck: max 160 Brown's Pd ORAN 1 Dec - 31 Jan; ws reps.

Greater Scaup: max 80 EGR 1-15 Dec; 20 WL 16 Jan; ws reps.

Lesser Scaup: 25 Lake Welch ROCK 11 Dec; 20 WL 16 Jan; ws reps.

Long-tailed Duck: max 79 EGR 1 Dec - 28 Feb; KL 8 Dec; Dockside P PUTN 2 Jan; 8 WL 16 Jan; Sand Dock Rd Trail DUTC 1 Feb.

Bufflehead: 21 RR 14 Dec; ws reps

Common Goldeneye: max 20 River Rd ULST 1 Dec - 31 Jan; max 53 RR 1 Dec - 29 Feb; 26 Lippincott Rd ULST 17 Feb.

Barrow's Goldeneye: max 2 River Rd ULST 2 Dec - 25 Feb; KP 13-26 Dec; WPFP 9 Feb, *intro*.

Common x Barrow's Goldeneye (hybrid): Farmer's Tpk ULST 26 Jan (ph.).

Hooded Merganser: 24 Chadwick L ORAN 4 Dec; ws in low numbers.

Common Merganser: 500 KL 10-22 Dec; ws reps.

Red-breasted Merganser: max 68 EGR 1-15 Dec; RLSP 14 Jan; ws reps.

Ruddy Duck: 32 Chadwick L P ORAN 4 Dec; 12 Lake Welch ROCK 15 Dec; few reps.

Wild Turkey: 52 Fremont SULL 13 Jan; ws reps.

Ruffed Grouse: Minnewaska SP ULST 7 Dec; Blue Mt Rd ULST 1 Jan; Kenneth Wilson Campground ULST 10 Jan; Flynn Rd SULL 15 Jan.

Pied-billed Grebe: max 6 New Croton Res WEST 7 Dec - 29 Feb.

Horned Grebe: 40 AR 2 Dec - 29 Feb; max 12 EGR 1 Dec - 29 Feb.

Red-necked Grebe: Glen I P WEST 15-20 Feb.

Virginia Rail: CPP 4 Dec-2 Jan; Manitou Pt Pres PUTN 2 Jan.

American Coot: max 90 Sylvan L DUTC 1-8 Dec; max 20 Muscoot Res WEST 11-12 Dec.

Sandhill Crane: 5 WRNWR 2-9 Dec; WRNWR 27 Feb.

Killdeer: max 14 EGR 1 Dec - 29 Feb; 4 Woodbourne SULL 12 Dec; OCBDR 6 Jan - 29 Feb; ws reps.

Purple Sandpiper: max 16 EGR 7 Dec - 29 Feb.

American Woodcock: Muscoot Farm WEST 8 Dec; Laurel Meadow ORAN 16 Dec; CIOES 17 Dec; SUNY Purchase WEST 17 Dec; Bellvale ORAN 11 Feb; ws reps.

Wilson's Snipe: max 14 Gardener Town Marsh ORAN 1-14 Dec; max 2 WRNWR 2-11 Dec; Denniston Rd ULST 18 Jan; Nyquist - Harcourt Sanctuary ULST 23 Feb; Kendridge Farm ORAN 25 Feb.

Razorbill: max 7 EGR 10 Jan-23 Feb.

Bonaparte's Gull: 6 CPP 4 Dec; 93 Rye WEST 10 Jan; NW 11 Jan; Plum Pt ORAN 15 Jan.

Laughing Gull: 2 MC 6 Dec; Glen I P WEST 9 Dec.

Ring-billed Gull: 350 NW/BW 1 Dec - 28 Feb; ws reps.

Herring Gull: max 1200 NW/BW 1 Dec - 28 Feb; ws reps.

Iceland Gull: max 3 NW/BW 7 Dec - 9 Feb; Sylvan L DUTC 10-11 Dec; max 3 Woodbourne SULL 4-13 Jan; New Paltz ULST 13 Jan; Glen I P WEST 7-24 Feb; WFPF 7 Feb, *intro*.

Lesser Black-backed Gull: max 3 NW 1-10 Jan; New Paltz 13 Jan; Mohonk Rd ULST 13 Jan; NW 31 Jan-8 Feb.

GLAUCOUS-WINGED GULL: NW/BW 20-25 Jan; Mohonk/New Paltz ULST 26 Jan (B. Nott, m.ob), *intro*.

Great Black-backed Gull: max 21 NW/BW 1 Dec-28 Feb; ws reps.

Red-throated Loon: Plum Pt P ORAN 3 Dec; PP 24 Dec.

Common Loon: max 11 AR 1-31 Dec; ws reps.

Northern Gannet: EGR 10-11 Jan.

Great Cormorant: max 4 Harbor Square P WEST 15 Dec; ws reps in low numbers.

Double-crested Cormorant: max 4 PP 16 Dec, ws reps.

American Bittern: WRNWR 12 Dec - 30 Jan, *intro*.

Great Egret: max 4 EGR 1-9 Dec; max 2 MC 1-4 Dec; Rhinebeck DUTC 22 Dec; Piermont ROCK 31 Jan; Rockland Psychiatric Center ROCK 10-28 Feb.

Black-crowned Night Heron: MB 24 Dec; Aiello P WEST 15 Feb.

Black Vulture: max 23 Narrowsburg SULL 1 Dec - 29 Feb; 70 New Paltz ULST 13 Jan; ws reps.

Turkey Vulture: ws reps.

Golden Eagle: BSWMA 4 Dec; 2 Robisch Hill Rd SULL 11 Dec; MB 17-20 Dec; 3 Ten Mile River Pres DUTC 28 Dec; Sparrowbush ORAN 22 Jan; max 3 Dover Plains DUTC 1-31 Jan; Winding Waters ORAN 29 Jan; NR 29 Jan; ws reps.

Northern Harrier: max 20 SGNWR 12 Dec - 28 Feb; max 5 OCBDR 12 Dec; ws reps.

Red-shouldered Hawk: ws reps.

Rough-legged Hawk: max 2 SGNWR 16 Dec -2 9 Feb; max 3 OCBDR 23 Jan - 24 Feb.

Eastern Screech-Owl: max 2 CPP 2 Jan -2 8 Feb; ws reps.

Great Horned Owl: max 2 SGNWR 1 Dec - 28 Feb; ws reps.

Barred Owl: max 2 BSWMA 2-29 Feb; ws reps.

Long-eared Owl: Montgomery ORAN 4 Dec - 15 Jan.

Short-eared Owl: max 13 SGNWR 1 Dec - 29 Feb; 12 WRNWR 2 Dec - 29 Feb.

Northern Saw-whet Owl: Oakly Rd ULST 16 Dec; Phoenicia ULST 26 Dec; max 4 Cooper L ULST 2-23 Jan.

Belted Kingfisher: ws reps.

Red-headed Woodpecker: max 3 CPP 1 Dec - 18 Feb; MC 1-26 Dec; max 3 Harriman SP ROCK 6 Dec - 11 Feb; max 2 Tomahawk L ORAN 9,16 Dec; Goshen ORAN 16 Dec; Salisbury Mills ORAN 16-17 Dec.

Yellow-bellied Sapsucker: ws reps.

Monk Parakeet: max 19 Larchmont WEST 1 Dec - 29 Feb.

ASH-THROATED FLYCATCHER: Mount Vernon WEST 13 Dec - 11 Jan (D. Martinez, m.ob), *intro*.

Eastern Phoebe: BSWMA 1 Dec - 29 Feb; Stringham P DUTC 2 Jan; North Salem WEST 2 Jan; WRNWR 19 Feb; Esopus ULST 25 Feb.

LOGGERHEAD SHRIKE: SGNWR 27 Jan - 29 Feb, *intro*.

Northern Shrike: SGNWR 6 Dec; Huckleberry Rd DUTC 26 Dec - 10 Feb; Aden Rd SULL 29-31 Dec; Donald J Trump SP PUTN/Indian Hills Rd WEST 2-20 Jan; OCBDR 2-27 Jan; Fording Place Rd ULST 12 Jan; Kripplebush ULST 21-22 Jan; Liberty SULL 22 Feb, *intro*.

Horned Lark: max 60 OCBDR 3 Dec; max 400 OCBDR 1 Dec- 28 Feb; ws reps.

Tree Swallow: max 130 CCP 29 Feb.

Ruby-crowned Kinglet: max 3 NW 2-17 Dec; ws reps.

Golden-crowned Kinglet: 5 BSWMA 7 Dec; max 5 CPP 1-15 Jan; ws reps.

Cedar Waxwing: max 45 Plum Pt ORAN 10 Dec; 120 Clements Rd SULL 1 Jan; ws reps.

Red-breasted Nuthatch: 4 Huson Rd SULL 1 Jan; ws reps.

Brown Creeper: ws reps.

House Wren: PCR 8 Dec.

Sedge Wren: Hurley Mountain Rd ULST 16 Dec (S. Wareham), *intro*.

Marsh Wren: CMACS 2 Dec; Buttercup Farm Audubon Sanctuary DUTC 16-17 Dec; GV 25 Dec; CPP 9 Feb.

Gray Catbird: max 2 CPP 1-16 Dec; ws reps
Brown Thrasher: Salt Pt DUTC 5 Dec; Gardiner ULST 14 Dec; Georges I P WEST 16 Dec; Donald J Trump SP PUTN 2 Jan.

Eastern Bluebird: max 10 SGNWR 1-15 Dec; max 15 BSWMA 1-15 Dec; 12 Browns Pd ORAN 14 Dec; ws reps.
Hermit Thrush: ws reps.

American Pipit: 20 Lake Welsh ROCK 6 Dec; max 41 CPP 7-10 Jan; 20 CIOES 9 Jan, 16-17 Feb; 10 BSWMA 17-25 Jan; ws reps.

Evening Grosbeak: Nyquist-Harcourt Sanctuary ULST 8 Dec; 2 Pleasant Valley DUTC 31 Dec; 4 Hilltop Acres ULST 27 Jan.
Purple Finch: 5 Buttercup Farm Audubon Sanctuary DUTC 17 Dec; ws reps.
Red Crossbill: max 68 Forestburgh SULL 1 Dec - 10 Feb; max 12 Minnewaska SP Pres ULST 2-22 Dec; 6 Port Jervis Res #3 ORAN 9 Dec, 1-12 Jan; ws reps, *intro*.
Pine Siskin: 18 AR 10 Dec; 50 Forestburgh SULL 11 Jan; 110 Hasbrouck SULL 14 Jan; 25 Tanzman Rd SULL 30 Jan; ws reps.

Lapland Longspur: max 3 OCBDR 3 Dec - 15 Feb; CPP 8-10 Jan; PCR 11 Jan.
Snow Bunting: 2 Hurley Mountain Rd ULST 4-8 Dec; BSWMA 5 Dec; GlynF 14 Dec; max 50 OCBDR 7 Jan - 28 Feb; ws reps.

Grasshopper Sparrow: Gabel Rd SULL 9 Jan, *intro*.
Chipping Sparrow: MB 2 Dec; BSWMA 4 Dec; Hartsdale WEST 4 Dec; Hartsdale WEST 4 Dec; 10 Ward Pound Ridge Reservation WEST 28 Dec; max 8 Ward Pound Ridge Reservation WEST 2-4 Jan; ws reps.
Clay-colored Sparrow: PCR 15 Dec; MC 26 Dec; MB 1-29 Jan, *intro*.
Field Sparrow: 3 Cliffdale Farm WEST 12 Dec; ws reps in single digits.
Fox Sparrow: 12 Appalachian Trail DUTC 1 Dec; max 15 BSWMA 9 Jan-11 Feb; ws reps.

American Tree Sparrow: ws reps.
HARRIS'S SPARROW: Mamaroneck WEST 11-14 Jan (L. Meintjes), *intro*.
Vesper Sparrow: 2 GlynF 9 Jan.
Savannah Sparrow: max 14 CPP 1-17 Dec; few reps.
Eastern Towhee: 3 GlynF 2 Dec; ws reps.

Yellow-breasted Chat: Hastings Meadowlands and Rowley's Bridge Trail WEST 1-5 Jan; CPP 11 Feb.

Yellow-headed Blackbird: Catskill P ULST 15 Jan, *intro*.
Eastern Meadowlark: max 22 SGNWR 1 Dec - 28 Feb; max 3 GlynF 2 Dec - 20 Jan.
Baltimore Oriole: Yonkers WEST 23 Dec - 29 Feb; WFPF 2 Jan; Dennings Pt DUTC 2 Jan; Lucas Turnpike ULST 8, 24 Jan; MB 30 Jan.
Red-winged Blackbird: 210 BSWMA 20 Dec; ws reps.
Rusty Blackbird: 2 Ulster P ULST 19 Dec; max 46 CIOES 9 Jan; few reps.
Common Grackle: 2000 SGNWR 7 Dec; ws reps.

Tennessee Warbler: NW 16 Dec - 15 Jan, *intro*.
Orange-crowned Warbler: MC 4 Dec; Greystone WEST 14, 25 Dec; Sojourner Truth SP ULST 27 Dec - 4 Jan; LaGrangeville DUTC 1 Jan; Sojourner Truth SP ULST 8-10 Feb.
Common Yellowthroat: EGR 1-2 Dec.
Northern Parula: NW 16-19 Dec.
Palm Warbler: Rockefeller SP Pres WEST 2 Dec; MC 9 Dec; NW 10 Dec-4 Feb.
Pine Warbler: CPP 9 Dec - 29 Feb; Mount Vernon WEST 27-29 Dec.
Yellow-rumped Warbler: MC 1-4 Dec; Orange L ORAN 8 Dec; CPP 9 Dec; CPP 8-9 Feb; ws reps.
Yellow-throated Warbler: NW 28 Dec-20 Jan, *intro*.
Wilson's Warbler: NW 24 Dec - 25 Feb; WFPF 2 Jan, *intro*.

Western Tanager: Putnam L PUTN 24 Dec - 6 Jan (B. Krulish); Sloatsburg ROCK 19 Jan - 1 Feb (M. Kravatz), *intro*.



REGION 10—MARINE

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Now is the winter of our discontent
Made glorious summer by this sun of York;
And all the clouds that lour'd upon our house
In the deep bosom of the ocean buried.

Shakespeare—*King Richard III*

Temperatures for all three months were three or more degrees above average. Whether we regard yet another winter made summer as the work of a beneficent sun or as a cloud lour'd over our future, winter 2023-2024 must be measured and its ornithological consequences identified. Like last year, this winter featured very little in the way of freezing conditions or snowcover. A 7 January Nor'easter yielded about 2 cm of very wet snow to some parts of the Region in the afternoon hours. Icing of small ponds was slight, and temperatures had risen to 46° F by 8 January. A snowfall on 16 January was the first in New York City in 701 days. Temperatures dropped to 18° in a cold snap 20-21 January, but the duration of freezing conditions was brief.

	Central Park			Islip		
Temp	Mean	Normal	Deviation	Mean	Normal	Deviation
Dec	44.6°	39.1°	+5.5°	42.2°	37.1°	+5.1°
Jan	37.0°	33.7°	+3.3°	35.1°	31.9°	+3.2°
Feb	40.1°	35.9°	+4.2°	36.1°	33.3°	+2.8°
Precip	Total	Normal	Deviation	Total	Normal	Deviation
Dec	6.71"	4.38"	+2.33"	8.56"	4.71"	+3.85"
Jan	5.28"	3.64"	+1.64"	7.32"	3.66"	+3.66"
Feb	2.05"	3.19"	-1.14"	2.40"	3.29"	-0.89"

Cackling Goose is now a regular component of our winter avifauna, sometimes occurring in flocks, and all four of the rarer species of geese (Ross's, Greater White-fronted, Pink-footed, and Barnacle) were recorded in the Region once again. Perhaps notable in this regard was a single Tundra Swan, on Staten Island on 3 December, which, in the absence of any reliable wintering birds in recent years, now constitutes a Regional rarity on the scale of the anserine species just mentioned—though the swan was formerly regular and the others formerly unknown or extremely rare.

An immature male Tufted Duck was found on Fort Pond, Montauk, on 2 December, remained there for more than two weeks, and was tallied on the Christmas Bird Count. Two days after the last report there, a similar-looking bird

was found to the west at Saint James, and was likely the same individual. High counts of 850 Surf Scoter and 2,200 White-winged Scoter, both from Gardiners Bay on 26 February, were very low relative to historical numbers around Montauk Point. The high count of 20,000 Black Scoters was more in line with this species' overall pattern of wintering further north in larger numbers in recent decades, but it was recorded off Brooklyn, as all of the seaducks continue much reduced at Montauk. A hybrid Common Goldeneye x Barrow's Goldeneye was carefully identified at Crab Meadow Beach, where a typical-looking drake Barrow's has wintered in recent years.

There were several highly productive pelagic trips this winter, yielding excellent diversity, including such notable species as Red Phalarope, Parasitic Jaeger, Dovekie, Common Murre, Thick-billed Murre, and Atlantic Puffin. Thick-billed Murres and Dovekies were also seen from land, as were two Black Guillemots, one at Shinnecock Inlet, where somewhat regular, the other at Crab Meadow Beach, Northport, unusually far west on the Long Island Sound.

As Rufous Hummingbird and several other western hummingbirds continue to expand their winter ranges in southeastern North America, Region 10's birders enjoyed multiple noteworthy contributions to this pattern. Both state-first hummingbirds from last fall (Allen's and Black-chinned) continued into the winter, and it is very notable that the Allen's persisted through the whole season, as did two Rufous hummingbirds, in Prospect Park, and East Hampton, Suffolk County.

Common Raven continues to increase in the Region, and is no longer a surprise in any context, except offshore. Fish Crow continues to yield higher counts than American Crow throughout the western parts of the Region, but several counts of 100-200 American Crow from widely spaced sites offer some encouragement that this familiar and widespread species might be recovering slowly from the extreme reduction in abundance observed since 2000, attributed to West Nile Virus.

Southerly-wintering species that were formerly scarce, rare, or unknown in winter continue to increase in numbers and variety. At one end of the spectrum, Ruby-crowned Kinglet was not long ago a species that could easily be missed on a well-covered CBC; now it is expected everywhere, often in numbers (e.g., a single-site max of nine at Governors Island on 10 December). House Wren, Lincoln's Sparrow, Yellow-breasted Chat, and Baltimore Oriole occurred at more than ten sites each this winter, with some persisting long past the CBC period. Winter reports of Veery and Wood Thrush, once almost exclusively based on misidentified Hermit Thrushes and Brown Thrashers, were both documented this season, as were no fewer than 20 taxa of warblers (not including the chat, which was once a staple component of this metric). Among these were not only true neotropical wintering species, such as American Redstart, Cape May Warbler, Yellow Warbler, and Black-throated Blue Warbler, but also several notable rarities: **two MacGillivray's Warblers**, on Staten Island and in the Bronx, an **"Audubon's" Yellow-rumped Warbler** at Jones Beach West End, and **two Townsend's Warblers**, in the Bronx and in Prospect Park, continuing from November. Similarly, it was less than a century ago that Northern Cardinal was the only member of its family expected in winter in Region 10—much heralded

then for its expansion from the south. This winter it was joined by relatives representing almost every imaginable mode of unusual occurrence: a Summer Tanager, far north of the wintering grounds (and possibly a vagrant from the Southwest); two Western Tanagers, rare but regular vagrants from the West; a Blue Grosbeak, formerly unheard of after October; Indigo Bunting, formerly unheard of after November; two Painted Buntings, now regular winter vagrants from the South; and two Dickcissels, long known for rare winter occurrence here, far north of their core Neotropical winter range.

In addition to the many unusual and even rare species mentioned above were a long list of miscellaneous rarities, including **Western Grebe, Magnificent Frigatebird, Swainson's Hawk, Northern Shrike (now rare in the Region), Bohemian Waxwing, two Mountain Bluebird, and Evening Grosbeak.**

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ABBREVIATIONS

BBP – Brooklyn Bridge P, KING; **BPt** – Breezy Pt, QUEE; **BRY** – Bryant P, NEWY; **CMB** – Crab Meadow Beach, SUFF; **CP** – Central P, NEWY; **CVP** – Calvert Vaux P (aka Dreier Offerman P), KING; **EPCAL** – Calverton Grasslands (former Grumman Property), Calverton, SUFF; **et seq.** – observers who saw a bird after the discoverer (from *et sequentes*, “and persons following”); **FBF** – Floyd Bennett Field, KING; **GarI** – Gardiners I, SUFF; **GKP** – Great Kills P, RICH; **GovI** – Governors I, NEWY; **GwC** – Green-wood Cemetery, KING; **HLSP** – Hempstead L SP, NASS; **HSP** – Heckscher SP, SUFF; **JBSP** – Jones Beach SP, NASS; **JBWE** – West End, Jones Beach SP, NASS; **JBWR** – Jamaica Bay Wildlife Refuge, QUEE; **JFKMWS** – John F Kennedy Memorial Wildlife Sanctuary, NASS; **KCP** – Kissena Corridor P, QUEE; **MP** – Montauk Pt SP, SUFF; **NPath** – Noyac Path, SUFF; **OakB** – Oakwood Beach, RICH; **PL** – Point Lookout, NASS; **PBP** – Pelham Bay P, BRON; **PlumbB** – Plumb Beach, KING; **PP** – Prospect P, KING; **RI** – Randalls I, NEWY; **Riv** – Riverhead, SUFF; **RMSP** – Robert Moses SP, SUFF; **SCFED** – Suffolk County Farm & Education Center, SUFF; **Shinn** – Shinnecock In, SUFF; **SMNC** – Salt Marsh Nature Center at Marine P, KING; **SMSP** – Sunken Meadow SP, SUFF; **SPCP** – Smith Pt CP, SUFF; **VCP** – Van Cortlandt P, BRON.

Snow Goose: max 1800 JBWR 18 Dec (DGo *et al.*).

Ross's Goose: singles Eastport SUFF 7 Dec (D. Massey), Riv sod farms and buffalo farm, 7-19 Dec ((KFeu, SF); Liberty I NEWY 19 Dec (I. Bell *et al.*).

Greater White-fronted Goose: max 3 Riv buffalo farm 25 Jan (J. Shea); Water Mill SUFF 4 Dec (DF); Riv sod farms 3 Dec - 26 Feb (L. Wollerstein *et seq.*); 2 Centerport-Northport SUFF 5 Dec - 27 Jan (P. Palladino *et seq.*); Half Hollow Park SUFF 27 Jan (F & S. Mutchnick); Planting Fields Arboretum NASS 1 Dec (M. Vedder) - 5 Jan; CMB 29 Dec (BBom, TJS).

Pink-footed Goose: Planting Fields Arboretum and vicinity NASS 1 Dec - 15 Jan (M. Vedder *et seq.*); CMB 29 Dec

(TJS, BBom).

Brant: max 17,500 JBSP 14 Dec (D. Chernack).

Barnacle Goose: Bronx Zoo BRON 3 Feb.

Cackling Goose: ca. 16 reports, BRON, KING, NASS, SUFF; mostly singles, max 12 Smithtown SUFF 4 Jan (D. Massey).

Canada Goose: max 6100 Riv fields 13 Jan (R. Valente, K. Rossi).

Mute Swan: max 105 Water Mill SUFF 17 Dec (T. Moran).

TUNDRA SWAN (R10): Miller Field RICH 3 Dec (ACi); *intro.*

Wood Duck: many sites, all counties; max 38 NPath.

Blue-winged Teal: mostly singles, RICH (2 sites), QUEE (JBWR) 21 Jan (S. Vasen), Patchogue L SUFF 3-31 Jan (K. Coyle *et*

seq.; max 5 here 28 Jan (K. Arvin).
Northern Shoveler: max 660 CP 26 Dec (E. Gaillard).
Gadwall: max 230 Swan L Patchogue SUFF 12 Jan (D. Cartwright).
Eurasian Wigeon: Brooklyn Army Pier KING 4 15 Jan (A. Baksh); JBWR 2 Dec - 17 Feb (m. ob.), Connetquot Ri SP Pres SUFF 8 Dec (V. Glasser) - 17 Feb.
American Wigeon: max 120 Setauket Harbor SUFF 18 Jan (L. Betti, PDom).
Mallard: max 633 NPath 21 Feb (S. Quadt).
American Black Duck: max 1489 NPath 8 Feb (S. Denenberg, S. Quadt).
Northern Pintail: max 86 JFKMWS 30 Dec (S. Camillieri *et al.*).
Green-winged Teal: max 950 Shorts Pd Watermill SUFF 24 Dec (G. Armistead, DGo).
Canvasback: 5 sites in BRON, 3 in QUEE, 1 in NASS, 14 in SUFF; max 205 Water Mill SUFF 3 Feb (A. Wilson).
Redhead: 2 sites in KING, 7 in QUEE, 5 in NASS, 28 in SUFF; max 68 Baisley Pd QUEE 4 Dec (D. Lichter).
Ring-necked Duck: max 210 Lake Panamoka SUFF 5 Dec (J. Rand).
TUFTED DUCK: Fort Pd Montauk SUFF 2 Dec (PJL, SSM *et seq.*) to 19 Dec; Cordwood P St. James SUFF 21 Dec (APe, S. Denenberg *et seq.*) to 1 Jan. Based on dates and overall appearance, these might present the same individual, *intro*.
Greater Scaup: max 8000 PlumbB 9 Feb (MSil *et al.*).
Lesser Scaup: max 935 Hewlett Harbor NASS 30 Dec 9 (SSI).
King Eider: PBP 6 Dec (P. Horan); BPt Tip QUEE 9-10 Dec (SSI *et al.*); JBSP 22 Dec - 8 Jan (P. Aitken *et seq.*); Stehli Beach, Lattintown NASS 30 Jan - 8 Feb (A. Leidig); 5 sites SUFF, Caumsett SP to Montauk 16 Dec - 12 Feb, m. ob.).
Common Eider: max 500 Shinn 20 Feb (E. Schumann), 27 Feb (H. Ye).
Harlequin Duck: 2 Mt. Sinai, SUFF 12-29 Dec (JRa); PL - JBSP 2 Dec - 20 Feb; max 59 9 Feb (JMcG), high state record.
Surf Scoter: max 850 Gardiners Bay East Hampton SUFF 26 Feb (AFar).
White-winged Scoter: max 2200 Gardiners Bay SUFF 26 Feb (AFar).
Black Scoter: max 20,000 Manhattan Beach P KING 17 Feb (D. Hrehowsik, R. Manion).
Long-tailed Duck: max 1811 CMB 11 Feb (F. Gallo, J. Dugan).
Bufflehead: max 780 World's Fair marina

QUEE 17 Dec (D. Schulman, R. Aracil).
Common Goldeneye: max 300 SMSP 18 Feb (J. Garzero).
Barrow's Goldeneye: Cedar Point CP SUFF 30 Dec (B. Horwith, E. Schumann) -1 Jan (T. Moran); Elda L SUFF 19 Jan (SSM).
Common x Barrow's Goldeneye (hybrid): CMB 27 Dec (TJS, BBom).
Hooded Merganser: many sites throughout; max 345 17 Dec Massapequa Pres NASS (B. Belford, J. Landesberg).
Common Merganser: max 226 Lake Ronkonkoma SUFF 21 Jan (CLI Birding).
Red-breasted Merganser: max 1100 East Islip SUFF 17 Dec (A. Baksh).
Ruddy Duck: max 950 Central Suff CBC, Eastport to Westhampton 27 Feb (E. Schwinn).

Wild Turkey: increasingly abundant RICH, NASS, SUFF; high count 68 Montauk CBC 16 Dec, 77 Clove Lakes P RICH 10 Jan (E. Johnson).
Ring-necked Pheasant: 1-3 Fresh Kills P RICH 9 Dec - 26 Feb (m. ob.); SMNC 28 Feb (H. Lopes); ca. 12 locs SUFF.

Pied-billed Grebe: many sites in all counties; max 6 Hook Pd SUFF 15 Dec (TWB, G. Benson), also L. Ronkonkoma SUFF 29 Dec (JMcG).
Horned Grebe: many records, coasts of all counties; max 130 SMSP 31 Jan (D. Cartwright).
Red-necked Grebe: ca. 11 sites, all counties except NEWY, 22 Dec - 24 Feb; max 4 Culloden Pt SUFF 2 Dec (PJL, SSM).
WESTERN GREBE: Conference House P RICH 7-10 Feb (R. Fleming *et seq.*).

Rock Pigeon: throughout.
Mourning Dove: max 217 CP 17 Dec (R. Zucker, D. Salas).

BLACK-CHINNED HUMMINGBIRD: RI 1-17 Dec. (B. Davaros *et seq.*), continuing from Nov.
RUFIOUS HUMMINGBIRD: Springs SUFF (private residence, 16 Dec thru (sev observers, ph JMcG); PP 10-29 Feb (S. Vasen, m. ob.).
ALLEN'S HUMMINGBIRD: Riv residence, cont. from October, thru; (MB Zilnicki, m. ob., first documented record for NYS.

Clapper Rail: 9 sites in BRON,

KING, QUEE, NASS, SUFF, all in December.

Virginia Rail: 3 sites in BRON, 3 in RICH, 3 in QUEE, 8 in SUFF, to 19 Feb (Arshamomaque Pres SUFF (B. Bull)).

Common Gallinule: Mill Pd Pres Wantagh NASS 2 Dec - 25 Feb, cont. from Nov. (m.ob.).

American Coot: max 87 Baisley Pd QUEE 17 Dec (R. Fleming).

SANDHILL CRANE (R10): 7 GwC 27 Feb, flying northeast (MSil, *et al.*), 4 of them picked up by DGo from his window in KING; also 1 over Manhattan NEWY flying northeast (L. Brock).

American Oystercatcher: 2 sites in KING, 1 in QUEE, 2 in NASS, 3 in SUFF, thru; max 55 JBWE 13 Dec (KFeu, SF).

Black-bellied Plover: many sites in RICH, NASS, SUFF; max 300 JBWE 13 Dec (KFeu, SF).

Killdeer: many sites, all counties, thru; max 34 SMSP 9 Dec (D. Cartwright).

Semipalmated Plover: scattered reports from KING.; NASS, SUFF, the latter in Setauket Harbor 21 Dec (APE; unusual site); max 7 Nickerson Beach 13 Jan (R. Comeau).

Piping Plover: PL12 Jan (B. Garriel *et al.*).

Marbled Godwit: JBWE 13 Dec – 10 Feb, max 18 13 Dec.

Ruddy Turnstone: 1 site NEWY, 2 in RICH, 6 in KING, 23 in QUEE, 10 in NASS, ~ 20 in SUFF; max 550 Garl 12 Jan (AFar).

Red Knot: 1 site in KING, 4 in NASS, 4 in SUFF, to 2 Feb; max 19 SPCP 2 Feb (S. Aebisher, ph.).

Sanderling: many shore sites throughout; max 1300 Garl 29 Dec (AFar).

Dunlin: many shore sites; max 9000 JBSP 13 Feb 9 (JMcG).

Purple Sandpiper: 2 Hudson River P NEWY 9 Dec (I. Bell), 39 GovI 9 Jan (L. Brock); many shore sites in KING, NASS, SUFF; max 90 JBWE.

Short-billed Dowitcher: 1-3 JBSP 10 Dec (JMcG) -24 Feb (M. Bochnik); max 3 24 Dec (KFeu, SF); Gilgo 12 Jan (PJL, SSM).

Long-billed Dowitcher: Gilgo NASS 17 Jan (KFeu), 3 Feb (PJL); 5 Shirley Chisholm SP KING 16 Dec (m.ob.); 6 Smith Pd Rockville Centre NASS 4 Dec - 4 Feb (m. ob.).

American Woodcock: multiple reports in

BRON, NEWY, KING, NASS; thru; max 17 GwC; 1-2 PBP 23 Dec - 18 Feb; 4 CP through (m. ob.); 2 BRY thru (m. ob.).

Wilson's Snipe: 2 sites in RICH, 1 in KING, 3 in QUEE, 3 in NASS, 9 in SUFF, max 12 Georgica Cove Hollow SUFF 25 Feb (KFeu, SF); thru.

Spotted Sandpiper: Setauket SUFF 21 Dec (APE); Coindre Hall P SUFF 10 Feb (D. Benn, ph); CVP 13 Jan (ph).

Lesser Yellowlegs: JBWR 16 Dec (CBC); Gilgo NASS 6 Jan (K. Coyle).

Willet: Cupsogue Beach CP SUFF 27 Dec (T. Moran *et al.*).

Greater Yellowlegs: several sites in RICH, NEWY, BRON; many south and north shore sites in NASS, SUFF; max 170 Smith Pd Rockville Centre NASS 2 Dec (E. Becher).

RED PHALAROPE (R10): 50 mini-pelagic 9 Dec (SSi *et al.*).

Parasitic Jaeger: mini-pelagic 9 Dec (SSi *et al.*), 2 Tobay Beach P NASS 20 Dec (J. Askildsen, M. Usai) JBWE 15 Jan (S. Billerman).

Dovekie: single bird 6 Dec - 10 Feb at 1 site in KING, 1 in QUEE, 4 in NASS, 5 in SUFF, inc. 4 being eaten by Peregrine Falcons in the parking lot at SPCP 13 Jan, and one found on a sidewalk in Lindenhurst SUFF, fate unknown (*fide* A. Milillo via Facebook photo); 88 pelagic from KING 27 Jan (SSi *et al.*).

COMMON MURRE: JBWE 4 Feb (ph); 8 Nassau (pelagic) 10 Feb (SSi *et al.*).

Thick-billed Murre: GKP 10-25 Feb (S. Wollney *et al.*); Conference House P RICH and nearby 10-11 Feb; MP 19 Dec; pelagic from KING 6 Jan (DGo *et al.*).

Razorbill: many reports from all along LI's south and north shores Dec 1 thru; max 1668 MP 19 Dec.

Black Guillemot: Shinn 5-6 Jan (MSch, K. J. Klein); CMB 10-12 Feb (TJS *et seq.*).

Atlantic Puffin: 2 pelagic from KING 27 Jan (DGo *et al.*); 17 pelagic 10 Feb (JMcG *et al.*).

Black-legged Kittiwake: East River NEWY 28 Dec (AFar); Tobay Beach P NASS 20 Dec (J. Askildsen *et al.*); RMSP 10 Dec also 17 Dec (PJL, SSM); Shinn 17 Dec (S. Biasetti *et al.*), 2 Ditch Plains SUFF 16 Dec (M. Osswald); 2 Camp Hero SP 29 Dec (JMcG); max 21 MP 24 Dec (DGo).

Bonaparte's Gull: many shore sites throughout; max 3000 JBWE 8 Dec (PJL, SSM).

Black-headed Gull: PBP 10 Jan (P. Horan);

CP 10 Dec (D. Ringer); 4 sites in KING 2 Dec - 21 Feb (J. Malbin, R. Fleming *et al.*); 4 sites in NASS 30 Dec - 24 Feb; 6 sites in SUFF incl. north shore Setauket SUFF 9-26 Dec (PDom, L. Betti, *et al.*), max 3 PL 27 Jan (K. Arvin).

Laughing Gull: 1 site in NEWY, 13 in KING, 6 in QUEE, 6 in NASS (to 24 Feb), 8 in SUFF; max 644 Coney I Pier KING 2 Dec (SSI); most records in Dec.

Ring-billed Gull: max 4300 BBP 12 Dec (M. Yuan).

Herring Gull: max 1300 Conference House P RICH 11 Feb (D. Salas *et al.*).

Iceland Gull: 1 record in BRON, 4 in NEWY, 8 in KING, 3 in QUEE, 3 in NASS, 24 in SUFF; mostly singletons; 2 at multiple sites.

Lesser Black-backed Gull: 3 sites in NEWY, 9 in RICH, 10 in KING, 13 in QUEE, 15 in NASS, ca. 40 in SUFF; max 21 RMSP 11 Dec (SSM).

Glaucous Gull: 1 site in BRON, 1 in NEWY, 6 in KING, 3 in QUEE, 2 in SUFF; all singletons.

Great Black-backed Gull: max 275 GarI 26 Feb (AFar).

Black-headed Gull X Ring-billed Gull hybrid: BBP 4-12 Jan (DGo, M. Yuan, A. Honeywood).

Herring Gull X Lesser Black-backed Gull hybrid: PL 11 Feb (R. Zucker *et al.*).

Common Tern: Cedar Beach Brookhaven SUFF 12 Dec (JRa), late!

Forster's Tern: L. Montauk inlet 2 Dec (L. Nasta, D. Elder, SSM).

Red-throated Loon: 2 Dec thru; many high counts; max 4500 MP 19 Dec (A. Martin, C. Strand).

Pacific Loon: Shinn 1 Jan (APe); JBWE 10 Jan (J. Trezza, ph); FBF 18-30 Jan (J. Malbin *et seq.*).

Common Loon: shore sites throughout; max 125 QUEE waters (pelagic, SSI *et al.*).

MAGNIFICENT FRIGATEBIRD:

Mattituck SUFF (B. Bolduc) 18 Dec; MP 18 Dec (T. Connell, G. Nupp), presumably same storm-driven bird.

Northern Gannet: abundant from many s. shore sites; max 2500 Fort Tilden QUEE 2 Dec (CFi).

Great Cormorant: many shoreline records, throughout; max 21 PBP 25 Feb (R. Aracil).

Double-crested Cormorant: abundant throughout; max 200 JBSP 24 Dec.

Brown Pelican: Fort Tilden QUEE 8 Jan (M.

Matthews); PL 8 Jan (J. Trezza); HSP 9 Jan (E. Leonardi *et seq.*), perhaps same bird at all sites.

American Bittern: JBWR 25 Dec (R.

Maharaj); Edgemere Landfill QUEE (M.

Epstein *et al.*); JFKMWS 11 Dec thru (L.

Nasta *et al.*); HSP 17 Dec (T. Dunn); Dune Rd SUFF 1 Jan thru. (m. ob.).

Great Blue Heron: many sites throughout; max 21 Mecox In SUFF 2 Dec (L. Wollerstein).

Great Egret: many sites in BRON, RICH, QUEE, NASS, SUFF; max 13 Mill Pond Pres Wantagh NASS (T. Preston).

Snowy Egret: Cammans Pd P NASS 5 Dec (J. Landesberg) - 5 Jan (TWB, G. Benson); 3 sites along Dune Rd SUFF 8 Jan (KFeu, SF, K.

Coyle, D. Cartwright), (prob. same individual).

Black-crowned Night-Heron: many sites, all counties; max 48 Cammans Pd P NASS 5 Dec (J. Landesberg).

Yellow-crowned Night-Heron: Bayswater P QUEE 20 Dec (R. Zucker *et al.*), also 1 Jan.; Cammans Pd P NASS 3 Jan (PJL *et al.*); JBSP 18 Feb; Nissequogue SP SUFF 8 Dec (A. Sambuco *et al.*); Captree I. 27 Jan (J. Garzero).

Black Vulture: many sites, all counties, to 26 Feb; 2 NY Botanical Garden BRON 26 Feb (B. Conway); 1-5 Riv late Dec to 9 Feb, known roosting site with TUVU; max 10 RICH 12 Jan (ACi).

Turkey Vulture: many sites, all counties, thru; max 47 Riv 9 Feb, site known for TUVU abundance).

Osprey: JBWE 11 Jan (A. Weiss) and Jones Beach bay islands 14 Jan; Northaven SUFF 17 Feb; East Hampton SUFF 24 Feb (P. Rosen).

Northern Harrier: many reports of 1-6 birds, throughout and thru.

Sharp-shinned Hawk: many sites, throughout.

Cooper's Hawk: many sites, throughout.

American Goshawk: Hallock State Farm Pres Northville SUFF 17 Feb (ML. Lamont); Shelter I SUFF 2 Dec (P. Dandridge).

Bald Eagle: many sites, throughout; 6 Bayard Cutting Arboretum SUFF 7 Feb (J. Quinlan).

Red-shouldered Hawk: single birds at 4 sites in BRON, 2 in NEWY, 11 in RICH, 5 in KING, 4 in QUEE, 3 in NASS, 8 in SUFF.

SWAINSON'S HAWK: GwC 16, 26 and 27 Feb (MSil); also at Municipal Recycling Ctr KING 27 Feb thru (m.ob.), same site as last winter.

Red-tailed Hawk: many sites throughout; less abundant in e SUFF.

Rough-legged Hawk: Douglaston QUEE 19

Feb (S. Walter); I-495 Brookhaven SUFF 21 Jan (AColl); Manorville 7 Feb; Hook Pd East Hampton SUFF 3 Feb (R. Valente, A. Kallenbach).

Barn Owl: NASS 2 Feb (DF).

Eastern Screech-Owl: many sites in RICH, NASS, SUFF; max 11 Northport Winter Count (SUFF) 27 Jan (BBom *et al.*).

Great Horned Owl: all counties; 12 Orient CBC Southold South sector 30 Dec (JRa; 7 N. Nassau CBC, Area 6, 16 Dec (SF *et al.*).

Snowy Owl: SMSP 26 Dec (Joseph Ross), only report.

Long-eared Owl: 2 CP early Feb (m. ob.); other sites not disclosed.

Short-eared Owl: singles at 1 site in BRON (PBP), 2 sites RICH (Cedar Grove Beach, OakB), 2 sites KING (PlumbB, JBWR), 2 sites QUEE (Bpt, Edgemere Landfill), 1 NASS (JBWE).

Northern Saw-whet Owl: FBF 9 Dec (T. Preston); Conference House P (RICH) 12 Dec (AColl); many sites in NASS and SUFF, 6 Dec - 25 Feb, inc 4 on Orient Pt CBC Southold South sector.

Belted Kingfisher: many sites, all counties, thru.

Red-headed Woodpecker: 1-2 Paumanok Trail, Manorville SUFF (m. ob., thru); Barcelona Neck SUFF 24-25 Dec (C. Gangemi *et al.*); Mashomack Pres SUFF 30 Dec (MSch); Pipes Cove Pres 30 Dec (J. Diorio, J. Brush Jr.); Elizabeth Morton NWR SUFF 30 Dec (K. Kleinpeter), Cedar Pt CP East Hampton SUFF 30 Dec, 1 Jan (E. Schumann, B. Horwith *et seq.*); Blydenburgh P SUFF 19 Jan (D. Masone); Willowbrook P RICH 23-27 Feb (ACi).

Red-bellied Woodpecker: abundant throughout.

Yellow-bellied Sapsucker: many sites, all counties.

Downy Woodpecker: abundant throughout.

Hairy Woodpecker: common throughout.

Northern Flicker: many records, all counties; thru.

PILEATED WOODPECKER (R10): 23 Dec VCP (S. Ogunbiyi); 6 sites in RICH 23 Dec - 20 Feb, inc max 2 Blue Heron P; Shu Swamp Pres NASS 7 Feb (BB *et seq.*); rare outside BRON and RICH but increasing reports from elsewhere suggest possible range expanding.

American Kestrel: many records throughout; more abundant in western counties.

Merlin: many records throughout.

Peregrine Falcon: many records throughout, densest in BRON, NEWY, KING, coastal QUEE, coastal NASS.

Monk Parakeet: many records in BRON, NEWY (near Hudson Ri), eastern QUEE, southern NASS, western SUFF; easternmost in Brightwaters 1 Jan (L. Nasta); max 51 GwC 29 Dec, the only stronghold in KING.

Ash-throated Flycatcher: Owls Head P KING 1 Dec - 4 Jan (B. Carlson, G. Chapin, D. Daniels *et seq.*); FBF 2 Dec (A. Ferino); southern NEWY 2-30 Dec (A. Drogin *et seq.*) and Shore Road P KING 16 Dec, poss same bird; PBP 23-24 Dec (S. Barno *et al.*); CVP 24 Dec - 7 Jan (E. Clark *et seq.*); Bayswater P QUEE 17 Dec-6 Jan (M. Epstein *et al.*).

Eastern Phoebe: 1 site in NEWY 1 Dec (M. Waldron, P. Waldron); 4 sites in RICH, to 16 Feb (C. Barron); 2 sites in KING, to 1 Jan (J. Malbin); 3 sites in QUEE to 21 Feb (E. Zawatski); 7 sites in NASS and 18 sites in SUFF together had 15 records in Dec, 9 in Jan, 3 in Feb; max 3 Robinson Duck Farm P Brookhaven SUFF 29 Dec.

Blue-headed Vireo: Sands Pt P NASS 5 Dec (J. Wilson-Pines *et al.*); JBWE 9 Dec (D. Walters); Manorville SUFF) 3 Dec (S. Biasetti).

NORTHERN SHRIKE (R10): Freshkills P RICH 4 Dec J. Trezza), cont from Nov.

Blue Jay: abundant throughout.

American Crow: throughout; mostly reported in small numbers but sev sites in KING report up to 60 birds; exceptional reports inc 100 Head of Pond Southampton SUFF 18 Feb, 170 SCFED 7 Feb (DF), max 200 Holy Cross Cemetery KING 14 Dec (DGo); *intro*.

Fish Crow: throughout; more reports of 50+ than for Am. Crow; max 1000 Uplands Farm Sanctuary SUFF 5 Feb (LF Melliny); higher counts inc 300 Eisenhower P NASS 10 Dec (J. Cimorelli); 600 Westbury NASS 4 Jan (J. Wilson-Pines); 910 PP West 6 Dec.

Common Raven: continuing to increase, esp. NASS and SUFF; many reports throughout and thru; max 10 Reeds Basket Willow Swamp P RICH 14 Jan (C. Hagen).

Black-capped Chickadee: throughout; max 71 Wertheim NWR SUFF 2 Dec; all positive reports from CP cite only 1 or 2 birds.

Tufted Titmouse: throughout; mostly in single digits except larger tracts; max for CP was 5 on

7 Dec.

Horned Lark: 2 RI 15-17 Feb (T. Healy), GovI 17 Feb (BBom); 34 FBF 4 Feb (I. Conte); 14 sites in RICH, 10 in QUEE, 20 in NASS, ca. 35 in SUFF; max for SUFF 200 Riv Buffalo Farm 16 Jan (JRa) same Calverton 16 Feb (MSch); max for NASS 90 Nickerson Beach (D. Mitthauer), same 19 Jan (V. Glasser).

Tree Swallow: several sites in KING, QUEE, NASS; max 1000 JBWE 11 Dec (L. Nasta), present here and other locs to end Feb.

Purple Martin: Timber Pt CP SUFF 27 Feb (J. Faulkner, ph.), unus date.

Barn Swallow: SPCP 11 Dec (JRa), late!

Ruby-crowned Kinglet: many reports throughout, thru; max 9 GovI 10 Dec (L. Beausoleil).

Golden-crowned Kinglet: many reports throughout, thru; max 21 NY Botannical Garden BRON 23 Dec (A. Baksh).

BOHEMIAN WAXWING (R10): JBWE 17 Feb (PDom *et seq.*); one of only a handful of LI records in the past 10 years.

Cedar Waxwing: many sites, all counties, thru; max 200 FI Lighthouse SUFF 26 Feb (D. Elder).

Red-breasted Nuthatch: 1 site in BRON, 3 in NEWY, 1 in RICH, 1 in KING, 7 in NASS, 20 in SUFF, entire period; most reports of single birds; max 3 Brookhaven National Lab SUFF 11, 12 Jan (L. Nasta), also 3 Brookhaven residence 19 Feb.

White-breasted Nuthatch common throughout in suitable habitat.

Brown Creeper: many records throughout, thru; max 7 Hither Hills SP SUFF 3 Feb.

Blue-gray Gnatcatcher: OakB 2 Dec (T. Preston *et seq.*) to 8 Jan.

House Wren: 2 records in NEWY, 1 in RICH, 3 in KING, 2 in QUEE, 4 in NASS, 8 in SUFF; all Dec except Flushing Meadow QUEE 3 Jan, 16 Jan (CFi), Montauk SUFF 11 Jan (S. Apte, J. Chaillet).

Winter Wren: many sites, all counties; thru; max 10 Mashomack Pres SUFF 9 Dec (N. Hamblet).

Marsh Wren: 3 sites in BRON, 4 in RICH, 1 in KING, 3 in QUEE, 5 in NASS, 12 in SUFF; to 23 Feb at HSP (M. Rath); max 26 Wertheim NWR SUFF 27 Dec (B. Moldashel).

Carolina Wren: throughout; 65 on Montauk CBC 16 Dec.

Gray Catbird: many sites throughout, thru.

Brown Thrasher: 2 sites in BRON, 2 in NEWY, 7 in QUEE, 7 in NASS, ca. 40 in SUFF; to 29 Feb KCP (CFi).

Northern Mockingbird: many sites throughout, thru.

European Starling: max 2100 Route 25 Aquebogue SUFF 30 Dec (J. Rose).

Eastern Bluebird: 2 sites in RICH, 1 in KING, 9 in NASS, ca. 92 in SUFF; max 29 Hubbard CP Hampton Bays SUFF 7 Feb (S. Denenberg, S Quadt); reported thru.

MOUNTAIN BLUEBIRD: Overlook Beach SUFF 9 Dec (F. Rodriguez, ph.); HSP 25 Dec - 15 Jan (M. Fernandez *et seq.*).

Veery: Corlears Hook P NEWY 12 Dec (M. Durand, ph.).

Hermit Thrush: many reports throughout, thru; max 17 Camp Hero SP SUFF 25 Feb (SSM, PJJ, BBe).

Wood Thrush: Union Square P NEWY 1-20 Dec (R. Davis *et seq.*).

American Robin: throughout, thru; max 9500 Gerard Pt East Hampton SUFF 29 Dec (JMcG).

House Sparrow: throughout, thru; max 1485 CP 17 Dec (on CBC).

American Pipit: 3 sites in NEWY, 13 in RICH, 6 in KING, 1 in QUEE, 2 in NASS, 52 in SUFF; max 40 Edgemere Landfill QUEE 17 Dec (CFi *et al.*).

EVENING GROSBEAK (R10): Mariners Marsh P RICH 9 Dec (C. Barron, ACi).

House Finch: abundant throughout thru; max 350 Gerard Pt East Hampton 29 Dec SUFF (JMcG).

Purple Finch: 2 sites in BRON, 2 in NEWY, 2 in RICH, 4 in KING, 2 in QUEE, 17 in NASS, 27 in SUFF; thru; max 32 Aldrich Lane CP Southold SUFF 23 Feb (K. J. Klein).

Pine Siskin: single digit counts from all counties except BRON from 1 Dec thru 25 Feb; max 10 JBWE 10 Dec (L. Wollerstein).

American Goldfinch: abundant throughout, thru; max 74 Greentree Estate Manhasset NASS 17 Dec (S. Perrault *et al.*).

Lapland Longspur: RMSP 1 Dec (J. Gluth); HSP 2 Dec (T. Healy, T. Moran); SPCP 7 Dec (M. Minkel *et seq.*), increasing to R10 max of 3 8 Dec (M & M Sparks, ph.), last report from

here one ind 13 Dec; PlumbB 11 Dec (ph); Sammy's Beach East Hampton SUFF 19 Dec (AColl); 2 JBWE 22 Dec (P. Markee, E. Markee-Ratner), flyovers; 2 Water Mill SUFF 24 Dec (DGo, G. Armistead); 2 Gerard P East Hampton SUFF 28 Dec (Andrew W.); 1-2 JBWE 30 Dec – 3 Jan (m.ob); Hulse Landing Rd Riv SUFF 12 Jan (B. Bull), likely same ind here 26 Jan (PJL) and 16-20 Feb (m.ob.); BPt 13-14 Jan (K. Mirth *et al.*) and 14, 17 Feb (J. Schiavone, M. Chitulescu); SPCP 13 Jan (K. Rossi, R. Valente); JBWE 13-17 Jan and 5-25 Feb (m.ob.); RMSP 26 Jan (SSM, ph); Wolfe's Pd P RICH 3 Feb (ACi).

Snow Bunting: many sites, mostly coastal, all counties, throughout season; max 232 SPCP 4 Feb (H. Resit, T. Dybvig).

Grasshopper Sparrow: JBSP 17 Dec (KFeu *et seq.*, ph).

Lark Sparrow: Holy Cross Cemetery KING 14-17 Dec (DGo *et al.*, ph); Mattituck SUFF 18 Feb (BBom *et al.*), to 26 Feb (B. Bolduc).

Chipping Sparrow: 2 records in BRON, 10 in NEWY, 7 in KING, 12 in QUEE, 7 in NASS, 31 in SUFF; max 26 Greentree Estate NASS 17 Dec (S. Perreault *et al.*); 25 EPCAL 24 Jan (KFeu, SF).

Clay-colored Sparrow: MP 12 Dec (L. Gaugler *et seq.*) to 22 Dec; Hither Hills SP SUFF 16 Dec (APe *et seq.*), also 29 Dec and 12 Jan.

Field Sparrow: many sites, all counties; thru; max 20 SCFED 22 Feb (G. Quinn).

Fox Sparrow: many sites, all counties, thru; 14 on Montauk CBC 16 Dec.

American Tree Sparrow: many sites, all counties, thru; max 17 Matrix Global Logistics P RICH 15 and 27 Jan (ACi); continues to decrease in numbers.

Dark-eyed Junco: many sites, all counties, thru; max 175 NY Botannical Garden BRON 23 Dec (A. Baksh).

White-crowned Sparrow: Inwood Hill P NEWY 9-10 Dec (H. Russ *et al.*); GovI 2 Jan (R. Fleming); PBP 19 Feb (T. Trombone); 4 sites in NASS to 23 Jan; 19 sites in SUFF; max 5 Cutchogue SUFF 16 Dec (J. Brush Jr); last Shinn 27 Feb (E. Schwinn).

White-throated Sparrow: many sites, all counties, thru; max 348 CP 17 Dec.

Vesper Sparrow: JBWE 20 Dec (F. & C. McGowan); Hulse Landing Rd Riv SUFF 8 Jan (K. Coyle); GKP 21 Jan (ACi *et al.*).

Seaside Sparrow: all reports from SUFF only: 4 on the Quogue-Water Mill CBC 17 Dec; Green Point W. Sayville 17 Dec (MMcB); max 8 Dune Rd at Triton La Southampton 24 Dec (DGo, G. Armistead *et al.*); Shinn West 24 Dec

(APe); Cupsogue Beach CP 27 Feb (B. Bull, ph).

Saltmarsh Sparrow: GovI 4-5 Dec (MB Kooper *et al.*); SMNC 17 Dec (P. Paul, D. Paul); Dubos Pt QUEE 17 Dec (CFi *et al.*); Quogue Wetlands Pres SUFF 20 Jan (M. Zambardino); Fireplace Neck SUFF 31 Jan and 21 Feb (M. Zambardino); 1-2 Dune Rd at Triton Lane SUFF 24 Dec-25; Dune Rd Quogue SUFF 21 Jan.

Savannah Sparrow: mostly coastal sites in BRON (2 sites), NEWY (2), RICH (5), KING (7), QUEE (7), NASS (17), SUFF (69); max 109 Hallock SP Pres SUFF 29 Dec (JRa APe).

Song Sparrow: abundant throughout.

Lincoln's Sparrow: singletons at 8-10 sites in NEWY 4 Dec thru; BBP 5 Dec (M. Yuan), also here 14, 29 Dec, 22 Jan; Hallock SP Pres SUFF 13 Dec (D. Cartwright); Captree SP SUFF 1 Jan (DF, then PJL, SSM); Bushwick In P KING 5 Jan (A. Duvall); Flushing Meadows Corona P QUEE 12-26 Feb (CFi *et seq.*).

Swamp Sparrow: many sites, throughout; thru; max 41 Wertheim NWR 27 Dec.

Eastern Towhee: 4 sites in BRON, 13 in NEWY, 10 in KING, 7 in QUEE, 29 in NASS, 110 in SUFF; thru; max 13 GarI 16 Dec (J. Gluth) and 13 Mashomack Pres SUFF 30 Dec (MSch).

Yellow-breasted Chat: BBP 1 Dec (G. Chapin *et al.*); Coney I Beach KING 2-4 Dec (SSi); 1-2 Wolfe's Pd P RICH 20-21 Jan (T. Mastoros *et seq.*); in SUFF, Montauk 16 Dec (K. Kleinpeter); Shadmoor SP 16 Dec (K. J. Klein *et seq.*); Mecox In 29 Dec (D. McNeill); Shelter I 30 Dec (APe *et al.*).

Eastern Meadowlark: 1 site in RICH, 4 in NASS, 12 in SUFF; high counts 12 GarI 16 Dec (MSch)), 26 Laurel SUFF 16 Dec (T. Mansfield), max 39 Hulse Landing Rd Riv 19 Jan (K. Coyle).

Baltimore Oriole: singles reported from ~ 20 sites in all counties except KING, RICH, mainly SUFF 7 Dec thru.

Red-winged Blackbird: many sites, all counties, thru; max 1000 Calverton SUFF 24 Jan (MSch).

Brown-headed Cowbird: many sites, all counties, thru; max 750 Riv Buffalo Farm SUFF 28-29 Dec.

Rusty Blackbird: 20 VCP 10 Feb (Zach L.); 50 Willowbrook P RICH (E. Johnson); 53 Alley Pond P QUEE 3 Jan (CFi); 21 sites in SUFF; 8 sites in NASS, max 28 Shu Swamp NASS 26 Dec (MSil).

Common Grackle: all counties; thru; 600 Napeague SUFF 3 Dec (DF); max 5000 Riv 27

Jan (K. J. Klein).

Boat-tailed Grackle: mostly coastal throughout, thru: 1 site in BRON, 3 in RICH, 2 in KING, 3 in QUEE, 7 in NASS, 18 in SUFF; high counts include 210 Cedar Beach Babylon SUFF 17 Dec (Keu, SF); 215 Charles Memorial P QUEE 19 Feb (R. Serio); 450 Broad Channel QUEE 27 Jan (CFi) and Reg 10 max 700 here 28 Jan (R. Comeau); 506 JBWR 17 Dec (L. Scheppeke).

Ovenbird: In NEWY: Trinity Church 4 Dec (S. Ogger), CP 6 Dec - 5 Jan (m. ob.), BRY 2 Dec - 4 Jan (m. ob.), St Paul's Church 17-20 Dec (T. Olson *et al.*); in KING: Main Street P 27 Dec (J. Thorpe), 1 PP 2 Dec (S. Vasen).

Black-and-white Warbler: Swindlers Cove NEWY 1-27 Dec (M. Waldron *et seq.*); VCP 29 Dec (T. Bolster).

Orange-crowned Warbler: 7 sites in BRON, 20 in RICH, 5 in NEWY, 10 in KING, 21 in QUEE, 12 in NASS, 40 in SUFF; max 4 River Rd marshes RICH 16 Dec (C. Barron, ACi) and 4 SMNC 21 and 27 Dec; last Eastport SUFF 28 Feb (D. Massey).

Nashville Warbler: 1 site in BRON, 6 in NEWY, 2 in RICH, 6 in QUEE, 4 in NASS, 2 in SUFF; max 3 Greenree Estate NASS 17 Dec (S. Perreault *et al.*); last Brookvillee P QUEE 24 Feb.

MacGILLIVRAY'S WARBLER: OakB 10 Dec (R. Veit); Riverdale BRON 23 Dec BW CBC (J. Batista, T. Fiore, *et seq.*) to 7 Jan.

Common Yellowthroat: 2 sites in BRON, 7 in NEWY, 4 in KING, 2 in NASS, 10 in SUFF; max 3 The Battery NEWY 17 Dec (S. Masson); most on CBCs; last OakB 11 Feb (C. Hagen).

American Redstart: SMSP 1 Jan (D. Cartwright).

Cape May Warbler: Powell's Cove P QUEE 17 Dec (D. Schulman *et al.*) to 16 Feb; PBP 20 Dec - 14 Jan; Southold SUFF 31 Dec (P. Polshek).

Northern Parula: Montauk 16 Dec (BBom).

Yellow Warbler: OakB 10 Dec - 26 Jan (subsp. *aestiva*, R. Veit); CP 17 Dec (D. Ringer, J. Spindell, on CBC).

Black-throated Blue Warbler: Ketcham's Creek SUFF 15 Dec (E. Mutchnick, L. Sherman, on CBC) to 22 Dec; Garl 16 Dec (MSch).

Palm Warbler: throughout: 1 site in BRON, 7 in NEWY, 2 in RICH, 8 in KING, 7 in QUEE, 6 in NASS, 14 in SUFF; latest 24 Feb Smith Pd NASS.

Pine Warbler: 2 sites in NEWY, 2 in KING, 2 in QUEE, 3 in NASS, 21 in SUFF; thru to 29 Feb Wainscott SUFF (J. Jackson Perle), one of many late records in eastern LI.

Yellow-rumped Warbler ("Myrtle"): many throughout, especially along coast of KING, QUEE, NASS, SUFF, thru; max 145 BPt Tip 16 Dec (SSi *et al.*).

YELLOW-RUMPED WARBLER ("AUDUBON'S"): JBWE 9 Dec (SSM *et seq.*), thru to 26 Feb (J. Cimorelli), very rare.

Yellow-throated Warbler: Orient Pt SUFF area 30 Dec and 2 Jan (P. Polshek).

Prairie Warbler: 2 Govl 2 Dec (L. Goggin) to 2 Jan (L. Goggin, L. Beausoleil); Bayswater P QUEE 17 Dec (M. Epstein).

TOWNSEND'S WARBLER: Riverdale BRON 23 Dec (J. Batista, T. Fiore *et seq.*) to 18 Jan; Forest P QUEE 27 Dec (K. Mirth *et al.*), cont from Nov.

Black-throated Green Warbler: 2 sites in RICH, GwC 16 Dec (m. ob.). BRON CBC 23 Dec (m.ob); 7 sites in NEWY (Dec - early Jan (m. ob.).

Wilson's Warbler: Morningside P NEWY 5 Dec - 2 Jan (K. Fung *et seq.*); JBWR 19 Dec (C. Engstrom, K. Engstrom).

Summer Tanager: Commack SUFF (private feeder) 11, 15 Feb (P. Bollard, ph).

Western Tanager: Morningside P NEWY 5 Dec (K. Fung); sightings to 14 Dec (m. ob.); JBWE 6 Dec (S. Williams *et seq.*) to 17 Jan.

Northern Cardinal: abundant throughout; max 46 CP 17 Dec on CBC.

Blue Grosbeak: Arverne East Nature Pres QUEE 10 Jan (CFi).

Indigo Bunting: Idlewild P QUEE 22 Jan (N. Pascuzzi).

Painted Bunting: PBP 5 Dec (P. Horan); HLSP 22 Feb thru (S. Jannazzo, m. ob.).

Dickcissel: Bleeker St NEWY and environs 7-12 Dec (O. Vischer *et seq.*); Eastport SUFF 8 Dec (D. Massey); Fresh Kills P RICH 9 Dec (E. Johnson).

EXOTICS

European Goldfinch: 3 GwC 25 Dec (MSil); PP thru season, max 6 19 Feb (A. Lazarus).

Eurasian Eagle-Owl: CP and vicinity, continuing to 23 Feb 2024. Escaped CP zoo Feb 2023, lived wild until sickened by rodenticide and pigeon herpesvirus, collided with a building and died the age of 14 years. RIP "Flaco".

REPORTING YOUR OBSERVATIONS

Observers are strongly encouraged to report their findings directly to the Regional Editors, to help identify significant trends. Summary reports of observations; impressions of notable patterns in the weather, timing of migration, unusual scarcity or abundance of particular species, etc.; and notable individual records are highly valued. For maximum usefulness, send in reports no later than the 15th day of the month following the end of each season:

15 March, 15 June, 15 September, and 15 December.

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; **arr** – arrival or first of season; **BBA** – Breeding Bird Atlas; **BOTS** – bird of the season; **CBC** – Christmas Bird Count; **Co** – County; **I** – Island; **imm** – immature; **intro** – see introduction to report; **juv** – juvenile; **L** – Lake; **max** – maximum; **mob** – multiple observers; **Mt** – Mountain; **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; **Pres** – Preserve; **Pt** – Point; **Res** – Reservoir; **Ri** – River; **SP** – State Park; **spm** – specimen; **subad** – subadult; **T** – Town of; **thru** – throughout period; **Twn** – township; **WMA** – Wildlife Management Area; **y** – young.

BREEDING BIRD ATLAS CODES

These codes are listed in ascending order to highest breeding codes.

POSSIBLE: H – in appropriate habitat; S – singing bird.

PROBABLE: S7 – singing male present 7+ days; M – multiple (7+) singing males; P – pair in suitable habitat; T – territorial defense; C – courtship, display, or copulation; N – visiting probable nest site; A – agitated behavior; B – woodpecker/wren nest building.

CONFIRMED: PE – physiological evidence; CN – carrying nesting material; NB – nest building; DD – distraction display; UN – used nest; ON – occupied nest; FL – recently fledged and precocial young; CF – carrying food; FY – feeding young; FS – carrying fecal sac; NE nest with eggs; NY – nest with 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.

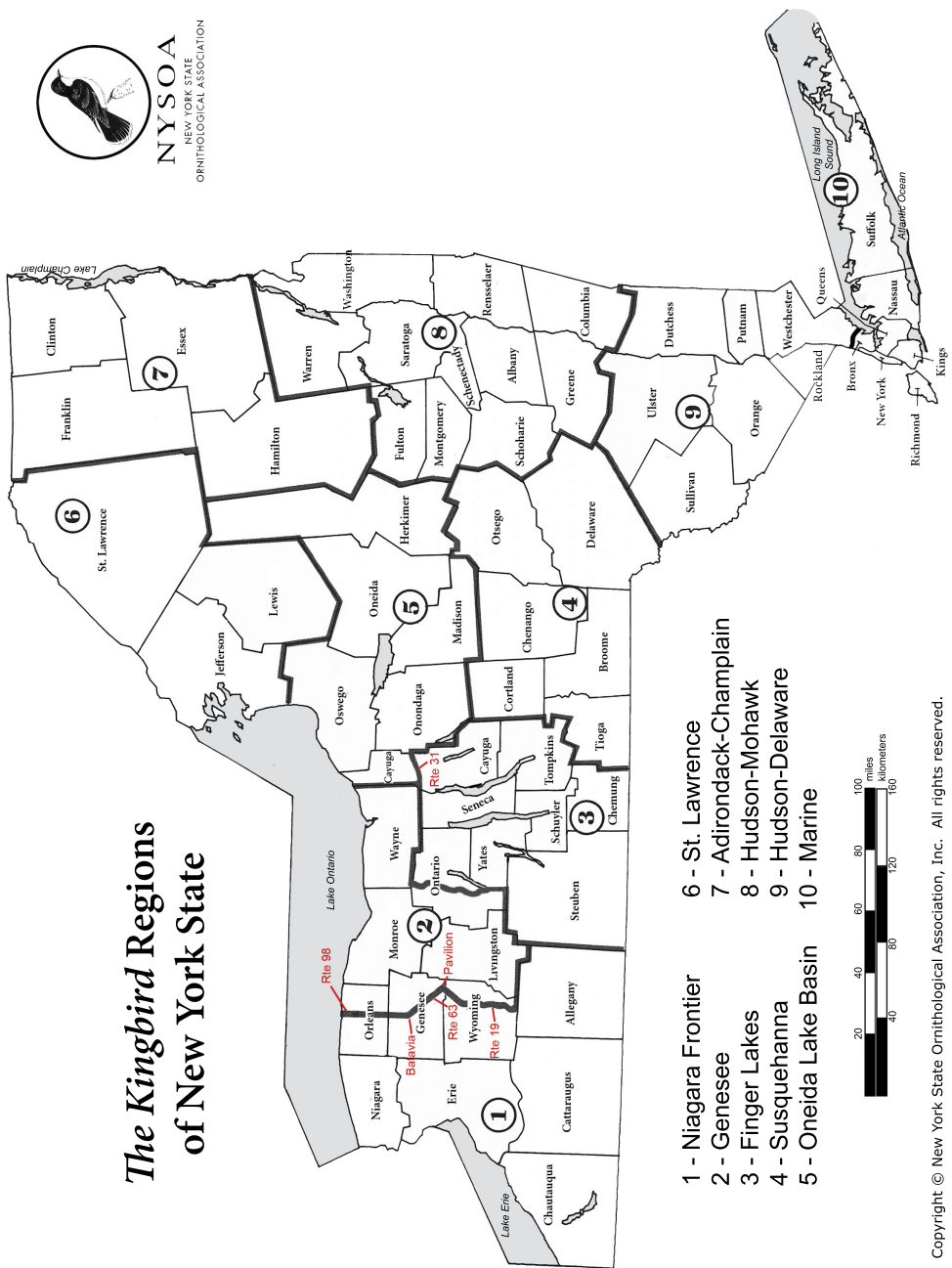
Region 2-Region 3 in Ontario County:

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.

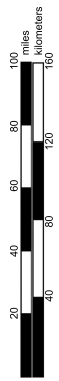
Region 3-Region 5 in Cayuga County:

the boundary is NY Route 31.

The Kingbird Regions of New York State



- 1 - Niagara Frontier
- 2 - Genesee
- 3 - Finger Lakes
- 4 - Susquehanna
- 5 - Oneida Lake Basin
- 6 - St. Lawrence
- 7 - Adirondack-Champlain
- 8 - Hudson-Mohawk
- 9 - Hudson-Delaware
- 10 - Marine



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