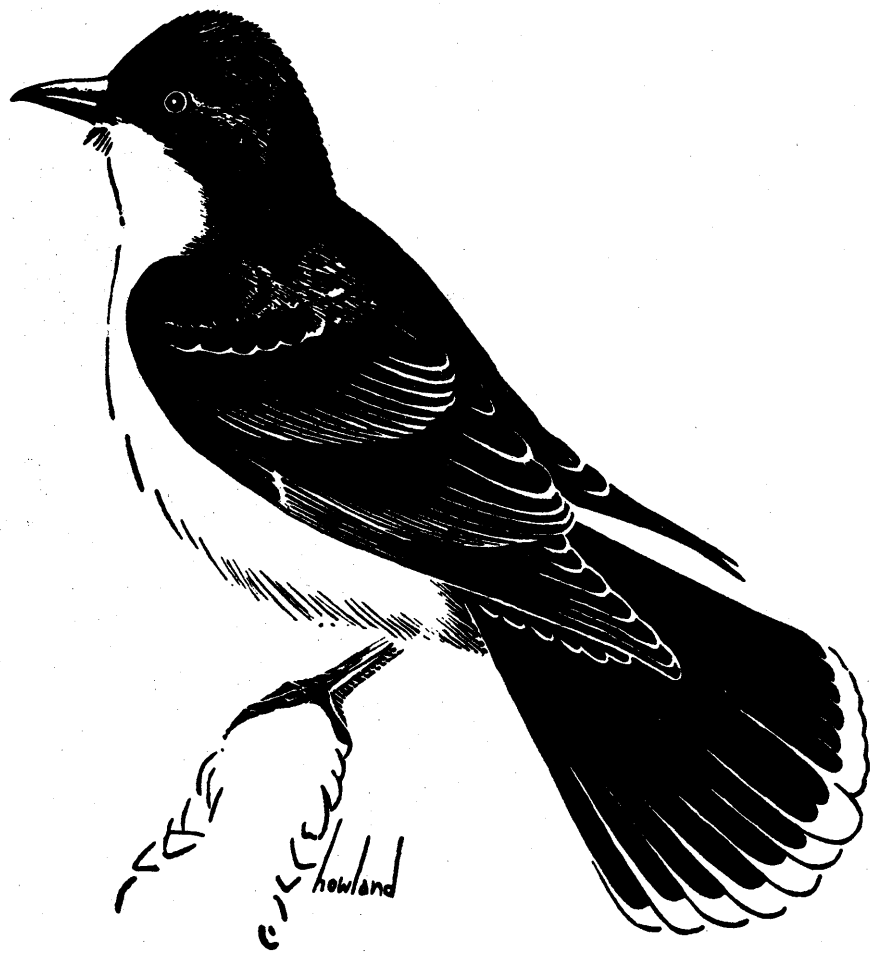


P-21

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

Highlights of the Spring Season
Guest Editor – Gordon M. Meade, M.D.

Circulation Manager – Constance N. Wilkins

Cover Design – Douglas L. Howland

*Ivory Gull. Saratoga Springs, Saratoga County.
15 January 1982*

Ron LaForce



IVORY GULL VISITS A BIRD FEEDER IN SARATOGA SPRINGS

KENNETH P. ABLE

Ivory Gulls (*Pagophila eburnea*) are known to be quite resourceful in finding food. In the Arctic they wander widely, feeding opportunistically on the carcasses of whales, walruses and seals as well as the excrement of seals and polar bears (Bent, 1921, p. 29). The immature bird present for weeks at Salisbury, Massachusetts in 1976 aggressively pursued handouts from birders and walked around on the cutting boards of fishing boats where the catch was being cleaned. Nevertheless, I think no one could have predicted the appearance of an adult Ivory Gull at a backyard feeder in upstate New York, many miles from open water. Yet on 14 January 1982 Mrs. James Coleman noticed a small, entirely white gull with short black legs walking about under her feeder in the northern outskirts of Saratoga Springs, Saratoga County. The area is quite open and the yard contained only a couple of very small trees and some shrubs. Perhaps initially attracted by bread, or scraps from a hanging suet feeder, the gull repeatedly visited the feeder area where it ate the remains of a pork roast, chicken, and minced clams offered by Mrs. Coleman. Between visits to the feeder, the bird sat atop two outbuildings at the edge of the yard; it apparently spent the night of 14-15 January on the roof of one of these buildings.

On the morning of 15 January, the gull was first noted at the feeder at about 7:30 A.M. At approximately 12:00, under sunny skies, C. Benkman, J. Cherry, P. Kerlinger, S. Terrill, and I confirmed its identity, and I photographed the gull as it sat on the barn roof. The immaculate, glistening white plumage and deep red eye-ring indicated that it was an adult bird, *i.e.*, more than one year old (Grant, 1981, p. 139). First-winter Ivory Gulls can apparently be entirely white, but have a black eye-ring (*Amer. Birds*, vol. 33, no. 3, p. 264; May 1979). The bird remained on the roof until we left at about 12:45 P.M. After we left in the early afternoon of 15 January, the gull was captured and banded. A few minutes after being released the bird soared high up in the air and disappeared toward the east, a direction in which it had been seen to fly earlier in the day (R. LaForce, pers. comm.). Unfortunately, it was not seen again, in spite of a search of all open water in the general area on 16 January.

The weather immediately prior to the arrival of the gull was not particularly remarkable except that the region had been enduring a period of sustained bitter cold. The movement of a coastal low-pressure storm off Long Island produced moderate to strong northerly winds over New York and southern Canada prior to the arrival of light snow in the area late on 14 January.

Beginning in the latter half of the 1970's, Ivory Gulls began to appear in unprecedented numbers off the shores of maritime Canada. In January and February of 1979, hundreds were seen in northern Newfoundland, part of a flight estimated to involve at least several thousand birds (*Amer. Birds*, vol. 33, no. 3, p. 264; May 1979). Coupled with this increase in more northern areas, stragglers reached southern Canada and New England with greater than usual frequency. The winter of 1975-76 brought Ivory Gulls to New Brunswick, Massachusetts, Connecticut, and New York; the winter of 1977-78 found two in Maine and single birds in Ontario, Massachusetts, and New York. The winter of 1980-81 produced a minor invasion of inland New York (Treacy, 1981, p. 63; Davis, 1981, p. 85). The species was considered casual or accidental in all of these areas at the time the fifth edition of the A.O.U. *Check-list of North American Birds* was published in 1957.

This record constitutes the fourteenth for New York. Bull (1974, p. 288; 1976, p. 20) lists seven records. Omitted is a sighting of an adult in the gorge at Niagara Falls in December 1924 (Beardslee and Mitchell, 1965, p. 256). Since 1976 there have been six additional records: 8-9 February 1976, Southold, Suffolk Co. (imm.); 8 December 1977 and 13 January 1978, Robert Moses Power Dam near Masena, St. Lawrence Co. (imm.); 22 December 1980-1 January 1981, gorge at Niagara Falls, Niagara Co. (imm.); 11 January 1981, Newburgh, Orange Co. (adult); 11-20 January 1981, Newburgh, Orange Co. (imm.); and 21 January 1981, Charlotte, Monroe Co. (imm.). The fourteen records are almost equally divided between coastal (6) and inland (8) areas. They include five adults, eight immatures and one bird of unspecified age. The preponderance of upstate occurrences in recent years suggests either that the birds are arriving overland from Hudson Bay, or more likely, perhaps from the population off Atlantic Canada via the St. Lawrence River.

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*Department of Biology, State University of New York at Albany,
Albany, New York 12222*

BREEDING SORAS ON A LONG ISLAND SALT MARSH

JON S. GREENLAW and RICHARD F. MILLER

We report here the recent discovery of a breeding population of Soras (*Porzana carolina*) on a Long Island salt marsh. This occurrence is notable for two reasons: (1) it represents evidence of recent breeding by this species on Long Island, and (2) it may constitute the first record of Soras using a salt marsh as nesting habitat.

OCCURRENCE ON LONG ISLAND

During June 1980, we located three concurrently active nests (Figure 1) of Soras in a localized section of a large salt marsh fringing the southern edge of Great South Bay at Oak Beach, Suffolk County. The population in 1980 probably consisted of only the three pairs responsible for these nests.

There is evidence of a prior recent history of Soras at Oak Beach Marsh. Post (1970) reported a summering Sora in 1970 in a breeding bird survey of the marsh. He did not find a nest of this species although he was able to locate seven nests of the Virginia Rail (*Rallus limicola*) in the same area. In the spring and summer of 1979, we saw at least one Sora and heard its distinctive calls on repeated occasions. Apparently this was the same bird that we netted and banded on 15 May 1979.

Our observations suggest that the Soras of Oak Beach Marsh constitute a "fugitive" population that may disappear for a year or more and then be re-established through dispersal from unknown sources. Although we worked almost daily on the marsh from May to July in 1977 and 1978, we did not notice or hear Soras. In each of those years, we recorded Clapper Rails (*Rallus longirostris*) on the outer portion of the marsh, and several pairs of Virginia Rails and at least one Black Rail (*Laterallus jamaicensis*) on the inner marsh where Soras might have been expected. Also, we failed to find Soras at Oak Beach Marsh this past summer, 1981.

This report of nesting Soras evidently represents the first confirmed breeding for the species on Long Island since 1935 (Bull 1974). Bull (1974) identifies only six prior nesting localities on Long Island, including three within the limits of New York City. Gardiner's Island, where it is conceivable that a population still occurs, and Fort Salonga are the sole localities listed for Suffolk County.

It seems evident from the older literature that Soras were at one time more common (at least locally) on Long Island than they have



Figure 1. Closeup of Sora nest containing a full clutch of 10 eggs on Oak Beach Marsh.

been in recent decades (Giraud 1844, Bull 1974). However, in the late 1800s or early 1900s its populations in the region began to decline, finally reaching the point where Griscom in 1923 was forced to describe it as probably extirpated as a breeding bird on Long Island. Since then the Sora evidently has occurred only sporadically during the summer on the island although a population of a dozen or more pairs (Bull 1964) has persisted to the present time at Troy Meadows in nearby northern New Jersey.

SALT MARSH HABITAT

The Sora is generally considered to be restricted to freshwater habitats during the nesting season throughout its continental range across the northern United States and adjacent Canada. The characteristic vegetation of these habitats varies from place to place, but

commonly includes sedge (*Carex*), bulrush (*Scirpus*), and cattail (*Typha*) communities associated with environments where standing water is prevalent. In a few areas, it has been found breeding in brackish marshes near the sea and even rarely in upland sites such as grass or grain fields (Forbush 1925). Except during migration, it appears to shun coastal salt marshes where certain other rallids typically occur.

Oak Beach Marsh is a low and relatively wet unditched marsh covered mainly by Smooth Cordgrass (*Spartina alterniflora*) and bounded along its upland side by a zone of *Phragmites australis* (= *communis*). It has been described in some detail elsewhere (e.g., Post and Enders 1970), so it seems necessary only to consider its special significance to Soras (and to Virginia Rails as well [Post and Enders 1970]) here.

The Soras and Virginia Rails were confined to a southeastern section of the marsh along the edge of the *Phragmites* about 250 m from the bay. Their activity spaces included both the *Spartina* and adjacent *Phragmites* communities. In this part of the marsh, the *Spartina* is irregularly interrupted by muddy openings and shallow pools of water harboring abundant aquatic life (Merriam, MS in preparation). Also, because the elevation of the marsh is at or very near mean high water and the relief on the marsh is gradual, drainage on the inner marsh is poor. There is usually standing water, a few centimeters deep, that is little affected by normal tidal cycles. Occasional high spring or storm-driven tides flood the area, but, except for the deeper pools, it may just as readily dry up during a period of drought. As a result then of the marsh's hydrological characteristics, the salinity of the water around the rail nests probably was quite variable.

The Soras nested and foraged on the marsh in *Spartina*, or in a combination of *Spartina* and *Phragmites*, and foraged and sought refuge in the neighboring *Phragmites* stand. Undisturbed feeding birds seemed to favor the edges of open mud pools along the margin of the *Phragmites*. From a physiognomic standpoint, the occupied portion of the salt marsh at Oak Beach may not be altogether unusual as a breeding habitat for Soras. It exhibits the basic feature that is frequently found in inland marshes used by them, namely a fine-grained mosaic formed by patches of open standing water and mud adjacent to areas containing erect marsh vegetation dominated by plants with a grass-like life form. The parts of Oak Beach Marsh covered by unbroken expanses of *Spartina* were not frequented by the Soras.

TABLE 1
HISTORIES OF TWO SALT MARSH SORA NESTS

<u>Variable</u>	<u>Nest no. 1</u>	<u>Nest no. 2</u>
1. Date discovered	27 May	28 May
2. Status of nest, date of discovery	egg-laying	clutch completed
3. No. eggs, date of discovery	6	10
4. Clutch size	10	10
5. Laying sequence	1 egg/day	unknown
6. Time of laying	before 07:00 ¹	unknown
7. Date (est.) first egg laid	22 May	17 May ²
8. Start full incubation ³	laying 4th egg	laying 4th egg
9. Start of hatching	12 June, 16:55 - 13 June, 09:45	06 June, 13:00 - 07 June, 13:15
10. No. eggs hatching during 9.	4	4
11. Hatching sequence After 9.	1 egg/day, except for ultimate and penulti- mate eggs (see text)	1 egg/day, except for penultimate egg
12. Total hatching interval ⁴	187.9±22.03 hrs.	144.4±20.47 hrs. (last egg failed to hatch)
13. Total no. eggs hatching	10 ⁵	9
14. Incubation period (days) (eggs 4-10)	18.8±0.35 to 20.6±0.56 ⁶	Unknown

¹ On several early visits to nest 1 during egg-laying, the egg laid that day had already been deposited by 07:00. For purposes of calculating incubation periods from laying to hatching (see note 6), I use 06:00 as an arbitrary and standardized laying time for all eggs.

² Back calculated from hatching of egg 4 (incubation started with egg 4), assuming an 18-day incubation period and 1 egg laid/day.

³ Inferred from hatching schedule (see text).

⁴ Calculated from the midpoint of consecutive visits bracketing hatching of the first egg to the midpoint of those of the last egg to hatch ± mean error (cf. Nolan [1978] for definition and calculation of mean error).

⁵ The last young hatched out and then died in the nest.

⁶ Calculated from laying to hatching of eggs laid after inferred incubation commenced, in days ± mean error.

NOTES ON BREEDING BIOLOGY

Bent (1926) summarized early information on the breeding biology of the Sora. Since then a number of studies have made substantive additions to our knowledge of reproductive patterns in the species (Mousley 1937; Pospichal and Marshall 1954; Tanner and Hendrickson 1956; Walkinshaw 1935, 1940, 1957). Gullion (1954) provided a convenient summary of the comparative breeding behavior of railids generally, including the Sora.

Two of the three Sora nests found at Oak Beach Marsh were built 39 meters apart in erect green and persistent *Spartina alterniflora*. One nest was about 9 meters from the nearest *Phragmites*, and the other was 15 meters from *Phragmites*. Both nests were situated near large mud pools over 200 meters from the bay. The third nest was built in short *Spartina* within a small, isolated clump of *Phragmites* about 2 meters onto the edge of the marsh. The two marsh nests were successful but the *Phragmites* nest was not. The histories of the two successful nests are summarized in Table 1.

One of the two marsh nests was well concealed by overtopping vegetation (0.75 m tall) but the other was partly exposed in a patch or dwarf *Spartina* with only about 40% cover overhead. Both nests had a loose canopy over them formed by the intermeshed leaves of adjacent plants. Walkinshaw (1940: 156) reported canopied Sora nests in freshwater habitats, while Post and Enders (1970) observed canopies over some Virginia Rail nests at Oak Beach Marsh.

The marsh nests were thick, well-formed masses of dead, interwoven *Spartina*, bearing shallow, saucer-like nest cups lined with finer stems of *Spartina*. The *Phragmites* nest was a loose affair of dead *Phragmites* stems. All three nests were placed on a platform of similar material built directly on the mud. None of the nests was attached to surrounding erect stems, as often is the case in Sora nests built over water in inland areas. The platforms raised the nests above the mud and low water so that suspension was unnecessary. None of the nests had a ramp leading up to the nest lip, a structure often present at nests built in freshwater marshes (Pospichal and Marshall 1954: 12). This may be because the salt marsh nests were built on low pads of vegetation, making it possible for the adults to step directly onto the nests from the mud substrate. In a suspended nest over deep standing water, adults leaping or scrambling up onto its rim without the aid of a ramp might tend to tilt the nest during the course of incubation and perhaps spill the eggs into the water. Thus,

ramp-building behavior may be viewed as a facultative adaptation that circumvents this problem, stabilizing the nest and permitting the attending adults to step directly into the nest cup.

SUMMARY

A small, perhaps transitory breeding population of Soras was located in a salt marsh on Long Island, New York. This occurrence constitutes the first confirmed breeding of this species on Long Island since 1935. The recent history of the species as a summering bird on the island is covered and aspects of the breeding biology of the salt marsh population are reported.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

We wish to thank the officials at the Long Island State Park and Recreation Commission for granting us the permits for access to Oak Beach Marsh. This work was accomplished during an investigation of *Ammospiza* sparrows supported by a grant from the Research Committee of C. W. Post Center of Long Island University.

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*Department of Biology, C. W. Post Center of
Long Island University, Greenvale, New York 11548*

CORRIGENDA

The following corrections should be made to "The Report of the New York State Avian Records Committee," (*The Kingbird* Vol. 31, No. 4; 1981):

- pg. 202: Correct year of the Redwing record is 20-24 Feb 1959, not 1954.
- pg. 202: Correct year of the citation in *The Wilson Bulletin* 71: 382-383 is 1959, not 1971.
- pg. 205: Correct Latin name of South Polar Skua is *Catharacta mac-cormicki* and not *C. skua skua*.

THE 1981 FALL SHOREBIRD SEASON AT JAMAICA BAY WILDLIFE REFUGE

THOMAS H. DAVIS

Thirty-six species of shorebirds were noted at Jamaica Bay Wildlife Refuge (JBWR), Queens County, during the period 28 June-25 October 1981. I visited the Refuge 37 times during this period and endeavored to census every species present nearly every trip, to note the arrival dates of adults and juvenals of 19 migrant species, and to estimate the ratio of adults to juvenals through their peaks of migration. All my visits overlapped the time of the peak high tide when the largest number of birds assemble on the shores of the drawn down East Pond to rest and preen. A majority of the birds present at the East Pond at high tide disperse to tidal flats scattered throughout Jamaica Bay on the ebb tide, at which time observers watch numbers of Semipalmated and Black-bellied Plovers, Red Knots, Sanderlings, Semipalmated Sandpipers, Dunlins, and Short-billed Dowitchers melt before their eyes! My visits averaged three to five hours in length and effort was measured by coverage. I divided the Refuge proper into five survey areas (see Fig. 1). At the West Pond, the water level was kept high until September 20th; a maximum of about 200 shorebirds was noted there in late July, but otherwise a total of less than 40 birds was normal.

The East Pond was first drawn down in the summer of 1976. This annual management policy was instituted to curtail recurrent outbreaks of botulism, and secondarily to provide a feeding and resting area for southbound migrating shorebirds. The West Pond is similarly drawn down during the month of May, at the peak of northbound migration. The ponds are allowed to refill with rainwater, are tested periodically, and botulism has not been reported. The ponds' attraction to shorebirds has been realized beyond anyone's wildest dreams—16 Curlew Sandpipers have been noted these six years (three in late May, 12 adults late July to early September, and a juvenal in early October), and New York State's first Sharp-tailed Sandpiper was present at the East Pond this year. All told, 39 species of shorebirds have been recorded at the Refuge between 1976 and 1981. Additional species reported prior to this season were Black-necked Stilt (June 1980), Piping Plover (formerly bred along the east side of the railroad tracks adjacent to the East Pond; single birds were observed

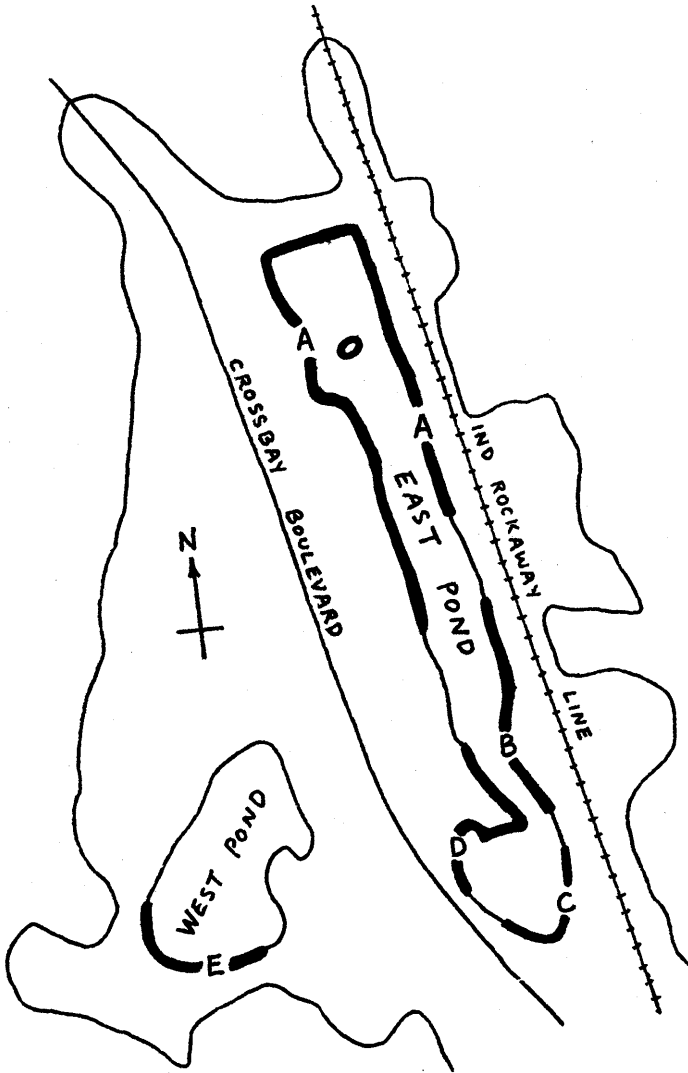


Fig. 1. Jamaica Bay Wildlife Refuge Shorebird survey areas. Area E includes adjacent salt marsh.

at the pond during August 1976 and 1977), and Red Phalarope (several times, May and August-September).

It is a well established fact that shorebirds exhibit a bimodal migration pattern in the fall, with numbers of adults preceding the juvenals by four to eight weeks. Juvenal shorebirds are regrettably not included in the standard American bird guides, but the publication of *A Guide to the Identification and Ageing of Holarctic Waders*, (Prater, T., J. Marchant, and J. Vourinen, 1977. BTO, Beech Grove, Tring, Herts. England) enables the interested student to recognize plumage differences with practice. I also photograph many shorebirds and it is educational to compare better shots to this book's detailed text.

Table 1 presents the arrival dates of adults and juvenals for this season plus incomplete data for the past two years.

TABLE 1. ARRIVAL DATES OF ADULTS AND JUVENALS,
DATES IN PARENTHESES REPRESENT
OTHER OBSERVERS' REPORTS

	1979		1980		1981	
	Adult	Juv.	Adult	Juv.	Adult	Juv.
Plover, Semipalmated	early July	8/11			7/11	8/15
American Golden			8/23	9/ 1	(8/25)	early Sep
Black-bellied					(7/21)	9/ 5
Red Knot	6/23 & mid July	8/18			7/18	9/ 6
Sanderling					7/18	8/23
Sandpiper, Semipalmated	6/26	8/11			7/ 3	8/15
Western					7/12	8/16
Least	6/26	8/14		7/26	6/28	8/ 8
White-rumped				9/13	7/18 & 8/2	9/19
Pectoral	early July				7/11	8/29
Curlew	8/15		7/20		(7/20)	None
Dunlin	8/18	9/ 9	8/23		(7/23) & 8/8	9/ 5
Stilt Sandpiper	early July	8/19		7/26	7/12	8/15
Dowitcher, Short-billed	6/26	8/11		8/ 9	7/ 3	8/15
Long-billed	mid July				7/18	9/26
Yellowlegs, Greater					6/28	8/15
Lesser	6/26	8/ 5		8/ 9	6/28	8/ 2
Ruddy Turnstone					(7/23)	8/23
Wilson's Phalarope					None	(7/23)

TABLE 2. JAMAICA BAY WILDLIFE REFUGE 198
ESTIMATES OF THE RATIO OF ADULT

	<u>6/28</u>	<u>7/3</u>	<u>7/4</u>	<u>7/5</u>	<u>7/11</u>	<u>7/12</u>	<u>7/18</u>
*American Oystercatcher							
American Avocet							
Semipalmated Plover					1	2	35
*Killdeer	8	10	9	8	12	15	14
Plover, American Golden							
Black-bellied							
Red Knot							1
Sanderling							2
Sandpiper, Semipalmated		6			13	65	210
Western						2	4
Least	4			1	16	18	40
White-rumped							1
Baird's							
Pectoral					3	2	2
Sharp-tailed							1
Curlew							
Dunlin							
Sandpiper, Stilt						6	6
Buff-breasted							
Ruff							
Common Snipe							
Dowitcher, Short-billed		11		32	170	357	695
Long-billed							4
*American Woodcock			1				
Godwit, Hudsonian						1	2
Marbled							
Whimbrel							
*Upland Sandpiper							
Yellowlegs, Greater	4	2		3	6	8	40
Lesser	4	8		2	29	10	25
Sandpiper, Solitary							
* Spotted			1		4	6	4
*Willet	1						
Ruddy Turnstone							
Phalarope, Wilson's							
Northern							
No. Species	5	5	3	5	9	12	18
No. Individuals	21	37	11	46	254	492	1089
Coverage: East Pond (see Fig. 1)	CD	BCD	A	CD	BCD	ABCD	ABC
West Pond (see Fig. 1)	E			E	E	E	
% adults (migrant species only)	100						
% juvenals (migrant species only)	0						
	* Breeds locally				(#) Reported by other		

FALL SHOREBIRD CENSUSES, COVERAGE, AND TO JUVENALS OF MIGRANT SPECIES.

<u>7/19</u>	<u>7/25</u>	<u>7/26</u>	<u>7/30</u>	<u>8/2</u>	<u>8/8</u>	<u>8/9</u>	<u>8/15</u>	<u>8/16</u>	<u>8/23</u>	<u>8/29</u>	<u>8/30</u>
5	4		1	5					5	(10)	4
30+	109	✓	190	244	245	563	593	654	735	520	✓
12+	18	12	19	12	7	13	6	4	3	8	✓
	5	13	12	12	40	76	190	116	435	590	✓
5	107	160	59	194	1	40	72	200	230	60	✓
44	83	230	21	162	1	186	70	60	220	1	2
200+	1015	✓	1105	920	1280	1418	951	1190	1220	1150	✓
2	8	4	(1)	2	1	2		1	3	15	✓
35+	113	✓	28	40	93	56	40	41	25	60	✓
				3	8	11	9	6	5	43	✓
8	9	5	3	5	4	1	1	1		4	4
1											
	1	1	1	1		2	2	2	1		
					1		1				
6	13	7	3	10	16	32	14	7	19	19	✓
1											
500+	1140	✓	440	460	233	516	138	127	170	115	✓
8	2	2	9	22	14	21	20	12	3	15	22
2	2	2	2	2	3	3	8	5	2	5	✓
										1	
				2			1				
25+	13	✓	65	33	92	114	90	120	370	360	✓
20+	17	✓	24	30	73	43	39	28	18	16	✓
											1
4	6	3	7	4	3	4	3	4		4	
			2			(1)				1	
	2	7	4	8	1	47	10	9	35	18	✓
	(1)	(1)		1		1	(1)	1		2	(1)
											1
18	20	19	20	22	19	21	21	20	18	22	21
908+	2668		1996	2172	2116	3150	2259	2588	3499	3017	
ABCD	ABCD	ABCD	ABCD	ABCD	ABCD	ABCD	ABCD	ABCD	ABCD	ABCD	ABCD
	E		E	E		E		E		E	E
→				99	99	99	97	97	90	66	
→				1	1	1	3	3	10	33	

✓ Present, numbers not counted

TABLE 2. JAMAICA BAY WILDLIFE REFUGE 198
ESTIMATES OF THE RATIO OF ADULT

	<u>9/5</u>	<u>9/6</u>	<u>9/7</u>	<u>9/10</u>	<u>9/13</u>	<u>9/19</u>	<u>9/20</u>
*American Oystercatcher			1				
American Avocet							
Semipalmated Plover	290	278	360	160	202	80	73
*Killdeer	4	10	8	12	7	1	2
Plover, American Golden			1		2		
Black-bellied	155	136	130	60	45	2	
Red Knot	3	15	7	4			
Sanderling	160	136	90	6	5	1	1
Sandpiper, Semipalmated	370	270	590	450	475	275	200
Western	10	8	18	12	2	5	3
Least	20	15	20	60	60	20	28
White-rumped	28	40	58	35	20	3	4
Baird's					(1)		
Pectoral	2	2	7	3	7	2	4
Sharp-tailed							
Curlew							
Dunlin	1	1	1		7	85	94
Sandpiper, Stilt	54	59	35	12	8	4	17
Buff-breasted	(1)						
Ruff							
Common Snipe							
Dowitcher, Short-billed	30	52	112	80	38	45	40
Long-billed	10	18	12	2	5	1	
*American Woodcock							
Godwit, Hudsonian	3	5	4	2	2	1	
Marbled	1	1	1	1	1	1	
Whimbrel							
*Upland Sandpiper							
Yellowlegs, Greater	36	105	175	80	346	50	112
Lesser	20	20	20	20	27	9	13
Sandpiper, Solitary	1					(1)	
* Spotted	1	1	2	1	2	1	
*Willet		1					
Ruddy Turnstone	16	12	10	5		1	
Phalarope, Wilson's						2	
Northern							
No. Species	22	21	22	19	20	21	18
No. Individuals	1216	1185	1662	1005	1262	590	607
Coverage: East Pond (see Fig. 1)	ABCD	ABCD	ABCD	ABCD	ABCD	ABCD	ABCD
West Pond (see Fig. 1)					E		E
% adults (migrant species only)	60	50	40	40	25	10	10
% juvenals (migrant species only)	40	50	60	60	75	90	90

* Breeds locally

(#) Reported by others

FALL SHOREBIRD CENSUSES, COVERAGE, AND TO JUVENALS OF MIGRANT SPECIES.

<u>1/26</u>	<u>9/27</u>	<u>9/30</u>	<u>10/4</u>	<u>10/10</u>	<u>10/11</u>	<u>10/12</u>	<u>10/17</u>	<u>10/18</u>	<u>10/21</u>	<u>10/25</u>
			1	1	(1)	1				
22	✓	5	3	3	4	1	4	8	7	1
13	✓	20	14	13	19	20	23	4	7	3
5	2			1	1			2		
29	✓	4	1	26	40	60	133	88	26	192
	(1)					5	5	3		6
						3	1	20	1	3
115	✓	100	78	64	78	80	33	18	8	4
1		1	2		(2)	2	2	5	4	2
35	✓	30	22	5	2	2				
3	5	1	3		(4)	6	4	9	7	6
		1	1	1	(1)					
3	7	7	10	1	1	(1)				
22	✓	22	35	42	36	84	175	275	100	920
2	✓	6	16	10	10	14	3	3	3	1
1									1	
10	✓	9								
10	18	6	9	9	8	7	1	9	5	19
							(2)			
1	1	3	2		1	2	2			2
1	1	1	1	1	1	2	2	2		2
1										
70	✓	24	12	120	146	177	193	80	120	130
26	✓	16	14	22	28	27	14	6	15	10
1	1	1			1			(1)	1	1
				(1)		3		1	1	1
20	18	18	17	16	19	19	17	17	15	18
371		257	224	320	384	497	598	534	306	1304
BCD	ABCD	ABCD	ABCD	ABCD	ABCD	ABCD	ABCD	BCD	ABCD	ABCD
E	E			E	E	E	E	E	E	E

✓ Present, numbers not counted

Table 2 presents the results of my daily censuses. I regret the lack of comparative data from previous years, yet some statistical trends are evident within this year's tabulation. I was surprised at the low numbers of juvenal birds noted in late August-mid September, their normal peak passage. The ratio of juvenal to adult Black-bellied Plover peak counts was about 1:6, Red Knot 1:46, Sanderling 1:5, Semipalmated Sandpiper 1:2, White-rumped Sandpiper 1:8, Short-billed Dowitcher 1:2, and Ruddy Turnstone 1:3. Peak numbers of juvenal and adult Semipalmated Plovers were about equal and juvenal Stilt Sandpipers outnumbered adults by about 2 or 3 to 1. There are several possible explanations for the comparatively low numbers of juvenal birds this season: 1) it may have been a poor nesting season in the Arctic; 2) meteorological conditions may have favored over-flight; 3) my visits were largely confined to weekends but the peak numbers might have occurred during the week (see the Stilt Sandpiper account below); 4) a pair of Peregrine Falcons present from mid-August to mid-September may have dispersed birds to roosts elsewhere (the Peregrines frequently harassed birds at the East Pond and were seen carrying a dead yellowlegs and a Semiplamated Plover); 5) later arriving juvenals may favor a different habitat (this may be true for Black-bellied Plover, Sanderling, and Ruddy Turnstone); and 6) there may have been some combination of the above factors.

Major influxes of new birds and species did not coincide with cold front passages, clearing skies, and northwest winds. Many shorebirds departed under such traditional fall landbirding conditions, but arrivals accumulated during periods of southerly or easterly winds, especially following rainstorms.

Species diversity was rather constant through the season (see Table 3), rapidly swelling to 25 species by late July, a peak of 27 species in late September, and a gradual decline through October.

TABLE 3. SPECIES DIVERSITY

Period	Late Jun- Early Jul	Late Jul	Early Aug	Late Aug	Early Sep	Late Sep	Early Oct	Late Oct
Number Visits	5	5	4	4	5	5	4	4
Total Species	14	25	25	26	26	27	23	21



*First Winter Long-billed Dowitcher—Jamaica Bay Wildlife Refuge
26 Sept 1980* Tom Davis

SPECIES ACCOUNTS

American Oystercatcher: one to two local family groups visited the East Pond 18 Jul-7 Sep.

American Avocet: Winter-plumaged adult male 2-14 Oct.

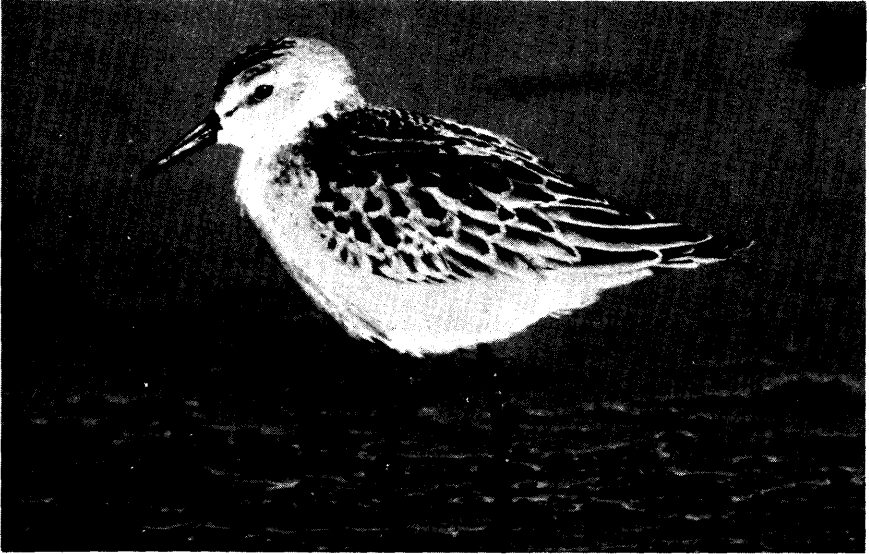
Semipalmated Plover: An average season (see Table 2).

Killdeer: Local birds, including downy young, dominated early counts; migrants swelled the numbers late Sep-mid Oct.

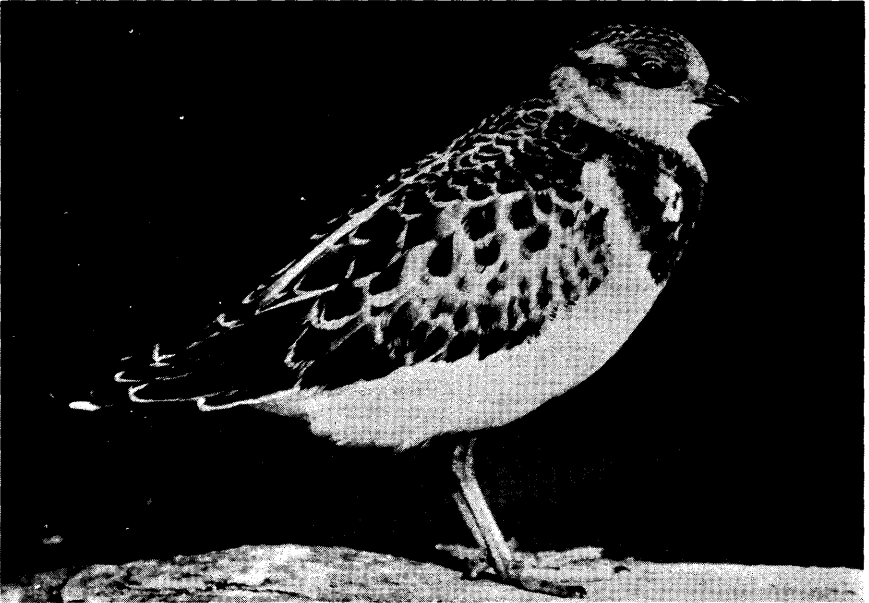
American Golden Plover: Nineteen individuals on eight dates, 7 Sep-18 Oct, slightly less than average.

Black-bellied Plover: See introductory remarks on low numbers of juvenals.

Red Knot: A continuing decline in numbers was noted—a maximum



Juvenal Semipalmated Sandpiper—Jamaica Bay Wildlife Refuge
4 Oct 1980 *Tom Davis*



Juvenal Ruddy Turnstone—Jamaica Bay Wildlife Refuge
23 Aug 1981 *Tom Davis*

of 230 adults 23 Aug, and a total of 15-20 juvenals 6-27 Sep. Previous maximum counts were 400 (26 Aug 1980), 700 plus (6 Aug 1977), and 1000-2000 (early Aug 1976). Following a hiatus of a month, small numbers of knots appeared in mid-Oct. Were these birds which would winter locally?

Sanderling: See introductory remarks on low numbers of juvenals.

Semipalmated and Western Sandpipers: See introductory remarks on low numbers of juvenal Semipalmateds. Maximum numbers of juvenal Westerns also appeared lower than in previous years. At their peak, Western numbers were less than 5% of the Semipalmated total. Bill length and shape were found unreliable in distinguishing long-billed eastern Canadian female Semipalmateds from short-billed male Westerns but bill thickness was not examined carefully. The difference in molt schedule was helpful in picking out the less numerous Westerns, especially juvenals. Semipalmateds migrate longer distances and defer their molt (some adults do exhibit partial molt), while Westerns molt enroute. Voice is also helpful in picking out Westerns; it is squeakier and it "sounds like a cross between a White-rumped and a Least" (K. Kaufman). Another Western call sounds like a Dunlin "higher and thinner but very similar in pattern" (W. Russell).

Least Sandpiper: An average season (see Table 2).

White-rumped Sandpiper: An unprecedented season for adults; maximum 58 on 7 Sep; previous maximum about 20-30 birds.

Baird's Sandpiper: Two juvenals 13 Sep (R. Lewis) and 30 Sep-11 Oct.

Pectoral Sandpiper: An average season (see Table 2).

Sharp-tailed Sandpiper: Breeding-plumaged adult 18-24 Jul. For full details see T. H. Davis (1981. Photographs of New York State Rarities. 41. Sharp-tailed Sandpiper. *Kingbird* 31: 198-201).

Curlew Sandpiper: An adult female 20 Jul-16 Aug (28 days) and an adult male 7-23 Aug (17 days).

Dunlin: An average season (see Table 2).

Stilt Sandpiper: An average season; my weekend maximum of 59 on 6 Sep was eclipsed by far by a weekday count of 110-130 birds 3 Sep (T. Stiles).

Buff-breasted Sandpiper: One 5 Sep (D. Riepe) was about normal for the season at JBWR; in this region Buff-breasts prefer the potato fields of eastern Long Island.

Ruff: Two adult females 19-20 Jul and 8-12 Aug (R. Arbib, T. Stiles *et al.*).

Common Snipe: Little appropriate habitat at the East Pond, but the first arrival 26 Sep was late.

Short-billed Dowitcher: See introductory remarks on low numbers of juvenals; my maximum of 1140 adults 25 Jul was apparently exceeded during the week of 20-24 Jul.

Long-billed Dowitcher: Heavily molted adults and juvenals were best identified by voice, but subtleties do exist in helping distinguish this species from Short-billed, including timing of migration with the Short-billed arriving earlier, molt schedule (long-billeds during migration), and differences in juvenal plumage (see Prater *et al.*, *op. cit.*).

American Woodcock: Breeds commonly in upland areas adjacent to the East and West Ponds but is seldom encountered during the day.

Hudsonian Godwit: This species' frequency of occurrence has exhibited a subtle increase since 1976; perhaps as many as 15 individuals visited the East Pond this season.

Marbled Godwit: One bird lingered from 5 Sep to 25 Oct, and a second bird 12-25 Oct.

Whimbrel: Singles 29 Aug and 26 Sep (a flyby); this species is more frequently encountered in the salt marshes farther east along the south shore of Long Island.

Upland Sandpiper: Flybys 2 Aug (two birds) and 15 Aug were probably from the breeding population at nearby JFK Airport, estimated at 12-20 pairs in 1981 (S. Chevalier).

Greater Yellowlegs: My daily counts fluctuated wildly throughout the season with peaks in late Aug, mid-Sep, and mid-Oct.

Lesser Yellowlegs: An average season (see Table 2).

Solitary Sandpiper: Two or three individuals 30 Aug-13 Sep all observed at the small freshwater pond created in September 1980, immediately west of the East Pond garden area.

Willet: Local breeding birds visited the East and West Ponds sporadically to 6 Sep and an individual of the larger western race was noted 17-25 Oct.

Ruddy Turnstone: See introductory remarks on low numbers of juvenals. Turnstones concentrate at the East Pond on the shellbank islands at the north and south ends of the pond.

Wilson's Phalarope: A season total of four to seven juvenals 25 Jul-19 Sep was low in comparison to recent years.

Northern Phalarope: one juvenal 30 Aug.

9446-85 Road, Woodhaven, New York 11421

RECENT OBSERVATIONS ON BREEDING BIRDS IN THE HUDSON HIGHLANDS

ROBERT SPEISER

One hundred years have passed since Edgar A. Mearns pioneered a field study of birds in the Hudson Highlands region. The results of his work, mostly from 1874 to 1882, were presented in several issues of the *Bulletin of the Essex Institute* (1878-1881). Although often inconclusive, Mearns' study was important since it laid the foundation for later studies. P. M. Silloway (1920) and Louis Kohler (1922) reported a breeding avifauna somewhat similar to Mearns' list.

An inspection and comparison of Mearns' list of breeders and the list developed by the author from 1976-81 (only the area *west* of the Hudson River was studied, similar to Mearns' work) exhibits a moderate amount of difference, although the number of breeding species is about the same (Mearns, 115; Speiser, 120). One notices immediately that several spectacular raptors, such as the Bald and Golden Eagles, and Peregrine Falcon, no longer occur, along with the Marsh Hawk and Long-eared Owl. Some other species extirpated or no longer found include the Black-crowned Night Heron, American Bittern, Sora, Passenger Pigeon, Common Nighthawk, Short-billed Marsh Wren, Purple Martin, Northern Parula, Savannah Sparrow, and Vesper Sparrow. Those that have greatly decreased in number, among others, include the Black Duck, Sharp-shinned and Cooper's Hawks, Common Gallinule, Least Flycatcher, Cliff Swallow, White-eyed Vireo, Yellow-breasted Chat, and Orchard Oriole.

Altogether, approximately 32 species have disappeared or decreased greatly since Mearns' time. These extirpations and reductions are attributed primarily to: 1) land "development" (habitat loss) and cessation of agricultural endeavors; 2) pesticides, including DDT; 3) overshooting; and, 4) introduction of competitive species. Conversely, about 28 species have increased greatly in number or are new breeders in the Highlands since Mearns' time. Several other species are new summer residents which have not yet been proven to breed (*e.g.*, Kentucky Warbler). These increases and additions are attributed primarily to: 1) habitat changes, especially maturation of "northern hardwoods" and hemlock forests; 2) compression of habitats and bird populations by urbanization; 3) natural extensions of range; and 4) introductions and escapes from domestication.

About 25 species of today's breeders and summer residents are of

“northern” affinity, whereas about 18 species have a “southern” origin. Northern species seem to have entered the Highlands mainly along the Reading Prong connection with northwestern Connecticut and southeastern New York (Taconic Mountains) as some populations have increased concomitant with more habitat becoming available through maturation of beech-maple woods and encroachment of hemlocks into deciduous woods (Charney, 1981).

Historically, southern species extending their range have found the Highlands to be a barrier; northward dispersal has been mainly by way of the lower Hudson Valley and Gorge (Griscom, 1923; Deed, 1951; Beddall, 1963). Deed cited the Carolina Wren and Cardinal as excellent examples. However, it is an oversimplification to view the Hudson River Valley and Gorge as the principal route of invasion. The Highlands is also dissected by the smaller Ramapo River valley and others farther south in New Jersey; these also serve as avenues for dispersal of southern species. Field work has determined that Kentucky Warblers are extending their range by way of the Ramapo River valley, where all recent sightings have occurred. Also, the only Highlands record for the Yellow-throated Warbler was far from the Hudson River. Furthermore, Cerulean Warblers are clearly extending their range from the west. Other species (*e.g.*, Acadian Flycatcher) appear to be following the backbone of the Highlands (Reading Prong) rather than the coastal plain and Piedmont areas.

It should be noted that the “life zones” of the Highlands, as a general rule, are reversed. That is, the more boreal-like “transition zone” forests are often located at lower elevations, such as lower slopes, ravines, and coves. In contrast, the highest elevations are dominated by a more southern, coastal-plain type flora; pitch pine, red cedar, scarlet oak, chestnut oak, and scrub oak are examples. Forests of the Highlands are locally segregated by moisture and soil depth (Ohmann and Buell, 1968). The result is a mingling of northern and southern species at the ecotone where the two types of forest meet, often with surprising associations. Some examples: Acadian Flycatcher singing adjacent to an active Goshawk nest; Dark-eyed Junco singing in the same tree as a Tufted Titmouse; and, Cerulean Warbler singing above a Canada Warbler’s territory.

Recent field work has answered several questions on the status, distribution, and ecology of avians of the Highlands. The following are, in the author’s opinion, the most important findings.

- PIED-BILLED GREBE** (*Podilymbus podiceps*). Casual breeder. Only three "modern" breeding records, 1961 (Mr. and Mrs. John Dye) and 1978 (JB, RS)—both in July and from estuarine Moodna Marsh (Cornwall Bay); adult with five young at West Haverstraw marsh 12 June 1981 (Robert Deed).
- BLACK DUCK** (*Anas rubripes*). Very uncommon to rare. Greatly decreased in numbers as a breeder since about 1975, as Mallards continue to increase.
- GOSHAWK** (*Accipiter gentilis*). Very rare. Breeding sporadically since 1964; maximum—three pairs, 1977.
- SHARP-SHINNED HAWK** (*Accipiter striatus*). Rare. Only one "modern" breeding record—pair with nest in hemlock, Harriman State Park, June 1977 (RS).
- RED-SHOULDERED HAWK** (*Buteo lineatus*). Very uncommon. Re-establishing its numbers following a population crash in the late 1950s and 1960s.
- OSPREY** (*Pandion haliaetus*). Rare summer resident, along Hudson River and locally in the interior. Recent breeding not proven.
- TURKEY** (*Meleagris gallopavo*). Wild stock released in Harvard Black Rock Forest and U.S. Military Reservation in 1979. Evidence of breeding, but too soon to determine if introductions were successful.
- COMMON GALLINULE** (*Gallinula chloropus*). Only one recent summer record—an adult at Mt. Ivy Marsh, Haverstraw Township, 9 June 1979 (JB, RS).
- BARRED OWL** (*Strix varia*). Uncommon. Almost all suitable habitats were occupied.
- ACADIAN FLYCATCHER** (*Empidonax vireescens*). Uncommon. Several nests were located, usually in beech or hemlock (JB, RS).
- ALDER FLYCATCHER** (*Empidonax alnorum*). Very rare summer resident. Found only in lowlands.
- LEAST FLYCATCHER** (*Empidonax minimus*). Has decreased in numbers since mid-1970s; now a rare breeder.
- CLIFF SWALLOW** (*Petrochelidon pyrrhonota*). Local breeder at only one locality of the U.S. Military Reservation; at least 4 pairs, summer 1980 (JB, RS).
- RED-BREASTED NUTHATCH** (*Sitta canadensis*). Rare and local. First breeding records—pair feeding three young, Harriman State Park 17 June 1980 (JB, RS) and pair feeding three young, Harvard Black Rock Forest, 5 July 1980 (JB, RS).

- BROWN CREEPER** (*Certhia familiaris*). Uncommon, but increasing in numbers each year. Pair with nest under hemlock bark, near Echo Lake, Tuxedo Township, 4 June 1980 (RS).
- EASTERN BLUEBIRD** (*Sialia sialis*). Uncommon. Almost all suitable habitat occupied. Census in 1980 revealed at least 65 males on territory (Speiser and Benzinger, 1981); most were in wooded swamps and burned mountaintops of Harriman State Park. Difficult to attract into new areas with nest boxes.
- GOLDEN-CROWNED KINGLET** (*Regulus satrapa*). Rare and local breeder in Harvard Black Rock Forest—pair with one juvenile, 7 July 1979 (JB, RS) and 5 July 1980 (JB, RS).
- SOLITARY VIREO** (*Vireo solitarius*). Species increasing in number. Five nests found during study (JB, RS).
- YELLOW-RUMPED WARBLER** (*Dendroica coronata*). First summer record—singing male near Sterling Lake, Sterling Forest, 29 June 1979 (JB). Returned during summer 1980 but no evidence of breeding.
- YELLOW-THROATED WARBLER** (*Dendroica dominica*). First summer record—singing male at Sterling Forest, 23 June 1978 (JB, RS); returned summer 1979, but no evidence of breeding.
- BAY-BREASTED WARBLER** (*Dendroica castanea*). First summer record—pair in spruce-cedar bog in Sterling Forest, 14 July 1978 (JB, RS). Probably very early fall migrants.
- CERULEAN WARBLER** (*Dendroica cerulea*). Increasing in number since mid-1970s. Two small colonies in the Highlands. Pair with nest, Long Mountain area, Harriman State Park, 9 June 1979 (JB, RS) but nesting unsuccessful.
- NORTHERN WATERTHRUSH** (*Seiurus noveboracensis*). Local breeder. At least 7 singing males in swamp near Lake Welch, Harriman State Park, 20 June 1980 (JB, RS). Adults with young noted in two places of Harvard Black Rock Forest area, Summer 1980 (JB, RS, PJ).
- KENTUCKY WARBLER** (*Oporornis formosus*). A few individuals found in the southwest section of the Highlands, Summer 1980 (JB) but no evidence of breeding.
- PURPLE FINCH** (*Carpodacus purpureus*). Local breeder. Small colony in the Arden area.
- DARK-EYED JUNCO** (*Junco hyemalis*). Local breeder in Harriman State Park. Nest found (RS) and young observed (JB, EB).

Observers: EB, Eugene Brown; JB, John Benzinger; PJ, Paul Jeheber; RS, Robert Speiser.

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13 Beam Place, Haledon, New Jersey 07508

NOTES AND OBSERVATIONS

A New Niche for the Rock Dove in Upstate New York: Twenty to 40 years ago, feral Rock Doves (*Columba livia*) occupied two principal niches in east-central New York: an urban niche and a rural niche. The city birds fed on human handouts in parks and at bird feeders, and used horizontal ledges on buildings for nesting; while rural birds frequented barns and silos for roosting and nesting, and fed on spilled grains about farms and fields. Both populations fed, where available, on grains spilled at urban and rural rail yards.

Approximately 20-30 years ago a new man-made niche became available as a result of the interstate highway construction program and other highway refurbishing programs. These programs introduced new bridge designs based on large I-beam construction. These new designs provided ledges for this ledge-seeking species. Today, it is a common sight along such Capital District highways as Interstate 87, 90 etc. and other places where new bridges have been built to see Rock Doves perched on bridge ledges, or on immediately adjacent powerlines, bridge railings, etc.

One of the most notable local examples of successful adaptation by this species to this type of structure exists at the Route 9 crossing of the Mohawk River at Crescent at the border of Albany and Saratoga Counties. The current bridge spans one-quarter mile of river and was built in the past five to ten years, replacing an older structure of quite different design. It is a four-lane, dual-span structure with two shore-based piers and four piers in the water spanned by I-beams standing four or five feet tall. It serves as home for a gathering of 1500-2000 Rock Doves!

In the winter, these birds are frequently seen clustered as a compact dark spot on the river ice to the east of the bridge enjoying the warmth of the sun; or otherwise occupying the compartmented ledges atop the huge I-beam supports between piers. The ledges are approximately eight to twelve inches deep and have dividers every five feet that create a compartmented effect. The ledges have about two feet of head space. The dividers that create the compartments prevent direct walking access along the ledge, or a view of the adjacent compartments. These ledges are protected from rain and snow by the overhang of the guard rail. There are approximately 265 such compartments on each outer I-beam, or 530 compartments on the outer east and west beams. The two spans are separated by about 10-12 feet and each of the two inner faces of these spans has the same approximately 265 compartments.

On the outer east face of the bridge, these compartments show considerable evidence of use by Rock Doves. Droppings are abundant and many compartments have a nest, with a few compartments having two nests. Most of the birds occupy the outer east and west faces of the spans, while the inner faces between

spans have fewer birds. A very few birds occupy the I-beam and cross-member ledges under the bridge, however, the outer east face which gets the warmth of the winter sun appears most popular.

While records of exact counts of Rock Doves at this site have not been kept, casual observation indicates that this flock continues to grow. It numbered about 1000 two years ago and about 500 three or four years ago.

Robert P. Yunick, 1527 Myron St., Schenectady, New York 12309

LETTER TO THE EDITORS

23 April 1982

To the Editors:

Charlie Delehanty's "Photographs of New York State Rarities: 29. Western Grebe" (*Kingbird* 28: 208-209, 1978) presents my photograph of a bird present at Tupper Lake, St. Lawrence County, in the summer of 1978. Within the Western Grebe population are both dark- and light-phased individuals, and preliminary studies indicate these birds may represent two sibling species (K. Kaufman, 1979. *Continental Birdlife* 1: 85-89).

In a communication dated 12 April 1982 R. S. Heil of Peabody, Mass., commented on the appearance of my photograph of the Tupper Lake Western Grebe: "I was surprised that the bird appeared to be of the light phase. The lores are clearly white, there seems to be plenty of white feathering above the eye . . . do you recognize it as a light-phased bird?"

Examining a series of color transparencies of the grebe, I find that it is in fact a dark-phased bird. In the photograph printed in the *Kingbird*, the bird was swimming directly into early morning sunlight and the black feathering of the lores and surrounding the eyes exhibits a sunlit sheen. Reproduced in black-and-white, this tonal quality was lost, and the face appears largely white. That a light-phased Western Grebe might occur in New York State would be most surprising, for this population is found in the far west, while dark-phased birds range west to Manitoba and Minnesota.

I am indebted to Mr. Heil's inquiry, which prompted this clarification of New York's only fully documented Western Grebe.

Sincerely,
Thomas H. Davis

9446-85 Road, Woodhaven, New York 11421

HIGHLIGHTS OF THE SEASON

GORDON M. MEADE, M.D.

My presentation of the highlights of the 1981-82 winter season takes a somewhat different approach. I hope the deductions I draw, and the implications I see in the data presented from the regions will be of some interest.

The only necessity for speaking of the season's weather is to make an historical record. There was no dispute that it was a dismal winter without an excess of snow, but what came was enduring because of the persistent deep cold, ice storms, and bitter, incessant wind. Only the hardiest birders were much afield and feeders enjoyed a rushing business.

My birding in New York State began seriously in 1918. If one views this past winter's season from the perspective of almost 65 years of birding, some interesting facts come into view, things known to some older birders but not realized by more recent recruits to birding.

As I review the regional reports I am impressed by the fact that a number of the reported species were essentially unknown or rare prior to 25-30 years ago in the areas where they are now common. An historically oriented discussion of a few of them may be illuminating.

Turkey Vulture—Eaton (1914) said this species was only a summer visitant on Long Island and western New York in limited numbers in July and August, and was not known to breed in the state. Now it is fairly common and widespread throughout the state. During the first two years of the Breeding Bird Survey it has been confirmed as a breeder in Regions 1, 2, 7 and 8 and found as a "Probable" in the other six regions. The current season reports indicate the possibility of a change to year round status. Region 2 reports a bird on 12 January, Region 3 found six or seven over Sapsucker Woods on 4 February, and, most remarkable, Region 9 tells of a nightly roost of 15 birds at Pound Ridge. There is no doubt this bird is prospering as another of the northward moving southern species.

Red-bellied Woodpecker—Eaton (1914) said this species "was common on Long Island and lower Hudson Valley 50 years ago (1860's) but now has entirely deserted that region—only two reports during the last 30 years. It must be regarded as uncommon or local in western New York." That its status has changed statewide is evi-

denced by regional remarks of "lots of RBWs," "95 on our CBCs," "one on Tug Hill plateau, unusually far north," "one at Henderson through season," "scattered reports through region," "continues its slow increase—one or more on most CBCs in Region 9." It is doing well despite rigorous winters and has become a regular feeder bird. And according to the Atlas Project its breeding has been confirmed in all regions except Region 1 where it is "Probable." Quite a change since 1914!

Tufted Titmouse—Eaton (1914) knew of no breeding record for the state except once on Long Island and said that in the rest of the state there were reports of occasional stray birds. When I started birding, the species in western New York was purely an accidental which occasioned excitement among birders. Like other southern invaders the "pioneers" have generally appeared in early winter. Our current season says it is "doing well," "181 on CBCs with 96 at Ithaca," "thrived at feeders in Region 4," "more numerous at feeders than usual—one unusually far north at Old Forge," "at feeders up the Champlain Valley and into the central mountains," "reported in very good numbers." An extraordinary contrast to the past. Now confirmed as a breeder in all regions but 6 where it is rated "Probable."

Mockingbird—As another southern invader which was an accidental or a rarity 30 years ago we find it mentioned in eight out of nine of this season's reports in terms of "encouraging numbers," "continued good numbers," "42 birds on our CBCs with 24 at Ithaca," "seems more abundant than ever," "one spent three weeks at Canton," "six on the Plattsburgh CBC, one at Ticonderoga," "large numbers on seven CBCs," "fantastic numbers on CBCs when you consider the bird was absent before the late Fifties." The Mockingbird is a continuing "success story." Eaton (1914) reported some evidence that it had bred on Long Island and possibly in southeastern New York. The current breeding bird survey has confirmed its breeding in every region of the state except Region 1 where it is considered a "Probable."

House Finch—A population explosion since the early 1940's has been that of the introduced House Finch. The magnitude of this phenomenon becomes increasingly clear. In this winter season it was reported from all regions in such terms as "usual abundance," "record highs on CBCs," "upward spiral continues," "thrived at feeders," "reports now so widespread that winter reports of Purple Finch are suspect," "outnumbers Purple Finch almost ten to one," "continues

to increase." And the Atlas Project now has confirmed its breeding in every region of the state. Question: Will we come to regret this introduction as we did those of the House Sparrow and Starling?

Cardinal—To some it may be surprising that I include this species with the others as a recent invading species. But it is quite true that in 1914 the bird was a local resident confined to southeastern New York, Staten Island and the west end of Long Island. In the rest of the state it had been occasionally reported as a rare visitor. I can recall well the excitement a male in Rochester created in February 1926. Just about 40 years ago it became a regular species on CBCs in western New York and its numbers have increased steadily. Today it is so commonplace it merits mention on only half of the regional reports but that it is still moving is evidenced by the fact that it is included on the rarity list from Region 7 where it appeared at Piseco, Tupper and Saranac Lakes, and Plattsburgh!

From this rather cursory discussion it can be seen that our regional reports can give evidence of long term, widespread changes in abundance and distribution of avian populations. Thus reports of even common and unexciting species can add to the unfolding picture. Avian demography is not static.

Flock Interchange

In Region 4 a partly albino House Finch came sporadically but at fairly regular intervals to be with a feeder group. The observer was led to speculate that there might be rotating flocks and that the 60 birds he counted daily might not always be the same birds. An experience I had in 1950 encourages me to assure him that he is correct in his surmise, that the flock composition undergoes constant change. At my feeder in Saranac Lake I had a daily flock averaging 30 birds. Over a period of three weeks I trapped one or two birds a day for a total of 20 birds, painted their upper mandibles with bright blue model enamel, and released them back to the flock. As time went on blue-billed birds were reported to me at the many feeders all over the village but I never had more than two of them in my flock of 30 at any one time—usually only one. It was obvious that the blue-billed birds were scattering elsewhere. My calculations at the time indicated there were probably about 400 birds in all in the interchanging flocks.

Raptor Predation

The concentration of small birds at feeders provided fine hunting for the protein-hungry Goshawks, Sharp-shinned and Cooper's Hawks and Northern Shrikes which were widely and frequently reported

throughout the state. In addition to small birds, Mourning Doves, Gray Squirrels and Cottontail Rabbits were victims.

Chickadee Irruption

Those regional editors who made note of such a common species as the Black-capped Chickadee felt that the high CBC counts and the unusual activity at feeders represented an irruption of the species. This phenomenon bears promise of an exciting and spectacular return migratory movement of these birds eastward along the south shore of Lake Ontario. When this happens they move steadily along for hours at a time—an extraordinary sight.

Along with this there was a definite south and west movement of that more septentrional species, the Boreal Chickadee, which appeared at a feeder as far west as Cheektowaga, and as far south as Jones Beach, Shelter Island, Rye and Slide Mountain. One wonders if these two species derived from the same areas or were simply impelled to move by the same factors. As in past years they very likely will be found among the Black-cappeds returning east along the lake.

The "Late-Stayers"

Year after year the fall and winter season Highlights report summer species that are still lingering. For example, this winter we have reports of American Bittern, King Rail, Sora, Brown Thrasher, Black-and-white, Tennessee, Nashville, Black-throated Green and Pine Warblers, Ovenbird, Common Yellowthroat, Yellow-breasted Chat, Northern Oriole, Scarlet Tanager and Rose-breasted Grosbeak—all species that should have long since responded to the hormonally regulated migratory drive.

Ever since reading of the pioneering experiments of Rowan in the 1930's on the stimulation of the migratory impulse by changing amounts of daylight, I have been intrigued by the question of whether these "late-stayers" may be birds in which disease of the gonads may be responsible for a lack of hormonal response and hence a failure to migrate. If this should be true, these are crippled birds just as much as the Black-throated Green Warbler with an injured wing which lingered at Rye until 5 December. Opportunity for revealing research lies in a study of the health of these "late-stayers."

Redpoll Invasion

This was a redpoll incursion year with reports from all ten reporting regions that the birds were common to "present in numbers up to 1500." Feeders were overwhelmed. Dorothy Crumb in Region 5 banded over 600 at her feeders. Along with them came a consider-

able sprinkling of the rare Hoary Redpoll, giving birders a chance to sharpen their diagnostic eyes and judgment. There were problems with individual birds which after careful scrutiny were concluded to be light-colored Commons. In Keene, an albinistic Common revealed another possible source of identification confusion. There is no doubt that there were numbers of Hoarys, but with such a highly-desired Life List species there is always the possibility of caution slipping and a resultant misidentification. Take extra care!

Another species being identified with increasing frequency is the Lesser Black-backed Gull. Four, and possibly five birds appear in the winter reports. One, at Cohoes Falls, is identified as a first-year bird. If this is correct, the conjecture arises as to whether this species is now breeding on this continent. The increasing number of reports throughout the northeast may lend support to this conjecture. Both the Lesser Black-backed Gull and Hoary Redpoll identification problems underline the danger of error when a species becomes a "popular item" and the need for extra care in diagnosis.

Rarities

When one counts all the species listed by the different regions as rarities—a total of 47 species—it becomes obvious that the reasons for listing a species as a rarity are quite variable. What is rare in one region is not considered so in another. Some species are called rare because they are present out of season such as the wood warblers, Scarlet Tanager; some are escapes—Black-hooded Parakeet, Blue-black Grosbeak and European Goldfinch; others are misplaced or wandering birds out of normal range—California Gull, Say's Phoebe; and some species are common species invading new territory—Fish Crow, Tufted Titmouse, Mockingbird and Cardinal; others are simply rare in the region; some are difficult to classify. So what should a state-wide Highlights list as rarities? Out of the 47 species I have chosen Common Murre, California Gull, Say's Phoebe, Varied Thrush, and Harris' Sparrow as species truly rare in the state as a whole. For the BOTS I nominate the Ivory Gull at the Saratoga Springs feeder, primarily because of its outrageously incongruous location and activity.

Perhaps from this review I have made some deductions, and sensed implications that will add a little breadth to the mass of data compiled in the regional reports.

27 Mill Valley Rd., Pittsford, New York 14534

REGION 1 — NIAGARA FRONTIER

VIVIAN MILLS PITZRICK

Aside from the paralyzing ice storm the first of the month, there was little to separate the men from the boys in December's near-normal weather, and Lake Erie froze 12 January, about a week late. However, the rest of the season was an endurance test, and although actual number of species was down, the good records below are proof of the "sterner stuff" of which birders are made. For January, precipitation was only 1.1 in. above normal, but temperatures averaged 5.2° F. (2.9° C.) below normal, and every weekend was too atrocious, even dangerous, for birding: the first,—rain and 72 mph. winds; the next three,—vicious blizzards with high winds and cold, cold temperatures; the last,—freezing rain and a severe ice storm. Even though February temperatures averaged near normal and precipitation .9 in. below, "the most unkindest cut of all" was the ICE as more ice storms early in the month increased the thick glazing on roads, driveways and snow cover where it persisted all month. With winter holding steady through the period, it was somewhat surprising to have even a few of the usual late-February migrants coming through.

This was another year for grebe fallout. Each winter as the larger lakes and waterways freeze, these birds are forced to hunt food elsewhere and are often grounded by storms and die because they need open water from which to take off. In the *Buffalo Evening News*, 27 January this year, Dave Bigelow writes that at least eight Horned Grebes were downed 19 January on the lake plains, but most of them were rescued and released on open water.

Scattered fields of unharvested ear corn were used all season by the fine Turkey population; 21 January some of these birds began coming regularly to the feeder on Ten-Mile, Cattaraugus County, and appeared as well on top dressings and open slopes and at spring runs; the good snow crust aided their mobility to the end of the period. Although the mast crop was poor, there was a good supply of both Black and Yellow Birch seed as well as Hemlock (Eaton). By mid-January wild foods such as fruits of wild grape and Box Elder were nearly exhausted, but the number of rabbits and squirrels was the best in years.

A new book, *Birds of Cattaraugus County New York*, by Doctor Stephen W. Eaton of Saint Bonaventure University, was published in December by the Buffalo Society of Natural Sciences. This scholarly work is of interest not only for the annotated list of birds, but also for the description of good county birding areas and of the general topography of our region. The Turkey, Professor Eaton's favorite study, receives lengthy attention.

Winter positives include 1) a baker's dozen widespread Great Blue Herons, and small numbers of Mallards, Black Ducks, Common Goldeneyes and Common Mergansers appearing on the Allegheny and Genesee Rivers following the freeze up of Lake Erie, 2) many records of Sharp-shinned and Cooper's Hawks, and a good Rough-legged season, particularly in February, 3) splendid grouse and turkey populations, 4) more than usual Short-eared Owls, a good sprinkling of wintering flickers, steady numbers of Hairy Woodpeckers, and lots of Red-bellied Woodpeckers, 5) small flocks of crows moving in late February, high

feeder counts of Black-capped Chickadees, Tufted Titmice doing well, many White-breasted and an invasion of Red-breasted Nuthatches, and a scattering of Brown Creepers, 6) encouraging numbers of Mockingbirds, here and there a wintering robin, and a few Northern Shrikes, 7) two to 20 redwings braving the elements all season, 8) Cardinals, Evening Grosbeaks and Purple Finches doing O.K., 9) House Finches in usual abundance, 10) a fair winter finch season with an incursion of Common Redpolls from mid-January on and from one to 26 widespread Pine Siskins, and 11) some interesting sparrows including several White-throats with a couple or so overwintering.

Winter negatives include 1) few loons, grebes, cormorants and night herons, 2) almost no Marsh Hawks and few kestrels, 3) not many larids, 4) no Barn and few Screech Owls, and a poor Snowy Owl season, 5) a low count for the Belted Kingfisher, and no Red-headed Woodpeckers, 6) Horned Larks doing poorly, 7) a scarcity of Winter and Carolina Wrens as well as of Golden-crowned Kinglets, 8) meadowlarks nearly missing, 9) small numbers of Common Grackles thru early January, and 10) very few Tree Sparrows in most areas.

Rarities: Eared Grebe, Gannet, White-fronted Goose, Barrow's Goldeneye, Goshawk, Bald Eagle, Black-legged Kittiwake, Common Raven, Boreal Chickadee, Varied Thrush, Rose-breasted Grosbeak, Hoary Redpoll and "Oregon" Junco.

Abbreviations: ACC—Allegany County Census, 2 Jan, of birds outside the Scio Audubon census circle, compiled by D. Burton; BOS—Buffalo Ornithological Society; CC—Audubon Christmas Bird Census: of St. Bonaventure (StBon hereafter), 19 Dec, compiled by T. Baird, of Jamestown (Jmst hereafter), 20 Dec, and of Scio, 2 Jan, compiled by D. Burton; EEC—Environmental Education Center; GMA or WMA—Game or Wildlife Management Area; NC, NP or NS—Nature Center, Preserve or Sanctuary; NWR—National Wildlife Refuge; OTH—*Olean Times Herald*; SF or SP—State Forest or Park; SPA—State Power Authority.

Contributors: Malory Adams, Mary Adams, Robert Andrie, Margaret Barnett, Sharon Baumgardner, Lois M. Beardsley (LMB), Esther Becker (EsB), Elizabeth Brooks (EB), Doris Burton, Lou Burton (LB), Clifford Button, Ruth Button, Victor Carpenter, Donald Clark (DC), Jane Clark (JC), Dale Coats (DaC), Stephen Eaton, Mary A. Fuller (MAF), Paul Fuller, Helen Graves, Sandra Hotchkiss, Doris Hurlburt, Claribel James, Ken Johnson (Weather Data, Wellsville), Dan Jordan, Clarence Klingensmith, Margaret Klingensmith, Erma Larson, Katherine Palmer, Raymond Pitzrick, Vivian Pitzrick, Frances Rew, Ernest Rositzke, Lynn Rositzke, Ann Scott (AnS), Lillian Simons, James Stimson, Robert Sundell and Audrey Westley; and Observers: Harold Axtell, Wavel Barber, Allen Benton, Dorothy Danner, Frances DeGroff, Flora Elderkin, Marcya Foster (MF), David Gagne, Mary Jordan, Harland Hale, Harriette Klabunde, Walter Klabunde, Alice McKale, Willard McKale, Fred Meyer ("Bird Notes," OTH), John Morse, Terry Mosher, Odmund Olsen, David Powers, Arthur Rosche, Olga Rosche, Arthur Schaffner (AS), Pauline Schwartz, Robert Schwartz, Bruce Smalley, Joseph Thill and Larry Wilson.

Corrigendum: In *The Kingbird* Vol. XXXI, No. 4 Fall 1981, page 235 line 28 should read, "... E. Bluebird ... production was good; near Amity L. 11 pairs produced 54 fledglings (VP) ..." (instead of 45 fledglings).

LOONS—DUCKS: Following the usual winter pattern, only three Com. Loons were reported, all from the Lake Erie and Niagara Falls areas, where, except for the Horned Grebes mentioned above and a Pied-billed on the StBonCC, all grebes occurred: Red-necked Grebe, one at Dunkirk Harbor 6-20 Feb (FR, RS+); up to eight more Horned Grebes; an EARED GREBE, at Dunkirk Harbor 29 Jan (AS, TM), and five more Pied-billed. A GANNET caused

great excitement at Dunkirk Harbor 5 Dec (WB, mob), and again 6 and 13 Dec (FR); it apparently stayed in the area until Christmas Day, was much photographed and is only the second record for Chautauqua Co. (RS). Single Double-crested Cormorants appeared at Dunkirk Harbor, an imm. 1-30 Dec (mob), at Buffalo 8 Feb (Klips) and on Grand Island 28 Feb (WB, Rosche). Unusual for winter were the two Black-crowned Night Herons spotted at Niagara Falls 3 Jan (HA+). The only Whistling Swans reported were 42 on the JmstCC and six at Dunkirk Harbor 6-21 Jan (Bowser, AB). Wintering were about 100 Canada Geese in Allegany Co. and nearly two dozen in Chautauqua Co.; the two at Farmersville Sta. have been there now for six years; high count for the season was 1000± n. of Barker in Dec. Two WHITE-FRONTED GEESE were found at Williamsville 15 Jan (Wendling). Noteworthy among duck reports were: Black Duck, 14 on the StBonCC, two on the ScioCC, 25 on the JmstCC and max 12 in Amity Twp., Allegany Co., 28 Jan; Am. Wigeon, two at Dunkirk Harbor 30 Jan (RS); Gadwall, max 12 at Dunkirk Harbor 29 Jan to 13 Feb; No. Shoveler, a female at Dunkirk Harbor 16 Jan (Carlson, AB, TM+), only second winter record for Chautauqua Co. (RS), and two, early, at the same place 13 Feb (FR, RS) and an ad. male, also early, at the outlet of Chautauqua L., Jamestown, 21 and 26 Feb (RS); Wood Duck, one on the JmstCC; Redhead, 12 on the JmstCC and max 117 at Dunkirk Harbor 15 Jan (TM+); Greater Scaup, 17 at Celoron 21 Feb (RS); Lesser Scaup, three on JmstCC; Com. Goldeneye, max 160 at Celoron 21 Feb; BARROW'S GOLDENEYE, one at Niagara Falls 12 Feb (RA+), a visitor to our region for the third successive winter; King Eider, one at Niagara Falls 13 Dec (WB+); White-winged Scoter, max eight at Dunkirk Harbor 27 Jan; Black Scoter, one at Derby 12 Dec; Ruddy Duck, two on the JmstCC; Hooded Merganser, one at Dunkirk Harbor 10 Jan; and Com. Merganser, max 1500 at Dunkirk Harbor 31 Jan and about 20 wintering from mid-Jan on the Genesee River.

HAWKS—ALCIDS: Single GOSHAWKS were reported on the StBonCC, feeder watching at Farmersville Sta. irregularly 14-24 Jan (DC, JC), and near Wellsville 16 Feb (Babcock *vide* EL). Both Sharp-shinned and Cooper's Hawks appeared in fair numbers, with the sharpies numbering two on the ACC and two on the JmstCC with singles in 11 areas, and the Cooper's, two on the StBonCC, one on the ScioCC, one on the ACC and six on the JmstCC plus a total of 18 from 17 other reports. On the ScioCC, 13 Red-tailed Hawks was highest count ever. Other interesting raptor reports include: Rough-legged Hawk, seven on the ScioCC, five on the ACC, three on the JmstCC and 23 others counted from 18 sites, including the one, "completely melanistic," at Fredonia airport 16 Jan (AB); BALD EAGLE, single ads. (same bird?) in Amity Twp., Allegany Co., 29 Jan (DB, MJ) and at Scio 2 Feb (D. Jordan) and another (age?) in Angelica Twp., Allegany Co., 12 Feb (Stevens *vide* DB); Marsh Hawk, one on the Scio CC, one on the JmstCC and one at Iroquois NWR 7 and 12 Jan (JM, OO). High count of the Am. Coot was 10 at Dunkirk Harbor 2 and 29 Jan. Unusual for the Dec. counts were two Killdeer on the ACC and one on the JmstCC, a late Am. Woodcock on the St.BonCC, and two Com. Snipe on the ACC as well as eight on the JmstCC. A Com. Snipe was also seen at Towerville (wintering?) 6 and 13 Feb (RS+). The poor larid season may be a reflection of the wretched birding weather, particularly for Jan and Feb, with best reports: Glaucous Gull, at least eight on Lake Erie and along the Niagara River; Iceland Gull, all along the Niagara River: *Larus glaucooides kumlieni*, one on 6 and 13 Dec (RA+), and undesignated subspecies, one to two on 9 and 29 Jan (Barbers, FR+), and three on 13 Feb (HA); Bonaparte's Gull, at Dunkirk Harbor, a decrease from 1200± at the beginning of the season to one 30 Jan; Little Gull, one at Fort Niagara SP 23 Dec (Thills), up to five at Dunkirk Harbor 6-25 Dec (RA+) and one at the latter location 15 Jan (TM+); and BLACK-LEGGED KITTIWAKE, one at Dunkirk Harbor 13 Feb (FR) and again 14 Feb (FR, RA).

PIGEONS—WOODPECKERS: The two Screech Owls on the ScioCC were noted again in Amity Twp. 5 Jan (SH), one appeared for the JmstCC as well as at Farmersville Sta. 20, 21 Feb (DC), and one was banded at Alfred 14 Jan (EB), but perhaps the most unusual was the one that spent hours at a Wellsville feeder regularly 20 to 26 Jan (MB). A total of only eight Snowy Owls was reported this season, all at areas near Jamestown, Fredonia and Buffalo

from 14 Dec to 28 Feb. In Allegany Co. up to six Short-eared Owls were seen in Hume Twp. irregularly 21 Dec thru 31 Jan (M+E Smith *vide* KP, KP, VC); up to five were found in the Fredonia-Dunkirk area 5-27 Jan (Carlson+), and at least four more appeared in the Town of Porter 13 and 14 Feb (HK, WK, Cooper). A Yellow-bellied Sapsucker was found near Alfred 24 Jan (Jevromovic *vide* EB).

FLYCATCHERS-STARLINGS: Horned Larks were scarce, with max: of *Eromophila alpestris alpestris*, 17 in Amity Twp. 16 Jan; of *E. a. praticola*, 29 near Arcade 12 Feb; and of undesignated subspecies, one on the JmstCC and 75 at Elma 5 Feb. Single COMMON RAVENS, both in previously documented Allegany Co. areas, were found in Ward Twp. 12 Dec (EB) and in Genesee Twp. 24 Feb (Dunning *vide* DB). Making a first winter appearance since 1976 were two BOREAL CHICKADEES at Cheektowaga 1 Jan (Rennings). Wrens were few, with but single Winter Wrens on the JmstCC and at Spring Brook 1 Dec (DD); two Carolina Wrens showed up at Spring Brook all season thru 22 Jan (DD) while singles appeared on the ScioCC and in Hume Twp. 21 Dec thru 13 Feb (Gilman *vide* KP). Single Mockingbirds were seen in six scattered locations in addition to one on the ScioCC, two on the ACC and one on the JmstCC. A rare VARIED THRUSH came to a Williamsville feeder 27 Feb (Klepfer, Busch). The only reports of Golden-crowned Kinglets were from the Alfred area with max 10 during Dec (EB), while the No. Shrike, although showing up in six scattered locations, numbered but eight plus one on the JmstCC. 87,000 Starlings wintered at the Peace Bridge, Buffalo (FM).

VIREOS-WARBLEDERS: One to two wintering Yellow-rumped Warblers were noted at Spring Brook, in Hume Twp., at Houghton, at Orchard Park and at Lake Erie SP.

WEAVERS-SPARROWS: Can it be that the E. Meadowlark is this scarce in winter, with the only report three birds at Wales 29 Dec (Rosches)? Individual Rusty Blackbirds appeared in Belmont 6 Dec (DB, LB), at Darien Center 3-17 Jan (Harper) and at Iroquois NWR 30 Jan (OO). Although there were good numbers of Cardinals, with 139 on ACC, 30 on StBonCC, and 426 on JmstCC, 32 on ScioCC was lowest ever; max of other reports was 16 in Willing Twp., Allegany Co., 30 Jan (Babcocks *vide* EL). An imm. male ROSE-BREASTED GROSBREAK frequented the feeder on Peck Settlement Rd., s. of Jamestown, 16 Dec to 16 Jan (R. M. Wilcox, M. Scott), including the JmstCC, and was critically studied 35 min. on 27 Dec to eliminate the possibility of Black-headed Grosbeak (RS). Influx of the Evening Grosbeak was slightly greater this season with 452 on ScioCC, 1232 on ACC, 61 on StBonCC and 324 on JmstCC with max feeder count 125 at both Jamestown and Wales; bandings for the winter were 504 at Alfred Sta. (EB) and 103 at Farmersville Sta. (DC). The House Finch continues to prosper: 86 on the ScioCC, 107 on the ACC, 19 on the StBonCC and 275 on the JmstCC with max for the season 95 at Jamestown 10 Dec (DG). Other notable finch reports include: Pine Grosbeak, one near Alfred, singing, 31 Dec (EB), three s. of Franklinville 9 Jan (EsB) and five at a Scio feeder 11 Jan (CJ); HOARY RED-POLL, one at a Depew feeder 5 and 6 Feb (Barbers); Com. Redpoll, a real incursion, with reports frequent in Jan but abundant in Feb, with max 180 at Orchard Park 6 Feb (RA, MF) and max of bandings, 136 at Alfred Sta. during Feb (EB); Red Crossbill, three on the ACC, with max, from five areas, 50 on Potter Rd. near Chautauqua Institution 25 Dec (Price); and White-winged Crossbill, 14 on the ScioCC, 10 on the ACC and 16 on the St BonCC, with max, from nine locations, 40 in the Alfred area 8 Dec (CK). A Rufous-sided Towhee appeared on the ACC and singles were also in Friendship Twp. 1-15 Dec (Hatrick *vide* Compton) and near Caneadea all Feb (HH). An ad. male "OREGON" JUNCO was watched at Jamestown 19 Dec (DG). Other noteworthy sparrows include: Tree Sparrow, regional max 50 at Farmersville Sta. during Jan (DC) and bandings, total for the season, 64 at Alfred Sta (EB) and 193 at Farmersville Sta (DC); Field Sparrow, five on the ScioCC and one on the ACC; White-throated Sparrow, max 28 at Derby 1-31 Dec (DP), and wintering, two at Belmont (DB, LB) and one at Farmersville Sta. (DC); and Swamp Sparrow, one on the JmstCC and one at Iroquois NWR 13 Jan (OO). The only reports of Lapland Longspurs were one on the JmstCC, one in the Town of Pomfret 30 Jan (RS, DG), three at Elma 5

Feb (EsB) and 20 in the Town of Porter 13 Feb (HK, WK). Snow Buntings numbered 205 on the ScioCC, 190 on the ACC and 75 on the JmstCC with max of other reports 800± in the Town of Porter 13 Feb (HK, WK).

Amity Lake, Belmont, New York 14813

REGION 2 – GENESEE

ROBERT SPAHN

This season was the most dismal birding season in the region in at least the past ten years. The weather was cold, windy, and snowy and the birds generally scarce or hard to find when birders could reasonably venture forth. December was cold and snowy with most water, except for the larger lakes, frozen before Christmas Bird Count (CBC) time. By month's end, 49.0" of snow had fallen for the season. Fortunately, a thaw during the last week of the month melted virtually all of this snow before the onslaught of January. January was one of the harshest months in history. Temperatures averaged 7.9° F (4.3° C) below normal. Winds averaged 15 mph above normal, with 50 mph or above occurring on five days. Snowfall was 43.6", 22.3" above normal, falling on 28 of the month's 31 days. Record lows were tied or set on four days. In February, the cold continued except for a brief break near the middle of the month. Snowfall of 14.9", while below normal, brought the season's total to 107.5". By season's end there was still no sign of Spring.

Birding declined dramatically after the first of the new year. In early December, half-hardies not noted since October popped up across the region. The three local CBC's, Letchworth-Silver Lake (LS), Rochester (R), and Conesus-Hemlock or Little Lakes (LL), recorded relatively low species totals at 56, 72, and 75 respectively, but each was run in snow and wind for some or even all of the count day. The late December thaw improved spirits and after observations during the first weekend in January, some people were talking of aiming at record species counts for the month. Then, the next *five* weekends were fit for neither man nor beast to venture out-of-doors. Reports plummeted and interest waned. From that point on, there were not even any feeder rarities to rekindle interest. The only glimmers of hope were reports of possible Bewick's Wren and Hawk Owl, neither verified. From late January into February, the active birders chased off into Region 3 in search of reported rarities. The local field trips which were not cancelled found birds scarce with but few exceptions.

Given the above account, amazingly, there were positive notes for the season. Turkeys were reported in good numbers in all three months, exceeding both Ring-necked Pheasant and Ruffed Grouse on the LSCBC. Short-eared Owls were found in several locations, with good numbers present all season near Avon and Retsof. Carolina Wren and Mockingbird reports continued in good numbers in spite of the severe winter weather. Northern Shrike numbers were at their best in several years. House Finches reached record highs on all CBC's and were found to be much more numerous than expected in a banding study in Greece. Winter

finches were present early, declined, then reappeared in numbers in February, with all species accounted for, including several Hoary Redpolls. Tree Sparrows were more numerous than has been the case for several winters. Snow Buntings remained through the season in very large flocks. Negatives include the general impression of scarcity, and particularly low numbers of most waterfowl, Ring-necked Pheasant, white-winged gulls, Cedar Waxwing, and Dark-eyed Junco. Am. Robin and White-throated Sparrow were down substantially from last year, though present in fair numbers locally. Lapland Longspur numbers did not seem consistent with the huge flocks of their bunting cousins.

In last year's winter report I noted the 1980 species count of 296 as the highest ever for the region. 1981 almost equalled this at 293, but with a very different set of rarities. These years provide two data points supporting an hypothesis that strays are always passing at about the same density, only requiring digging and a bit of luck to turn them up. This year may challenge that hypothesis if its very slow start continues.

Rarities: King Eider, Turkey Vulture, Red Phalarope, Black-legged Kittiwake, Bohemian Waxwing, Yellow-breasted Chat, Scarlet Tanager, Hoary Redpoll, and Dark-eyed "Oregon" Junco.

Abbreviations: CL—Conesus Lake; D—Durand-Eastman Park, Rochester; H—Hamlin Beach State Park and the adjacent town of Hamlin; IBO—Irondequoit Bay Outlet; OB—Oklahoma Beach on Lake Ontario in the NW corner of Webster; and WL—West Lakeshore.

Observers: Ron & Kay Ballard, John Barna, Doug Bassett, Walter Benning, Roger & Carolyn Cass, Julie Claffey, Anne Clarridge, William & Rhea Colzman, Paul Conklin, Mike Davids, Gertrude Davis, Bill Dingerson, Kathy Disney, Frank & Bob Dobson, Kay Doris, John & Arlieen Foster, Genesee Ornithological Society, Kevin Griffith, R. & G. Guenther, Robert & Sandra Hazen, Norm Henderson, Oivind Jensen, Allen & Bea Kemnitzer, John Koopmans, David Levy, Warren Lloyd, Walter Listman, Hayward Madden, Bob & Margaret McKinney, Ann Miranian, Laura & Neil Moon, Fran Munson, Richard O'Hara, Bernie Olin, Mike & Tom Peter, P.O.S. (Allan, Brian, Dan, David, & Grace Strong, James Lenhard, & Kinsley Whittum), Rochester Birding Association, Pat Reister, Jeanne & Sharon Skelly, Robert & Susan Spahn, Ann Stear, Alison Stewart, Harriet Stride, Mary Ann Sunderlin, William Symonds, Steve Taylor, Tom, Mike, & David Tetlow, Eleanor Weld, Paul Weld, and Peter Zachmann.

LOONS—DUCKS: Both Com. and Red-throated Loons and Horned Grebes lingered into early Jan with one to two of each present in the vicinity of OB to 1-6 Jan, typical late dates. A late Pied-billed Grebe was found on the RCBC: IBO 20 Dec. The only Double-crested Cormorant of the season was at Charlotte 24 Dec. Great Blue Herons were scarce after the CBC's, with the only wintering reports: three-five Caledonia Fish Hatchery thru; and one Turning Point Park 18 Feb. The only waterfowl reports of interest were a large concentration of many species on Conesus Lake before the Jan freezeup and the typical rafts of divers on Lake Ontario off Rochester. The most notable records were: Whistling Swan: 9-15 CL thru 6 Jan; Mallard: max 4000 CL 6 Jan; and 1200 Caledonia 27 Jan; Black Duck: max 1000 CL 6 Jan; Pintail: one CL 2 Jan; Redhead: max 4000 S end Canandaigua Lake 15 Jan; Greater Scaup: 1000-5000 Charlotte to Russell Station thru; Lesser Scaup: max 1700 Sea Breeze near IBO 5 Dec; Oldsquaw: max 2000 off OB 16 Jan; KING EIDER: one female OB 15-30 Dec (KD, AM, PR, AS, EW, mob); and one imm male OB 25 Dec-17 Jan (mob); and White-winged Scoter: max 4000 OB 26 Dec.

HAWKS—ALCIDS: The second regional winter **TURKEY VULTURE** was observed in Greece 12 Jan (NH). Wintering accipiter records were normal, with eight Goshawks, 37

Sharp-shinned Hawks, and 27 Cooper's Hawks reports received. Rough-legged Hawks were present, but not numerous: max seven Avon to Caledonia Dec. The only Bald Eagle report was of a lone adult: CL 27 Dec, probably one of the Hemlock Lake nesting pair. Two rare winter records of Merlin were: Lima 19 Dec (JF); and Lima 25 Jan (*fide* FD). While Ring-necked Pheasant remains low and Ruffed Grouse seesaws through its cycles, Turkey is booming. Good Turkey counts were: 51 LSCBC 19 Dec; 20 Letchworth State Park 9 Jan; 30 Letchworth 16 Feb. The lone Virginia Rail sighting was at Mendon Ponds Park 30 Jan (MD, KG), a regular wintering location. As expected, shorebird reports were very few: Killdeer: one Murray 1 Jan; Com. Snipe: one-three Penfield thru 10 Jan; and one Spencerport 13 Jan; Dunlin: one Braddock Bay 2 Dec; and one IBO 20 Dec (WLI, MAS), very late; and **RED PHALAROPE**: one Charlotte to Russell Station thru 3 Dec (mob). Gull numbers and records were unusually low this season. White-winged gulls were particularly scarce with only about six reports of Glaucous Gulls and none of Iceland Gull, following no Iceland reports for the Fall either. Bonaparte's and Little Gulls lingered off D thru 6 Jan. The Little Gull max in this period was 23. Also of interest was **BLACK-LEGGED KITTIWAKE**: three imm. D 6 Dec (MD).

PIGEONS-WOODPECKERS: The boom in wintering Mourning Doves is illustrated by: max 600 Hilton 30 Dec; and a new high of 472 on LSCBC 19 Dec. The only Snowy Owl reports were: two WL 5 Dec; one Rochester 20 Dec; and one H 24 Dec. Two Barred Owls LLCBC 27 Dec, were a new high count. Short-eared Owls provided a focal point for many field trips with concentrations of: to 20 Avon area; to 22 Retsof area; and one-five Parma, all season. The two Saw-whet Owls of the season were both picked up dead: Genesee Valley Park 28 Jan; and Irondequoit 13 Feb. Pileated Woodpeckers were noted in several locations, one of the more interesting at a large shopping plaza, Pittsford Plaza, thru Dec. The Red-headed Woodpecker colony near Avon thrives, max 12+ on 26 Dec.

FLYCATCHERS-STARLINGS: No flycatchers; typical. Large flocks of Horned Larks were noted along the west lakeshore area and in a new high count of 836 for the LSCBC 19 Dec. Carolina Wren and Mockingbird maintained their numbers at regular locations thru the season. The atypically-plumaged Carolina Wren visiting a Penfield feeder thru Jan and Feb gave many a chance to observe closely and to speculate on the possibility of Bewick's Wren, which it was not. Am. Robin numbers were well down from the past two winters, but 438 on the RCBC 20 Dec was still a respectable winter count. Hermit Thrush was scarce: only one-two D thru 3 Jan. E. Bluebird reports were also low, with good counts: four CL 27 Dec; seven CL 29 Jan; and nine Avon 28 Feb. The flocks of kinglets dwindled, with only a few Golden-crowned reported and the only Ruby-crowned at Honeoye Lake 27 Dec (KD, RS). There were just a few reports of **BOHEMIAN WAXWING**: five H 26 Dec (R & SH); two Letchworth State Park 15-22 Dec (DB); and one Clarkson 4, 8 Feb (WS). No. Shrike numbers were much better this winter than the past two, with one-six reported in many areas thru. The Starling roost at Hinchy Road was again low with only 50,000 reported for the RCBC 20 Dec. It has never been the same since a grid of open lanes was cut through the pines several years ago.

VIREOS-WARBLERS: Surprisingly, a few reports for this harsh winter: Yellow-rumped Warbler: one-ten Mendon Ponds Park thru Jan, a typical wintering area; and 30 Hilton 3 Jan, a surprise; Com. Yellowthroat: one Honeoye Lake outlet 27 Dec (RS); and **YELLOW-BREASTED CHAT**: one CL 13 Dec-3 Jan (RBA, mob), a first winter record for the region.

WEAVERS-SPARROWS: There were the usual isolated reports of icterids wintering, no surprising species or spectacular numbers. A regional winter first was a **SCARLET TANAGER**: female Mendon Ponds Park Nature Center feeder 10-13 Dec (park staff, AC, RS), probably expired. Purple Finches were very scarce. House Finch set new highs on all of the CBC's at LSCBC-235; RCBC-411; and LLCBC-eight, a new species to this count. All of the winter finches were reported, with the most interesting records: Pine Grosbeak: max 29 D 26 Dec; **HOARY REDPOLL**: one Greece 17 Jan (FD); one Webster Park 24 Jan (MD),

WLi, WS); one H 2-4 Feb (KB, PR); two Irondequoit 4 Feb (L & NM); one Penfield 17 Feb (R & MM); and one H 20 Feb (MD, KG); Com. Redpoll: max 600 Canadice Lake 27 Dec; Pine Siskin: fairly scarce until late Feb; Red Crossbill: max 13 Greece 20 Dec; and White-winged Crossbill: max 12 Sodus 24 Dec. Few half-hardy sparrows lingered. Among the reports were: Savannah Sparrow: one Avon 13 Dec (J & AF); Field Sparrow: seven reports; and White-crowned Sparrow: four Kendall 31 Jan. Typical low numbers of White-throated, Swamp, and Song Sparrows wintered. Tree Sparrow numbers were high, particularly early when a new high count of 806 was recorded for the LSCBC 19 Dec. Among the scarce Dark-eyed Juncos was one "OREGON" JUNCO: Webster thru Jan (MAS, mob, photos). The peak Lapland Longspur count was: 30 WL 16 Jan. Snow Buntings wintered in large flocks: 600 WL 31 Dec; 5000 WL 15 Jan; 9000 WL 24 Jan (KG); 2000 H 14 Feb; and 1000 K 20 Feb.

As a final note, in spite of some of the gloom above, there was really nothing shockingly missing this winter; it was more a case of having to work hard to find the birds under often miserable weather conditions and the lack of anything really special to pique interest. The regional species total of 120 was not really terribly low for Winter.

716 High Tower Way, Webster, New York 14580

REGION 3 – FINGER LAKES

W. E. BENNING

Looking back one remembers this as a rather rugged winter. December was about normal in both temperature and precipitation with the coldest days and the most snow about mid-month. January started mild but soon changed to severe cold with sub-zero days made more unbearable by high winds. Precipitation was below normal but, with no thawing days for three weeks, the snow accumulated. A brief thaw at the end of the month was followed by more extreme cold and ice storms that benefited neither man nor birds. Mid-February brought a welcome warm spell. The month closed with more cold. Precipitation was below normal.

There were six Christmas Bird Counts conducted in Region 3, as follows:

Name	Date	Numbers		
		Participants	Species	Birds
Central Cayuga	1 Jan	7	51	27,193
Elmira	1 Jan	26	48	9,565
Geneva	26 Dec	15	76	24,679
Ithaca	1 Jan	120	69	13,200
Montezuma*	1 Jan	7	44	22,754
Watkins Glen	27 Dec	5	50	2,327

*Only that portion of the count area lying in Region 3.

Seasonal positives: 1) encouraging reports of accipiters and Marsh Hawks though they are still far from their former abundance; 2) good numbers of Rough-legged Hawks from the southern Finger Lakes to the Pennsylvania line; 3) continued increase in Turkey numbers and territory; 4) a tremendous move-

ment of several thousand gulls heading south over Watkins Glen on 11 Jan. Were they leaving in advance of the sub-zero cold, high winds and ice storms?, 5) the best "winter finch" season in several years with fair to good numbers of all species including three reports of Hoary Redpolls; 6) more than the usual number of Lapland Longspur sightings; 7) good numbers of Snow Buntings.

Seasonal negatives: 1) very few diving ducks or wintering gulls at the south end of Seneca Lake. No rafts of ducks; 2) continued low numbers of Ring-necked Pheasants and Carolina Wrens; 3) few overwintering American Robins, Golden-crowned Kinglets, icterids, White-throated or Song Sparrows; 4) weather which encouraged birders to be feeder watchers rather than field observers.

Rarities: Red-throated Loon, Black-backed Three-toed Woodpecker, Common Raven, Fish Crow, Boreal Chickadee, Hoary Redpoll.

Abbreviations: Cay—Cayuga; CC—Christmas Count; Co—County; L—lake; max—maximum; MNWR—Montezuma National Wildlife Refuge; Sen—Seneca; Tomp—Tompkins; WC—January Waterfowl Count; * (starred)—Details on file.

Contributors and compilers: W. E. Benning, Jack Brubaker (Watkins Glen), John Confer, Vernon Dewey (MNWR), Bernice Hilfiker, Wilfred Howard, Herbert & Polly Keating, Helen Lapham, Malcolm Lerch (Penn Yan), Dorothy McIlroy (Ithaca), Paris Trail, Jeffery Walters, and Mary Welles (Elmira).

LOONS—DUCKS: Com. Loon: ten north of Hammondsport on Keuka L in early Feb. RED-THROATED LOON: one at Myers Point, Cayuga L, 13 Feb (E. Gates)*. Horned Grebe: continues to be scarce with maximums of six on the Geneva CC and eight at Union Springs 7 Feb. Pied-billed Grebe: six on three CCs; four on the WC; up to four overwintered on Sen L at Watkins Glen. Great Blue Heron: reports of eight birds attempting to overwinter. At least four made it into Feb. Whistling Swan: two at Geneva 25 Dec and two at Union Springs 22 Feb. Canada Goose: 30,000 MNWR 10 Dec; 46,702 on five of the CCs with 15,000 plus on each of the Central Cay, Geneva and Montezuma counts; 19,108 on Cay L for the WC; 7,000 on the west shore on Cay L 29 Jan and 8,000 on the east shore 7 Feb. Snow Goose: one on Central Cay and two on Geneva CCs; four Sheldrake 14 Feb. More than the usual number of winter reports.

Maximum waterfowl numbers as reported by the Montezuma Refuge personnel:

Mallard	50,000	10 Dec	Canvasback	50	7 Dec
Black Duck	9,000	10 Dec	Greater Scaup	150	6 Dec
Gadwall	250	10 Dec	Com. Goldeneye	30	16 Feb
Pintail	300	7 Dec	Bufflehead	75	7 Dec
Am. Wigeon	200	7 Dec	Ruddy Duck	10	7 Dec
N. Shoveler	150	7 Dec	Hooded Merganser	40	7 Dec
Redhead	20	7 Dec	Com. Merganser	100	7 Dec
Ring-necked Duck	30	7 Dec			

Mallard: 1,280 CCs; 3,301 WC. Black Duck: 886 five CCs; 986 WC. Gadwall: 18 Geneva CC and reported thru the period from Sen L; five WC on Cay L. Green-winged Teal: one on Central Cay CC was the only report. Am. Wigeon: one Caton 4 Dec; all other reports were from Cay L with max 15 on Central Cay CC. Wood Duck: WC found six Cay L and one Keuka L. Redhead: 4,000 Central Cay CC; 2,000 Keuka L; 5,808 WC. Ring-necked Duck: one Keuka L only report. Canvasback: 755 on three CCs; 2,468 WC. Greater Scaup: 491 on three CCs; 308 WC. Lesser Scaup: 15 Geneva CC; 48 WC. Com. Goldeneye: 189 on three CCs; 637 WC. Bufflehead: 69 on two CCs; 169 WC. Oldsquaw: 37 Geneva CC; two Sheldrake 24 Jan. White-winged Scoter: one south end Sen L 27 Dec; one Ithaca 23 Jan and 7 Feb. Ruddy Duck: two on Geneva CC was the only report. Hooded Merganser: four WC.

Com. Merganser: 144 on five CCs; 108 WC. Red-breasted Merganser: 120 Ithaca CC and one Elmira CC.

HAWKS—ALCIDS: Turkey Vulture: a very unusual winter record of six or seven soaring west of Sapsucker Woods, Ithaca 4 Feb (M. Barclay). Goshawk: reported from Geneva, Ithaca and Odessa. Sharp-shinned and Cooper's Hawks: 11 of each on the CCs. Widespread reports of increasing activities of these birds around feeders. Red-tailed Hawk: 138 on CCs, Red-shouldered Hawk: one south of Geneva 30 Jan (JW)*. Rough-legged Hawk: eight at MNWR 14 Dec but most observations were from the southern part of the region with 26 of the 37 CC sighting from Elmira. Marsh Hawk: nine on five CCs. Am. Kestrel: 130 on the CCs with 62 of them on the Geneva Count. Ruffed Grouse: the Ithaca CC had 27 of the 55 recorded on five CCs. Ring-necked Pheasant: still very scarce but all CCs recorded the species for a total of 36 with 24 on the Ithaca count. Turkey: ten each Ithaca 30 Jan and Bluff Point in Feb; many sightings in Chemung Co. Am. Coot: 165 on three CCs with Ithaca having 109; 509 WC. Killdeer: a remarkable 40 at MNWR 4 Dec; an overwintering bird at Phelps 8 Feb. Am. Woodcock: one Ithaca at the unusual date of 5 Jan (S. Weeks). Com. Snipe: an overwintering bird at Phelps in the same spot where the species plus Killdeer and Great Blue Herons often overwinter.

PIGEONS—WOODPECKERS: Rock Dove: CCs total 4,492 with 1,312 at Elmira, Mourning Dove: 803 of the 1,344 found on the CCs were at Geneva; at Elmira MW had up to 200 regularly at her feeding station. Monk Parakeet: the Elmira bird is still present. Screech Owl: 12 MNWR 3 Dec, and seven on three CCs. Great Horned Owl: ten MNWR 31 Dec and 24 on five CCs; nest at Montour Falls late Feb. Snowy Owl: one MNWR 2 Dec; one Lansing early Jan; one Ithaca 3 Feb. Barred Owl: two MNWR 15 Dec; singles on Geneva and Ithaca CCs; in Feb one at Camp Dittmer, Phelps, responded to the noon whistle at Clifton Springs by calling three times. Short-eared Owl: up to five at Milo Center, ten at Hall and 12 at Elmira; singles south of Ovid 29 Jan, Ithaca 5 Feb and two at Sheldrake 14 Feb. Saw-whet Owl: one Camp Dittmer, Phelps, late Feb. Com. Flicker: 60 on the CCs with 28 at Geneva. Pileated Woodpecker: Ithaca had 17 of the 23 found on the CCs. Red-bellied Woodpecker: 95 on the CCs mostly at Geneva and Ithaca. Red-headed Woodpecker: singles at Geneva 26 Dec and Waterbury southwest of Trumansburg 25 Jan. Yellow-bellied Sapsucker: singles on the Geneva and Ithaca CCs, Myers Point 15 Jan, Ithaca 6 Feb and at Phelps. Hairy Woodpecker: 133 on all CCs. Downy Woodpecker: 460 on CCs. **BLACK-BACKED THREE-TOED WOODPECKER:** one male Camp Dittmer, Phelps. 12 Dec. thru, photographed (P. Trail *et al.*)

FLYCATCHERS—STARLINGS: E. Phoebe: a very early migrant Ithaca 28 Feb. Horned Lark: three CCs found 107. Blue Jay: 7,936 CCs with some reports of fewer than usual. **COMMON RAVEN:** two or three Arnot Forest early Dec; one east of Conn Hill, Tomp Co 4 Jan. **FISH CROW:** three Ithaca CC. Black-capped Chickadee: 2,586 on the CCs with 1,658 at Ithaca. **BOREAL CHICKADEE:** one at Camp Dittmer was known to have stayed for about one week (P. Trail *et al.*). Tufted Titmouse: 181 on CCs with 96 at Ithaca; reports indicate it is increasing. White-breasted Nuthatch: CCs 367. Red-breasted Nuthatch: five CCs 40. Brown Creeper: 25 on four CCs. Winter Wren: one Penn Yan Jan-Feb. Carolina Wren: Geneva, Elmira and Ithaca CCs totaled four birds. Also noted at Penn Yan, Odessa, Milliken Station and Phelps. Mockingbird: 24 of the 42 found on five CCs were at Ithaca. Gray Catbird: one Geneva 26 Dec. Brown Thrasher: one at Elmira at a feeder 14 Jan thru the period. Am. Robin: compared to last year's abundance everywhere, they were scarce with only three CCs reporting them for a total of 51. The only sizeable flock was 25 at Camp Dittmer in early Feb. Hermit Thrush: one Elmira 6 Feb. E. Bluebird: small numbers, up to eight, reported from Ithaca, Penn Yan, Lansing, Elmira and several Schuyler Co. locations. Golden-crowned Kinglet: generally scarce; 13 on 3 CCs. No. Shrike: three on two CCs; one south of Newark 21 Jan and one Ithaca 25 Jan. Starling: 12,558 on the CCs with 4,888 at Elmira.

VIREOS—WARBLERS: Yellow-rumped Warbler: seven Camp Dittmer, Phelps thru late Dec.

WEAVERS—SPARROWS: Red-winged Blackbird: 64 on five CCs, low. Rusty Blackbird: three Phelps during Feb. Com. Grackle: only 15 on four CCs. Brown-headed Cowbird: 97 on CCs. Cardinal: 718 on CCs with 314 at Ithaca. Evening Grosbeak: 1,111 on four CCs—nearly all in the southern portion of the region. Scattered reports of small numbers elsewhere. Purple Finch: 175 on Ithaca CC; also a few at Penn Yan, Watkins Glen, Odessa. House Finch: the upward spiral continues. The CCs totaled 1,523; up to 80 at Keating's feeder in Sen Falls. Pine Grosbeak: found at several locations in Tomp Co with 60 on the Ithaca CC; 12 Pine City 24 Jan and a small flock at Burdette in Feb. **HOARY REDPOLL**: one Clifton Springs 31 Jan (E. Donohue)*; at Dryden one 10 Feb, two 11 Feb, four 13 Feb (L. Stafford); one Mt. Zoar, Elmira 11 Feb thru (D. Clements). Com. Redpoll: biggest invasion year since 1977-78; 55 on three CCs with reports becoming more numerous and widespread thereafter, especially in Feb, with max of 350 at Tomp Co airport. Pine Siskin: 15 on the Ithaca CC; reported from Penn Yan, Elmira after 1 Jan, Watkins Glen feeders the last week of Feb. Am. Goldfinch: 1,044 on all CCs. Red Crossbill: Camp Dittmer, Phelps Jan (P. Trail); Danby 28 Jan (Dan Gray). White-winged Crossbill: 24 Brooktondale 5 Dec; up to 100 Ithaca Dec; 21 on the Elmira CC and several sightings later; Trumansburg and Camp Dittmer Jan; Ithaca, Arnot Forest and Penn Yan Feb. Rufous-sided Towhee: six on the Ithaca CC was an unusual find. Savannah Sparrow: one Central Cay CC. Dark-eyed Junco: 440 on the CCs mostly from the Elmira and Ithaca areas. Tree Sparrow: 440 on the CCs. After two years of low numbers in some areas they are coming back. At Penn Yan ML banded 75 against only two for each of the past two years. Field Sparrow: one at Ithaca and three at Elmira all on 1 Jan. White-crowned Sparrow: one Elmira 16 Jan the only report. White-throated Sparrow: 110 on the CCs. Generally considered to be down. Song Sparrow: scarce with only 48 on the CCs. Lapland Longspur: reported from Penn Yan; 9 Elmira 12 Feb; up to six in the Ithaca area 13-14 Feb. Snow Bunting: 3,267 on the CCs with 2,319 from the central Cay count; reports of flocks from all parts of the region.

R.D. 2, 793 Tyre Rd., Clyde, New York 14433

REGION 4 — SUSQUEHANNA

HARRIET T. MARSJ

December was mild, with never enough snow to cover the wild seed crop. Rivers and lakes were open. January continued mild until the sixth, when winter arrived with a vengeance. For the next three-and-one-half weeks, overnight thermometers consistently read below zero, and daytime temperatures never higher than the mid-twenties and more often were in the mid-teens. Little snow fell except for one storm January 23rd, accompanied by wild, driving winds. The eight inches registered accumulation drifted one to two feet deep, effectively covering many field plants. This condition remained until the night of January 31st when a warm, lashing rainstorm of over two inches hit the southern part of the region, washing away most of the snow, and ending one of the coldest Januaries on record. In contrast, February's temperatures were 1.6 degrees higher than normal. Snow was 6.9 inches below normal and spread out during the month. Thus two weather trends predominated for the season, namely, a long, sustained, bitter cold spell and little snow cover except for the last week of January. A third environmental factor should be mentioned, and that is a very poor wild berry crop.

The severe weather did not apparently negatively impact most of the normal winter species or those expanding their winter territories north. Although three of the four Red-bellied Woodpeckers reported were Christmas Census birds with no further details, the Newark Valley observer reported a bird "in residence, more or less, since last October or so . . . feeding regularly, every morning and often in the afternoon, eating mostly suet." (LD). Tufted Titmice, Cardinals, Mourning Doves, House Finches and White-throated Sparrows thrived on feeder fare. Mockingbirds seemed more abundant than ever. One observer noted three, and one day five, birds regularly in his yard, until the last week in January. They first stripped his Mountain Ash, then his *Pyrocantha* and finally his Barberry. When these foods were exhausted, the birds left (BB). Only the Carolina Wren showed noticeable attrition after mid-January. These birds depend on suet to survive. Suet, frozen solid, would be tough on a wren's bill. The deep freeze did not appreciably alter the pattern for ducks and geese either. Rivers and lakes freeze over every year. A thin layer of ice is just as formidable as a thick one. As might have been anticipated, the high December count of Great Blue Herons (9) dwindled to one for the rest of the period.

Some species may have been affected by the light snow cover. Turkey reports, for example, were very high. The snow, too light to cover their food, made their dark silhouettes easily visible. The "winter finches" also found adequate food in the wild, apparently coming to feeders only after the January storm when small bands of Pine Siskins and large congregations of Common Redpolls descended upon the dependable food supply. Accompanying this was the usual flurry of reports of predators at feeders. At one station a Sharp-shinned Hawk, diving after a bird, struck a window, leaving a clear imprint of its body and feathering on the pane (LB). Two Northern Shrikes were also reported during the same period at feeders. Evening Grosbeaks seemed to prefer wild food as their presence at feeders was sporadic, though they were reported often in the wild. Also in the field, many small flocks of Pine Grosbeaks were seen, observers often noting their trusting nature. One reporter commented, "Talking quietly and imitating the soft, whistling calls, we watched the flock . . . until our necks got stiff. The grosbeaks sat and chewed through sumac fuzz, watching us and whistling among themselves." (RM). White-winged Crossbills made several February appearances. Only one Red Crossbill report came in. Horned Lark and Snow Bunting reports were normal. The paucity of wild berries was reflected in the small numbers of "half-hardies" reported. Cedar Waxwings, American Robins, Common Grackles and Brown-headed Cowbirds were down after December. Only one Eastern Bluebird was seen. A few Common Flickers made it through the winter, one reported in January feeding on sumac (GK).

The only rarity for the period was the Hoary Redpoll. There were two well-documented reports, one in Newark Valley (JB) and one in Norwich (JL). A third was reported banded in Endicott, without details.

Abbreviations: BCC—Binghamton Christmas Count 27 Dec; CCC—Cortland Christmas Count 20 Dec; DOCC—Delaware-Otsego Christmas Count 19 Dec; TCC—Tioga Christmas Count 1 Jan; WFC—Federation Waterfowl Census.

Observers: Jean Barnes, Cutler & Jeannette Baldwin, Don Bell, Judy Bell (JB), Don Bemont, Les Bemont (LB), Herb Bennett, Lois & Steve Bingley, Bruce Bozdos (BB), Nancy Brundage, Ted Buckley, Alvin Carpenter, Jane Chittenden, Mildred & Peter Clark, Reeva

Clark, Doreen Curtin, Anna & Marilyn Davis (A & MD), Louise Dean (LD), John Dillon, Mrs. Dixon, Mary Dobinsky (MD), Sadie Dorber, Polly & Earl Getkin, Claire Gottschall, Pauline Gray, Gerald & Audrey Gregory, Cherylin Greiner, Miriam Hartman, Shirley Hartman, Elma Holway, Claude Howard, Pearl Johnson, Ruth Jones, Cay Jordan (CJ), Paul Kalka, Eugene Kirch, Gail Kirch (GK), John Knapik, Margaret Layton, Jay Lehman (JL), Florence Linaberry (FL), Anne & Harvey Loomis, Clarence Manning, Andrew Mason, Harriet Marsi (HM), Rick Marsi (RM), Leona McDowell, Bud & Evelyn Mead, David Messingo (DM), Louise Moore (LM), Robt. Miller, Edith & Leon Nettleton, S. Nively, Robt. Oggins, Robert & Steve Pantle (R & SP), Robt. Paratley, Kay Perkins (KP), Chuck Pettis (CP), M. Reynolds, Jean & Robt. Saunders (J & RS), Joe Sedlacek (JS), Mary Sheffield (MS), Robert Sheffield (RS), Sean Strohofer, Chris Theophanis, Loretta Thompson, Eliz. Washburn, Anne Whitaker, Connie Whitcomb (CW), Beryl & Tom Wilson, Kathryn Wilson (KW), Gerald & Irene Wright, Cliff Yates, Giovanna Zevan.

LOONS-DUCKS: Red-necked Grebe: one 27 Dec seen feeding along the south bank of the Susquehanna R below the confluence with the Chenango R (HM, BB, JS). Horned Grebe: One 16 Jan found floundering in a backyard in the snow in Cherry Valley, was transported to the Susquehanna R near Cooperstown (LM). Great Blue Heron: Two BCC, one DOCC, two TCC, four others, all Dec, all Broome Co., one Jan Delhi. Canada Goose: 140 CCC, 11 TCC; four other Dec reports, two flocks at Oxford, one of which was estimated to be 103+, (A & MD), one group at Whitney Point Reservoir and a flock of 75 on Otsego Lake (MD); 134 were reported on WFC, including a flock of 100 seen in Windsor flying south (CP); no reports from early Jan through Feb. Mallard: 175 BCC, 72 CCC, 334 WFC. Black Duck: 15 BCC, one TCC, 302 WFC; 37 23 Feb Pepacton Reservoir Outlet (JL). Canvasback: one 13 Jan Susquehanna R at Chenango Forks (GK, FL). Com. Goldeneye: one BCC, 30 TCC, 57 WFC. Hooded Merganser: one 16 Jan below Rockbottom Dam in Binghamton (J & RS). Com. Merganser: nine TCC, 58 WFC.

HAWKS-ALCIDS: Goshawk: one 21 Feb south of Gilford, "an obvious accipiter, larger than a crow, sitting in a tree so that its white underparts were clearly discernible. Pigeons around the farm were seen flying into the woods." (JL). Sharp-shinned Hawk: one BCC, one CCC, two DOCC, one TCC; 11 other reports were received. Of these five came from one feeding station, three from another and one from a third. Cooper's Hawk: one BCC, two TCC; one other reported 19 Dec Vestal; one in Jan in Tioga Co; two in Feb, one in Endwell, one in Vestal. Red-tailed Hawk: three BCC; one CCC, two DOCC, six TCC; many other single reports well-dispersed through the area and the period. Rough-legged Hawk: three CCC, four DOCC, one TCC; two other reports, one 19 Dec Owego, one Feb Otselic. Bald Eagle: four WFC at Cannonsville Reservoir; one 7 Jan at Pepacton Reservoir and one ad 11 Feb at Fish's Eddy. Am. Kestrel: five BCC, two DOCC, five TCC—as usual several others during period. Ruffed Grouse: five BCC, three CCC, seven TCC. There were several other reports from Owego, Vestal east, north central Vestal, Oneonta. However, hunters complained of a poor season. Ring-necked Pheasant: one BCC, three CCC. No other reports. Turkey: two CCC, two DOCC, one TCC; 11 other reports well-dispersed through the area and the period. Several were of flocks of 14 to 25 which were seen regularly in a particular vicinity. Herring Gull: 17 BCC, one DOCC, 15 TCC. There were the usual several reports of individual birds seen cruising the rivers but one report of 60 birds on Otsego Lake 29 Dec (MD) deserves separate mention. Ring-billed Gull: seven BCC, one TCC; one 3 Jan Newark Valley the only other report.

PIGEONS-WOODPECKERS: Rock Dove: 401 BCC, 218 CCC, 598 DOCC, 515 TCC. Mourning Dove: 60 BCC, 175 CCC, 183 DOCC, 116 TCC. Common throughout area throughout period. Screech Owl: one BCC, one CCC; one Jan Tioga Co; two Feb Otselic. Great Horned Owl: 12 BCC, one CCC, one DOCC, three TCC. Several other scattered reports during period. Barred Owl: one 22 Dec Oneonta (KW). Belted Kingfisher: six BCC, one CCC, one DOCC, one TCC. Also reported in Jan from Tioga and Broome Cos. and in Feb at Chenango Valley State Park. Com. Flicker: one BCC, one CCC, one TCC; two other

reports both from Vestal but so far apart that two different birds are probably involved. Pileated Woodpecker: one BCC, one TCC; nine other scattered reports in period. Red-bellied Woodpecker: four TCC (R & SP), one Newark Valley all period (LD). Yellow-bellied Sapsucker: one frequently seen at a suet feeder during Jan and Feb in Choconut Center (MS). Hairy Woodpecker: seven BCC, 33 CCC, 19 DOCC, eight TCC. Downy Woodpecker: 44 BCC, 71 CCC, 28 DOCC, 49 TCC.

FLYCATCHERS—STARLINGS—Horned Lark: none reported on Christmas Counts; large flock (estimated 75) Jan through Feb in outlying Union (CW). In Feb four reports: six birds near barnyard in Sanitaria Springs, 40 outside Norwich (JL), 20 Edson Corners (MD, KW), a "large flock" Whitney Point (A & MD). Blue Jay: 115 BCC, 206 CCC, 320 DOCC, 144 TCC. Com. Crow: 158 BCC, 442 CCC, 297 BOCC, 433 TCC. Black-capped Chickadee: 318 BCC, 279 CCC, 288 DOCC, 372 TCC. Tufted Titmouse: 17 BCC, ten CCC, none DOCC, seven TCC; several other reports in Broome Co during period, one from Tioga Co and four reports from one observer in Norwich. White-breasted Nuthatch: 41 BCC, 38 CCC, 34 DOCC, 50 TCC. Red-breasted Nuthatch: six BCC, none CCC, seven DOCC, one TCC. A few other scattered reports from Endwell, Tioga Co, Vestal, Walton, Oneonta. Brown Creeper: four BCC, four CCC, four TCC; two reports of birds singing, one 25 Feb, one 27 Feb, both Norwich (JL). Carolina Wren: none reported on a Christmas Census. However, there were seven different locations in the Vestal-Endwell area and one in Tioga Co where birds were reported. Two birds north of those areas were reported, one in Norwich and one in Meridale. Mockingbird: two BCC, none CCC, two DOCC, six TCC; several records well-dispersed over the area during the period, coming from Vestal, Binghamton, Newark Valley, Oneonta, Lounsberry, Norwich and Johnson City. Am. Robin: five BCC, one TCC, three other reports from different areas in Broome Co in Dec. No others until 20 Feb when three showed up in Vestal. E. Bluebird: one 7 Jan Apalachin. Golden-crowned Kinglet: two BCC, three CCC; only two other reports, one 14 Feb Chenango Valley State Park, the other Norwich. Cedar Waxwing: 88 BCC; a Dec. report of a flock of 25 in Vestal; the only other report was of a single bird seen in Norwich. No. Shrike: one imm 26 Jan in East Vestal at a feeder; one ad 8 Feb in West Vestal at a feeder. A shrike sp. was also reported in Norwich on CCC. Starling: 5,004 BCC, 198 CCC, 342 DOCC, 829 TCC.

VIREOS—WARBLERS: None.

WEAVERS—SPARROWS: House Sparrow: 252 BCC, 590 CCC, 319 DOCC, 697 TCC. Red-winged Blackbird: one BCC, one CCC, one DOCC, three TCC; one 30 Dec through 1 Jan, Middlefield and one 3 Jan Tioga Co the only other reports for period. Com. Grackle: five BCC, two DOCC, one TCC; three other winter birds, Tioga Co, Walton, Oneonta. The flock of 25 reported 27 Feb were probably spring migrants. Brown-headed Cowbirds: 25 TCC. Three Jan reports, Tioga Co, Port Dickinson, Vestal Center. Cardinal: 48 BCC, 38 CCC, 34 DOCC, 97 TCC. Evening Grosbeak: 139 BCC, 230 CCC, 332 DOCC, 248 TCC; reported regularly from all areas from early Dec through entire period. Purple Finch: 16 BCC, one CCC, none DOCC, one TCC; very few reports; one seen regularly at a feeder in Vestal in Dec and in Feb (B & TW); two females 24 Jan in Norwich (JL). House Finch: 184 BCC, two CCC, none DOCC, 169 TCC. There were many reports from Broome, Tioga and Chenango Cos. Reports from Otsego, Delaware and Cortland Co. were sparse. One observer in Johnson City had an albino bird. He noted that it was not at his feeder daily but showed up at fairly regular intervals, leading him to speculate that there might be rotating flocks and the 60 he counted daily might not be the same birds. If so the number of birds would be far greater (BB). Pine Grosbeak: none BCC, 15 CCC, 31 DOCC, 16 TCC; a banner year for this species; over 25 reports from all sections of the region. **HOARY REDPOLL**: three well-documented reports: in Newark Valley a male and female were observed 5 Feb periodically between 11:30 a.m. and 2 p.m. at a distance of eight feet. The "entire bird was whiter all over with no real brown tones to it . . . the rump and undertail coverts were un-streaked . . . the male had a light pink wash on rump . . . breast likewise" (JB). The birds returned 6 Feb. On 24 Feb at the same station a Hoary Redpoll was again observed. There

was no way of knowing if it was one of the previous visitors. In Norwich, at one station on 4 Feb "a very light (white) colored" bird was observed. On 20 Feb a "very light and frosty colored male (pink on breast, crown and rump) bird" was reported and on 28 Feb "seen at 50 ft. with 8x binoculars, preening with back towards me, turned to side also, very light streaking on the sides down near undertail coverts, sides almost totally white, no streaking on undertail coverts or rump . . . totally light pink" (JL). Another Hoary Redpoll was reported banded in Endicott. No details. Pine Siskin: three TCC; no other Christmas Counts reported them; there were scattered reports of small groups at feeding stations from Broome and Tioga Cos. and one report from Oneonta. Am. Goldfinch: 178 BCC; 30 CCC; 64 DOCC; 237 TCC; large flocks (up to 150) reported frequently both in the wild and at feeders and from all areas. Red Crossbill: one DOCC the only report. White-winged Crossbill: none reported on a Christmas Count. There were six reports at other times during the period: 23 Dec and 16 Jan from Oneonta (MD, MD & KW), 22 Feb Binghamton (CJ), 24 Feb and 27 Feb Delhi at same feeding station by same observer (MC) and two other Broome Co. reports with no details. Rufous-sided Towhee: one DOCC only report for season. Savannah Sparrow: one TCC only report for season. Dark-eyed Junco: 135 BCC, 50 CCC, 21 DOCC, 92 TCC; the usual number of feeding station reports from all areas through the period. "Oregon" Junco: one daily in Port Dickinson (KP). Tree Sparrow: 219 BCC, 202 CCC, 98 DOCC, 227 TCC; as usual reports from all sections throughout period. Chipping Sparrow: three CCC, only report. Field Sparrow: one TCC, only report. White-crowned Sparrow: one DOCC, one TCC, White-throated Sparrow: 36 BCC, one CCC, four DOCC, one TCC; many reports from Broome Co. feeding stations of anywhere from one to 12 birds staying all winter; otherwise one report from Norwich, one from Newark Valley and one from Oneonta. Swamp Sparrow: one BCC, one TCC. Song Sparrow: two BCC, 15 CCC, none DOCC, three TCC; only three other reports all winter, these from Broome and Tioga Cos. This seems to be a low count for this species. Snow Bunting: 77 CCC, no others on Christmas Counts; 11 other reports all during the season, a few from each area. One flock between Oneonta and Davenport was estimated to be between 200 or 300 birds (MD). Another in Otselic (DM) and one in Johnson City to be over 100 (CW).

Friendsville Stage, Binghamton, New York 13903

REGION 5 – ONEIDA LAKE BASIN

PAUL DeBENEDICTIS

The winter 1981-82 was, in general, mild and ornithologically dull. The cold weather that set in just prior to the Christmas Bird Counts was not relieved until mid-February. Precipitation for the winter was just about normal, even though this February was the seventh driest on record at Syracuse; total snowfall had just surpassed the annual average of 110 inches at the end of the season. January was very cold, averaging nearly 9° below normal and was the second coldest recorded at Syracuse. December and February were more nearly normal. The first, all too brief warm spell, came 15 February, but lasted only about 30 hours. The cold weather and persistent northerly winds left most waters frozen by late December. Oswego Harbor was full of ice for much of January. When the ice cleared, only a moderate number of waterfowl appeared, although this number included both Barrow's Goldeneye and King Eider. Dabbling ducks were very scarce this winter. The closing of many landfills, especially in Oswego, forces us to adopt a new base line for winter gull populations, especially of the "white-

winged" gulls. It is now very difficult to compare numbers versus those prior to the mid-1970's.

Landbird numbers were unimpressive given the size of the fall winter finch flight. This is probably due to a general paucity of cones, seeds and berries. Raptors were widespread but not very numerous. Short-eared Owls were reported from many more localities than normal but not in very large numbers. Snowy Owls were scarce. Most half-hardy species were few in number this winter and several, such as Winter Wren and Rusty Blackbird, went unreported. Others, notably Killdeer, were noted only at the start and very end of the season. With two exceptions, winter finches showed a steady decline through the winter. One of these exceptions, White-winged Crossbill, departed in mid-December and returned in February. The other, Common Redpoll, though present in the fall, did not become numerous at feeders until late January, when their numbers became most impressive. Equally impressive were the many Hoary Redpolls which accompanied them.

House Finch has become so widespread in the region that winter reports of Purple Finch no longer can be accepted without raised eyebrows, especially in a season when none of the local expert birders could find the latter. One local House Finch mystery was partially solved this winter. Dorothy Crumb has a summer resident House Finch population which deserts northern Pompey township in December. On 15 January your editor found, in his urban Syracuse driveway, a dead House Finch wearing a band attached by Mrs. Crumb in November 1981. Now we know where at least some of her birds go!

Some notable rarities were found this season: Lesser Black-backed and Thayer's Gulls, Barn Owl, Say's Phoebe and Hoary Redpoll. Several goodies like Bald Eagle, Boreal Chickadee and Bohemian Waxwing added more spice to an otherwise bland season. A total of 108 species were reported this season.

Abbreviations: arr--arrival; CBC--Christmas Bird Count; max--maximum(a); NPT--Northern Pompey Township; Onon--Onondaga; Syr--Syracuse.

Contributors: Gerald Church, Dorothy W. Crumb, Paul DeBenedictis, Bruno DiSimone, Robert L. Evans, John Hanyak, Jr., Gene Huggins, Ruth Knight, Jeanne Lally, George Maxwell, Margaret S. Rusk, F. G. Scheider, Magdalena Stooks, Elba VanDresar.

LOONS--DUCKS: Com. Loon: last two Skaneateles Lake, 9 Jan. Red-necked Grebe: last two Onon Lake 17 Dec. Horned Grebe: scattered singles all winter, none persistent. Pied-billed Grebe: one near Old Forge 28 Dec (EVD), one irregularly at Baldwinsville through. Great Blue Heron: last Howland's Island 1 Jan. Canada Goose: max 111 Skaneateles Lake mid-Jan, very few in Feb. Gadwall: only one or two/day Oswego. Pintail: arr Baldwinsville 27 Feb. Green-winged Teal: three singles, none persistent, in Jan, arr about 25 Feb Clay. Blue-winged Teal: last 19 Dec Clinton CBC. Am. Wigeon: last Oswego 13 Dec. Redhead: one to 12/day Oswego. Canvasback: max 65 mid-Feb Oswego. Greater Scaup: max 1074 on 4 Feb Oswego. Lesser Scaup: one to seven/day Oswego. Com. Goldeneye: max 250 early Feb Oswego. Barrow's Goldeneye: female 14 Jan, male 7-14 Feb, both Oswego. Bufflehead: max 81 mid-Jan Oswego. Oldsquaw: max 54 Oswego 30 Jan. King Eider: female Derby Hill 13 Dec (JH), imm male 7-14 Feb Oswego joined by female on 13 Feb. White-winged Scoter: one Oswego 20 Dec, then 16 there in mid-Feb. Ruddy Duck: last Onon Lake 17 Dec. Com. Merganser: max 1743 Oswego 30 Jan.

HAWKS--ALCIDS: Goshawk: about six reported. Rough-legged Hawk: one or two/day all winter. Bald Eagle: unmarked imm Cazenovia Lake 25 Dec (GH), Onon Lake 16-24 Jan

(mob), probably only one bird involved. Marsh Hawk: reported without details Dec and Feb Holland Patent, evidently the best area for overwintering raptors this winter. Ruffed Grouse: very scarce. Turkey: second-hand reports Holland Patent most of winter and single Clinton CBC 19 Dec. Am. Coot: single Baldwinsville 7-8 Feb only report. Killdeer: two sightings only, none persistent. Com. Snipe: two reports to mid-Jan. Glaucous Gull: max three Oswego River 15 Feb. Iceland Gull: max four there 19 Dec. Great Black-backed Gull: max 175 Oswego much of winter. **LESSER BLACK-BACKED GULL**: very dark adult Fulton 14-28 Jan (FGS, DWC, JH, mob), fifth regional record. **THAYER'S GULL**: imm Fulton 4-14 Feb (FGS, photographed DWC and PDeB, mob), is about the fourth substantiated regional record of a species nearly annual along Lake Ontario and the Oswego River. Herring Gull: mid-winter population about 1200 at Oswego. Ring-billed Gull: mid-winter population about 2000 at Oswego, but numbers regularly reduced for short periods.

PIGEONS-WOODPECKERS: Mourning Dove: several counts of 100-120 per day. **BARN OWL**: a belated report of nesting near Oriskany, adults last seen early Dec (*fide* DWC), first confirmed nest in region since 1968. Snowy Owl: one Wampsville 22 Dec (JL), three females Oswego most of winter (mob). Long-eared Owl: single NPT 2 Jan only (DWC). Short-eared Owl: about ten reported from five localities, best numbers and most persistent near Rome/Holland Patent. Saw-whet Owl: one Biddlecome 14 Feb (MSR), another Holland Patent 27 Feb (EVD). Red-bellied Woodpecker: one from Tug Hill Plateau on 7 Feb (MSR) unusually far north. Red-headed Woodpecker: only report on Clinton CBC 19 Dec.

FLYCATCHERS-STARLINGS: **SAY'S PHOEBE**: the one in Marcellus died night of 20/21 Dec, specimen to American Museum of Natural History. Horned Lark: last Onon Co. 20 Dec, arr there mid-Feb. Com. Raven: two on Old Forge CBC. Boreal Chickadee: one Forestport 3 Jan (MSR) and another NPT 8-22 Jan (DWC) are far from nesting areas. Tufted Titmouse: more numerous at feeders than usual, and one at Old Forge was unusually far north. Red-breasted Nuthatch: one or two/day through the winter. Carolina Wren: three reported Jan, two, all different, in Feb. Am. Robin: very scarce this winter, mid-winter counts only in teens away from our known winter roost. E. Bluebird: two males, one female Carpenter's Brook 31 Jan (FGS). Bohemian Waxwing: eight at Oswego on 6 Dec with large group of Cedar Waxwings (DWC), two at Clinton on 9 Jan (BDiS). No. Shrike: about ten reported, widespread but not very persistent.

VIREOS-WARBLEDERS: Yellow-rumped Warbler: two reports, last Clinton CBC 19 Dec, at feeder.

WEAVERS-SPARROWS: Red-winged Blackbird: disappeared in late Dec, a few arr in late Feb. Com. Grackle: one at feeder NPT through Jan; arr Syr about 15 Feb. Brown-headed Cowbird: last 19 Jan. Evening Grosbeak: very few all winter, especially unusual because highest numbers were in Dec. Pine Grosbeak: max 50 Holland Patent in Dec, very few reported after early Feb. Com. Redpoll: numbers low until late Jan, when widespread at feeders; DWC banded about 650 at her feeder. **HOARY REDPOLL**: unprecedented invasion—DWC banded five and saw three others NPT plus three Onon Hill in Feb (JH), one Oswego 13 Feb (GM), one Beaver Lake early Feb (Roy Slack). Pine Siskin: except from Clinton, only reports 25 Oswego on 13 Dec (GM), one NPT on 20 Feb (DWC); this pattern also evident from feeder surveys. Am. Goldfinch: one to ten/day after Dec. White-winged Crossbill: 20 DH on 13 Dec (JH), then none until early Feb when up to 20/day central Oswego Co. Dark-eyed Junco: max about ten/day. Tree Sparrow: max about 30/day. White-crowned Sparrow: last Clinton CBC 19 Dec. White-throated Sparrow: widespread and successful in ones and twos at feeders. Swamp Sparrow: last two South Onon on 21 Jan. Song Sparrow: one to four/day, very few reported in Feb. Lapland Longspur: three Clinton CBC, then two Fulton 4 Feb and two NPT on 9 Feb, all with Snow Buntings. Snow Bunting: max 1500 NPT on 9 Feb and 3500 + 500 Eaton on 28 Feb.

306 Kensington Pl., Syracuse, New York 13210

REGION 6 – ST. LAWRENCE

KENNETH L. CROWELL

This was the first good old-fashioned winter since 1978-79. Those who ventured out—or even watched their feeders—were rewarded with an unusual variety and abundance of boreal and arctic visitors. December began mildly, but by the second week snow cover was established which was to remain until March. Sub-zero readings occurred for the first time 17 Dec. There was rain 1 Jan, and a heavy rain 3-4 Jan was the only storm during the period with more than one inch of precipitation. Then, severe and steady cold set in with only two readings above freezing in five weeks. There was only slightly more open water for the New York State Waterfowl Count in mid-January than in 1981. A half-dozen Bald Eagles wintered again along the St. Lawrence River. Increasing numbers of Rough-legged Hawks, Snowy Owls, Northern Shrikes and one Gyrfalcon and one Hawk Owl were reported between late December and mid-February. Rain, the first of February, resulted in an impenetrable crust. Hawks seemed much less abundant after this. It is my surmise that the crust sealed off rodent populations, causing the hawks to move elsewhere. In mid-February temperatures began moving toward the freezing mark and Joe VanRiet points to the arrival of Canvasbacks and increasing numbers of Greater Scaup and Common Goldeneyes as harbingers of spring, followed by Horned Larks and Common Crows and Starlings.

A review of Christmas Counts for the past six years shows 1981 to have the greatest numbers of Common Redpolls, Crossbills, and Tree Sparrows since 1978. Numbers of other species apparently built up later in the period with 25 reports for Snowy Owl and over 25 for Northern Shrike. Evening Grosbeaks and Purple Finches were down and the numbers of Pine Grosbeak dwindled as winter progressed. Is there a pattern here? It looks to me as if we had more arctic and tree-line species such as redpoll, shrike and Snow Bunting and fewer species from the boreal forests (i.e. grosbeaks and Pine Siskins and Purple Finch).

Numbers of Tufted Titmice were up, with individuals wintering in Jefferson Co. and in St. Lawrence Co. for the first time. Resident species, including Black-capped Chickadee, Downy and Hairy Woodpeckers, and both nuthatches were abundant. Chickadees were even more abundant than last winter. We color banded 23 at our feeder and saw 18 of these in one day. Waxwings and winter finches were down this winter as previously discussed. Rarities include a dark-phase Gyrfalcon on Lake Ontario 20 Dec; Hawk Owl, possibly two, at ULLWMA in Canton 6 Jan thru (a second individual may have appeared about 26 Feb); and four or five Hoary Redpolls in late February.

There were few lingering summer residents and transients: a Wilson's Warbler 1 Dec in Canton, meadowlarks and Red-winged Blackbirds in Massena, and a Great Blue Heron looking very reptilian, oriental and cold in sub-zero temperatures at ULLWMA in mid-January. Weather (from *St. Lawrence Plaindealer*): Daily mean and extreme maximum and minimum temperatures (0° F) were: Dec, mean high of 29°F, low 18°F, extreme high 50°F, extreme low -6°F; Jan means 18°F and -5°F, extremes 44°F and -28°F; Feb means 25°F and 6°F, extremes 47°F and -12°F. Total precipitation was Dec, 1.58 in.; Jan, 2.79 in. and

Feb, 1.9 in. Snow depths at the end of the period ranged from 15 to 46 inches. There were heavy winds on 10, 16, 23 Jan and 1 Feb.

Abbreviations: HPT—Hawkins Point; Jeff Co.—Jefferson County; MCC—Massena Christmas Count (27 Dec); St. Law Co.—St. Lawrence County; ULLWMA—Upper and Lower Lakes Wildlife Management Area; WCC—Watertown Christmas Count (19 Dec).

Contributors: Stewart Brown (SB), Lee Chamberlaine (LC), Frank Clinch (FC), K. Crowell (KC), Allen & Phoebe Rogerson, J. VanRiet (JV), Robert & June Walker (R & JW), William Chaisson assisted with the compilation.

LOONS—DUCKS: Com. Loon: one on St. Lawrence River, Massena 30 Dec; one Adams 14 Jan—grounded in a field (probably from storm on 11 Jan), released in Black River at Dexter (SB). Horned Grebe: one grounded at Lake Bonaparte 24 Feb—released at Dexter (SB). Great Blue Heron: one at Muskalonge Creek near Sackets Harbor 17 Dec (W. Gordon); one ULLWMA below outlet of Rensselaer Falls 14-20 Jan (D. Hamelin). Mute Swan: one Perch River WMA 19 Dec (WCC). Canada Goose: two thru period at HPT; 300 near Henderson 11 Dec; 260 WCC 9 Dec; 76 MCC 27 Dec; 80 Three Mile Pt 1 Jan; 30 Henderson 2 Jan. Snow Goose: 21 Potsdam 27 Jan (D. MacKentley). Mallard: 29 WCC; 95 MCC; three males, one female ULLWMA 7 to 22 Jan; 150 HPT 14 Feb; two Lakeview WMA 3 Mar. Black Duck: 15 WCC; 35 MCC; three ULLWMA 14 Jan; 150 HPT 14 Feb. Am. Wigeon: two PRWMA (WCC). Ring-necked Duck: one male ULLWMA 14 Jan (D. Hamelin). Canvasback: ten HPT 14 Feb. Redhead: ten HPT 30 Dec; four HPT 14 Feb. Greater Scaup: 40 WCC; seven HPT 14 Feb. Lesser Scaup: one female HPT 28 Dec. Com. Goldeneye: 260 MCC; 100 St. Lawrence River near Morristown 13 Feb; 700 HPT 14 Feb. BARROW'S GOLDENEYE: one female HPT 13 Feb (JV). Bufflehead: two Pt. Peninsula 1 Jan; one female HPT 14 Feb. Oldsquaw: one thru period HPT (JV). White-winged Scoter: one HPT 29 Dec. Hooded Merganser: one thru period HPT; 18 St. Lawrence River near Morristown 20 Jan; two Black River Bay (WCC). Com. Merganser: 15 Pt. Peninsula 1 Jan; 3000 MCC; 1100 HPT 14 Feb. Red-breasted Merganser: one to two thru period HPT.

HAWKS—ALCIDS: Goshawk: one HPT 28 Dec; one Dry Hill 30 Dec (R & JW). Sharp-shinned Hawk: one imm Canton at feeder in Jan (Howard); one Canton 10 Feb (M. Heaney). Cooper's Hawk: one WCC; one repeatedly in Henderson—9 Dec caught and ate a Starling, at feeder 25 Dec caught and ate a Mourning Dove; 13 Jan on ground eating cottontail rabbit, harassing birds at feeder 14 Jan; attempted to catch Mourning Dove 6 Feb (LC); one at Paddy Hill 3 Jan (SB). Red-tailed Hawk: 47 WCC; one MCC; fair numbers in Jeff Co.—increasing toward end of period (LC); three or four singles in Canton area in Jan; two Robt Moses State Pk 16 Feb. Rough-legged Hawk: 20 WCC; early in period dark phase outnumbered light two to one, dark phase decreasing toward the end of period; most birds in Jeff Co. between I-81 and Rt. 3; two to four a day (LC); frequent sightings—all light phase—Canton-Pierrepont and ULLWMA mid-Jan to mid-Feb, unusual numbers for this area on edge of foothills. BALD EAGLE: one imm HPT 2 Jan; three St. Lawrence River 8 Jan; one Chipewaw Bay 13 Jan; one adult, one imm near Brownville 16 Feb (Gerry Spaziani); at least seven on St. Lawrence River wintering area thru—four adults and three imm (LC). Marsh Hawk: one WCC; one Henderson 22 Jan attempting to catch birds at feeder; one Pt. Peninsula 2 Jan; one Chaumont 21 Feb; one female with injured wing near Potsdam in Feb. Am. Kestrel: five WCC; one Massena area 26 Dec; two Pt. Peninsula 1 Jan; one on Rt. 68 near Langdon Corners 16 Dec and 21 Dec (KC); "a few around this winter—mostly close to Lake Ontario" (LC); one Canton 16 Feb. GYRFALCON: one Henderson Harbor 20 Dec (SB & N. Leone). Ruffed Grouse: two WCC; six MCC. Ring-necked Pheasant: one WCC; one Pt. Peninsula 21 Feb. Gray Partridge: 25 WCC; 13 MCC; common Jeff Co. (Orleans, Pamela and Housefield), small coveys six to ten birds usually; 20 Chaumont 31 Jan (R & JW); two coveys of five HPT 16 Feb (KC). Glaucous Gull: 8 MCC; 22 HPT 26 Jan; 12 HPT 14 Feb. ICELAND GULL: one MCC; two Robt Moses Power Dam 3 Dec, HPT 14 Feb (JV). Great Black-backed Gull: two WCC; six Henderson Harbor 25 Dec; 177 MCC; 300 HPT 14 Feb. Herring Gull: 44 WCC; 430 MCC.

PIGEONS—WOODPECKERS: Rock Dove: 1341 WCC; 426 MCC. Mourning Dove: 77 WCC; 9 MCC; two Brownville Jan-Feb at Brownville Game Farm; up to 20 at feeder Henderson thru—four banded in Feb, older birds had no toenails—frostbite?; one at feeder Canton 13 Feb (J. Green); several all winter at Watertown, a few singles reported. Screech Owl: one WCC. Great Horned Owl: two MCC (one subsp. *wapacuthu*); heard Henderson thru; one ULLWMA 4-5 Dec (P. VanDongen); one Canton 17-18 Dec; one S. Colton 19 Dec; one Dry Hill 11 and 31 Dec; four Stony Point 27 Dec (R & JW); one Canton 25 Jan. **HAWK OWL:** Rt. 68 ULLWMA 6 Jan thru (H. Gerbis *fide* KC). Snowy Owl: two WCC; one near Adams Center 15 Dec; four Pt. Peninsula-Chaumont 2 Jan; one ULLWMA Rensselaer Falls 6 Jan; one ULLWMA Canton 12, 15, 20 Jan; one east of Potsdam in late Feb one between Canton and Potsdam 15 and 16 Feb; two Evans Mills 28 Feb; singles Stone Mills, Ashland WMA, LaFargeville, Somerville, Pillar Pt., Chaumont, Housefield, Pt. Salubrious, Sackets Harbor, and Pamela 6 Jan to 28 Feb. Barred Owl: all reported sightings from Canton-Potsdam area, one Pierrepont 15 Jan; one ULLWMA 31 Jan; one outside Canton 3 Feb; one calling W. Potsdam 3 Feb; one 9 Feb; one 22 Feb. **LONG-EARED OWL:** one found dead Henderson at Briggs Farm underneath outdoor light 22 Jan—specimen. Short-eared Owl: five Pt. Peninsula 2 Jan; 15 Chaumont 2 Jan; one Chaumont 11 Jan; one Henderson hunting over field 27 Jan; one same location on post with *microtus* 28 Jan; one Housefield 29 Jan; six Watertown 18-28 Feb (FC). Saw-whet Owl: one found dead Brookside Cemetery near Watertown 30 Jan—specimen; one Watertown—picked up alive and released (A. Smith); one Henderson near feeder 14 Feb; one Canton mid-Feb. **BARN OWL:** one road kill Hannawa Falls in late Feb—specimen (KC). Belted Kingfisher: one Perch River WCC. Pileated Woodpecker: three singles Canton area in Jan; one Henderson 5 Feb; one ULLWMA 13 Feb. Red-bellied Woodpecker: one male Henderson at feeder thru. Hairy Woodpecker: up from last two winters in Henderson (LC); 16 WCC; 4 MCC; pair present thru in Pierrepont. Downy Woodpecker: 24 WCC; 13 MCC; pair plus second male thru in Pierrepont. Black-backed Three-toed Woodpecker: fresh borings on spruce in Sevey's Corners bog (B. Chaisson).

FLYCATCHERS—STARLINGS: Horned Lark: 12 WCC; 25 MCC; 70 Housefield 21 Jan; 50 Rt. 3 near Fort Drum 22 Jan; increasing numbers in Canton area 21 Jan thru; greater numbers toward end of period (LC). Blue Jay: 79 WCC; 43 MCC; moderate numbers thru (KC). Com. Crow: 103 WCC; one MCC; 65 Housefield 21 Jan; a few 8 Feb thru ULLWMA; increasing from mid-Feb thru Henderson. Black-capped Chickadee: 117 WCC; 130 MCC; abundant thru in Canton-Pierrepont area. **TUFTED TITMOUSE:** one Henderson at feeder thru—captured and banded; one in Henderson Harbor thru—captured and banded; one in Henderson Harbor regularly thru (Mike Flood); one Canton 9 Dec (S. Ekfelt); one (same?) Goodrich St., Canton 15 Dec (R & C Carlisle). White-breasted Nuthatch: 17 WCC; 13 MCC; good numbers in Canton area. Red-breasted Nuthatch: present in St. Lawrence Univ. Kip Tract. **MOCKINGBIRD:** three weeks in Feb Canton (Marge Parker). Am. Robin: one WCC; one MCC; one near Henderson 15 Feb (LC). Cedar Waxwing: six WCC; none MCC; seven Henderson 14 Feb—only ones seen during period. No. Shrike: two WCC; two MCC; one or two ULLWMA, one Watertown near feeder in early Feb; one Brownville 4 Feb; one Greig (Lewis Co.) 11 Feb; one killed sparrow at lumber yard Watertown 10 Feb; one Henderson attempting to kill redpoll in banding trap and did kill another bird—probably a redpoll 28 Feb; one killed a *microtus* in Canton 18 Feb; one five times in Pierrepont 4 Feb thru—singing 19, 22 Feb, killed a *microtus* 27 Feb; singles from Colton, Potsdam, Pierrepont, Canton in St. Law Co. and Henderson, Sackets Harbor, Chaumont, Pt. Peninsula in Jeff Co. Jan 10 thru. Starling: 1113 WCC; 216 MCC; one Canton-Madrid Rd. 15 Feb (J. Ross); six Cray Mills 2 Feb (first since winter).

VIREOS—WARBLERS: WILSON'S WARBLER: one Canton 1 Dec (D. Sibley).

WEAVERS—SPARROWS: House Sparrow: 658 WCC; 289 MCC; E. Meadowlark: a group of seven Massena 28 Dec (JV). Red-winged Blackbird: four WCC; one cripple MCC; one female in flock of Starlings at feeder Henderson 9 Jan. Rusty Blackbird: one cripple MCC. Brown-headed Cowbird: 6 MCC; two male and two female Canton 23 Dec (J. Green); six

females Canton 12 Feb (K. McCarthy). Cardinal: 30 WCC; 3 MCC; several in village of Canton thru—up to three females and one male seen at once. ROSE-BREASTED GROSBEAK: one WCC (J & P Pattengill). Evening Grosbeak: 233 WCC; 193 MCC; few and seldom at Watertown feeder (FC), increasing at Henderson in Feb—sporadic at feeders—mostly males; very few in St. Law Co. at the end of the period; five Pierrepont 13 Feb. Purple Finch: 23 WCC; decreasing at Henderson from Jan on. House Finch: one WCC; one to three daily Watertown—down from ten daily last year (FC). Pine Grosbeak: 33 WCC; 109 MCC; flocks of three to six in Dec and early Jan in Canton area then only two singles 8 Feb and 11 Feb; scattered singles at Henderson, 5 Robt Moses State Pk 16 Feb. HOARY REDPOLL: one regularly in a flock of hundreds of Commons at Potsdam feeder 12 Feb—aggressive toward other birds (J & N Ackermann); one Watertown 20-21 Feb (R & JW); one Watertown 26 Feb (FC); two at feeder at Henderson with Com. Redpolls—one male and one sex unknown 27 Feb—banded and photographed by LC. Com. Redpoll: most common finch of the winter—ten to 20 at feeders from the middle of Dec thru—decreasing toward end of period; 127 WCC; 513 MCC; 1500 Pt. Peninsula 2 Jan (R & JW). Pine Siskin: three WCC; no other reports. Am. Goldfinch: 21 WCC; 14 MCC; one to ten daily at Watertown feeder (FC), 60+ at Henderson feeder thru. Red Crossbill: one Watertown 18 Feb (Nagel). White-winged Crossbill: one MCC; “a few in Watertown last week of Feb for at least two days” (FC). Dark-eyed Junco: six WCC; one MCC. Tree Sparrow: 290 WCC; 155 MCC; at feeders thru mid-Feb in Canton; one or two daily, numbers seem down (R & JW), common Jeff Co., increasing thru period Henderson (LC). White-throated Sparrow: one WCC; one MCC. Song Sparrow: two MCC. Lapland Longspur: two Massena 26 Dec; ten or so Rt. 3 near Fort Drum 22 Jan (A. Brayton). Snow Bunting: 30 WCC; 387 MCC; six Robt Moses Power Dam 3 Dec; 300 and 500 near W. Lowville 9 Dec; 200 W. Lowville 12 Dec; 200 Pierrepont 1 Jan; 80 Housefield 21 Jan; 600 (one flock) Rt. 3 near Fort Drum 22 Jan (Al Brayton); 145 Three Mile Pt. 1 Jan. Flocks of five to 40 Canton-Pierrepont area thru; 16 Massena 21 Feb.

R.D. 4, Canton, New York 13617

REGION 7 – ADIRONDACK-CHAMPLAIN

THEODORE MACK

The winter season was not marked by any appreciable thaws. Temperatures were in the twenty below to twenty above range for much of the period. Winds were moderate for the most part but bitter just the same, so that outdoor activity for humans could be an unpleasant experience. This may have discouraged birders if not birds.

Evening Grosbeaks were fewer than usual. Perhaps they went farther south. Purple Finches were absent. This probably indicates a better food supply elsewhere and not scarcity of the species. There were quite a few Common Redpolls and at least two Hoary Redpolls, as well as a few Bohemian Waxwings. A number of Hawk Owls were seen in the eastern border states. Our region had one for at least two months. No Great Gray Owls were reported.

Observers: Merry Baker; Dirck Benson; Mary Benson; Geoffrey Carleton; Dan Christmas; Denise Christmas; Dean Cook; Marnie Cook; Warner Cook; Charlie Delehanty; Mark Gretch; Anne Hungerford; Elsbeth Johnson; Harold Klein; Paul Koehler; Anne Lacy; Bruce Landon; John Lemieux; Dorothy McIlroy; NYSWC—New York State Waterfowl Counts

Clinton and Essex Cos. 9 and 10 Jan; Ray Payson; John Peterson; Helen Potter; William Rutherford; Gary Randorf; Don Timmons; Cecelia Wojciukiewicz; David Young.

LOONS—DUCKS: A Great Blue Heron was at Plattsburgh 19 Dec. Another flew over Tupper Marsh 29 Dec (CD) and one was near Saranac Lake on the river 2 Jan, as was an Am. Bittern (RH). The NYSWC yielded the following: Horned Grebe 1, Canada Goose 444, Snow Goose 1, Mallard 93, Black Duck 220, Pintail 1, Canvasback 606, Greater Scaup 5, Com. Goldeneye 579, Bufflehead 15, White-winged Scoter 1, Com. Merganser 820. A small flock of Snow Geese in flight was over Saranac Lake 2 Jan. A late Lesser Scaup was at Lincoln Pond 16-21 Dec (CW). Six Hooded Mergansers were at Tupper Marsh 1 Dec. A Com. Merganser was on the Saranac River near Saranac Lake all of Dec, and one spent Dec on the St. Regis River near Paul Smiths.

HAWKS—ALCIDS: A Goshawk was seen near Elizabethtown 27 Dec. A Sharp-shinned Hawk preyed on feeder birds until 28 Feb at Tupper. A Cooper's Hawk did the same at Bloomingdale thru Jan, and one was at Rockefeller Park 17 Jan. One was at Plattsburgh 19 Dec and one at Cadyville since 15 Feb. Three Red-tailed Hawks and three Rough-legged Hawks were seen on the Elizabethtown Christmas count 27 Dec. The Champlain Valley had a few of the former and many of the latter as usual. A Rough-leg was at Tupper 29 Dec. A Bald Eagle was perched in a hemlock along the Raquette River near Tupper 3 and 4 Dec (CD) and an adult was at Ticonderoga 20 Jan (HP). One adult and one imm were at Rouses Point 6 Dec and at Wickham Marsh 26 Jan. DC and MC watched a gray phase Gyrfalcon winging south along Lake Champlain 10 Jan. Eight Gray Partridges were in northern Clinton Co. 8 Feb. (MG). There were 26 Great Black-backed Gulls from Willsboro Bay to Whallon's Bay 10 Jan.

PIGEONS—WOODPECKERS: There were 50 Mourning Doves on the Elizabethtown Christmas count, several at Tupper thru the period, a few at a Gabriel's feeder and two were at Bay Pond 18 Dec. A Great Horned Owl was perched in a Tupper Lake Marsh tree 14 and 15 Dec (CD). A Snowy Owl was seen at Ticonderoga 20 Jan (SL). **HAWK OWL:** one was at Port Henry 23 Jan (NM); and one was seen by many people near Keene Valley, where it stayed close to the road. The bird's yellow eyes, long tail and black head markings could be studied at leisure. This bird spent at least two months in the area, where it fed on mice and voles. A few Barred Owls were reported as usual. A Belted Kingfisher was at Plattsburgh 8 Jan. The Elizabethtown count listed six Pileated, 29 Hairy, and 40 Downy Woodpeckers.

FLYCATCHERS—STARLINGS: A Horned Lark was at Bay Pond 28 Feb (Dan & Denise Christmas), with good numbers all winter in no. Clinton Co, becoming more vocal since last week of Feb (MG). Gray Jays were at Brandon and Bay Pond as usual. One was at Ray Brook 2 Jan. A pair were at feeders in Owls Head (AH). Ten Com. Ravens were soaring together near Elizabethtown at Raven Mountain on 24 Jan (EJ, JP). This appeared to be an invasion year for Boreal Chickadees. Several visited feeders beyond their usual haunts, including two Jan birds at Plattsburgh. Tufted Titmouse: at feeders in Cadyville, Crown Point, Elizabethtown, Moriah, Saranac Lake, and Ticonderoga, as well as Tupper Lake where it is not to be expected. 12 Brown Creepers were on the Elizabethtown Count. Six Mockingbirds were at Plattsburgh on their big count 19 Dec. They always have this species. One was at Ticonderoga. A Brown Thrasher was on the Saranac Lake Christmas count. Plattsburgh had two Am. Robins. Up to five E. Bluebirds were at Ticonderoga to 19 Jan (DT). 14 Golden-crowned Kinglets were tallied at Elizabethtown 27 Dec. 14 Cedar Waxwings were on the Plattsburgh count. There were two Bohemian Waxwings at Witherbee eating frozen apples on 13 Dec (CW) and 12 were at Ticonderoga 31 Dec (WC, *fide* DC). A flock was seen on the Saranac Lake count 2 Jan. This species is seen each winter. At least eight No. Shrikes were counted during the period including one at Tupper Lake, that chased feeder birds.

VIREOS—WARBLERS: A Yellow-rumped Warbler appeared 24 Dec at a Plattsburgh feeder and remained.

WEAVERS—SPARROWS: House Sparrow: 231 at Elizabethtown and 295 at Plattsburgh

on their Christmas counts. An E. Meadowlark was at Essex 16 Jan (AL, GR). Red-winged Blackbird: several from Bay Pond and Tupper Lake to Champlain Valley. A male No. Oriole was at Moriah 10 and 11 Dec (GC). Com. Grackle: two Plattsburgh; one Tupper 6 Jan. Brown-headed Cowbird: three at Piseco Lake, 16 at Tupper, 37 at Plattsburgh, seven at Elizabethtown. Cardinal: seven Saranac Lake; 32 Plattsburgh; two Tupper Lake; four at Piseco. There were fair numbers of Evening Grosbeaks with over 450 on two Christmas counts. The only Purple Finch report was 12 at Plattsburgh, where 102 House Finches were also reported. This was an excellent Pine Grosbeak year with 136 at Saranac Lake and 78 at Tupper Lake. A Hoary Redpoll with white rump and frosty look was at Tupper Lake 25 Jan-24 Feb (CD). Another was seen by several in Gabriel's at Dave Young's feeder. There were plenty of Com. Redpolls. High count was 216 at Plattsburgh. Both Pine Siskin and Am. Goldfinch were extremely localized. There were 43 of the former at Elizabethtown and 137 of the latter at Plattsburgh, while these species were absent in most areas. Red Crossbill: nine 6 Jan Tupper Lake and ten 20 Dec at Macomb Park in Clinton Co. White-winged Crossbill: 70 feeding on white and red pine cones 12 Dec at Ausable Point on Lake Champlain; 25 12 Dec and 3 Jan feeding on spruce cones which CD saw them remove, fly to a perch, position the cone between their feet and then feed on the seeds. Dark-eyed Juncos were hard to find. Six were seen on the Elizabethtown count and three at Plattsburgh. 87 Tree Sparrows were counted at Elizabethtown. They were generally scarce. A White-throated Sparrow spent Dec at a Tupper feeder. A Song Sparrow was seen on the Elizabethtown count. No. Clinton Co. had up to six Lapland Longspurs. The Snow Buntings seemed to have stayed near Malone where there was a flock of over 200.

Paul Smiths, New York 12970

REGION 8 — HUDSON-MOHAWK

BILL COOK

Numerous exotic species in and around Region 8 this season made winter '81-'82 most interesting for the cold weather birder. Temperatures never got as low as last year, but the rainfall persisted as a snowy winter possibly signaled an end to the drought conditions of the past few years. The snow seemed to intensify feeder activity, which included a Dickcissel in Berne, a Pine Warbler in Colonie, a Red-bellied Woodpecker in Amsterdam, a Carolina Wren in Glenville, a mysterious blue-colored grosbeak in Cobleskill, an European Goldfinch in Charlton and an Ivory Gull, described as the "feeder bird of the century" in Saratoga Springs.

Outside the region, but near enough and regular enough for viewing by many local birders, were a Harris' Sparrow in Dutchess Co., a Golden-crowned Sparrow in Holyoke, Mass., and a Hawk Owl in Keene, Essex Co.

An Ivory Gull at a feeder? Yes, and not only that, but the nearest open water was estimated to be at least ten miles away! This unlikely feeder bird appeared near Saratoga Springs on 14 January. It was banded the next day and its wing cord of 342 mm indicated that it was an adult male.

A bird that would more likely be expected at your feeder, assuming that you put out your sunflower seeds in South America, is the Blue-black Grosbeak (*Cyanocopsa cyanoides*). A blue grosbeak that was not our North American

Blue Grosbeak was photographed at Cliff Collins' feeder in Cobleskill on 19 December. The photographs were circulated among local birders, compared to specimens of Blue-black Grosbeak in the State Museum at Albany, sent to the National Museum and to the American Museum of Natural History. Local lack of expertise with South American birds has left this poor waif unnamed as yet. No such problem occurred when snapshots of an European Goldfinch were examined. The bird was observed by Paul Hartman at his feeder near Charlton, Saratoga Co. in 10 January. Whereas the tropical grosbeak must be considered as escaped cagebird or stowaway from a banana boat, the goldfinch is potentially a wild bird.

An albinistic House Finch appeared for one day, 4 January, at a feeder in Ghent. Its creamy white body, lacking any streaking, was marked only by a tawny buckskin head and shoulders, somewhat reminiscent of a Snow Bunting. Albinism may also be behind some noted identification difficulties. Many reports of Hoary Redpoll, when subjected to the scrutiny of local birders, turned out to be light-colored Common Redpolls. This observer encountered an albinistic Common Redpoll (all white except for the forehead which, lacking melanin, was brilliant pink rather than deep red) in Keene, Essex Co. on 16 February.

Still, some *bona fide* Hoary Redpolls did invade our region this winter. In addition, we were host to multitudes of Pine Grosbeaks, Common Redpolls, Snow Buntings, some Pine Siskins, Red Crossbills, White-winged Crossbills, Bohemian Waxwings, Northern Shrikes, Snowy Owls, a Boreal Chickadee and an irruption of Black-capped Chickadees. Lesser Black-backed Gulls seem to be becoming commonplace these days and Scott Terrell's report of a first-year bird tantalizingly suggests the possibility of this species breeding in North America.

No less than seven Christmas Bird Counts and the New York State Waterfowl Count held in the Capitol District were submitted for this report, resulting in an abundance of data and a total of 116 species which is 19 more than last winter. One of the more interesting species encountered was the Black-hooded Parakeet from the Alan Devoe count. Was it just an escape or could it be from that wild population apparently established in Ontario?

SUMMARY OF AREA CHRISTMAS COUNTS AND WATERFOWL COUNT

Date	Count	Abbreviation	Total Species	Approx. Numbers	Observers	Party Hours
19 Dec 81	Schenectady	SNCBC	59	14,500	33	92
19 Dec 81	Alan Devoe	ADCBC	67	8,474	30	103
19 Dec 81	Cobleskill	COCBC	43	4,292	27	
23 Dec 81	Coxsackie	CXCBC	61	8,394	12	37
26 Dec 81	So. Rennselaer	SRCBC	58	24,701	41	
31 Dec 81	Fort Plains	FPCBC	43	2,739	12	64
2 Jan 82	Troy	TRCBC	51	7,891	20	52
10 Jan 82	Waterfowl	NYSWC	8	2,724	12+	28

With 67 species, Alan Devoe set a new record for themselves, Schenectady tied their record set in 1977 and Cobleskill celebrated its first count.

The influx of numerous northern species indicated reduced food supplies

through the winter, but rumors of Barred Owls literally falling out of the trees and in broad daylight is a bit disturbing. One such specimen from Glenmont now rests in the Columbia-Greene Community College collection. Disappointing also was the failure to find any Barn Owls on a 15 February search on the Cox-sackie Flats. Lower numbers of wintering kinglets was another negative noted, and no hardy Hermit Thrushes remained around this winter, although a catbird was found for a Christmas count once again.

The reduced food supplies apparently made feeder activity of interest to more than just birders. A Starling at a feeder in Niskayuna became a holiday meal for a Cooper's Hawk on Valentine's Day. A well-fed female Sharp-shinned Hawk fared less well, however, when a Cobleskill feeder tender fired and felled her. Bill Cleveland, the local Christmas count compiler, tactfully took some action concerning this inappropriate deed, and also had the resourcefulness to ship the frozen specimen to Columbia-Greene Community College.

Duck hunters from Embough Bay in Catskill noted high numbers of Pintails, the presence of unusual species including Oldsquaw and Bufflehead, but reduced numbers of Canvasbacks and teal in the 1981 season. Reports of Lincoln's Sparrow and Whistling Swan were dismissed by the records committee as probable immature Swamp Sparrow and Mute Swan based on insufficient supporting evidence.

Good Birding and may the bluebirds blissfully breeding in your backyard afford affection to your avian Atlas adventures.

Contributors: Ken Able (KA), V. & B. Able, Douglas Ayres, Roberta Bernstein, Rachael Brody, Arlene & Tom Brown (A & TB), Bob Budliger (BB), Bill Cook, Juanita Cook (JC), Bill Cleveland, Rena Dodd, Kate Dunham, Peter Feinberg, R. Frazier (RF), Barbara & Hugo Gardina (B & HG), M. & A. Giddings (M. & AG), Bob Goodrich (BG), Elisabeth Grace, Andrew & Richard Guthrie (RPG), Paul Hebert (PH), Philip Ingalls, Ron LaForce (RL), Betty Laros, William Lee (WL), Elaine Mansell, Tom Palmer (TP), Elsie Powell, Jon Powell (JP), Alice Ross (AR), Walt Sabin (WS), Shirley Shadow (SS), Linda & Scott Terrill (L & ST), L. Thomas (LT), M. & B. Ulmer, Peter Worthington (PW), Robert Yunick (RY), all of the Dial-A-Bird reporters and CBC participants.

LOONS-DUCKS: Great Blue Heron: one Collins L 9 Dec; one Fort Plains 24 Dec. Mute Swan: one CXCBC on Hudson R (BB). Canada Goose 63 SNCBC; 106 ADCBC; 200 CXCBC; 600 TRCBC; 346 NYSWC; six other reports total perhaps a thousand birds. Brant: three NYSWC. Snow Goose: one ADCBC; several Tomhannock Res 5 Dec; a blue morph sighted in Cohoes on 28 Feb may be an escape (PH). Mallard: three SNCBC; 99 ADCBC; two COCBC; 228 CXCBC; 110 SRCBC; 14 FPCBC; 369 TRCBC; 888 NYSWC. Black Duck: 11 SNCBC; 24 ADCBC; 278 CXCBC; 17 SRCBC; 46 TRCBC; 477 NYSWC. Pintail: four CXCBC; nine NYSWC; a report of 300 on Embough Bay 12-13 Dec with equal numbers of Blacks and Mallards being amazing if accurate (JP). Wood Duck: reported from Ghent and Hudson 13-14 Dec. Redhead: four Cohoes Fall, Mohawk R 19 Jan (L & ST); five there 25 Jan (SS); 12 there 11 Feb (KA, ST). Ring-necked Duck: Hudson 13 Dec (A & TB). Canvasback: 40 NYSWC; 500 Embough Bay 8 Jan; 20 there 10 Jan. Greater Scaup: one TRCBC. Lesser Scaup: one SRCBC; two Cohoes 16 Jan. Com. Goldeneye: one ADCBC; seven TRCBC; 18 NYSWC; one Cohoes 19 Jan; two New Baltimore 28 Feb. Oldsquaw: one ADCBC; one SRCBC. Com. Merganser: two ADCBC; three CXCBC; 50 SRCBC; 11 FPCBC; 40 TRCBC; 78 NYSWC; 50 Cohoes 19 Jan; eight New Baltimore 21-28 Feb displaying courting behavior. Red-breasted Merganser: Tomhannock Res 5 Dec.

HAWKS-ALCIDS: Goshawk: two SNCBC; two COCBC; one SRCBC; seven other reports

from Chatham Jan-Feb; Coxsackie 15 Feb, Colonie 8 Feb, Guilderland 13 Feb and Albany 20 Feb. Sharp-shinned Hawk: one SNCBC; two ADCBC; five CXCBC; two SRCBC; three TRCBC; one taking a Starling from a Saratoga feeder; four other reports from Charlton 26 Dec, Burnt Hills 23 Jan, Ghent 3 Jan and Cobleskill feeder 30 Jan. Cooper's Hawk: one SNCBC; one ADCBC; one COCBC; one FPCBC; one TRCBC; four other reports from Albany Pine Bush 10 Feb, Niskayuna feeder 14 Feb, Coxsackie 15 Feb and Guilderland picnic table 18 Feb. Red-tailed Hawk: 63 SNCBC; 52 ADCBC; 12 COCBC; 28 CXCBC; 81 SRCBC; 17 FPCBC; 42 TRCBC. Red-shouldered Hawk: one SNCBC. Rough-legged Hawk: nine SNCBC; seven ADCBC; two COCBC; 14 CXCBC; six SRCBC; three FPCBC; one TRCBC; 16 max Coxsackie Flats 13 Feb; one banded there 15 Feb; seven other reports. Bald Eagle: one SRCBC; one adult near Carlisle, Schoharie Co. 15 Jan (RY). Marsh Hawk: two ADCBC; one CXCBC; one Columbia Co. near Hudson R 19 Dec; Hudson 3-7 Jan; two Coxsackie Flats 28 Feb. Merlin: one Ghent 7 Dec, a late date (JC). Am. Kestrel: eight SNCBC; 14 ADCBC; eight COCBC; 21 CXCBC; 18 SRCBC; nine FPCBC; four TRCBC; down in numbers on Coxsackie Flats (RPG). Ruffed Grouse: three SNCBC; 12 ADCBC; three COCBC; two CXCBC; eight SRCBC; two FPCBC; 12 TRCBC. Ring-necked Pheasant: three ADCBC; three CXCBC; 13 SRCBC. Turkey: 29 ADCBC; one CXCBC; pair feeding Duaneburg 14-17 Jan, hen with 14 young Craryville cornfield 13 Feb; pair Central Bridge 16 Jan; several other reports from Altamont, Acra and Kinderhook. Com. Snipe: one SNCBC. Glaucous Gull: a first-year bird at Colonie made the TRCBC; a second-year bird was there 10 Feb. Iceland Gull: two Colonie 10 Jan (WL). Great Black-backed Gull: one ADCBC; five CXCBC; five SRCBC; 15 TRCBC. LESSER BLACK-BACKED GULL: a third-year bird at Colonie 5 Dec (WS)-6 Dec (RL); a first-year bird at Cohoes Fall 19 Jan (ST). Herring Gull: 177 SNCBC; 35 ADCBC; 39 CXCBC; 19 SRCBC; one FPCBC; 194 TRCBC. Ring-billed Gull: 44 SNCBC; one ADCBC; 33 CXCBC; 15 SRCBC; vacated Colonie by 19 Jan (RY). IVORY GULL: adult male Coleman feeder Saratoga Springs 14 Jan, photographed and banded 15 Jan (RY).

PIGEONS-WOODPECKERS: Rock Dove: 582 SNCBC; 432 ADCBC; 380 COCBC; 264 CXCBC; 2463 SRCBC; 349 FPCBC; 1405 TRCBC. Mourning Dove: 538 SNCBC; 1025 ADCBC; 272 COCBC; 595 CXCBC; 1132 SRCBC; 161 FPCBC; 217 TRCBC. Black-hooded Parakeet: one ADCBC. Screech Owl: four SNCBC; one ADCBC; one CXCBC; five SRCBC; three TRCBC; one Colonie 28 Jan; one Bramanville, Schoharie Co. thru; one whistled mid-day in bright sunshine Coeymans 28 Feb. Great Horned Owl: three SNCBC; two ADCBC; six COCBC; five SRCBC; one TRCBC; three other reports from Niskayuna, Rotterdam and Ghent. Snowy Owl: one FPCBC; one Niskayuna 16 Dec; one perched on roof in Colonie 6 Feb; one Altamont 20 Feb. Barred Owl: one SNCBC; one ADCBC; one road kill Glenmont 21 Jan; one Rotterdam 29 Jan. Short-eared Owl: one Fort Plains 1 Jan; three Coxsackie Flats 13 Feb. Saw-whet Owl: one Niskayuna 15 Jan; one road kill Athens 10 Jan. Belted Kingfisher: five SNCBC; one ADCBC; one COCBC; two CXCBC; three SRCBC; four TRCBC; one New Baltimore 4 Jan and 4 Feb. Com. Flicker: nine SNCBC; eight ADCBC; 11 CXCBC; six SRCBC; seven FPCBC; three TRCBC; four reports thru Feb. Pileated Woodpecker: five SNCBC; seven ADCBC, three COCBC; one CXCBC; two SRCBC; three TRCBC; at least 13 other reports. Red-bellied Woodpecker: one CXCBC (RPG); one Scotch Bush, Montgomery Co thru Jan and Feb (TP); one Vosberg's Marsh 15 Feb (BG); one Greendale 23 Feb (A & TB). Red-headed Woodpecker: two ADCBC (B & HG); one Rotterdam feeder 12 Jan-1 Feb. Yellow-bellied Sapsucker: one ADCBC; one SRCBC. Hairy Woodpecker: 45 SNCBC new max; 33 ADCBC; 30 COCBC; eight CXCBC; 36 SRCBC; 17 FPCBC; 14 TRCBC. Downy Woodpecker: 113 SNCBC; 102 ADCBC; 54 COCBC; 44 CXCBC; 133 SRCBC; 41 FPCBC; 68 TRCBC.

FLYCATCHERS-STARLINGS: E. Phoebe: one ADCBC New Baltimore (RPG). Horned Lark: 12 SNCBC; 833 ADCBC; 31 COCBC; 240 CXCBC; 127 SRCBC; 215 FPCBC; 101 TRCBC. Blue Jay: 512 SNCBC; 360 ADCBC; 288 COCBC; 133 CXCBC; 549 SRCBC; 87 FPCBC; 312 TRCBC. Com. Raven: Berlin, Rensselaer Co. 7 Dec (AR). Com. Crow: 1443

SNCBC; 431 ADCBC; 246 COCBC; 186 CXCBC; 1070 SRCBC; 48 FPCBC; 269 TRCBC. Black-capped Chickadee: 805 SNCBC; 309 ADCBC; 444 COCBC; 151 CXCBC; 633 SRCBC; 172 FPCBC; 379 TRCBC. **BOREAL CHICKADEE**: one came daily to a feeder in Hagadorn Mills, Saratoga Co 13 Feb (*vide* Bob Kirker). Tufted Titmouse: 64 ADCBC; 21 COCBC; 28 CXCBC; 74 SRCBC; seven FPCBC; 36 TRCBC. White-breasted Nuthatch: 87 SNCBC; 53 ADCBC; 54 COCBC; 33 CXCBC; 121 SRCBC; 21 FPCBC; 49 TRCBC. Red-breasted Nuthatch: ten SNCBC; three ADCBC; four COCBC; four CXCBC; one SRCBC; one FPCBC; five TRCBC; scarce compared to last year's invasion (RY). Brown Creeper: four SNCBC; one ADCBC; two COCBC; three CXCBC; nine SRCBC; one FPCBC; three TRCBC; becoming more common locally in the winter (RPG). Winter Wren: one CXCBC. Carolina Wren: one CXCBC; one Glenville feeder 16-21 Jan (RY). Mockingbird: 55 SNCBC; 37 ADCBC; one COCBC; 36 CXCBC; 65 SRCBC; two FPCBC; 29 TRCBC. Gray Catbird: one SNCBC. Brown Thrasher: one Amsterdam 2 Jan (TP); one Niskayuna 11 Jan (RY). Am. Robin: 33 SNCBC; 135 ADCBC; ten COCBC; 373 CXCBC; 206 SRCBC; three FPCBC; seven TRCBC. E. Bluebird: seven SNCBC; 32 ADCBC; three CXCBC; eight SRCBC; two Ravena 24 Dec-16 Jan; male investigating house Central Bridge 27 Feb; four Unionville 1-26 Feb; six Voorheesville 6-14 Feb; one male, two females Acra 25 Feb; 21 more reports include Charlton, Altamont, Earlton and Castleton. Golden-crowned Kinglet: one CXCBC; Castleton 1-3 Jan. Ruby-crowned Kinglet: one Cobleskill feeder 17 Jan; one Cohoes 15 Feb. **BOHEMIAN WAXWING**: 40 near W. Charlton 12-19 Jan (RY, mob). Cedar Waxwing: one ADCBC; 60 CXCBC; four SRCBC; only four other reports indicate lower numbers locally this winter. No. Shrike: one SNCBC; two CXCBC; one Guilderland Center thru (KA); one Amsterdam 27 Dec (TP); imm Albany 1 Jan; adult Coxsackie 5 Feb; one Glenville 9 Dec (PW). Starling: 6813 SNCBC new max; 1248 ADCBC; 497 COCBC; 1341 CXCBC; 14,216 SRCBC; 356 FPCBC; 1388 TRCBC.

VIREOS-WARBLEDERS: Yellow-rumped Warbler: one Central Bridge feeder 1-8 Jan; one Catskill 10 Jan. Pine Warbler: one Colonie feeder 22 Dec-17 Jan (LT).

WEAVERS-SPARROWS: House Sparrow: 859 SNCBC; 838 ADCBC; 523 COCBC; 327 CXCBC; 813 SRCBC; 141 FPCBC; 845 TRCBC. E. Meadowlark: one SNCBC; 25 ADCBC; two COCBC; nine CXCBC; one FPCBC. Red-winged Blackbird: one SNCBC; eight ADCBC; four SRCBC; one TRCBC; female Rensselaer 19 Feb (RPG). Rusty Blackbird: two males and two females at Hagadorn Mills 2-12 Jan (KA). Com. Grackle: two SNCBC; one ADCBC; one SRCBC; Castleton Dec-Jan; Rensselaer feeder 23 Feb. Brown-headed Cowbird: 14 SNCBC; 19 ADCBC; six CXCBC; 160 SRCBC; ten FPCBC. Cardinal: 257 SNCBC new max; 164 ADCBC; 35 COCBC; 25 CXCBC; 157 SRCBC; 23 FPCBC; 86 TRCBC. **DICKCISSEL**: one FPCBC at Palatine Bridge feeder 24 Nov-20 Jan (RF); one Berne feeder 25 Nov-17 Jan (KA, mob). Evening Grosbeak: 261 SNCBC; 364 ADCBC; 515 COCBC; 78 CXCBC; 619 SRCBC; 323 FPCBC; 169 TRCBC; ten other reports total 400 individuals; two banded with lower numbers at Jenny L. Purple Finch: seven SNCBC; 12 ADCBC; 46 COCBC; one CXCBC; nine SRCBC; four FPCBC; six TRCBC. House Finch: 250 SNCBC; 273 ADCBC; 137 COCBC; 104 CXCBC; 274 SRCBC; 35 FPCBC; 190 TRCBC; Pine Grosbeak: 69 SNCBC; 81 ADCBC; 122 COCBC; five CXCBC; 155 SRCBC; 14 FPCBC; 127 TRCBC; nearly 30 other reports attest to widespread invasion; max 20 Fuera Bush 20 Dec. Hoary Redpoll: female Altamont 14-28 Feb (ST). Com. Redpoll: 210 SNCBC; five ADCBC; 43 COCBC; 223 SRCBC; three FPCBC; 136 TRCBC; 14+ reports with max of 60 East Greenbush 12 Feb; one banded Schenectady 13 Feb. Pine Siskin: 45 SNCBC; one ADCBC; two COCBC; 20 TRCBC; nine other reports but considered scarce with max of eight Burnt Hills 1-15 Feb. **EUROPEAN GOLDFINCH**: one Charlton feeder 10 Jan (RY). Am. Goldfinch: 192 SNCBC; 147 ADCBC; 100 COCBC; 39 CXCBC; 320 SRCBC; 36 FPCBC; 102 TRCBC; perhaps our most abundant feeder bird (RY). Red Crossbill: two SNCBC; one SRCBC; five in flight Jenny L 5 Dec; one Malta feeder mid-Jan; small flock Delmar 27 Jan; one Altamont 10 Feb. White-winged Crossbill: six Burnt Hills 21 Jan (SS); Hudson 17-28 Feb (A & TB); one unconfirmed Galway L 17 Feb (RL). Rufous-sided Towhee: one COCBC; one uncon-

firmed near Schaghticoke 1 Feb. Savannah Sparrow: one FPCBC. Dark-eyed Junco: 171 SNCBC; 445 ADCBC; 73 COCBC; 125 CXCBC; 252 SRCBC; 22 FPCBC; 166 TRCBC; one "Oregon" subspecies Schenectady 23-30 Jan (PW). Tree Sparrow: 256 SNCBC; 345 ADCBC; 165 COCBC; 123 CXCBC; 359 SRCBC; 137 FPCBC; 357 TRCBC; a male banded at New Baltimore 24 Nov '78 was recaptured 23 Jan '82. Field Sparrow: one SNCBC; one CXCBC; one SRCBC; after six years Bill Gorman's winter visitor did not return. White-crowned Sparrow: one FPCBC; Chatham Center 1-13 Feb (M & AG). White-throated Sparrow: 67 SNCBC; 102 ADCBC; 24 COCBC; 308 CXCBC; 44 SRCBC; 20 FPCBC; 35 TRCBC. Swamp Sparrow: one ADCBC; four CXCBC; one TRCBC; Ghent thru Jan (B & HG). Song Sparrow: 30 SNCBC; 17 ADCBC; nine COCBC; 14 CXCBC; 23 SRCBC; three FPCBC; 17 TRCBC. Lapland Longspur: two ADCBC; two CXCBC; one Cocksackie 17 Jan; three there 13 Feb (RPG). Snow Bunting: 100 SNCBC; 105 ADCBC; 47 COCBC; 61 CXCBC; 15 SRCBC; 479 FPCBC; 14 other reports with max of 2000 Cocksackie 28 Feb.

Remember Dial-A-Bird for Hudson-Mohawk area bird news at 518-377-9600.

Columbia-Greene Community College, Box 1000, Hudson, New York 12534

REGION 9 — DELAWARE-HUDSON

EDWARD D. TREACY

December was cold, and January was impossible. Together they produced one of the coldest winters of the century. Temperatures in January rarely went above the freezing mark, and the northern portions of the region and higher elevations remained below zero for extended periods of time. Three snowstorms during the third week of December dropped at least two feet in the Catskills, and subsequent storms almost every other day in mid-January added one or two more feet to that already on the ground. February brought a warming trend, and by late in that month the ice on the Hudson had broken. Lakes, however, were still frozen, and would probably remain so until April.

Bird populations in the areas hit by the Gypsy Moth last summer were predictably low, largely due to the paucity of fruit and seed. Birders on the Bear Mountain-Harriman Park Christmas Count hiked something like eight miles over a period of eight hours and found only 18 individuals of five species. Another count in similar circumstances found only 14 individuals of four species. Elsewhere conditions were better. The northern finch invasion, observed last fall, continued into the winter, and although all species were well-represented, they were not in numbers. Had the Federation Waterfowl Count been done in December the numbers would have been much larger. By the time of the target date January 10, most of the lakes and streams were closed by ice. The count was good, but not even close to the highs of two years ago. Mute Swans continue their phenomenal increase, and the numbers of wintering Canvasbacks are nothing short of extraordinary. The 5,103 individual ducks counted was the second highest count in more than twenty-five years, and the 20 species realized was the third highest (the usual average is sixteen).

Rarities included in this report are: White-fronted Goose, Osprey, King Rail,

Sora, California Gull, Lesser Black-backed Gull, Black-legged Kittiwake, Boreal Chickadee, several warblers, Rose-breasted Grosbeak, European Goldfinch, Dickcissel, Sharp-tailed Sparrow, Chipping Sparrow, and Harris' Sparrow.

Corrigendum: The reference to breeding Gadwall in the Region 9 report of the Fall 1981 edition (Vol. XXXI, No. 4, p. 261) was reported inaccurately. The statement should read: "Gadwall: Rockland had its second breeding record when a pair with three grown young were discovered at Piermont Pier on 29-30 July by Robert F. Deed. The first record was made by Donald S. Deed on 19 July 1971."

Contributors and observers cited: Al Brayton, Tom Burke, Robert F. Deed, Stan DeOrsey, Valerie Freer, John Guarnaccia, Jim and Mary Key, Ken and Joan McDermott, Vaughn Morrison, Frank Murphy, Jack Orth, Eleanor Pink, Brian Schiefer (BSe), Benton Seguin (BSe), Selden Spencer, John Tramontano, Edward D. Treacy.

Abbreviations used: The first four or five letters of each county; BWCC—Bronx-Westchester Christmas Count 27 Dec; FWC—Federation Waterfowl Count 10 Jan; GSCC—Greenwich-Stamford Christmas Count (includes parts of Westchester) 20 Dec; JBCC—John Burroughs Christmas Count of Ulster 19 Dec; MCC—Mearns Christmas Count (Orange) 19 Dec; RCC—Rockland Christmas Count 20 Dec; SCC—Sullivan Christmas Count 19 Dec; WCC—Waterman Christmas Count (Dutchess) 29 Dec; CB—Cornwall Bay; MC—Marshlands Conservancy, Rye; PL—Playland, Rye; USMA—U.S. Military Academy, West Point.

LOONS—DUCKS: Com. Loon: JBCC had a phenomenal count of 20 (no details). Only a few singles reported elsewhere. Red-throated Loon: the BWCC had two; one in the harbor at MC continued there thru 2 Jan. Horned Grebe: RCC has had one on the last three counts after a seven year absence. Great Blue Heron: peaked in the PL area with 20 on 9 Jan; withdrew from the region almost completely after that date. Black-crowned Night Heron: last at PL 27 Dec. WHITE-FRONTED GOOSE: two adults of the Greenland race carefully studied on the Maple Moore Golf Course in Harrison 26 Dec (TB, JG). Mute Swan: continues its extraordinary increase. FWC had 225, up from 36 of last year. 65-70 were at Stony Pt. Cove on 1 Feb as soon as the ice broke. More than 100 wintered just below the Dutch Co. line on the east side of the Hudson—an unusual concentration so far north. Canada Goose: continues its increase. More than 1,200 on MCC and the 895 on the RCC was their second highest count in 35 years. Snow Goose: 11 on MCC was their first winter record. 100 over Hudson R near IBM, P'kpsie 19 Dec; and five more flying up river 27-28 Feb. Single birds reported from West and Sull during Dec. Gadwall: unreported on FWC before 1979; as many as 12 this year. Pintail: four at Stony Pt on RCC was the third time for that count. The last time was in 1954. A single male was obs regularly on Rio Res in Sull thru Jan and Feb. Am. Wigeon: a good number of 162 were at Rye for the BWCC. Ring-necked Duck: 53 were on Kensico Res on the GSCC. Canvasback: excellent numbers of last fall were driven out by ice but returned with the thaw. RCC had a record high of 723. This was down from the more than 2,000 reported from the area 18 Dec, and the increase to more than 4,700 on 31 Dec. 3,100 were on the Hudson at Newburgh for the MCC, and although excellent, was far below the more than 7,500 there in early Dec (BSe). Greater Scaup: more than 4,000 off PL on 13 Dec. Com. Goldeneye: continues to improve from lows of several years ago—203 off Rye on 27 Dec. Bufflehead: MCC had 52, up from the 12 of last year. Ruddy Duck: another poor season on the lower Hudson. The best count was 81 there 29 Dec. Hooded Merganser: MCC had 17, up from three last year. Com. Merganser: the 838 on MCC was four times their average but down from the 1,041 of last year. Red-breasted Merganser: 26 on the RCC at Stony Pt was only the twelfth time in 35 counts.

HAWKS—ALCIDS: Turkey Vulture: a nightly roost of about 15 birds discovered in Dec at Pound Ridge probably accounted for the scattered reports for the season. Migrants were

observed returning in early Mar. Goshawk: more reports than usual and well scattered thru the region. Several were reported working bird feeders. A pair of imm Goshawks attempted to catch a Gray Squirrel at Pamela Bruns' feeder near Saugerties 12 Feb. At least seven others were reported. One caught a Cottontail at Jack Orth's home in Wawarsing and after leaving the kill, was replaced by a Red-tailed Hawk that finished it. Sharp-shinned Hawk: the usual two or three from central Dutch working bird feeders. Two late Dec reports from the Rye area, and at least seven or eight other reports thru the region. Cooper's Hawk: one took a Mourning Dove at Florence Germond's feeder on 22 Dec in Clinton Corners, and at least three others were reported from Dutch. Red-tailed Hawk: 37 on RCC was an excellent count, as were the counts in the northern part of the region. Red-shouldered Hawk: two reports: one 13 Dec at MC and another on MCC. Rough-legged Hawk: another good year. Most counts produced one or two. Bald Eagle: several reports of wintering birds in the mid-Hudson region. An adult was at Stony Pt 19 Dec, and two imm at Iona 15 Jan. The DEC winter survey totaled a max of 17 in the Sull Co reservoirs area. Only a few of these were observed at any one time by most birders. Marsh Hawk: more than usual—reported by at least five correspondents. Four on MCC were unusual, and five were at Piermont Marsh on the RCC. OSPREY: one at RCC at West Nyack Dump, and one at Mongaup Res 2 Jan; undoubtedly due to open water. Merlin: most unusual in winter—one at Red Oaks Mill 1 Jan (JMK); another seen several times at Purchase in Dec (Jim Utter, Brad Hurley). Am. Kestrel: numbers down. RCC had only five as did the GSCC. Ruffed Grouse: numbers continue up 15 on RCC; eight were observed "budding" high in the trees at Pound Ridge Res 16 Jan. Good numbers elsewhere in appropriate habitat. Turkey: continues to increase. Several reports of birds at the USMA reservation where they have not been previously reported, including reports from West and Dutch, and a huge flock of 40 in the Cooper Lake area of Woodstock dur Dec. KING RAIL: one well observed and described by Al Brayton 25 Dec, at Kingston Pt. SORA: one observed at Kingston Pt 30 Dec by AB while looking for the previous King Rail. Am. Coot: a flock of 80 at Rockland L 27 Dec was soon frozen out and only a few remained feeding on handouts from people in the park. Am. Golden Plover: last report two at Stewart Airport 2 Dec. Ruddy Turnstone: at least five seen regularly at Milton Pt Rye during Jan; peaked to nine on 6 Feb. Am. Woodcock: singles reported at Mamaroneck's Taylor Pond on the BWCC and at MC 17 Jan. The latter was displaying on 15 Feb, the earliest date recorded for this behavior. Com. Snipe: one Rockland L 10 Jan and another at Kingston 14 Jan were unusual in the sub-freezing cold. Purple Sandpiper: at least 100 were feeding on the rocks off Milton Pt Rye thru Dec and Jan. They were in the company of a dozen Dunlins and several Ruddy Turnstones. Glaucous Gull: a second-year bird at Rockland L 26 Dec, and another at the Haverstraw dump 1 Feb and again 14 Feb. Iceland Gull: two Haverstraw dump, 31 Dec—one was of the *kumlieni* subspecies. Another of this race was at MC 7 Feb. A first-year bird was at the IBM plant in the Town of Ulster 7 Dec. Great Black-backed Gull: the 115 on RCC was down from the peak of 458 in 1977. This is true of numbers throughout the region, but the population is still excellent. LESSER BLACK-BACKED GULL: one at Grassy Pt Marina 28 Dec was the fourth record for Rock. The Harbor L Park bird in Mamaroneck disappeared in mid-Dec, but returned for the BWCC. It left again when the area froze, but returned again when the ice left on 21 Feb. CALIFORNIA GULL: again at Rockland L for RCC—last there 12 Feb for the fourth winter. Bonaparte's Gull: 35 at the sewer outlet south of Piermont Pier on 10 Dec, increased to 30 by 27 Dec and 50 by 29 Dec. Only others were four at MC 9 Dec and a single at PL on BWCC. BLACK-LEGGED KITTIWAKE: an imm at Cornwall Bay 6 Dec was well-observed and described by KJM and seen independently by BSe and JT. This is a first for Orange Co. and the fourth record for the mid-Hudson region.

PIGEONS—WOODPECKERS: Mourning Dove: a phenomenal 1,388 on MCC and 586 on JBCC. Screech Owl: tape recorders are playing havoc with the records for this species. RCC had 15; ten of them responding to tapes. A few years ago three or four on a count was to be expected. Great Horned Owl: the 17 on GSCC probably made their presence known

in response to tapes. A pair at MC 27 Dec were quite vocal for the BWCC counters. Bared Owl: fewer each year. One was at MC 6 Dec and again 3 and 10 Jan. Most counts had one or none. Long-eared Owl: Rockland had its eighth record in this century when one was obs 16 Jan at Tallman Mt. Short-eared Owl: one at MC 25 Dec and a max of eight at Galeville Airport 12 Feb. Saw-whet Owl: one MC 15 Feb—another found dead in Rye 17 Feb. An injured one found near CB 5 Feb is being rehabilitated at the Nature Museum in Cornwall. One found dead along Rt 9G in Dutch 24 Feb was an adult in good plumage and flesh. SCC had its first ever when one was spotted by seven-year old Dan Pugliani along Cold Spring Rd. in Hartwood. Pileated Woodpecker: the downtown Nyack bird of last fall was present thru the winter. Red-bellied Woodpecker: continues its slow increase. Most Christmas counts reported one or more. RCC had six and GSCC had 26. MCC had five and at least four others were at feeders outside the count area in Orange.

FLYCATCHERS—STARLINGS: E. Phoebe: last report one at Eldred 1 Dec. Horned Lark: exc. numbers thru period in farmland, especially on recently manured fields. Flocks of up to 200 were not uncommon, and several Christmas Counts reported numbers above 300. Fish Crow: continues its slow increase. One can expect it now at several locations along the Hudson. Black-capped Chickadee: excellent numbers. Most feeders had a dozen or more, and some have many more. Tom Mutchler of Forestburg counted 26 at one time in Feb and 40 at one time in early Mar. **BOREAL CHICKADEE:** the last of a string of sightings in Rye that began in Oct was at Greenwood Union Cem on 12 Dec. One was at Wanasink L in Sull 21 Feb, and three or four were photographed on the summit of Slide Mt. on 6 Feb (Jan Maas). White-breasted Nuthatch: 503 on WCC was extraordinary. Numbers excellent everywhere. Carolina Wren: good reports in Dec, but very few since the extreme low temperatures of Jan. Most reports along the Hudson as were the eight on RCC. Mockingbird: RCC reported 147 and GSCC had a record 267. Fantastic numbers when you consider the bird was absent before the late fifties. Gray Catbird: RCC had a fine count of five—no word on their survival. Am. Robin: wintered in good numbers. Maximums were 37 at Rockland L 31 Dec, and several Dutch flocks of more than 50 in Jan and Feb. Hermit Thrush: only report one at Suffern 26 Dec. E. Bluebird: the GSCC produced 91, and WCC had 19. Many scattered reports of one, two or three birds through the period. These numbers reflect the efforts of the Bluebird Trail builders in the area. Ruby-crowned Kinglet: the 15 on RCC was a record high for that count. Water Pipit: only report 20 at Stewart Airport 2 Dec. Cedar Waxwing: JBCC reported the high of 269; not many reported elsewhere. No. Shrike: numbers down from the highs of the last few seasons. At least five reports, mostly in Dec. Loggerhead Shrike: one at Wanasink L, Sull 6 Mar. Starling: Rock continues to hoard this species with an RCC count of 12,640, a record high. At least 10,000 were roosting under the Tappan Zee Bridge and in the nearby Grand View and Piermont Marsh area.

VIREOS—WARBLERS: **BLACK-AND-WHITE WARBLER:** Peter & Ellen Derven had a long close look at one on the Iona I Causeway on 28 Dec. The only other winter Rock record was near Suffern a year ago. **TENNESSEE WARBLER:** one at MC on the BWCC might have been mistaken for an Orange-crowned but that it sang several times (John Guarnaccia *et al.*). **YELLOW-RUMPED WARBLER:** one at Kingston Pt 2 Jan and two on the JBCC. Both records were at the northern limit of the region. **BLACK-THROATED GREEN WARBLER:** an adult male was at PL 5 Dec with an injured left wing. **YELLOW-BREASTED CHAT:** one was at Taylor Pond, Mamaroneck on the BWCC. Another was at the Cornwall Bay area on the MCC (VM).

WEAVERS—SPARROWS: House Sparrow: numbers down from years ago, but seems to be stable. JBCC had an actual count of 1,000 which was exceptionally high and more than twice the average of other counts. E. Meadowlark: continues to decrease as in recent years. An unusual count of 18 at Millerton and 17 at Amenia on the Housatonic Christmas Count 20 Dec. Only a few elsewhere. Blackbirds: red-wings and grackles arrived right on time during the third week of Feb. Rusty Blackbird: one at Iona I. 9 Jan and four at Armonk's Nichol's Preserve on the GSCC. Another visited the Rye Nature Center feeders on 27 Dec.

ROSE-BREADED GROSBEAK: one was on the RCC and studied by five observers. **DICKCISSEL:** only report was one visiting a Larchmont feeder from 7 Dec-26 Jan. Evening Grosbeak: reported in small flocks everywhere. Max was more than 200 around a feeder next door to the Forestburg Town Hall 30 Jan—a fantastic sight (EDT). Purple Finch: continues to decline, only a few reports, and then only a few each time. House Finch: continues to increase. WCC reported 216 compared to only one Purple Finch. JBCC reported 367 to only 15 Purple Finches. Pine Grosbeak: an excellent season. Most counts had a few. Max 26 on the Ramsey Christmas Count at Suffern 26 Dec. Twenty-three were at Pound Ridge 10 Jan—inc to 29 by Feb. Forty were at Pawling 11 Feb. and 22 at Millbrook 28 Feb. Com. Redpoll: small flocks regularly reported along roadsides. Maximum 100 at Galeville 20 Feb and two flocks each with about 40 near Rio Res 30 Jan. 100-150 were at Monticello Airport 9 Jan. **EUROPEAN GOLDFINCH:** an adult was visiting a feeder in Mamaroneck from 11-23 Feb (Claudia Neff). Tom Burke saw it 13 Feb. Crossbills: both species represented, but many more White-wings than Red. At least four reports of Red in flocks of less than ten. Five reports of White-wings in flocks of more than 20. **SHARP-TAILED SPARROW:** two were still hanging on at MC as late as 25 Dec. One was there for the BWCC. Dark-eyed Junco: numbers good thru period. One of the *oreganus* subspecies was well-studied at Blauvelt for the first time on the RCC. **CHIPPING SPARROW:** one was visiting a Rye feeder on 13 Dec, and another appeared at Vaughn Morrison's feeder in Wappinger's Falls 15 Dec and stayed thru the rest of the period. White-crowned Sparrow: one on RCC in north Rock for several weeks in Dec was the tenth time for that count. Another wintered at a Blooming Grove feeder in Orange. **HARRIS' SPARROW:** an imm appeared on 16 Dec at Trixie Strauss' feeder in Amenia and remained thru the period. Lapland Longspur: as many as ten were wintering at the Warren Sod Farm near Pine I. Snow Bunting: at least five reports. Max about 150 in each of two flocks in Dutch during mid-Feb. Several hundred at Warren Sod Farm 26 Feb.

Pellwood Lake, Highland Falls, New York 10928

REGION 10 — MARINE

JOSEPH A. DiCOSTANZO

The winter started slowly with much of December warmer than normal, but it turned cold in time for the first Christmas Bird Counts. The first two days of the period, 19-20 December, were the coldest days of the month (all temperatures from New York City). Counts after this first weekend experienced milder weather. From 21 December thru 7 January, the daily mean slipped below normal only once, on 3 January, and then only by one degree. On 8 January the big freeze began. For the next three weeks the mean temperature climbed to normal only once, on 20 January. On 11 January the temperature dropped to a mean of 11, twenty-one degrees below normal. Over the next few days it warmed slightly, but in exchange we received over nine inches of snow. From then until 29 January, there were a series of cold waves at roughly four-day intervals: 24 below normal on 18 January, 19 below normal on 22 January and 15 below normal on 27 January. On the nights of 17 and 18 January the temperature plummeted to zero in the city. In late January the Jamaica Bay Wildlife Refuge looked like arctic tundra. After this, the weather turned mild for the rest of the season with February averaging nearly two degrees above normal.

The Montauk count maintained its position as the highest count in the state, but just barely. At 126 species, four below the last two years, Montauk was only one above Central Suffolk. Most of the rest of the counts were about average or above in total species: Brooklyn—113, Captree—115, Northern Nassau—107, Queens—105, Smithtown—88 and Southern Nassau—119. Most counts registered above normal numbers of many land birds, but the Central Suffolk counters really outdid themselves, setting all time count highs for an amazing 23 species. It would be interesting to know how these species fared during the January freeze, particularly Carolina Wren, Mockingbird, American Robin, Cedar Waxwing and Cardinal. In our area the severe winter weather usually occurs after the Christmas Bird Count period. Anyone for a Valentine's Day Bird Count?

Some general observations follow in more or less checklist order. Following a poor fall migration, loons and grebes were scarce on most counts. Perhaps the mild weather in December had not yet frozen them out of the interior? Virtually all hawks, except Rough-legs, were reported in good to excellent numbers. Wintering American Coots appear to be continuing a several year decline on Long Island. Is this also true in other areas or have they merely shifted to someplace else? Were white-winged gulls really as scarce as the reports received would indicate, or are observers just reporting them less? Snowy Owls evidently moved south in the vanguard of the January freeze. How else do we explain their appearance in a number of unlikely places on 9 January? I think it would be stretching things a bit to attribute these sightings to the weekend birder effect. In many places chickadees and titmice surpassed even last winter's excellent numbers. Countering a trend of increasing numbers in recent winters, only two chats were reported this winter.

Rarities were few and far between: Common Murre, Pileated Woodpecker, Varied Thrush and Harris' Sparrow.

Dates of Christmas Bird Counts: Montauk, Queens and Staten Island—19 Dec; Captree—20 Dec; Central Suffolk and Northern Nassau—26 Dec; Bronx-Westchester and Smithtown—27 Dec; Orient—2 Jan; Southern Nassau—3 Jan.

Abbreviations: LI—Long Island; JBWR—Jamaica Bay Wildlife Refuge; RMSP—Robert Moses State Park; CRSP—Connetquot River State Park; CBC—Christmas Bird Count; mob—many observers.

Contributors and initialed observers: Robert Adamo, Jim Ash, George Bouquio, Leonard Brown, Thomas W. Burke, Ralph Cioffi, Thomas H. Davis, Stephen B. Dempsey, Joe DiCostanzo, Sean Duffy, Sandy Faison, Fran File, Allan Lindberg, William Paterson, Robert O. Paxton, Gilbert S. Raynor, Arthur Richard, Hannah Richard, Brian Schiefer, Lore Schore, Walter Sedwitz, Barbara J. Spencer.

LOONS—DUCKS: Com. Loons were low: Montauk CBC reported 48, the lowest in over a decade. The same count reported only nine Red-throated Loons, much lower than their average of 28 over the past ten years. Horned Grebes were also low on the LI counts with Montauk reporting 27 compared to a ten year average of 94, and Captree only recording two. A 12 Feb count of 130 along Jones Beach indicated better numbers later in the winter (LS, *et al.*). Pied-billed Grebes were also reported in smaller than usual numbers with nine on the C. Suffolk CBC, the lowest there in over a decade. No Red-necked Grebes were reported. Great Cormorant numbers seemed a bit below normal. Double-crested Cormorants were reported in all time high numbers on both the Brooklyn (60) and Queens (67) counts; the similarity in numbers makes one wonder if both counts saw the same flock passing over-

head. Five at Jones Beach 30 Jan was a good mid-winter count (GSR). Great Egrets lingered long enough to be picked up by the Queens, Staten Is. and S. Nassau counts with the Staten Is. bird remaining until 9 Jan (M. Weingartener, *vide* GB). The S. Nassau CBC recorded a remarkable three Louisiana Herons; it has only been a few years since this species was first recorded on any LI count. The high count of Whistling Swans reported was ten at Hook Pond 5 Dec; five were still present 27 Feb at Mecox (GSR). Canada Geese and Brant were reported in about normal numbers on the counts. Snow Geese were sparingly reported with three each on the Captree and N. Nassau counts and only scattered reports after. The Brooklyn CBC reported an all time high, 124, of Green-winged Teal, but numbers were normal elsewhere; an individual of the Eurasian race was found on the S. Nassau CBC (R. Sloss, *et al.*). European Wigeons were widely reported with at least eight drakes found in Dec (*vide* THD); S. Nassau set an all time high with five. The peak count of Canvasbacks at Jerome Park Reservoir was 1350 on 27 Dec (WS), about normal, but the Queens count of 935 was their lowest since 1972 (535). Two female Tufted Ducks were present at the Central Park Reservoir 15 Dec-10 Jan (L. Pohner, *et al.*, *vide* THD). On most counts Com. Goldeneyes were low with Captree reporting an "all time" low of nine. At least two drake Harlequin Ducks wintered at Montauk Pt. (mob) with six reported there 9 Jan (GSR). Forty Com. Eiders on the Montauk CBC was the highest since 1977 when 200 were found, but adult males were very scarce; two Commons at Captree were good for this count. Six King Eiders on the Montauk CBC was about normal; two at Jones Inlet 30 Jan was very good since they are uncommon this far west on LI (RA, GSR).

HAWKS-ALCIDS: There were scattered reports of Goshawks on the counts: Brooklyn, Montauk, N. Nassau and S. Nassau; an imm. wintered at Muttontown Preserve (AL, WP). Sharp-shinned Hawks were reported on all counts for which reports were received: C. Suffolk was the leader with an all time count high of ten; a minimum of 37 were reported on LI counts. Cooper's Hawks were also widely reported: three on the Brooklyn CBC and one at Montauk; one wintered at JBWR (mob) and one at Manorville 3 Jan caught and ate a Bobwhite (GSR). C. Suffolk set a count high of 24 Red-tailed Hawks but they were in about normal numbers elsewhere. Continuing their excellent year C. Suffolk had their first ever Red-shouldered Hawk. Other reports received were two on the N. Nassau and one on the Brooklyn counts. It was, at best, a fair winter for Rough-legged Hawks with six on the Montauk count, seven in C. Suffolk and scattered reports elsewhere. Several Bald Eagles, or one or two very busy imm., were reported wintering on LI; one on Gardiner's Is. on the Montauk CBC was traditional, another was at Tobay 24 Dec-13 Jan (P. Martin, *et al.*). Other reports were of a bird at Patchogue 18 Feb (GSR) and a bird in the Roslyn Harbor area 23-27 Feb (*vide* RC). Peregrine Falcons were reported from several locations in the early winter: a subadult was present at JBWR thru much of Dec (mob) and lingered for the Brooklyn count. Queens reported two more the same day in other areas. The latest report was of one on the S. Nassau CBC 3 Jan. Merlins were widely reported with singles on the Brooklyn, Queens and C. Suffolk counts. In addition N. Nassau reported two and Captree three. The latest reports were one at West End, Jones Beach 24 Jan (JD, SF) and one 17 Feb at Muttontown Preserve (AL). Last winter's report recorded a Merlin taking a Mourning Dove at a feeder in Southold; this Jan an Am. Kestrel was seen at Southold trying to carry off a dead Mourning Dove (RA). Southold is evidently a pretty rough area for Mourning Doves. The Turkey flock at CRSP is doing very well; from 1970 to 1979 the flock fluctuated between four and nine, last year the Captree CBC reported 17 there and this year it was up to 27. Montauk's total of 34 on Gardiner's Is. was their lowest since 1975 when 26 were reported. A King Rail found at Westhampton Beach on the C. Suffolk CBC was still there 30 Dec (GSR). The only Virginia Rails reported were two each on the Montauk and C. Suffolk counts. What is happening to the wintering Am. Coots on LI? C. Suffolk declined for the fourth straight year to 142, the lowest number in over a decade. Montauk fluctuates a lot, but also reported the lowest numbers in over a decade, ten birds, compared to an average of 192 over the last ten years. Only Captree, with 232, reported good numbers, but this is less

than two-thirds their average of 378 in 1971-1975. Three late Am. Oystercatchers were seen flying over Oak Beach 26 Dec (LB). Lesser Yellowlegs remained till early Jan with three found on the S. Nassau CBC. Lingering Red Knots were reported in good numbers with 14 and one on the Queens and Brooklyn counts, respectively, and another nine at Shinnecock the same day (GSR). The high count of Purple Sandpipers reported was 200 at Jones Inlet 30 Jan (RA, GSR). Three Long-billed Dowitchers remained at Lawrence until 31 Jan (E. Levine, *et al.*). Very few white-winged gulls were reported. A second year imm Glaucous Gull was at Great Kills 6 Feb (GB, BS). Two Iceland Gulls were found on the Brooklyn CBC and another two at Montauk 9 Jan (GSR). The "Kumlien's" Gull was back at the Jones Beach restaurant for the sixth winter. The only Lesser Black-backed Gull report received was an adult seen with thousands of Herring and Great Black-backed Gulls at the Muldoon Ave. landfill on Staten Is. 27 Feb (GB, BS). The C. Suffolk and S. Nassau counts supplied the only reports of Laughing Gulls. The spring return of Bonaparte's Gulls to Jones Inlet was 20 Feb (RA). They brought with them an adult Black-headed Gull (TWB) and two adult Little Gulls (mob). Black-legged Kittiwakes were in very short supply on the counts with only four at Montauk; one at Brooklyn was a good find for this area. One of the very few rarities reported this winter was a breeding-plumaged COMMON MURRE 19 Dec on the Montauk CBC (S. R. Drennan, K. C. Parkes, S. Sutcliffe), details to NYSARC.

PIGEONS—WOODPECKERS: C. Suffolk had the dubious distinction of setting a count high of 1373 Rock Doves. Screech Owls were in very good numbers with C. Suffolk offsetting its pigeon count with an impressive 42 Screech Owls, a count record. Seven, nine and ten were reported by Captree, N. Nassau and Smithtown, respectively. C. Suffolk recorded ten Great Horned Owls, another count high; S. Nassau reported their first ever. A max three Snowy Owls were found at JFK Airport this winter (S. Chevalier). One was seen intermittently at JBWR thru Dec and Jan (mob). Individuals were reported 9 Jan at Cedar Beach (I. Parks), Forest Park (M. Sohmer) and East River Park at 6th Street in Manhattan (D. Rodriguez) (all *fide* THD). A Barred Owl, always a rare bird on LI, was reported heard on the S. Nassau CBC (J. Yrizarry). Wintering Long-eared Owls were widely reported in about average numbers. C. Suffolk found 12 Short-eared Owls, yet another count record, but Brooklyn passed them with 14. Saw-whet Owls were reported wintering in pine groves as usual at JBWR and Jones Beach. A rare bird reported on LI this winter is one that breeds in the inland portions of our region: **PILEATED WOODPECKER**. A female was discovered 11 Dec in Forest Park, Queens (P. Bernarth). Though often elusive, the bird remained thru the period (mob). This represents only the second LI record of this century, the only other was at Sag Harbor in 1947. Red-bellied Woodpeckers were widely reported, with the highest numbers, seven on the Queens CBC and 13 in N. Nassau.

FLYCATCHERS—STARLINGS: No E. Phoebes were reported. C. Suffolk posted yet another count high with 645 Com. Crows but N. Nassau outdid everyone with 2519. Black-capped Chickadee: highs or near highs were set by a number of counts, N. Nassau (1116) and Brooklyn (246), were records and C. Suffolk with 588 was only one below its 1972 total. Other counts were also well above normal. With all these Black-caps, only one Boreal Chickadee was found: 2 Jan at Shelter Is. (GSR, *et al.*). The Tufted Titmouse also broke many count records with N. Nassau (166), C. Suffolk (83) and Brooklyn (75) all setting new highs. On far eastern LI, where it has remained an uncommon bird, Montauk had their second highest total, six, compared to last year's record ten. White-breasted Nuthatches were also at above normal levels everywhere with 41 in Brooklyn a record, and yes, you guessed it, C. Suffolk set another count high with 115. Unsurprisingly, Red-breasted Nuthatches were also high on most counts: Captree's 233 was the highest number reported, more than double their 1980 total. Winter Wrens were considered scarce by at least one observer (GSR) but two at CRSP 20 Dec for the Captree CBC were about normal (SBD). For perhaps the first time the Montauk CBC, which includes Gardiner's Is., did not have the highest total for Carolina Wren. A windy day held Montauk's total to 17 while C. Suffolk found 28, another count record. Two in Riverdale 26 Dec were the first seen there in several

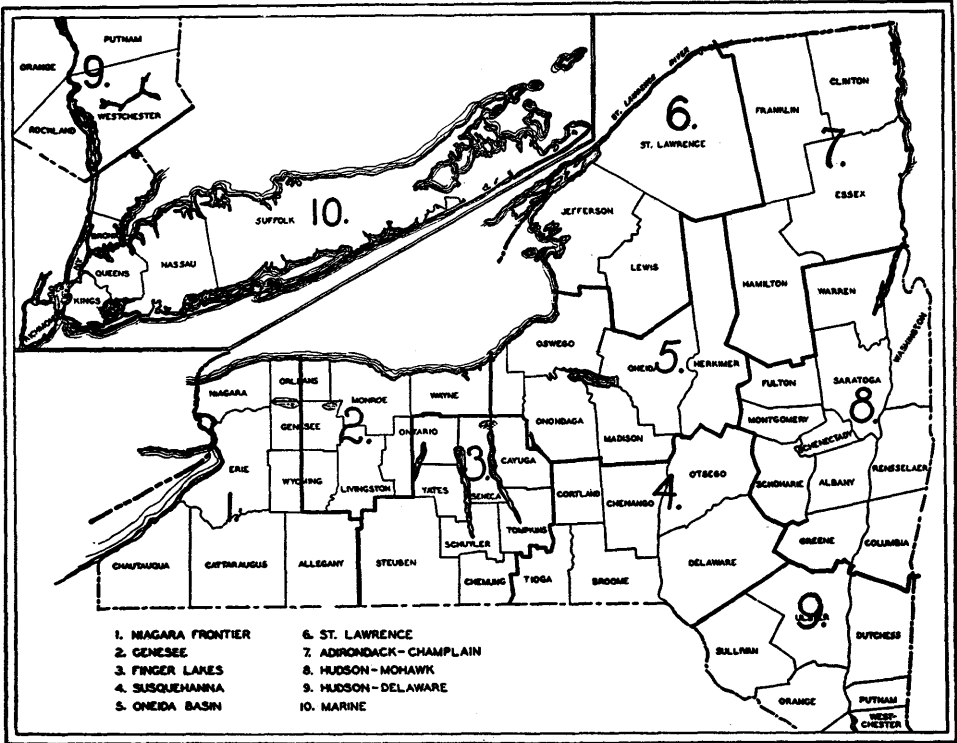
years (WS). Mockingbirds appear to have more than recovered from the severe winters of several years ago with C. Suffolk, again a record, reporting 236, but edged out by N. Nassau with 249. Of course these counts were before the big Jan freeze. Brown Thrashers were widely distributed with at least individuals on nearly every count. A female **VARIED THRUSH** was present at a feeder at Orient from late Feb to 7 Mar (GSR, D. Terry, *et al.*). Individual Wood Thrushes lingered til 27 Dec at the Bronx Botanical Gardens (*vide* P.A. Buckley) and on the C. Suffolk and Orient counts. Three E. Bluebirds wintered in Latourette Park, Staten Is. (*vide* GB) while three were found on the Montauk CBC (JA, *et al.*) and another four at Muttontown Preserve 8 Jan (AL *et al.*). Cedar Waxwings were found in good numbers on a number of counts: 73 in N. Nassau, 40 in C. Suffolk (another high), 35 at Captree and 20 at Montauk. The only N. Shrikes reported were two on the Montauk CBC (TWB).

VIREOS-WARBLERS: Single Orange-crowned Warblers were reported on the Captree, N. Nassau and S. Nassau counts. A lingering Nashville Warbler was present in a suburban garden 11 Dec to at least 18 Dec (W. Pasfield, *vide* FF). Yellow-rumped Warblers were in about average numbers. Most counts reported at least one Palm Warbler, but eight at Montauk was exceptional, five of them at the Montauk dump (ROP). Single Ovenbirds were found on the Montauk (ROP) and Captree (SBD) counts. S. Nassau reported three Com. Yellowthroats and individuals were found lingering in Queens, Captree and C. Suffolk. Only two Yellow-breasted Chats were reported this winter: singles on the Bronx-Westchester and Brooklyn counts.

WEAVERS-SPARROWS: For the second year in a row a N. Oriole was found lingering for the N. Nassau count; C. Suffolk also found one. In a sure sign of spring, 30 Com. Grackles returned 27 Feb to Glenwood Landing (J. Doran). Cardinals were in above normal numbers on all counts with 235 in C. Suffolk (yes, a record) surpassed by 382 in N. Nassau. The only Dickcissel reported was on the Bronx-Westchester CBC. Amidst widespread "winter finches" reports, only one Pine Grosbeak report was received: a single bird at Lloyd Harbor on the N. Nassau CBC (C. Loscalzo). Widely scattered reports of individuals and small groups of Com. Redpolls were received with a max of 80 at RMSP on 30 Jan (RA, GSR) and at least 20 more at Montauk the same day (H. Roth). Pine Siskins were widespread, usually in groups of four-20 individuals. Though there were isolated reports of both crossbills in late Dec, they did not reach LI in numbers until Feb. The earliest report of Red Crossbills was seven on Gardiner's Is. on the Montauk CBC (J. Trimble). Twenty were at Bronx Park 31 Jan (B. Renshaw, *vide* LS); the largest flock reported was 26 at Muttontown Preserve 11 Feb (WP). White-winged Crossbills outnumbered Reds this winter. The earliest report was of six at Easthampton 26 Dec (JA). Many small flocks of up to 20 birds were seen throughout Feb. Larger groups included 48 at Welwyn 11 Feb (AL) and approximately 85 at various locations on Staten Is. 2-13 Feb (W & N Siebenheller, *vide* GB). C. Suffolk set another count high with 26 Sharp-tailed Sparrows. One Vesper Sparrow was found on the C. Suffolk CBC. Montauk found its first ever Lark Sparrow (TWB). Single Chipping Sparrows were found on the Montauk, Captree and N. Nassau counts. An imm **HARRIS' SPARROW** was discovered with White-throats at Gilgo Beach 30 Jan (ROP). The bird remained there thru the period (mob). Only two reports of Lapland Longspurs were received: four at Bay Park 10 Jan, down from 120 there last year (SBD); and two at West End, Jones Beach 24 Jan (JD, SF). The earliest Snow Bunting reported was a single bird 20 Oct at RMSP (FF). They were in normal numbers on the local counts.

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

REPORTING REGIONS



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

REPORTING DEADLINES

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

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

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

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

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