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METHODS IN BIRD WATCHING

FRITZ SCHEIDER

After ten minutes of bush-circling and faint, gray glimpses of a perplexing sparrow, my patience wore thin and I elected to "drive" the bird to force it to a more exposed position. As I began my frankly aggressive march on bush and inhabitant, my birding companion, who had now caught up with me, told me to wait. He stood quite still and proceeded to embark on a brief career of imitating steam boilers; I watched, puzzled but interested. Soon I could see the sparrow fidgeting in the bush, hopping higher and higher. In a few moments a beautiful Lincoln's Sparrow had worked its way to the outside of the bush and eyed us curiously. My comment was immediate and not quite printable. Further, I realized that birdwatching was not necessarily an activity solely for the swift or the keen-eyed or the intrepid, but could be extended greatly if proper techniques — to wit, getting the birds to you or you to the birds — were available.

In the past few years, I have collected (and tried) a number of bird-watching techniques that have been more or less successful. The ones described below are some of the more productive ventures.

Sound Techniques

1. Probably the most useful birding technique — and the easiest — is "squeaking" or "spishing" or "whispering"; it goes by a variety of names. The method depends basically on creating squeaky or hissing noises, similar to the distress notes of small land birds and some of the smaller mammals. "Spishing," to me the easiest, is best performed by saying the words "spish" or "dish" or "tish" through lightly clenched teeth. It has the advantage of leaving both hands free for holding and adjusting binoculars. "Squeaking" can be done by wetly kissing the back of your hand or sucking protractedly on your palm; however, this does tie up at least one hand. Mechanical squeakers I find difficult to use as these require both hands to produce really effective sounds. This spishing readily draws sparrows, warblers, thrushes, jays, Catbirds (they're an out-and-out menace), kinglets, Chickadees, and wrens into easy viewing distance. Further, birds responding to a series of distress notes hop and flit about excitedly, actions that aid greatly in spotting them. And spishing will draw the predators of these species too; it is particularly effective on Sharp-shinned Hawks, shrikes, and Horned and Screech Owls. Another calling method, useful in winter, consists of imitation of the Screech Owl's decrescendo quaver; nuthatches, chickadees, and woodpeckers respond quite well to this, more so if a few frightened "squeaks" and "spishes" are added. However, don't be surprised if you get but one respondent, a Screech Owl. Keep trying; other species — Blue Jays, sparrows, kinglets — may eventually come to seek the source of all this commotion and to pester the owl.

A word of caution — quick, jerky movements on the caller's part can undo much of his "spishing" effort; by keeping binoculars close to eye level or slightly to the side, a minimum of motion and a maximum of spishing can be obtained.

Usually if you have attracted any birds by spishing, you will note that they lose interest after four or five minutes, no matter how distressful-sounding your efforts. Shyer species may appear if a three or four minute

period of vigorous spushing is followed by abrupt silence. Sometimes thrushes fly out to view the now-silent situation; wrens are particularly prone to expose themselves when this sequence is applied.

2. Imitation of bird voices can be a parlor sport, a hobby, an art, or a method; I prefer it as the last. The best examples of imitation and achieving response to same rest with the owls, particularly Barred Owls. Time-wise, late dusk and very early dawn of clear nights are the "prima donna" hours for owls. Duck-calling and crow-calling have been aids to nimrods which can be practiced by birdwatchers. Some shorebirds, especially Yellow-legs, Black-bellied Plover, and Upland Sandpiper, respond well to mimicry of their whistled notes; answering birds will sometimes fly up, only to alight again near the person imitating them. Loud cackles over a marsh can sometimes produce a chorus of responses from the gallinules and rails therein. However, other techniques for that group are available (see below).

3. Marsh birds, rails, and gallinules cackle, court, converse, and complain noisily, especially to loud sounds. This low threshold to noise can be exploited by hand-clapping or the use of firecrackers in or around a marsh. The answering clatter may be out of all proportion to the "trigger-sound" you have made but, fortunately, marsh birds are a bit like Barred Owls — once started, they may launch into a veritable chorus of cackles on their own. Even a shout or a pistol shot across a marsh may evoke typical guttural or chicken-like responses from rails, herons, and gallinules.

Wide grassy meadows are another area where hand-clapping and an occasional shout are useful. With such noisy provocation, Short-eared Owls, Harriers, Pheasants, and Meadowlarks may startle up from deep meadow grass; a single loud handclap may be rewarded with a number of Harriers and Short-eared Owls taking off from unsuspected proximity.

Mechanical Techniques

1. Too often observations of water birds such as loons, grebes, and scoters are meager, frustrating, and hampered by distance. Even if you were able to get out to where the birds were, your observations would in turn be hindered by the low elevation of the boat. By slowly waving (tolling) a large handkerchief or small flag from a hidden but elevated position (sand dune, dirt bluff), such waterbirds, particularly loons and grebes, can be lured to within easy viewing distance. At times I have seen this trick work with a person in full view, but my most successful efforts have been when all but the waving flag was concealed.

2. You can locate rails, wrens, herons, sparrows, and ground nests of many meadow and farm-birds by the simple technique of "dragging". The only pieces of equipment needed are: (1) a 100 foot rope ($\frac{3}{8}$ inch diameter), and (2) a partner. Tie one end of the rope about your waist and the other about your partner's waist; then sweep a meadow or marsh with the rope fully extended and dragging slightly between you and your cohort, but do not let it curve out behind. The rustle of the rope on the grass flushes many birds from American Bittern to Short-billed Marsh Wren before it. If this is applied methodically to a field or a grassy marsh, a fairly accurate picture of breeding birds can be obtained. If no partner is available, one can drive a post in the ground, attach the rope to it and, instead of parallel sweeps, make a single circular sweep. A more noisy variation of dragging is to tie empty beer cans with small pebbles inside to the rope to create more racket

and flush up very tight-sitting birds (incubating ducks). Frankly, that gimmick is too noisy, even for me.

3. "Jack-Lighting" provides a night time method particularly appropriate for herons. By searching shallow marsh and beach areas at night with a railroad beam lantern or portable spotlight, you can observe herons standing immobile, apparently fascinated by the light. Often you can walk or canoe (see *Traveling Techniques*) to within a few feet of such birds. Two points to note well: (1) complete silence is the rule, and (2) all observers must be behind the light source. In early April the combination of this technique with a keen ear can result in spotlight performances of Woodcock courtship antics.

4. Many times rails, sparrows, herons, and wrens have eluded me by diving into visible but inaccessible cover. If none of the above tricks will bring them again into view, a pebble carefully placed near them by a sling-shot will often frighten the bird up to look about or to fly, if only briefly, into the open.

Traveling Techniques

1. Too often people complain about seeing birds too distant to identify. With water birds this difficulty may be obviated by a boat if available. In a marsh or northern bog area, a canoe is almost ideal — quiet, easy to maneuver, shallow of draft and, if brown or dull green, almost camouflage-perfect. The use of boats and canoes as blinds make these craft most helpful for nesting studies (e. g. heron colonies, marsh wrens) and photographic work (ducks, herons).

2. For personal traveling in just wet areas or mud sections during warm weather, I prefer canvas shoes or sneakers; such shoes are cheap, washable, and the water flows in and out equally. Occasionally, however, you come upon muddy areas or mud flats too deep or too soft to traverse, yet liberally strewn with exciting but distant shorebirds. In such a situation you can resort to donning snowshoes to cross the terrain (this is very rough on snowshoes, believe me). A more inexpensive, equally feasible method is strapping bushel — or $\frac{3}{4}$ bushel-basket covers to your canvas shoes with clothesline and then strolling out on mud or muck, using the covers just as you would snowshoes. Also, such covers are readily acquired and, when mud-decorated and smelly, readily disposed of.

3. Winter travel to various areas (e. g. reforestation projects for "winter finches", flooded but frozen swamps for observing woodpeckers or setting out Wood Duck boxes) can be materially accelerated and eased by the use of skis or snowshoes. If using snowshoes, practice a little bit each day before trying extensive traveling.

4. For the young, hot-blooded, athletic type, one last trick — swimming up on shorebirds. If you can swim with only your head exposed, it is possible to approach within a few feet of Knot, Red-backed Sandpiper, or the like, resting or feeding along channel or inlet edges. Apparently these birds do not recognize a solitary, floating head, so a near view is comparatively easy to obtain and the method is even refreshing if the day is warm.

Most of the above maneuvers have been rather successful in getting birds to people or people to birds. If you have other methods, please let me know of them and their effectiveness, as I would like to add them to the growing file on "birdwatching techniques".

DeWITT CLINTON

JOHN B. BELKNAP

By many people DeWitt Clinton is remembered for his activities in behalf of the Erie Canal, of which he was one of the chief proponents. His distinguished political career, marked by a succession of high offices, occupied most of his adult life. As a student of natural science he is not as well known, yet he was interested in zoology, botany, mineralogy, ichthyology and ornithology and advocated pursuit of knowledge in all of these fields. The botanist, Constantine Rafinesque honored DeWitt Clinton by naming the dogberry which grows in our New York woodlands, *Clintonia Borealis*.

DeWitt's grandfather, Charles Clinton, came to this country from Ireland in 1729 and settled in Orange County, then a part of Ulster County. The family seat was established at Little Britain, a few miles west of Newburgh. James Clinton, DeWitt's father, was a military officer who served in the French and Indian War and in the Revolution. James married Mary DeWitt and the subject of this sketch was born at Little Britain in 1769.

Clinton graduated from Columbia College at the head of his class in 1786. He studied law under his uncle, George Clinton, and was admitted to the bar. Later he studied natural science under the guidance of Prof. S. L. Mitchill and Dr. David Hosack of Columbia. At the age of 28 he was a member of the New York State Legislature. A few years later he became a United States Senator, but resigned to be mayor of New York City. In 1812 he ran for president but was defeated by James Madison.

Since DeWitt Clinton was, more than anyone else, responsible for the building of the Erie Canal, a brief review of his part in this undertaking will be given. In March 1810 he was appointed one of seven commissioners "to explore the route of an inland navigation from Hudson's River to Lake Ontario and Lake Erie." During the summer of that year the commissioners made a journey across the state for this purpose, some travelling by land, others by water. Clinton went by water, via the Mohawk River, Wood Creek, Oneida Lake and the Oswego River. He kept a detailed record of the trip, calling it his "Private Journal". This account has to do with natural resources, agriculture, commerce, industry, local history and contains references to plants, minerals, animals, birds and fish.

Under the date of July 12 he lists 23 kinds of birds seen near Rome. Three days later at Three Rivers; "Colonel Porter shot one of them (an eagle) on the wing — he was alive, and measured eight feet from the extremity of one wing to the other. He was a bald eagle; his talons were formidable; head and tail white." More than once Clinton mentioned the scarlet tanager and was obviously impressed by it. He called it "the most beautiful bird in America". At Fort Niagara on August 1 he wrote, "I observed an uncommon number of mosquito hawks flying over the plains adjacent to this town; they are certainly different from whip-poor-wills. They were in pursuit of insects, and their cry was squah, in a sharp note."

The war of 1812 postponed action on the canal but in 1816 Clinton was again promoting its construction. He became Governor of New York in 1817 and the Erie Canal was begun on July 4 of that year. He took part in the triumphant ceremonies that marked the completion of the canal in the autumn of 1825.

DeWitt Clinton was one of the organizers of the "Literary and Philosophical Society of New York" which was formed in 1814. He served as the first president and delivered an "Introductory Discourse" which has been called one of the best summaries of the state of scientific knowledge in America at the time. Its length is 57 pages and the notes which follow take up an additional 106 pages. Birds are among the many subjects discussed, and Clinton is quoted as follows: "Many meritorious attempts have been made to illustrate the ornithology of America. Mr. Alexander Wilson, whose death is to be sincerely lamented by every friend of science (Wilson died in 1813) had devoted himself for years to this subject with an enthusiasm, industry and ability never surpassed. Although he has done much, yet the subject is by no means exhausted. The whole number of species, according to Latham is 3000. Considering that the American Republic, including our Louisiana acquisition extends from the Atlantic to the Pacific, it is not unreasonable to suppose that we may claim at least 1000 species of birds, who either reside with us, or occasionally visit us. But the most interesting part of ornithology is the migration of birds. There are some that stay with us the whole year; there are others that visit us regularly; and there are several that visit us occasionally or accidentally, which are driven by storms on our coast, by famine from their usual country, by excessive cold from the north, by excessive heat from the south, or by some cause unknown to us. All of these birds ought to be carefully noted and accurately distinguished. Strange birds are frequently seen in the vicinity of the ocean after a storm. Several years ago a large flock of paroquets was observed 25 miles to the NW of Albany. There are birds that sometimes stay with us the whole year, and at other times depart; this depends upon the mildness of the weather, and the quantity of food."

DeWitt Clinton married twice, his first wife being Maria Franklin who died in 1818. He later married Catherine Jones. He himself died suddenly in Albany on February 11, 1828.

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FIELD NOTES

The Evening Raptor Succession at Rough-leg Meadow — There is a wide flat "meadow" immediately south-west of Bridgeport, N. Y., which is bordered on the West and South by the low maple woods of Cicero Swamp, over which the writer noted an unusually large concentration of Rough-legged Hawks (*Buteo lagopus*) in the winter of 1952-53. This area, now locally known as "Rough-leg Meadow" has well lived up to its name in winters of low snow cover, although the terrain is more

than "meadow," including unmown grass, some corn fields, much brushy field, fence rows and wetlands. Not only are Rough-legs seen here regularly in winters of good mouse-hawking, but also Harriers (*Circus cyaneus*), fewer Red-tails (*Buteo jamaicensis*) and occasionally or frequently a Sharp-shin (*Accipiter striatus*) a Cooper's Hawk (*Accipiter cooperi*) or an American Kestrel (*Falco sparverius*). In addition, Short-eared Owls (*Asio flammeus*) may winter on the meadow, and to be complete, both Horned Owl (*Bubo virginianus*) and Screech Owl (*Otus asio*) may be heard on the borders.

During the late fall and early winter of 1957-58, Rough-leg Meadow has presented a fine raptor showing especially in early evening. As the day draws to a close a regular raptor succession takes place, and the following observation is a good example of this.

Arriving on the meadow at 4 p. m. on Dec. 22, 1957 (Christmas Census) with Ian C. T. Nisbet recently of Cambridge University, we counted 10 Rough-legs in a single scanning. Probably more were actually present. Some were perched, others flying low, or hovering, both light and dark phases being observed (and both adult and juvenile plumages of both phases). By 4:30 p. m. most of these had retired to night perches off the meadow proper and at this time we first scanned 3 Harriers appearing on the scene. At 4:45 p. m. we counted 7 Harriers and then 10, two of which were light gray adult males. A Sharp-shinned Hawk was seen in a tree at this time, but soon flew toward the woods. The Harriers hunted very actively until about 5 p. m., but several were still to be seen when the first Short-eared Owls got up to begin hunting. By 5:15 p. m. the last Harrier had settled into the meadow for the night, while the "snerk" calls of the Short-ears could be heard now on all sides, and counts in the waning light established at least 12 owls. By 5:45 p. m. it was getting quite dark, the owls no longer could be seen, and the "snerk" chorus had about ceased.

Many trips have established that the owls perch upon the ground in the area all day and come up in the evening to hunt. Since the calls are heard only for a short time after they get up, either they soon cease to call or more likely many move out of the area to hunt further.

The Harriers perch there during the night, and leave early in the morning for various hunting fields, although a few may be seen at any time of day. Later in the afternoon they return and hunt intensively just as the Rough-legs leave the meadow, and settle down for the night just as the owls get up.

The Rough-legs hunt over Rough-leg Meadow all day, arriving from the bordering woods in the first morning light, when they sometimes call. The call is a somewhat plaintive cry, not the airy whistle of the Red-tail or the musical call of the Red-shoulder, but a long full-bodied whistled cry, somewhat descending in pitch. Maximum count for the Rough-leg on Rough-leg Meadow is 12 birds but with 4 more seen nearby. The maximum for the owls is 14 and for the Harrier, 11. It is interesting that this particular area consistently shows very high raptor counts, more so than neighboring similar areas. The mouse population appears to be high here during good hawk winters, as I have myself caught them by hand! — Walter P. Spofford, 766 Irving Ave., Syracuse.

Behavior notes on the Olive-sided Flycatcher. — Whether in its northern tamarack-studded bog, in Canadian spruce, birch and hemlock, or in migration to and from these haunts, the Olive-sided Flycatcher generally seeks a dominant perch for its feeding, usually on the "tip-most branch of the top-most tree". Here, this "rather large bull-headed flycatcher," as Roger T. Peterson calls it, affords little insect life to pass without a challenge, and shows a perseverance and unalterable intent in the chase which will be described.

My first "fall" migrating Olive-sided Flycatcher in 1957 was seen at Massapequa, August 13. On August 17 I left, with my family, for northern New Hampshire and on August 19 at Dixville Notch, I saw an Olive-sided still feeding young, in this case a full-grown juvenile. I was surprised during the 15 or 20 minutes I watched to hear one subdued but articulated song, although from hearsay and personal experience I have learned that singing tapers off by late June or very early July in the Adirondacks — a point to remember by those wishing to get maximum pleasure in hearing this species in its summer home.

Watchful for the light migration of these birds that usually comes through Long

Island in early September, I was pleased to see again at Massapequa on Sep 8 an Olive-sided Flycatcher sitting on a lone, dead, upright branch about seven feet long, topping an otherwise vigorous pitch-pine. This big pine, the largest in the vicinity, was a splendid specimen with wide-spread branches, a girth at the ground of about 45 inches and a height of some 50 feet. It overlooked second-growth oaks and underbrush that contained Catbirds, Towhees and a small band of migrating warblers. A few individuals moved freely through the big tree to the top, which brought them just beneath the bare rampike lookout perch, and thereby offered good opportunities to study relationships and behavior where normally the Olive-sided Flycatcher is isolated on some dead tree far above vegetation, and likewise, feeding birds.

The weather was slightly cloudy about 70° F and observation took place from about 5:15 p. m. to 7:09 p. m. E. D. T.

From my observations, the Olive-sided appeared never to miss an insect and took them regardless of size. One of the first noted caught was a medium-sized dragon-fly. Large insects got a vigorous blow or two of the bill on the bleached hard pine branch before swallowing. To my surprise among the larger insects, I saw practically no wings or horny parts discarded, but these were apparently swallowed whole with vigorous ingestive movements.

Insects were taken from a range of a short hop upward off the perch to long sallies outward of about 40 feet. Winged insects were abundant and sallies averaged about one a minute. High ranging insects were in evidence that evening with Tree Swallows and a Nighthawk feeding at an estimated elevation of 300 to 400 feet.

At 6:20 feeding got better with many flying insects maintaining about a 20 foot level. Most of the flycatcher's downward swoops were rather spectacular dives, followed by an upward flight (not glide) to its perch. A prolonged sortie, taking it out of the immediate vicinity, apparently caused it to desert the pine for another tree, but it was back to its perch by 6:32 after an absence of about three minutes. Feeding continued with three small insects taken and several large ones. One small insect was acquired by an upstretching and short leap.

At this time a Catbird flew to the tree, worked upward into the top branches and quietly observed the flycatcher, which in a moment again deserted its perch on an extended sortie. When it had left, the Catbird hopped up to its exact perch — a slight horizontal "kink", a foot or two from the top of the dead tip. Here was a chance to observe a terrestrial bird in the role of flycatcher! As the first insect flew by about four feet outward and down from the perch, the Catbird immediately took after it, apparently acquired it, but clumsily alighted among the pine needles below instead of gracefully returning to the perch. A moment later it flew down into its normal habitat — the undergrowth. No doubt the Catbird was at a disadvantage in selecting a nearby insect below perch-level and close to the dense tree-top. During my observations I saw the Olive-sided eye, but disregard, insects at this range and level.

At 6:45 the stub was still deserted. By the amount of food taken, I thought the Olive-sided was satisfied and had completed its evening meal; this probably was partially true, because, upon returning at 6:50 it preened and arranged its feathers instead of immediately taking up the insect chase. Although its back was almost constantly in view while hunting, extremely little had been seen of its unique white flank-patches, but now while preening, a large, white, downy tuft appeared and a moment later I had the rather unusual experience of seeing both flank patches prominently displayed.

The big pine's next visitor was a warbler — identified as a Cape May — which flitted through the needled branches and up onto the dead top. Here it perched, just below the Olive-sided Flycatcher, out in the open. It showed every intention of following the fairly common warbler practice — that of chasing another bird out of the vicinity. It is no surprise in late summer to see some Red-eyed Vireo, Oriole, even Kingbird or Robin being chased out of the neighborhood by one of our tree-top warblers. And this intent fairly registered in the alert pose of the Cape May as it impatiently awaited the flycatcher's next move. As the Olive-sided shot out from the perch with a distant insect in view, the Cape May flew threateningly up and behind its back. To my amazement, with magnificent composure the flycatcher didn't deviate an inch, but captured its winged prey and both birds about a foot apart spectacularly swung around, flew up and alighted on their former perches.

The warbler, apparently placed in a ridiculous situation, lost interest and immediately departed.

Some further hunting occurred as the Olive-sided acquired a few more insects, but at 7:09, after some 114 minutes under observation, and with daylight lessening, the Olive-sided left, apparently to bed down elsewhere for the night. I saw it no more, nor did I see any others that season. John J. Elliott, 3994 Park Avenue, Seaford, L. I.

THE WINTER SEASON: DECEMBER 1 TO MARCH 31

There is little to say about the season just past except that it was a fine demonstration up-state of the effects of the "real old-fashioned winters." Each regional report has its story about the February blizzards and their toll of bird life. This year especially after the mild weather extending through Christmas which held many of the half-hardy species over, we had an opportunity to witness how destructive the inclement weather can be. It will be interesting to note continuing levels in the populations of such birds as the Tufted Titmouse and the Carolina Wren. It will be interesting too to speculate on the differing effects on birds which utilize feeders and those which do not.

Noteworthy was the winter finch flight with Redpolls in the vanguard. 14 Snowy Owl reports, six from Finger Lakes. There was very little evidence of an echo flight of Three-toed Woodpeckers. The Cardinal continues to spread to the northeast, this winter bringing a report from the central Adirondacks. It is unfortunate that this bird did not make it through the winter. GRR

REGION 1 — NIAGARA FRONTIER

ROBERT F. ANDRLE

The cold and stormy weather of November continued to mid-December but the marked higher temperatures during the latter half of the month made it the warmest December in 26 years. A sleety, snowy and comparatively cold first three weeks of January followed but a "thaw" in the last week saw temperatures fluctuating little from the freezing point. There was no ice in Lake Erie nor much in Buffalo harbor until February which ushered in severe weather with more snow (54.2 inches) than in any month on record. It was also a cold month with a record low of -5° F on the 18th after a weekend storm left more than two feet of snow over much of the region. Alternate thawing and freezing late in the month and through March removed much of the snow cover without causing flooding. During the last month of the period near normal temperatures prevailed (average 34.5° F) and precipitation was very light. Unusually low wind velocities occurred and prevailing easterly winds during the latter part of March caused open water by moving much Lake Erie ice to the westward. Great numbers of gulls continued to be present through December but soon after the advent of harsher weather and the formation of the ice bridge below Niagara Falls in January they decreased greatly. Slightly more than the normal number of half-hardy birds were observed through December and the flights of Evening Grosbeaks, Common Redpolls and Snow Buntings continued quite heavily during the period. The feeders south of Buffalo were well patronized by the Grosbeaks. Tufted Titmice and Carolina Wrens also appeared

irregularly although some of the latter may not have survived the cold and the heavy snow of February. Bald Eagles do not seem to be appearing in the winter as frequently as they did formerly and this past winter continued the trend with none at all being observed.

Loons — Ducks: Loons and grebes are generally uncommon throughout most of the period in this region. However, the gorge below Niagara Falls is particularly favored by them and a Red-throated Loon, several Common Loons, a Pied-billed Grebe and as many as two dozen Horned Grebes remained until early January. An Eared Grebe, presumably one of those seen upriver earlier, was found dead in the gorge on Jan 1 (Andrle). It was preserved and is the first specimen of this species from the Niagara Frontier area. Whistling Swans were quite scarce on their northward migration but Canada Geese, first noted on Mar 15, 36 at Springbrook (Coggeshall), were estimated by Axtell at 22,000 birds in the Oak Orchard Swamp and Wolcottsville areas on Mar 30. Four Canada Geese on the Niagara River Jan 4 (McCanns) is one of the few winter records for the species in the region. Among the geese in the Oak Orchard area were three Snow Geese on Mar 29-30 (McCanns et al) and four Blue Geese (Wendlings et al). Low fields and stream valleys east and northeast of Buffalo were well filled with water and the surface feeding ducks began to arrive on schedule in late March although seemingly not so numerous as in some prior years. Wintering waterfowl on the Niagara River as usual fluctuated considerably in numbers. Several Gadwall, American Widgeon and a few score Pintails were observed on Grand Island and at Niagara Falls until late December. A maximum of 7000 Canvasbacks were estimated on the river Dec 14 (Mitchell et al). The two Harlequin Ducks continued to be observed irregularly in the rapids above Niagara Falls until March. A King Eider on the Niagara River Dec 5 (Axtell, Andrle) was the only one observed during the period. Common and Red-breasted Mergansers were quite numerous and several Hooded Mergansers remained at Niagara Falls into the winter.

Hawks — Owls: The first Turkey Vultures appeared on Mar 13 at Gainesville (Smith). A Sharp-shinned Hawk at East Aurora Feb 22 (Mitchell) was the only report of a species which is rarely seen here in winter. Many reports of Cooper's Hawks indicates that they perhaps were wintering in above normal numbers. A report of single Red-shouldered Hawks at Boston Dec 1 and Hamburg Dec 4 (Bourne) was noteworthy. Rough-legged Hawks were observed in scattered localities but seemed less common than usual although their winter status is perhaps too variable to establish a norm. At Chestnut Ridge Park just south of Buffalo on Mar 29 Bourne reported a Peregrine Falcon. Like the eagle this species also seems to be occurring less often in the region. Turkeys seem to have suffered some losses from the heavy snows as evidenced by Eaton's account of one found in a weakened condition and caught on Feb 23, and six others picked up dead in southern Cattaraugus and Allegany counties. Stanley writes that six American Coots are wintering in Dunkirk harbor. Of interest was the report of individual Killdeers at Jamestown Dec 27 and Jan 11 (Beal). Great Black-backed, Glaucous, and Iceland Gulls (two races) were conspicuous on the Buffalo water-front and at Niagara Falls among the thousands of Herring Gulls. A number of interesting and often puzzling immature and sub-adult plumaged birds, particularly in the gorge, fascinated avid gull-watchers in the area. The usually wary Great Black-backed Gulls, both adults and immatures, were noted feeding on the dumps at Buffalo more than in many previous winters and could be approached very closely. The ubiquitous Bonaparte's Gulls appeared irregularly through the period, maximum numbers being 2000 on the Niagara River Dec 14 (Mitchell et al) and 1000 on January 15 (McCanns et al). A Snowy Owl on Jan 14 in Tonawanda (rep by Mitchell) was the only record for the period in a winter when a flight was expected. Short-eared Owls appeared to be more common than normally, the largest flock being 25 at Niagara Falls Feb 1 (Abbott). Eaton writes about the finding of a Screech Owl Feb 26, and a Barred and Great Horned Owl Mar 24, all in weakened condition. Apparently the deep snow and the hard crust which could, according to Eaton, support Turkeys, deer and men on Mar 9, contributed to this interesting situation.

Goatsuckers — Shrikes: On Feb 7 a Red-bellied Woodpecker, very uncommon in the region, was seen by several observers near East Aurora. A Yellow-bellied Sapsucker was noted on Dec 5 at Hamburg (Bourne) and another on Feb 12 in Williams-

ville (Wendlings). This species, though a common migrant, is very seldom seen here in winter. Phoebes were not reported in March, an unusual circumstance considering the fine weather in the latter part of the month. Tree Swallows were also unreported although ice covered inland water areas could possibly have a bearing on this. Some Horned Larks of both races appeared in January and the main migration through the area in February apparently was not affected by the adverse weather. Widespread observations of Red-breasted Nuthatches seemed to indicate that they were more numerous than in previous winters. A Long-billed Marsh Wren on Dec 22 on Grand Island (Axtell et al), is an outstanding observation. There was a Brown Thrasher wintering in Kenmore just north of Buffalo (Allen rep. Mitchell). Four Cedar Waxwings on Jan 22 at Niagara Falls (Rogerson) and two flocks of 15 and six on Feb 1, 24 (Wendlings) were of note. Northern Shrikes were regularly reported from many localities.

Vireos — Warblers: Individual Myrtle Warblers were seen on Grand Island Dec 22 (Axtell et al), and at Wilson on Jan 11 (Drobits, Webb) and also there on Feb 2 (Lehrer). A very unusual observation was a Yellowthroat on Grand Island Dec 22 (Andrle, Gampp).

Blackbirds — Sparrows: Cardinals continued to be numerous in many localities and seemed to be unaffected by the severe weather. A striking report is that of an immature male Rose-breasted Grosbeak which has been coming to a feeder in the vicinity of Dunkirk since early November (Feb 8, Stanley). Pine Grosbeaks have been noted only in small numbers and nowhere were concentrated as were the Evening Grosbeaks south of Buffalo. Very few crossbills have been observed since they first appeared in November. Of interest is a flock of 200 Goldfinches at Elma Jan 31 (rep. Mitchell). Although March temperatures were above normal in the latter half of the month and there were no storms and little precipitation it is interesting to observe that Rufous-sided Towhees, Savannah, Vesper, Field and Fox Sparrows went unreported. Factors which might be considered in speculation on this situation are the rather heavy snow cover which remained from earlier storms, the fact that the prevailing winds were westerly to east-north-easterly on 11 of the last 12 days of the month or perhaps the lack of thorough coverage in the region.

193 Woodward Avenue, Buffalo

REGION 2 — GENESEE

HOWARD S. MILLER

December was an extremely mild month with little snow. At the end of the month there was absolutely no snow cover and all waters were entirely free from ice. This of course resulted in the presence of a good number of species which in an ordinary year would have migrated much earlier. With the advent of the New Year, however, the weather pattern suddenly changed and winter conditions prevailed during the whole month. The temperature hardly went above freezing at any time and snow cover appeared along the lake early in the month. Inland there was less snow until about the middle of January.

If winter weather prevailed in January, the weather during the first three weeks of February was nothing short of devilish. A snowfall of $3\frac{1}{2}$ times normal coupled with gale winds and very low temperatures much of the time, made the month as bad as possible for both man and bird. The few Mockingbirds which had worked their way into this area disappeared, Carolina Wrens dropped sharply in numbers and some other half-hardy species disappeared about this time. Cardinals on the other hand seem to have survived this winter without any apparent decrease in numbers. 75,000 pounds of bird seed donated by the R. T. French Co. of Rochester

was distributed during this time and must have done considerable good in relieving hunger among the birds during this very critical period.

The last week of February and all of March showed about normal temperatures with little precipitation which resulted in a gradual melting of the heavy accumulation of snow. This resulted in most of the water content being absorbed by the dry ground and produced nowhere near as heavy a runoff as would have been expected. There were no warm days in March. This and unfavorable winds resulted in a retarded, uninteresting migration up to the end of the period.

Loons — Ducks: Two Common Loons on Dec 22 and a Red-throated Loon on Dec 29 at Manitou (Listman) were the last records for these birds to the end of the period. A Red-necked Grebe was seen Dec 22 at Summerville (Haft et al) and another bird of this species was seen Mar 15 at Manitou (Listman). 15 Horned Grebes were seen Dec 31 along the east lakeshore (Kemnitzer). The species was not recorded in January but was seen during the next two months in very small numbers along the lake. An Eared Grebe was present near Sea Breeze from Dec 14-29 (Kemnitzer, Listman et al). Pied-billed Grebes were still not present at the end of the period. A very late Double-crested Cormorant was seen Dec 23 at Sodus (Janes). Three Great Blue Herons were seen on the Christmas census Dec 22, a single bird Dec 21-24 near Canandaigua (A Tanghe) and a very few were present at the end of the period.

No Whistling Swans were recorded up to the end of the period. Eight Canada Geese on Mar 8 were the first of the season. They occurred in normal numbers during the rest of the month. An estimated 8000 were in the Oak Orchard area Mar 30 (GOS). Three Snow Geese were in the same area on this date and two Blue Geese were there Mar 29 (Killip, Haller, Rising). Two Gadwall were seen near Summerville Jan 4 (McKinney). This species was not seen subsequently. A single Pintail was seen Dec 22, but not again until Mar 8 when a flock of about 30 was seen near Shore Acres. Present the rest of the month in slightly below normal numbers. Two Green-winged Teal were at Buck Pond Dec 22 (Holland). First spring migrant was Mar 24 at Braddock (Listman) and they were present the rest of the month in small numbers. Five Blue-winged Teal were seen Mar 29 near Braddock. A single American Widgeon was seen Dec 28 at Conesus (Listman et al). The first migrants were Mar 22 at Sodus, about 30 birds with other ducks. They were present the rest of the period in fair numbers. Only one report of Shovelers, a single bird Mar 29 at Durand (Dineen, Foley). Only one Wood Duck report, a single Mar 17 near Manitou (Listman). Flocks of 250 Redheads Mar 9 at Sodus (Jones) and 300 Canvasbacks there Mar 23 (Miller) constitute the largest numbers reported of these two species.

The spring flight of most diving ducks was rather poor. Five Ring-necked Ducks were reported at Round Pond Mar 29 (O'Hara). 3000 Greater Scaup were reported Dec 22 on the Christmas census. 1000 Common Goldeneyes were reported Feb 20 at Manitou (Listman). Buffleheads occurred in fair numbers during the whole period. 4850 Old Squaw were reported Dec 22 and 1000 were seen on Lake Ontario near Sea Breeze Feb 1 (Kemnitzer). A single immature male King Eider was present Dec 30 - Jan 2 at Manitou (Listman). White-winged Scoters have been present on Lake Ontario in flocks of hundreds. Five Surf Scoters were seen Dec 31 off Sea Breeze (Kemnitzer, Listman) and one bird was seen Feb 15 at Manitou by the latter observer. Three Common Scoters were recorded Dec 22. 19 Hooded Mergansers were at Honeoye and Conesus Dec 28 and four were at Oak Orchard Mar 30. 1000 Common Mergansers were present Feb 15 at the Russell pumping station when this area was almost the only place in the lake that was ice free.

Hawks — Owls: Four Turkey Vultures were at Oak Orchard Mar 30. No Goshawks were reported. A very few Sharp-shinned and Cooper's Hawks wintered especially in the vicinity of feeders and very few went through during the latter half of March. Two Red-shouldered Hawks were present at 1000-acre swamp from Mar 22 on (Kemnitzer). Rough-legged Hawks, common in December, drifted out when the heavy snows arrived. Some reappeared early in March, following the

retreating snow line. An adult Golden Eagle was carefully observed at Webster Mar 30 (Kemnitzers). Two adult Bald Eagles were at Hemlock Lake Dec 28 and another bird of this species was seen at Braddock Dec 31 (Listman). Marsh Hawks, scarce during January and early February, had returned to their nesting grounds in normal numbers by the end of the period.

A Virginia Rail was seen Jan 11 near the Russell Pumping Station (Listman). 20 American Coot were reported Mar 23 at Canandaigua Lake (Zeitler) but were unreported at Sodus and elsewhere in the area. A single Killdeer was Dec 22 at the Irondequoit Boy Outlet (Kemnitzer). The species was not recorded again until Mar 7 when two birds were seen south of Rochester (V White). It was well along in the month before they became generally distributed. A few Woodcock were reported the last few days of the period but the Common Snipe was unreported. A very bedraggled Lesser Yellowlegs was reported Mar 20 at Braddock (Listman) and a much trimmer looking bird was reported Mar 29 a few miles east of the first location. The Purple Sandpiper was reported Dec 3, 9 and 31 at Braddock, a single bird in all three cases (Listman).

Both Glaucous and Iceland Gulls were rather scarce, never being reported as more than a single individual at any one time. Bonaparte's Gulls remained in good numbers through December, but disappeared shortly after New Years. An adult Little Gull was seen near Sea Breeze Dec 26 (O'Hara). Mourning Doves wintered in fairly good numbers and seemed to survive the very severe weather without any great loss. A Snowy Owl Dec 22 was the last report of this bird for the period. A single Long-eared Owl was observed Dec 22. It was not again reported until a lone individual was seen Mar 29. A few Short-eared Owls wintered along the west lake shore and a considerable increase was noted in March, up to fifteen birds being seen in a single evening (Listman). A Saw-whet Owl was seen Dec 22 in the Island Cottage woods (Holland) and a single bird was seen Jan 19 and Feb 14 in the Frisbee Hill "owl" woods (Listman).

Swifts — Shrikes: Two Belted Kingfishers were recorded Dec 22. One was Jan 24 at the Irondequoit Boy outlet (Sunderlin). The first migrant was not seen until the very last of March. A woodpecker "census" in the Avon section during early January over a period of more than one day and in several different areas resulted in a composite count of six Pileated, 18 Red-bellied, eight Red-headed, 13 Hairy and 26 Downy Woodpeckers (Haller). The Black-backed Three-toed Woodpecker was seen Dec 14 in Durand and Dec 15 on Dewey Avenue, about ten miles apart in Rochester. After this last date the echo part of this year's "echo flight" died out completely.

There was only one Phoebe reported during March, a bird seen in Durand Mar 28 (Dineen, Foley). 50 Horned Larks between Hamlin and Point Breeze Jan 12 (Listman) was a good count for so early in the season. No Tree Swallows were reported during March. Two Tufted Titmice were reported from near Durand (Carpenters), two east of Irondequoit Bay (McNetts), two near Avon (Haller) and one at Fairport (Jones). All these records were from feeders and in the first two cases at least the birds survived the severe weather. Four Red-breasted Nuthatches wintered in Highland Park (Starling) and a very few were present in Hamlin Beach Park and Durand Park. There were three reports of Carolina Wrens in March which of course represent birds which successfully wintered. Four Long-billed Marsh Wrens were reported Dec 22, none subsequently. A Mockingbird was seen Dec 23 at Sea Breeze (Miller), another Jan 12 at Hamlin (Listman) and at least one of the two wintering birds was present up to Feb 15 (Kemnitzer). Since then there have been no reports and it would seem that this species was unable to survive the rest of the winter. Extremely few Robins wintered this year and the spring migrants were very late in appearing, not being present in most parts of the area even in small numbers until after Mar 20. Only one Bluebird was reported on Mar 28 at Durand. A Bohemian Waxwing was reported Dec 8 in Genesee Valley Park (Mutchmore) and another bird was present in Durand Jan 1 - 4 (Miller et al). Cedar Waxwings were generally distributed in small to medium sized flocks, the largest 92 birds at Fairport Jan 25 (Jones).

Shrikes — Sparrows: Northern Shrikes were generally distributed, one or two birds being seen on almost every trip into open country. Some were reported in the

vicinity of feeders. Eight Myrtle Warblers were reported Dec 22 at Durand and single birds were seen at Conesus Dec 28, in Brighton Jan 16 (V White). There were no records after the last date anywhere in the area. Two Yellowthroats were seen Dec 22 at Tryon Park. Eastern Meadowlarks, Red-winged Blackbirds, and Brown-headed Cowbirds wintered in small numbers but the first and last named species were late in their spring arrival. An immature male Baltimore Oriole was present from Dec 15-23 in a back yard on Stone Road in Greece (Tanghe). There were only two reports of wintering Rusty Blackbirds and they were little in evidence by the last of March. Common Grackles also were late.

A Dickcissel was present from Dec 31 - Jan 14 at John Brown's feeder in Scottsville. Evening Grosbeaks were mainly confined to the vicinity of feeders, 80 being present east of Irondequoit Bay (Sunderlin, McNetts). A single Purple Finch was near Cobbs Hill Feb 22 (Peters). Pine Grosbeaks, which had been very common in the late fall and early winter, decreased rapidly after New Years, only a few scattered birds being reported late in the period. A Hoary Redpoll was seen Jan 22 in company with Common Redpolls on Lighthouse Road (Listman). The latter has been our commonest and most generally distributed winter finch during this winter, one or two flocks being seen on almost every trip. On Mar 9 flocks totaling an estimated 1000 birds were seen along the Lakeshore Parkway (Dobson). A very few Pine Siskins were observed during December, none since. Some American Goldfinches were present during the whole period occurring in small flocks, the largest about 30 birds Feb 1 in Webster. A single Red Crossbill was seen Dec 22 in Highland Park (Starling) and a single White-winged Crossbill the same day at Manitou (Listman).

A Towhee was reported at a feeder in Charlotte Dec 15 and was seen occasionally until after the heavy snows (B. Dolan). Another was reported from near Geneseo (Haller) and two attempted to winter at the BANC station near Victor. One bird was found dead Jan 18 and the fate of the other is unknown. Slate-colored Juncos were rather uncommon during the winter in most areas and were very slow in appearing during March. An Oregon Junco appeared at a feeder in Irondequoit Dec 30 (Leubner). It was soon joined by an obscurely marked bird which may have been a hybrid. Both birds were present until well into February. Two Oregon Juncos were at a feeder near Avon for about a month (Haller) and possible hybrids were reported at Pittsford (Cameron) and Fairport (Jones). Four Field Sparrows were reported from near Hemlock Lake Dec 28 (Kemnitzer) and two to three birds of the same species were present in the tamarack swamp at Durand until Jan 4. A White-throated Sparrow was near Hemlock Lake Dec 28 (Kemnitzer) and two wintered at a feeder near Irondequoit Bay (McNetts). No Fox Sparrows were reported. 28 Swamp Sparrows Dec 22, but numbers fall off. Lapland Longspurs were generally reported but in small flocks or as single birds. Snow Buntings, in contrast to a year ago, were reported in large flocks except in the early part of the period. The largest individual flock reported was an estimated 800 birds Jan 22 in Webster (Jones).

61 Richland Street, Rochester 9

REGION 3 — FINGER LAKES

SALLY F. HOYT

In at least two counties of the Finger Lakes — Seneca and Tompkins — the winter was one of the worst on record. Three storms officially termed blizzards struck in two weeks in February, and with other lesser storms piled a total of four feet on the level with drifts up to 20 feet. Temperatures dropped below zero during the blizzard period, and stayed below freezing for so long that melting did not take place, and large drifts remained at the end of March. It will be some time before we know how much our bird population has suffered, but it was obvious that many starved to death, others were buried by snow when they took shelter in seemingly protected places. Pheasants collected along roads or on any bare spots, and sportsmen's groups helped feed them. In early March, strips bared along roads by snow-

plows were spotted with Horned Larks, Snow Buntings and Meadowlarks. Migration seemed about two weeks behind schedule as April approached and the heavy snow cover persisted and was supplemented.

As predicted, natural food was scarce, and even the abundant weed seeds were snow-buried, but the abundant field mice escaped the Hawks and Owls and remain numerous this spring. Feeders were well-patronized. The commonest winter finches were Evening Grosbeaks, Pine Grosbeaks and Redpolls.

Montezuma benefited in one indirect way — the heavy snow on top of the ice apparently was the chief factor in a heavy kill of fish, particularly carp and bullheads. Manager Smith reports that carp control will not be a problem this year at least. At Sapsucker Woods pond, hundreds of the gold fish and golden shiners, stocked two years ago as Heron and Kingfisher food, suffocated for want of oxygen.

Loons — Ducks: Loons were scarce on Keuka Lake, and there were few reports of them on Cayuga during the period. A Red-necked Grebe was seen off Levanna (Cayuga L.) on Mar. 23 (I. Nisbet). Horned Grebes were in good numbers — several came to grief landing in snow banks or on ice, at scattered locations. 27 were seen on Seneca Lake (south end) on the census on Dec. 31 (Bardeen, Smith). Pied-billed Grebes were commoner than usual on Keuka in Dec. and Jan. (F. Guthrie). 2 Great-Blue Herons were seen at Montezuma on Jan. 1 by the staff, and one at Elmira Jan. 12.

Waterfowl seemed down in numbers throughout the region during the reporting period. However two things contribute to the low count: some areas were ice-covered longer than most years, and the severe winter and impossible driving conditions made for fewer observer hours. The more protected spots on the lakes were inaccessible by car, and even by foot. Ducks were late in returning to the Montezuma Refuge, because of lingering ice cover. A Whistling Swan was seen at Brandy Bay (Keuka L.) on Jan. 5 (Holmes) and 12 landed at Branchport in mid-March. One Swan was seen at the Montezuma Refuge on Jan. 1 by several observers. An American Brant was spotted on the Chemung River on Dec. 11 by K. Fudge, a late date. Two Blue Geese were off Levanna, Mar. 23 (I. Nisbet), and two Snow and two Blues at Montezuma the last week in March. Heavy flights of Canada Geese over Keuka Lake the last of March, and the usual flocks of up to 29,000 (I. Nisbet) rested on Cayuga and fed in the fields near Kings Ferry.

There were a few Mallards and Blacks at the south end of Seneca in January (Bardeen), and up to 200 dropped into the pond at Sapsucker Woods daily, until the open water was gone. Two Black Ducks were the only waterfowl on the river at Avoca in January. At the end of March a European Widgeon appeared at Montezuma (L. Smith, I. Nisbet). There were more Baldpates on Keuka in March than usual (Guthrie), and they also appeared at the south end of Seneca, close to shore. There were 3300 at Montezuma the last of March. A Pintail was reported on Cayuga on January 1st. A few Redheads and Scaup were seen at the south end of Seneca on Feb 22 (Mrs. C. Robinson) and at the north end, Ward reported that Scaup were the only species in near normal numbers on the census Dec 29. On the other hand, they were rare on Keuka, and both Scaup and Redheads were scarce on Cayuga. Scattered flocks of Canvasbacks were seen on Cayuga, and about 200 of them at the south end of Seneca on Mar 20 (Bardeen). Mr. Dewey, of the staff at Montezuma, saw a Barrow's Golden-eye in the canal near Pt. Byron in early January. American Golden-eyes were scarce, as were Old-squaws on Keuka, Seneca and Cayuga. A Ruddy Duck was seen at Sheldrake on Jan 19 (Nisbet). All the Mergansers were scarce except that over 100 fed on one of the ponds at Howlands Island when the ice went out in late March. AAllen reported that he'd never seen so few waterfowl on Cayuga as the last week in March.

Montezuma was late in freezing, and consequently there were more ducks on the Refuge on Jan 1 than in any previous year. Smith counted 1800 Mallards, 25 Redheads, 250 Blacks, 150 Ringnecks, 200 Canvasbacks, 25 Goldeneyes, and 1,100 American Mergansers on that date. But when the ice cover finally came, it

lingered much later than usual and it was not until the last week in March that ducks appeared again in numbers, when highlights of the count were: 2300 Blacks, 850 Pintails, 3300 Baldpates, 250 Ringnecks, 200 Goldeneyes, 20 Buffleheads and 50 Hooded Mergansers.

Hawks — Owls: A Cooper's Hawk hung around the Geneva City Dump (Ward) and one made periodic appearances over the aviary at Sapsucker Woods Research Center. Two Hawks identified from the description as either Cooper's or Sharpshinned were reported to Mrs. Carter in Avoca as hanging around a feeding station, where they had taken a Snow Bunting, Redpoll, Song Sparrow and Tree Sparrows. I. Nisbet reported a Goshawk over Ithaca, Mar 27. At Keuka, Rough-legged Hawks were reported as fairly common, but not in last year's numbers (Guthrie). 8 Rough-legs were counted at Geneva on the Dec 29 census, and on the Cayuga Basin census Jan 1. It was expected that they would move out when the heavy snows came, but instead they were seen every week near Ithaca, and we wonder how they got their mouse supply! Two Bald Eagles were seen on the ice on Cayuga Lake on Jan 4 (J. Walker), and the pair has been on that nest which is visible by scope from the storage pool entrance at Montezuma, since mid-March. Few Sparrow Hawk reports this winter, but three were seen within the city of Corning on Jan 19 (Carter).

No reports of Ruffed Grouse at Watkins Glen. Arthur Lane fed 3 Grouse all winter on his porch at Sapsucker Woods. Pheasants had a very hard time of it, but were cared for by various Sportsmen's groups. They were watched roosting in spruce trees at Alpine (Mrs. Perry Bishop). Near Ithaca, they could be seen daily along the country roads after they were plowed. Coot were common again on Keuka, not quite as numerous as last winter on Cayuga. The first Killdeer report around Ithaca was on Mar 2 (N. Case). Two Woodcock were seen near Elmira on Dec 29 and one on Jan 5 (Welles). The first Ithaca report was by Harold Cox on the Coddington Road on Mar 25.

Lerch and Guthrie report a Black-backed Gull on Keuka on Jan 12, the second record there in over ten years. At Ithaca, over 20 of them were counted on Jan 1 on Cayuga. Two were seen on Seneca Lake near Watkins all winter. Groesbeck reports that whenever the Canisteo River was open at Hornell, 15 Herring Gulls hung around.

The flock of Mourning Doves again visited Arthur Lane's station at Sapsucker Woods daily, but were not quite as numerous as last year. There were other reports that they had wintered, including seven seen outside of Hornell on Jan 24 (M. Carter) and 30 at Geneva Jan 30 (Gambrell).

Snowy Owls were seen at half a dozen places in the Finger Lakes — including the Welles Farm at Elmira, a point south of Interlaken, Branchport, 8 miles from Avoca, and near Ithaca. Scattered reports of Short-eared Owls also, including Elmira (Welles) and Milo Station (Lerch) where six appeared in mid-December. Few reports of Screech Owls.

Swifts — Shrikes: The Sapsucker Woods Pileateds were seen at intervals from the windows of the Research Center, especially late in March. This species seems on the increase at Keuka (Guthrie). A Red-bellied Woodpecker fed at the Montour Airport feeder again (one was there in '55-'56, but not in '56-'57). One was reported from Auburn in February (Miss A. Linzy) and one from Aurora in early March (Mrs. F. Van Duyne). No reports of wintering Flickers. Horned Larks reported as scarce at Watkins Glen. In mid-March, migrating flocks of Larks found bare and manure-covered spots in fields on the Saroka Farm, west of Etna, and were there daily for about two weeks.

An immature Canada Jay was seen by a number of observers at Breeseport Jan 25 and Jan 27 (Brimmer). Blue Jays seemed fairly abundant everywhere. Crows seemed the most numerous in many years the end of March — or perhaps they were driven into the open for food.

Even Chickadees had a difficult time in the blizzards. Mrs. Carter reported that she lost four of her seven in the last big storm. A partial albino Chickadee was seen in Geneva. Tufted Titmice continue to increase and become established at new stations in the area. Most of the Region had Red-breasted Nuthatches all winter — several were at feeders in Ithaca — but Watkins Glen had none. Brown Creepers and Winter Wrens were scarce. The Mockingbird was seen regularly at Ludlowville (Shepherd). Only one report of a Robin around Ithaca in January and

February (O. Hewitt), and a flock of 25 at Elmira Jan 26. They were up to two weeks late in returning. Not many reports of Kinglets except at Watkins Glen where 16 Golden-crowns were counted on Dec 31.

Cedar Waxwing flocks were reported from Bath, Watkins Glen and Ithaca, seizing upon any fruit they could find. Northern Shrikes were seen quite regularly, but I would not call it a big Shrike year. Both Bardeen and Guthrie reported that Starlings were scarce in January and February, abundant in March.

Vireos — Sparrows: Only one or two reports of Myrtle Warblers this winter: One visited some Etno feeders in February. A Meadowlark was seen near Sapsucker Woods Jan 14 (Hoyt). Four Rusty Blackbirds settled down for the winter at the Research Laboratory at Sapsucker Woods and two were still there after the February storms. Cowbirds visited feeders in Morovio and Etna. A Grackle wintered at Branchport, and Redwings wintered at Penn Yan marsh. 100,000 Redwings, apparently all moles, were at Montezuma on Mar 22 (Nisbet). A male Western Tanager appeared at a feeder in Watkins Glen on Jan 12, and was identified by the Champions and Louise Hope. Like Titmice, Cardinals are continuing their northward spread and establishment in areas. There were 6 at the Lyon feeder in Avoca (Carter); Groesbeck reports at least 15 in Hornell and 5 in N. Hornell, and others in Canistota, Jasper, Woodhill, Almond, Alfred and Arkport. Along both sides of Cayuga Lake the numbers are increasing, and winter flocks at feeders were reported in some cases as numbering 15 to 20 birds.

The Evening Grosbeak invasion continues and reports pour in from everywhere. My flock in Etno apparently numbered only about 50, but the make-up changed constantly, and by the end of March I had banded almost 500, most of these on my windowsill as I couldn't even find my other traps under four feet of snow. Groesbeck fed 100 in Hornell, there were small flocks around Branchport in March, at least 100 in Bath, a few in Avoca, and in mid-February they turned up in Waterloo. It is strange that the northern part of the Region does not get these northern visitors until later in the season. Few Purple Finch reports. Pine Grosbeaks were found on the Bald Hill Road south of Ithaca in March, and probably had been at that inaccessible spot all winter, as they were there in December. Spiker saw them in Branchport in mid-February, and Lerch saw them in Penn Yan. Mrs. Bishop had them in Watkins Glen, and there were 15 in the Lyons yard in Avoca.

This was a big Redpoll year. They seemed to feed first on Birch catkins, then on whatever weed seeds they could find above the snow. Guthrie reported "thousands" near Keuka, and there were up to 300 on the Bardeen farm near Burdett. More than a thousand in a flock at Hornell (Groesbeck), a large flock near Lyons home at Avoca (Carter), a small flock at Waterloo on Mar 18, and scattered flocks around Ithaca from early March on. Almost no reports of Pine Siskins to date except three at Waterloo Mar 2 (Walker). Scattered flocks of Goldfinches appeared, and for the first time they came to feeding stations in this area. (It has always been puzzling that as a rule these birds shun feeders in central New York State).

There were 8 Red Crossbills around Beebe Lake on the Cornell campus Feb 10-13 (Nisbet). 27 White-winged Crossbills were seen near Danby on Feb 4 (Nisbet) and 8 there on Mar 13. Prof. Guthrie saw one White-winged south of the Keuka College campus on Jan 5 and for a week thereafter. A Towhee spent the winter at the Lyons feeder in Avoca. Tree Sparrows were apparently spottily abundant. At my own station in Etna and at the feeder in Sapsucker Woods, numbers were far below other years. But at Hornell they were in fairly good numbers (Groesbeck), scarce until the snows around Watkins Glen (Bardeen), and at Elmira, population built up until they were abundant in mid-January, where M. Welles had up to 400 on their farm. A Chipping Sparrow was seen at Geneva Jan 15 (DeMayo). There was an unverified report of a Harris' Sparrow in Trumansburg Jan 28 and 29 (Harrington) — the description seemed unmistakable. Two reports of wintering White-crowns. Through most of the Region, there were almost no reports of wintering Song Sparrows — I banded one in January but never saw it again. But in Avoca, five remained at the Lyons feeder.

There were large flocks of Snow Buntings everywhere, but I have only one report of a Longspur, on the Danby Road Mar 13 (Nisbet). However, with driving conditions so bad, others may have been present in inaccessible fields.

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REGION 4 — SUSQUEHANNA

LESLIE E. BEMONT

December was warm and wet with little snow in comparison with previous years. January was also warm, but snowfall was the heaviest since 1948. February was the coldest since 1936 and produced the heaviest February snowfall since 1893. March was about normal with respect to temperature and precipitation, but the snow that fell during January and February persisted on the ground all month. From Jan 10 to Mar 28 the ground was essentially covered with snow and at the end of the period six foot drifts were still very much in evidence at higher elevations. The heavy snow and the resulting bad driving put a big dent in the amount of time spent in the field by observers, especially in February.

Around Greene, in Chenango Co., where a large number of deer starved to death two years ago there was a great deal of activity on the part of sportsmen, cutting browse and putting out corn and hay, to prevent a recurrence of the disaster. Wholesale starvation has evidently been averted, but some of the smaller deer have died. The effects of the severe weather on the birds have not been so obvious. The rebuilding Carolina Wren population appears to have received another setback, and in the Oxford area, at least, Blue Jays have been absent. Horned Larks have seemed more common, probably because they have been forced to forage along roadsides where they are more easily seen, rather than because of any real increase in numbers.

For want of a better local explanation the persistent snow cover in March will have to take the blame for an approximately two week delay in the start of the migration of small land birds.

Loons — Ducks: On Feb 19 a Horned Grebe was found in a snow bank in Endicott (Loomis). It was held for several days, while its strength was being built up with a surprising number of live minnows, and then released with a band on its leg. No Pied-billed Grebes reported during the period. A few Great Blue Herons remained in the Binghamton area thru December. The last one was seen along the Susquehanna River as a byproduct of the Waterfowl Census Jan 12 (Hannans). The first spring record was of two at Whitney Point Dam Mar 25 (Beaver).

A flock of 30-40 Canada Geese over Endicott Mar 6 (Carter) was our first. The usual small number of Mallards wintered in the Triple Cities area, but of the 364 found in the region during the Waterfowl Census 350 were at the Sherburne Game Farm (Whites). Twelve Baldpates, the first spring migrants, were at Whitney Point Dam Mar 25 (Beaver). The male Green-winged Teal that was at the Sherburne Game Farm Mar 9 may have wintered there (Whites). Two Wood Ducks and 11 Ring-necked Ducks were at Whitney Point Dam Mar 30 (M. Sheffield). A Canvasback was found during the Waterfowl Census at Wells Bridge, in Otsego Co., Jan 12 (Wisner). One was on the Chenango River at Sherburne Feb 20 (Whites) and one was at Oxford Mar 9 (Stratton). Nine American Goldeneyes were at Sherburne Feb 20 (Whites) and four were on the Susquehanna River at Endwell Mar 16 (Bemont). Two Buffleheads were at Whitney Point Mar 25 (Beaver) and a pair of Hooded Mergansers was at Deposit Mar 27 (Wilson). American Mergansers were present in just about one half their normal numbers, judging by Waterfowl Census figures. In the Deposit area the drop in numbers was even sharper.

Hawks — Owls: Cooper's Hawks have been more in evidence than usual all winter in the Triple Cities area. No wintering Red-tailed Hawks were reported around the Triple Cities but they were seen regularly around Sherburne and Norwich (Whites). The one at Unadilla Feb 24 (Wisner) may have been a migrant. A Red-Shouldered Hawk was seen at Endicott Feb 18 (Carter). No more until Mar 31 at Choconut Center and Deposit. There were several records of Rough-legged

Hawks during January and one Mar 5, all at Oxford (Stratton), but none from the rest of the region. A Marsh Hawk was at Oxford Jan 4 (Stratton) but no more were seen until Mar 14 when one was at Choconut Center, just north of Johnson City (Sheffields). Sparrow Hawks were seen in their usual numbers until Jan 19, but from then until Mar 3 when one was caught and banded at Deposit (Mrs. Wilson) none were reported at all.

Of the 500 Bobwhites released in Broome Co. last year, by the Broome Co. Federation of Sportsmen's Clubs, at most six coveys are estimated to have made it through the rugged winter. They were helped out as much as possible by artificial feeding. When the snow was deepest Pheasants could frequently be seen in the road between the high drifts on either side. The need for grit coupled with more restricted escape routes no doubt increased the highway toll to some extent but how much is hard to say because few observers think to report dead birds found alongside roads regardless of weather conditions. At Owego Mrs. Mildred White had eight Pheasants, apparently in weakened condition, find her feeder in late January. From then thru February they were daily visitors. On Feb 5 a Virginia Rail was caught in a muskrat trap at Boland's Marsh, north of Binghamton, and the following day another was caught. Both birds that were caught of course died, but three others were seen in the vicinity and the traps were removed (Stockton). Our first Killdeer was at Endicott Mar 11 (Carter), late but not unusually so. Three Woodcock were found just north of Endwell Mar 18 (Zovolinsky) when flushed by a dog. One was at the same spot Mar 26. The usual small flock of Herring and Ring-billed Gulls was present around the Triple Cities all winter. The high counts were 39 Herring Gulls Dec 29 and five Ring-bills Jan 12, the Christmas and Waterfowl Censuses respectively. Herring Gulls were also reported from Newark Valley, Norwich, Unadilla and Oxford at various times during the period. Two Ring-bills were at Norwich Mar 30 (Whites). Several Mourning Doves fed regularly just under a picture window in Newark Valley during the bad weather (Dean) and were still coming at the end of March. The first migrants were reported Mar 16, eight at Sherburne (Whites) and one at Choconut Center (Sheffields). There have been more than the usual number of both Screech and Horned Owls reported. At Sherburne the Screech Owls have been using Wood Duck boxes for winter homes. One Snowy Owl was seen a few miles north of Deposit Jan 26 (J. E. Smith), but no more were reported. A Barred Owl was near Greene Dec 29 (Bartlett, Maxon) and an injured one that later died was picked up in the road near Cannonsville Jan 31 (Wilson). An unidentified hunter shot and injured a Long-eared Owl somewhere in western Broome Co. Jan 18 and then turned it over to Mr. Lee Lomis to care for, but it too died. At about noon Feb 20 a Short-eared Owl was found perched in a tree near the Norwich city dump. Two hours later it was seen flying in the same area (Whites).

Goatsuckers — Shrikes: A few Kingfishers stuck it out thru January, but by Feb 13 when one was at Greene (Stratton) they had evidently seen enough because no more were reported until Mar 29 when one was at Newark Valley (Dean). There were reports from Newark Valley (Dean) and Owego (Wright) of wintering Flickers. Two Pileated Woodpeckers were found around Greene Dec 29 (Bartlett, Maxon) and one appeared at Vestal Mar 10 and has been seen regularly since (Mapes) but those were the only reports. A Sapsucker came to a feeder in Binghamton all during January (Benyi). No Phoebe by the end of March. Lots of Horned Lark reports, especially during late February and early March when they were seen in large flocks along roadsides. No Tree Swallows by the end of March.

Blue Jays were completely absent at Oxford all winter (Stratton) and near Windsor an active feeder attracted one Feb 16 and one Mar 18, but that's all (Neilsens). Crows were "awfully thin" at the Sherburne Game Farm (Elliot) and at Oxford none were seen until Feb 20 (Stratton). A Tufted Titmouse was banded at Deposit Feb 15 (Wilson). The colony at Chenango Bridge continues to thrive and a feeder in Endicott was hosting at least six at a time during the winter. Two Winter Wrens were at Greene Dec 29 (Bartlett, Maxon) and another was at Boland's Marsh the same day (Bemont). Still another was near Unadilla Feb 11 (Wisner). There were quite a few Carolina Wren reports from the Triple Cities area in December, but since the heavy snow and cold weather only two stations report them. One was seen at Oquaga Lake Feb 2 but it was no longer around Feb 15 (Wilson). The Mockingbird at Washburn's feeder in Endwell was around until Dec 31 but then disappeared until Feb 17. Since then it has been around regularly feeding on the multiflora

rose hips and jealously guarding them from Waxwings or any other birds that come around. Even Evening Grosbeaks seemed frightened of it, but the Cardinals were unconcerned.

There were several late Robin records, the last Jan 6 in Binghamton (Goetz). The next one was seen Mar 3, also in Binghamton (Collier), a week to ten days late. There were a number of scattered reports all thru March, but they were still not plentiful at the end of the month. A Bluebird at Oxford Mar 29 (Stratton) and another near Binghamton the same day (Marsis) were our first, ten days later than in any of the past six years. 25 Golden-crowned Kinglets were reported on the Triple Cities Naturalists' Club Christmas Census, a record high, but after Jan 1 they disappeared completely until Mar 28. Quite a few flocks of Cedar Waxwings were reported during February from the Triple Cities area. Most flocks included about a dozen birds, but one flock at Hillcrest, north of Binghamton, Feb 9 contained over 60 individuals (Gendle). A total of 20 individual reports of Northern Shrikes were received from the region during the period. Five of these, four immature and one adult, were banded at Deposit (Wilson). Another one was at Norwich Mar 19 to 27 and was seen eating the flies swarming on the house in the warm sun and also picking flies from the snow (Whites).

Vireos — Sparrows: A Myrtle Warbler was at Chenango Bridge for the Christmas Census Dec 29 (Bemont) and one in the same general area Jan 27 (Larkin) was, perhaps, the same individual. Another was at Sherburne Mar 30 (Whites).

A Meadowlark was at Boland's Marsh Jan 1 (Sheffields) and another was seen five miles south of Windsor Jan 30 (Goodnough). The first migrant was at Unadilla Mar 15 (Wisner). A male Redwinged Blackbird appeared at Unadilla Dec 2 and was back the next day with a female (Wisner). These, and one at Greene Dec 29 (Bartlett, Maxon) were, perhaps, late departees, but the female that visited a feeder in Newark Valley Feb 1 must have been a wintering bird (Dean). A flock of 100 at Whitney Point Mar 9 (Beaver) were the first migrants. They were reported from most of the region within a day or so. 40 or 50 females were seen in a flock at Deposit Mar 30 (Wilson). Two Common Grackles were at Binghamton Feb 27 (Marsi), three Cowbirds were at Greene Dec 29 (Bartlett, Maxon) and one Cowbird was near Binghamton Feb 21 (Barrus). Migrants of both species started coming in Feb 14.

Cardinals continue to appear at new stations throughout the region and in at least two areas, Owego (M. White) and Endwell, were seen in flocks of about a dozen. All areas report flocks of Evening Grosbeaks and at Deposit 646 were banded during the period and 14 foreign retraps taken (Wilson). The only Purple Finches reported were at Owego Jan 15 (M. White). Pine Grosbeaks were reported from several places but didn't seem common anywhere. Redpolls were also reported from several areas, and in the Binghamton area at least were quite numerous. One flock seen at Sherburne Feb 2 had some Hoary Redpolls in it (Whites). No Pine Siskins were reported and Goldfinches were scarce, but there was one report of twelve Red Crossbills Dec 22 in the Binghamton area and one White-winged Crossbill was seen in Endwell Jan 26 (Linaberry). North of Endwell (Fishers) and near Windsor (Neilsens) there were fairly large flocks of Slate-colored Juncoes during the winter, but elsewhere there have been very few. A few migrants could be seen the last few days of March, but except at Deposit where 24 were banded in the last three days of the period (Wilson), they have been in ones and twos and none too conspicuous. Tree Sparrows were somewhat down in numbers around Norwich and Sherburne (Whites) but at Unadilla, Deposit and Endwell banding results show a substantial number to have been present. A Field Sparrow was banded at Deposit Dec 1 (Wilson) and a White-crowned Sparrow was at Binghamton Christmas Day (Hock). A White-throated Sparrow was at Binghamton Dec 29 (Barlow) and another was at Deposit from Dec 30 to Mar 2 (Wilson). Four Swamp Sparrows were still at Boland's Marsh Dec 8 (Bemont). Quite a few Song Sparrows stayed late as shown by the total of 20 found on the Christmas Census Dec 29, but they thinned out soon after. One die-hard was seen Feb 6 in Endwell (Mrs. H. Smith), but no more until Mar 17 near Endwell (Bemont). There were more scattered reports until around Mar 29 when a real wave of migrants moved in. There have been a lot of Snow Bunting reports, several flocks numbering in the hundreds. A flock at Oxford Jan 27 was estimated at 400 to 500 (L. H. Stratton).

710 University Ave., Endwell, N. Y.

REGION 5 — ONEIDA LAKE BASIN

Fritz Scheider

Dec was wet, lacked even mild freezing spells, and had a negligible amount of snow; Clay Swamp was unfrozen until Dec 30 and Oneida Lake was unfrozen until Jan 3. The mild weather induced many half-hardies to linger and the Dec 22 Syracuse Christmas Count of 71 species, an all-time high, attests to this. However, Jan and Feb brought severe, continued cold, frequent blizzards, and persistent deep grown snow with no breaks or thaws until mid-Mar. The severity of the winter produced marked effects on the composition of winter birdlife; by late Jan the severe cold and snow had nearly wiped out all half-hardies; by mid-Feb the snow had covered both mice and weed seeds forcing out the winter "mousers" (Short-eared Owl, Rough-legged Hawk, Northern Shrike) and the ground birds (Snow Buntings, Tree Sparrows, Horned Larks) respectively. Ice formation on Lake Ontario reached memorable proportions, e. g. a mile-plus ice pack in Mexico Bay; extensive freezing-over along the Oswego River created sharp reductions in the number of wintering gulls and concentration of those that remained. In the last two weeks of Feb, a rash of "grounded" grebes plus "inland" reports of other grebes and scoters indicated more severe freezing to the north of us.

The outstanding features of the winter were 1) the numerous winter finches, literally everywhere, with Redpolls and Evening Grosbeaks vying for first place, and 2) the number of Cardinals sighted, indicating a population explosion, probably made more conspicuous by the birds' necessary patronage of feeders.

The latter half of Mar produced very gradual thawing, such that little flooding occurred; most marshes and lakes were largely ice-bound to the end of the period. Spring migration so far has been a grossly retarded affair with all migrants one to two weeks late; particularly notable, to date, were the low counts of ducks and the almost complete absence of Bluebirds, Hermit Thrushes, and Fox Sparrows.

Loons — Ducks: Common Loon: first is Mar 12 (very early), five in spring plumage on the Salmon River, Selkirk Shores State Park. Red-necked Grebe: reported from Oswego, Jan 11-19, one; also singles seen at Baldwinsville and Phoenix, Feb 27-Mar 9, following severe cold weather (Mrs. Estoff, Mrs. Propst, Spofford). Horned Grebe: high of 50, Jan 5, Skaneateles Lake; from Feb 16 to Feb 23, five were found grounded; one at Clyde sent to Cornell University; three at Syracuse released in open-water areas (Burtt). Pied-billed Grebe: one grounded, Feb 23, Baldwinsville, placed in the Seneca River (Ernst). Great Blue Heron: arrival date is Mar 23, one (late).

Canada Goose: first record is a flock of 13, Mar 4; flight to date very poor. Mallard and Black Duck: steady drop, eventually greater than 50%, in numbers at Oswego and Baldwinsville thru the winter; 600+ Blacks and 300+ Mallards, seven Pintails, and a male Shoveler stayed thru the winter at Howland's Island G. M. A. on the largesse of the N. Y. S. Conservation Dept. food provided for the captive breeding stock there; a pair of Pintails remained in the river at Oswego from Dec 15 to Feb 16 but were driven out by the ice conditions of the last half of Feb. Green-winged and Blue-winged Teals: first noted on Mar 26, one, and Mar 30, one, respectively, Clay Swamp; both late. Wood Duck: wintering birds present at Manlius, two, Baldwinsville, two, and Howland's Island G. M. A., five. Redhead and Canvasback: the pre-spring influx, usually occurring in mid-Feb, was not noted until late Feb (this year).

High winter counts for diving ducks this winter were: Greater Scaup—6443;

Golden-eye—909; American Merganser—6470; Red-breasted Merganser—183. Bufflehead and Oldsquaw: despite slightly higher counts on the Jan Waterfowl Census (129 and 171 respectively), counts thru the winter were very low and concentrations of either were nil. White-winged Scoter: from Feb 23 to mid-Mar, singles and small groups (up to 11/ flock) reported from open-water areas of the Oswego River (Fulton, Minetta) and the Seneca River (Baldwinsville), apparently forced out of more northern wintering grounds by the Feb freezing much as were the grebes mentioned earlier. Ruddy Duck: two males wintered in Oswego Harbor, the second year in succession. Hooded Merganser: two Jan records; a pair, Jan 5, Skaneateles Lake; two females, Jan 19, Oswego.

Hawks — Owls: Turkey Vulture: first reported on Mar 30, one, Howland's Is. G. M. A. Goshawk: a spate of records; one, Dec 12, Rome (Brockner); singles on Dec 15, Mar 9, Mar 30 (Spofford); an adult migrating, Mar 2, near Texas. Red-shouldered Hawk: one, Feb 25, Three Rivers G.M.A., is a record arrival date (Earnst). Rough-legged Hawk, Harrier, Kestrel: Dec numbers very good (highs of 31, 22, and 13 respectively); with heavy snow of Jan, a complete disappearance of Harriers and a marked drop in the numbers of both Kestrels and Rough-legs which reduction persisted until early Mar with good counts of Rough-legs (19/day) in late Mar; spring Kestrel flight very light to date.

Pheasant: many reports of starving birds, especially in the snow-buried flat country north and east of Syracuse. Killdeer: one on Feb 23, Tully, is remarkably early in view of the snow on the ground (20+ inches) at the time. Woodcock and Wilson's Snipe: arrival dates are Mar 30, one, Three Rivers G.M.A., and Mar 27, one, Skaneateles respectively, both late but in keeping with the sluggish Mar migration. Red Phalarope: one, well-studied, Dec 29, Oswego Harbor, is a very rare and fantastically late occurrence (Rusk, Scheider).

Glaucous and Iceland Gulls: very few in Dec but up to ten/day in Feb (high of four and six respectively); the severe freezing in Feb forced the gulls to the falls in the Oswego River; on Feb 16, eight individuals of the three forms (Glaucous, Iceland, and Kumlien's) were in view at once; **not one adult** "white-winger" was observed this winter. Bonaparte's Gull: one, Jan 1, Oneida Lake, is evidence of the mild Dec; two were reported in Oswego Harbor, where they are always unusual, in early Feb (Watertown group).

Mourning Dove: wintered widely (Bridgeport, Port Byron, Manlius) in unprecedented numbers with a high of 150 at one farm, Fayetteville; wintered for the first time at Westernville (Mrs. May). Barn Owl: one, heavily oiled, found Dec 31 at Syracuse, was washed, dusted, fed, banded, and released; one, found dead, Jan 20 near Fayetteville; one, found dead, near Cedarvale in the last week of Mar (all fide Burtt). Horned Owl: six nests currently under observation near Syracuse. Snowy Owl: two records; one killed, Dec 5, near Cato (fide Burtt); one on ice floes at Oswego, Mar 2, (Spofford, Nisbet, et al). Long-eared Owl: single individuals found in four pine plantations between Syracuse and Bridgeport in late Feb and early Mar (Mrs. Estoff, Mrs. Propst). Short-eared Owl: up to 14/evening at Bridgeport in Dec; a marked fall in numbers in snowy Jan; all later reports (two - five birds) from a single roost near East Syracuse. Saw-whet Owl: one reported from Onondaga Hill, Jan 29 (Spofford); one, Jan 26, near Westernville (fide Mrs. May).

Swifts — Shrikes: Red-headed Woodpecker: an immature from mid-Dec to early Feb near Pompey (Mrs. Maxwell) and an adult seen several times in mid-Feb near North Syracuse (fide Burtt) are very unusual in view of the rugged winter. Red-bellied Woodpecker: adults reported from Sterling, Cayuga Co., thru the winter and from Marietta near Otisco Lake, Feb 11-18, (fide Burtt); both reports would suggest new stations away from the "Seneca River distribution" this bird seems to have locally. Yellow-bellied Sapsucker: an immature at local Oneida feeding stations, Jan 11 to Feb 9, (Mrs. Ackley, Paquette) is a rare half-hardy.

Phoebe: one, Mar 28, is first arrival. Blue Jay: steady fall in numbers thru Jan and Feb; by late Feb reports were consistently scarce and low in numbers (less than ten/day). White-breasted Nuthatch: high of 130 on Syracuse Christmas Count, Dec 22; winter counts of this species along with those of Black-capped Chickadees and Brown Creepers have remained high thru to late Mar. Red-breasted Nuthatch: about 25 reports, almost all of singles or pairs at feeders or in large groves of conifers. Winter Wren: a few Dec records, **no** Jan or Feb records. Carolina Wren: a pair reported from New Woodstock, Madison Co., in Feb (fide Mrs. Hoyt) and a

single reported in Syracuse for a few days in late Jan; none reported at Oneida (Mrs. Ackley) or Rome (Mrs. Aspinwall) where they had been seen thru the fall. Long-billed Marsh Wren: four reported on Syracuse Christmas Count; none seen subsequently.

Catbird: one in ragged condition visited the Hiscock's feeder at Skaneateles in mid-Jan. Robin: few wintering records, all of single birds. Bluebird: one Mar report, a single, Mar 30; none reported so far in April. Where are they? Ruby-crowned Kinglet: one at a feeder near Jamesville in mid-Jan (fide Burt). Northern Shrike: high of 14 on Dec 22; marked reduction in Feb reports; a flurry of records in the first two weeks of Mar probably indicates returning migrants.

Warblers — Sparrows: Myrtle Warbler: singles reported in early Jan from feeders at Oneida (Mrs. Ackley) and Skaneateles (Hiscock) are probably half-hardies forced to such food by the cold weather. Yellowthroat: an immature male reported Dec 22 at Clay Swamp is phenomenally late and points up the mildness of Dec.

Wintering Icterids: a handful of reports of Red-winged Blackbirds and Cowbirds; most Dec records from swamps and cornfields, all Jan and Feb reports from feeders and dumps. Wintering Meadowlarks, present in good numbers thru Dec, were hard hit by the deep snow of Jan; the lack of Feb reports shows how rough the winter was on this species. Rusty Blackbird: one, Feb 28, Westerville is probably a very early migrant.

Cardinal: an amazing population burst this winter; possibly the hard winter forced them to feeding stations but in many cases, greater numbers were seen where no feeders were available; flocks of up to 20 birds reported at feeders and corncribs; reported in numbers from Mexico, Mexico Point, Pulaski, and Selkirk Shores St. Pk., areas famous for their lack of Cardinals, and from Chittenango, Oneida, Oriskany, and Rome. This neat split of reports, i. e. one parallel to Lake Ontario, the other along the Oneida Lake — Mohawk River axis, is probably dependent on the concentration of observers and is somewhat offset by reports from Camden, north of Oneida Lake, and Lacona, on the western edge of the Tug Hill Plateau. Evening Grosbeak: hundreds of reports with a majority of Jan and Feb reports from feeders; strangely enough, many seed-bearing box elders remain untouched; a sharp decrease in numbers in the last week of Mar. Pine Grosbeak: small flocks (3-29) reported from Rome (Mrs. Aspinwall), Oneida (Mrs. Ackley), north shore of Oneida Lake (Rusk, Scheider), along Lake Ontario (Paquette), and in the hills south of Syracuse but chronically scarce around Syracuse; last reported on Mar 1. Redpoll: this winter saw a heavy Region-wide flight of this species; flocks of 80 - 600 reported; some decrease in Jan and Feb when deep snow covered the abundant weed seeds but late Feb and all Mar saw heavy concentrations comparable to some spring flights of Snow Buntings. Hoary Redpoll: one male, Feb 23, with a group of 80 Redpolls in a large weed patch at Oswego Harbor is a new species for the Region.

Purple Finch and Pine Siskin: aside from a few sporadic Dec records, both species were absent thru the remainder of the winter; no spring movement of Purple Finches noted by end of period. White-winged Crossbill: one report, a single, Dec 1, Selkirk Shores St. Pk. Towhee: two winter records, one, Dec 22, Fayetteville; one, Dec 28, Tully (Mrs. Estoff, Mrs. Propst). Junco and Tree Sparrow: good counts thru Dec but the heavy snow of Jan forced the great majority of them out of the area and reports of **flocks** (12-20) of Tree Sparrows at feeders were frequent. Field and White-throated Sparrows: records of these species up to Dec 22 and Jan 5 respectively and the complete absence of records of them after mid-Jan reflect the weather pattern of the winter. Song Sparrow: reduced numbers present thru Dec; by early Feb the wintering population appeared to be wiped out; the major influx of Song Sparrows had not occurred by the end of the period.

151 Seventh North Street, Syracuse 8, New York

REGION 6 — ST. LAWRENCE

FRANK A. CLINGH

The past winter was a mild one with temperatures average or above, and the snow in most places less than normal. The most severe weather came the second and third weeks in February at which time several species of owls were seen in and around Watertown. A Richardson's Owl was found dead near Deferet March 13. There were many Evening Grosbeaks and some Pine Grosbeaks; Redpolls were common and there were more Cardinals in more places than ever before. In March we had only one-fifth the average precipitation. The snows melted gradually and without floods. March migrants reached us ten days to two weeks late, delayed no doubt by weather conditions to the south.

Loons — Ducks: Three Horned Grebes were seen in the St. Lawrence River above Morristown Dec 17, and a few remained along Lake Ontario thru December. Canada Geese appeared at the Perch River flats Mar 30. Rev. Nichols saw a Pintail at Eel Weir, St. Lawrence County Mar 4, and Gordon found Pintails at Perch River flats Mar 23. A boy picked up an adult female Blue-winged Teal in Watertown on Dec 18. It was not near any water, but was in good condition except for the feathers on one wing. Among the birds seen at Perch River flats were: Blue-winged Teal, Mar 30; Baldpate, a few pairs, Mar 27; Shoveller, a pair, Mar 31; Bufflehead, Mar 30. On Mar 25 there were 30 Canvanbacks above Morristown and a Hooded Merganser was at Rensselaer Falls, St. Lawrence County, Jan 21.

Hawks — Owls: Late in March Miss Elitharp saw a Turkey Vulture near Lake Ontario. Allen and Gordon saw their first Red-tailed Hawk on Mar 2 near Dexter. Belknap reports a good flight of Rough-legged Hawks in Dec with ten records. One was seen Jan 11 at Dablon Point and another Feb 8 near Philadelphia (Gordon). Two Marsh Hawks were seen in St. Lawrence Dec 27 and one Feb 18. Another was reported near Dexter Mar 16. The first Killdeers appeared in Watertown Mar 18, but most of them came several days later. A Ring-billed Gull was seen at Ogdensburg Mar 4 which is early. Belknap reports several records of Snowy Owls in Dec and Jan. One was seen near Watertown late in Dec and in Feb one was shot west of Watertown. It had fed on mice. On Feb 18 an immature Saw-whet Owl was taken alive in Watertown. It had eaten the head and neck of an Evening Grosbeak. The owl may have been injured by flying against a window, but it flew away when released (F. C.). There were more reports than usual of Short-eared Owls this winter. One was shot near Watertown and later one was seen in Watertown. Belknap says that several Short-eared Owls were reported. On March 13 Mayhood found a dead Richardson's Owl near Deferet. This is the first known record for this area and the skin has been preserved.

Swifts — Sparrows: On Jan 23 Allen and Belknap observed a Winter Wren near Watertown. Northern Shrikes were much more common than in the three previous winters (Nichols). A Mockingbird which was found in Watertown Nov 24 was last reported in that section Jan 19, however, Allen saw a Mockingbird south of Watertown Apr 9. A Red-winged Blackbird was seen near Madrid on Feb 27, and was perhaps the same bird reported as sheltering in a woodshed at Louisville before that. Numbers of them arrived March 25, or earlier (Nichols). Grackles were first seen at Ogdensburg on March 25. Two Cowbirds were at a feeder at Norfolk on Feb 27 and Mar 18. Another report says a few lingered all winter at feeding stations. There were many reports of Cardinals from all parts of this region and it is possible to mention only a few. A newspaper tells of one or more in the southern part of Jefferson County. Cardinals appeared on the Watertown Christmas census list for the first time when three were seen. Four females and two males were found near Watertown Jan 4. Later a male was found dead and Miss Elitharp banded a female. Rev. Nichols writes, "Perhaps the most unusual place for a Cardinal was Oswegatchie, elevation 1300 ft. and a bleak place, where Mrs. Williams had one at her feeder for two weeks in Nov. Mr. Hickok found one at Ogdensburg Dec 1, and we saw a pair at the same spot Dec 17, and a female was still there until Mar 4. A female was reported as visiting a feeder above Morristown until Mar 24, at least. The species

was first recorded in St. Lawrence County in Feb 1952, also at a feeder. But this winter's invasion was by more birds, it seems." A Cardinal appeared at a feeder in Lowville, Lewis County. Evening Grosbeaks appeared in many places. At Madrid they stayed only where they found the best feeders, and the maximum count was 63 on Jan 21, somewhat lower than in the winter of '55-'56 (Nichols). Around Potsdam there were more Evening Grosbeaks than usual this winter (L. Blake). They visited about 20 feeders in Watertown. Among the Watertown birds was a "golden" grosbeak. There was no black or dusky, dull color, but only bright canary yellow with pure white tail and much white on the wings — a striking bird and one sure to be noticed. In other ways it was a normal Evening Grosbeak and stayed with them. In about a week it was seen at four places, sometimes a mile or two from where it was seen last — an indication of how individuals keep shifting from one feeder to another. It was an excellent winter for Pine Grosbeaks according to Rev. Nichols and he and Hickok saw 60 in 7 flocks west of Ogdensburg on Jan 28. The last ones were seen March 4. Common Redpolls were conspicuous all winter. Two Hoary Redpolls were identified at leisure at a distance of about 8 ft. at Ogdensburg on Mar 4, and noted until Mar 18 (Nichols). A Junco was seen near Madrid until Jan 21, and a Song Sparrow at Louisville dump on Dec 27, and one or more at Ogdensburg from Feb 1 on. Both these species have now been recorded every month in St. Lawrence County. Some very large flocks of Snow Buntings have been noticed this winter.

173 Haley St., Watertown

REGION 7 — ADIRONDACK - CHAMPLAIN

THOMAS LESPFRANCE

The "Old-timers" were smiling and saying, "Well, you young whippersnappers have finally found out what a real old-fashioned winter can be like," but before the thaws came, they were really worried that if the next winter were to be like this one was, it would be too much. Accumulations of snow were fantastic in some areas, some roads near Dannemorra have only recently opened five weeks after the big storms. Ellenburg through to Redford reported drifts as high as twenty-five ft. with 52 in. on the level. Total official accumulation was reported to be 231 inches and this was mostly from the two big storms which occurred about two weeks apart.

The Christmas census was very rewarding and each one seems to add another to the list, suggesting that perhaps more and more the feathered populations are reluctant to leave the north country for the questionable cold weather of the so-called sunny south. Twenty-eight species not including waterfowl were recorded on the Xmas census, as follows: Pileated, Hairy, Downy, Arctic, Three-toed Woodpeckers, White-breasted and Red-breasted Nuthatch, Chickadee, Brown Creeper, Gold Finch, Pine Grosbeak, Evening Grosbeak, Pine Siskin, Red Poll, Horned Lark, Crow, Blue Jay, White-wing Crossbill, Tree Sparrow, Snow Bunting, Mourning Dove, Goshawk, Starling, Red-wing Blackbird, Cowbird (these were in a small flock, and were being harried by the Goshawk), Saw-whet Owl, English Sparrow, Herring Gull, and Ring-bill Gull. The lake had not frozen over and the following ducks were seen: Am. Golden-eye, White-winged Scoter, Buffel Head, Ruddy Duck, Black Duck, Pintail Duck, Mallard, . . . also seen were Eared Grebe, and Common Loon. This made the most rewarding census thus far in this area over the past nine years.

On the other hand correspondents report a poor season further west in Sunmount-Tupper Lake area. Miss Amstutz reported a poor census as did Dr. Kingsbury. However, they noted a return to feeders of the Evening Grosbeaks that last winter were notable by their absence, also noted were Shrikes until just before Christmas and a few (very few) Chickadee, and Snow Bunting. They reported a complete absence of Purple Finch and none of this species were reported throughout the whole area.

The following is the report of our new species in the Adirondacks as given to me by Dr. Marguerite Kingsbury on Apr 2 at Sunmount: CARDINAL, adult male: "First seen by me on either Jan 26 or Feb 3, had been at feeding Station in FAUST, at

the home of Mrs. Dorothy Hull — for about ten days. She had known the species in Florida and could not quite believe her eyes, when she saw this bird come to her feeder. The bird came regularly to the feeder until Mar 25, and was not seen after this time alive. It was found dead by children either the same day or the next day. I was told of these events on Mar 27 and the bird was brought to me that day."

75. N. Sable St., Keeseville

REGION 8 — MOHAWK - HUDSON

JAMES K. MERRITT

The winter months in the Mohawk-Hudson region were generally warm and wet. The only severe cold wave that hit was the one immediately following the February 16 "blizzard of '58" which dumped about two feet of snow in the Mohawk Valley and considerably more at higher elevations. A fairly severe snow on March 14 delayed what we had hoped would be an early arrival of spring. This one deposited up to two feet of white stuff in the northern Catskills and lesser amounts elsewhere. The region was not severely affected by the March 21 snowstorm that did so much damage along the middle Atlantic seaboard.

The period was highlighted by an excellent northern finch flight and by a continued infiltration of certain southern land birds. Of especial interest among the individual records were an Iceland Gull, a Baltimore Oriole, and perhaps most surprising of all, a Grasshopper Sparrow. There were no confirmed reports of Snowy Owls, and the Barrow's Goldeneye was missed along the upper Hudson for the first time in three years.

Forty-one varieties were noted on the annual Schenectady Christmas count, and thirty-seven were recorded at Troy. Thirty-one species were observed at East Chatham on the first annual count taken there by the Alan Devoe Bird Club.

Loons — Ducks: A Common Loon was seen along the Hudson on the Troy count Dec. 28 (Schenectady Bird Club). Horned Grebes were present at Saratoga Lake at least until Dec 15. Two Green Herons were near Old Chatham on Mar 17 (Reilly). A few Canvasbacks were present during the winter. Two were near Troy on Dec 28 (SBC), forty were at Saratoga Lake on Jan 1 (Angst), and three were along the upper Hudson on Feb 22 (Stone, Yunick). Unfortunately, this species could not be located during the duck count. Three Redheads were on the Hudson near Troy on Feb 15 (SBC) and again on Feb 22 (Stone, Yunick). Several Greater Scaup were reported in February. A lone Pintail was at Troy on Dec 28 (SBC). On Dec 8 three Old-Squaws were at Saratoga Lake (Hallenbeck), and two were still there a week later (Foote). One near Schenectady on Dec 21 constituted the first Christmas count record for the species there since 1953 (SBC). Several White-winged Scoters, not a common bird locally, were at Saratoga Lake on Dec 15 (Foote, Merritt). By late March the waterfowl migration seemed to be up to expectations in the lower Hudson area (Alan Devoe Bird Club).

Hawks — Owls: At Old Chatham a Turkey Vulture was seen on Jan 20 (Reilly). The two Goshawks seen near Oppenheim, Fulton County, on Mar 22 were the only ones reported (Murphy). The Cooper's Hawk was noted on several occasions in the East Chatham area (Radke, Reilly). Several Rough-legs were observed. The first of the season were the two near Troy on Dec 28 (SBC). One was at Scotia on Jan 1 and Feb 25 (Hallenbeck), and another was along the Thruway near Catskill on Feb 2 (Merritt). An early Broad-winged Hawk was seen near Troy on Mar 29 (Austin, Hipple). The period's only report of the Bald Eagle was of an adult at Germantown on Jan 12 (ABBC). Marsh Hawks were definitely scarce this winter. A Duck Hawk was noted at Livingston on Feb 15 and again on Feb 19 (Munson).

Several Bob-whites, very probably birds released in the area, were seen near Schenectady on Dec 21 (SBC), and two were noted at Old Chatham on Dec 29

(Reilly). Pheasants seemed to be not as common as might be expected. The six Coots at Saratoga Lake on Jan 1 constituted the only period report (Angst). Great Black-backed Gulls seemed quite common along the upper Hudson in early January. A count of 29 was made on Jan 1 (Angst, Gardner). Numbers declined sharply late in the month. There were several March observations of individual birds. An Iceland Gull along the Hudson at Mechanicville on Jan 1 permitted close study (Angst, Gardner), but subsequent attempts to relocate it were in vain.

A flock of about 45 Mourning Doves was at Voorhesville on Jan 11 (Grace). Other winter reports were of individuals or very small groups. On Dec 1 an injured Barn Owl was picked up near East Chatham (vide Radke); the bird was released a week or so later. A Short-eared Owl was found dead at Castleton on Jan 11 (Cook). There seemed to be an above-average number of reports of Great Horned, Screech, and Barred Owls. Snowies, however, were unrecorded.

Goatsuckers — Shrikes: Pileated Woodpeckers seemed to be reported in good numbers, but unlike last winter, no Three-toed Woodpeckers were observed. No late March Phoebes or Tree Swallows were reported. Red-breasted Nuthatches were scarce throughout the period.

One of the amazing events of the winter was the number of reports of the Tufted Titmouse. Eight or nine were recorded. Two were at a Niskayuna feeder until early March (Simpson), and one was at an Alphas feeder until Mar 15 (Lundy). These birds were not recorded thereafter, and one can only conjecture as to whether they succumbed to the late winter storms. However, two Tufted Titmice first seen at Scotia on Dec 21 were still present at the end of the period (Hallenbeck). One was at Hillsdale at least until early March (Green), and another was a feeder visitor at Chatham from December until Feb 24 (Mickle). I know of at least one feeder report from Ballston Spa, and Doug Ayres informs me that a Tufted Titmouse was reported by two observers in Canajoharie.

A Winter Wren was reported on several dates at Scotia (Hallenbeck), and one was at Old Chatham on Jan 18 and 25 (Reilly). Reports of Carolina Wrens were frequent, especially early in the period. It is perhaps a bit too early to tell yet how this species survived the winter. There were several December and January Robin observations. Five were seen near Schenectady on Dec 15 (Kaskan). One was in Niskayuna on Jan 16 (Nowak), and another was in Alphas on Jan 31 (Heitkamp). Others were reported from the Chatham region (Radke, Reilly). The regular March migration of this species was extremely late throughout the region. By March 31 the Robin was still not a common lawn bird. Northern Shrikes seemed to be very generally distributed, with perhaps fifteen to twenty individual birds being reported by various observers during the winter.

Warblers — Sparrows: Three Myrtle Warblers were at Old Chatham on Dec 2 (Reilly), and at Oppenheim a Yellow Palm Warbler was noted on Dec 6 and 7 (Murphy).

Three Meadowlarks were at Burnt Hills on Dec 15 (Foote), and from Dec 8 until at least the 15th a Grackle was a Greenfield Center (Meader). Other Grackles were reported at Amsterdam on Jan 1 (Fitzgerald) and at Niskayuna on Jan 19 (Novak). Several wintering Cowbirds were observed. A group of about 25 Rusty Blackbirds was seen near Scotia on Dec 1 (Bartlett). An unusual winter record is that of a Baltimore Oriole. The bird was present at a Castleton feeder from Jan 8 until Jan 25 (Cook).

Cardinals continued to spread throughout the area, and I can see no point in listing all the individual records submitted. Of especial interest, however, are the four pairs of Cardinals in the Fort Plain-Canajoharie area, the first there within the memory of one veteran observer. It will be interesting to see how many spring nesting observations are made.

The northern finch flight was in virtually every respect a fine one, with the White-winged Crossbill being the only member of this group to be unrecorded. Evening Grosbeaks were widely reported at feeders, with the high count being the 350 or so at Amsterdam (Fitzgerald). Pine Grosbeaks were reported with greater frequency than they have been in several years. No less than 45 were seen on the Troy count. During late January and February, however, the number of reports of the Pine Grosbeak declined. Redpolls were reported in good numbers throughout the period, while Pine Siskins were reported in somewhat lesser numbers. Purple Finches

were scarce. At Old Chatham several Red Crossbills were seen on Dec 2, 3, and 20 (Reilly).

The rarity of the period is very probably the Grasshopper Sparrow seen at Livingston on Jan 18. During a high wind and heavy snowstorm that day Howard Munson was called to check on two sparrows that had appeared at a sill feeder. By the time he arrived one of the birds had flown. The other, however, was so weak that it was easily picked up. The bird died shortly thereafter. The specimen was turned over to the New York State Museum at Albany, where verification of the identification was made. One can only conjecture as to whether the second bird was also a Grasshopper Sparrow.

Some forty to fifty Fox Sparrows, the first of the season, were near Chatham Center on Mar 29 (ADBC). A White-crowned Sparrow was at Amsterdam on Dec 31 (Fitzgerald), and for the second January in a row one appeared at Burnt Hills. An individual was present there between Jan 13 and 22. Another, or perhaps this same bird, was noted there on Mar 3 (Foote). A White-throated Sparrow was at Amsterdam from Jan 21 on (Fitzgerald).

Snow Buntings were reported much more frequently than in recent winters. Most of the records were made during February and March. The high count was the 300 or so at Oppenheim on Mar 23 (Murphy). During February flocks of up to 200 were noted in Columbia County (ADBC). There were many reports of flocks ranging from 50 to 100 in the Schenectady area. Lapland Longspurs were unrecorded.

16 *Ellen Lane, Scotia 2*

REGION 9 — DELAWARE - HUDSON

FRED N. HOUGH

As compared to last winter (56-57), birds remaining in the Hudson Valley following the Fall migration showed a lower normality. Numbers of common migrants were down and the drain out seemed progressively greater as one traveled up the Hudson from Rockland and Westchester. The Northern visitors were not numerically high except for the Siskin in Rockland where it was very abundant (Deed). The vagrant and rarity list shows several interesting finds and new records. It is worthy to note that the number of bird watchers operating feeding stations has increased considerably in the past decade and that this practice has paid off in influencing birds to remain in the vicinity for the season. This is one way to attract rarities that would otherwise not be discovered.

Winter did not settle upon us with any great severity until the season was half over. December was warm and wet followed by some snowfall and cooler weather in January. In early February, however, Winter tightened its hold — dropped its temperatures more and dumped a series of snows upon the ground to a total accumulation of 5-6 feet or more in some areas up in the Catskills. As of April 1 much snow still remained in the mountainous areas, kept there by cool north to east winds that had been constant through almost all of March.

March snowfalls along the Atlantic Coast coupled with the almost constant winds gave the Hudson Valley one of the latest and poorest Spring migrations in a number of years. Although a few birds managed to come through close to on time most flights however, were two weeks or more late. In the northern part of our region at least, the scarcity of migrants during the last two weeks of March was amazing.

Loons — Ducks: A Common Loon was seen near Stony Point on Jan 12 (Irving Kennedy), the third winter record of this species for Rockland. On Feb 13 Lynn Braganca found an emaciated Great Blue Heron near Bedford, Westchester. Apparently the bird found the going difficult against winter odds. Of interest was Rockland's second winter record of the Snow Goose discovered near Haverstraw, Dec 28. It remained through most of January (J. Orth; J. Kenney; E. Treacy; F. Steffens). Down in Rockland four Redheads decided to abandon the Hudson River and spend the season on a small pond near Nanuet, six miles inland, (B. Deed). Bob Deed remarked that when the ice broke in the lower Hudson River and nearby lakes about Mar 1, the ducks began to show up almost immediately which contrasts with their habit of the past few years in staying away or remaining scarce for two or three weeks following the ice break. A Hooded Merganser remained on the Ashokan Res., Ulster County through most of Jan (Al Feldman).

The Turkey Vulture showed up over the region on Mar 2, (Treacy) later than the usual dates of the past few years.

Wintering hawks were probably about normal. Broadwings seldom attempt to winter and are rarely seen at this time of year. Two were seen early in the season, one at Pearl River, Dec 29 (Joseph Morlan), and one or the same bird at Tappan on Jan 2 (Deed). An adult Broadwing was seen near Katonah, Westchester, Mar 20, an early migrant date (William Russell). The Rough-legged Hawk was seen about its usual haunts near Stone Ridge on Dec 2 and was last seen Feb 5 (F. Hough). Another was seen on Feb 22 by Stan Grierson et al, near Katonah, Westchester. Bald Eagles attracted attention in several places along the Hudson River and in a couple of cases inland, during the Winter. Wilson's Snipe remained near Lake Deforest, Rockland for most of Dec. Dr. Marjorie Hopper saw two or more in mid-December and Mr & Mrs Frank Steffens had one on the Xmas count, Dec 28, a first. Near Blooming Grove, Orange County, Martha Earl checked frequently a Wilson's Snipe that was wintering near her place. Deep snows in the lower Hudson area must have disturbed many of the owls, especially the Long-eared and Saw-whet. One Long-eared was found dead in the woods near Bedford, Westchester on Mar 13 (Hurdman). Other reports from the area indicate a nearby group. The uncommon Short-eared Owl was seen hunting in the Tri-Loba Hill Sanctuary near Katonah, Feb 18 by Ruth and Stanley Grierson.

There are some signs that the little Saw-whet Owl found it difficult to cope with the dearth of food forced upon him by the late winter snows. On Feb 22 one was found near South Salem, Westchester by Miss M. Yocca and was apparently starving. The attempt to help it failed. On Feb 26 another Saw-whet was found dead in Mt. Kisko, Westchester by Joe Brunco. William Russell had more pleasant experiences with this interesting little owl. On Mar 23 & 24 he heard one calling for considerable periods of time, Katonah. This is also becoming late for Saw-whets to remain in our region.

Swifts — Shrikes: A Kingfisher was seen about Kingston Point, Ulster County on Feb 4 (Arthur Cragin). A vagrant **Red-bellied Woodpecker** was discovered in New City, Rockland on Nov 26 but disappeared shortly after Dec 1 (Deed). It was Rockland's first record. Thomas Dow and David Hill made another Rockland first when they discovered an **Arctic Three-toed Woodpecker** near Blauvelt on Dec 28. Apparently there was a slight southward movement of the Acadian Chickadees last Fall with very few being detected. The only ones reported in our region were found near the Ashokan Reservoir, Ulster County on Jan 1 and 14 (Henry & Ilse Dunbar).

Again the Tufted Titmouse showed a good winter count for most of our counties. For the first time two visited the feeder of the writer regularly all winter, and this is under the shadows of the Catskills! On the property of Charles Bergeret in Yorktown Heights, Westchester as many as ten were seen!

A small number of Red-breasted Nuthatches wintered in the region. Like the Titmouse, the Carolina Wren was found in good numbers throughout many areas of the Hudson Valley. A Long-billed Marsh Wren was found in the Piermont Marsh, Rockland on Dec 28 (Deed et al). The Mockingbirds of the Lake DeForest area in Rockland probably wintered successfully. One Mocker was seen near Stone Ridge, Ulster on Dec 22 (Hough), and was probably the one that was seen there in early Nov. Mrs. R. J. Comas had a solitary Catbird coming to her feeding station in Yorktown Heights, Westchester, throughout the season. Wintering robins were

scarce. Mr. and Mrs. Earl Brown had a Hermit Thrush near their home in Upper Nyack, Rockland on Feb 18. Although reported, Bluebirds were also scarce in the region. Golden-crowned Kinglets, likewise, were down in winter numbers. Shrikes were off.

Vireos — Warblers: A Yellow-breasted Chat was noticed in Nyack, Rockland sometime in Jan and only a flock from where one wintered a year ago (fide Deed).

Blackbirds — Sparrows: Meadowlarks were reported in Ulster (Hough), in Orange (Earl), Rockland (Deed) and Westchester (Grierson). Some Redwings were not too late in arriving but most were slow and scattered.

The finding of the **Orchard Oriole** (male) spending at least December near Tappan, Rockland was indeed spectacular for this bird. It was in an unthrifty condition and probably succumbed later on. The record makes another Rockland first (Mr. and Mrs. Archer Stansbury et al).

A Baltimore Oriole appeared at the home of Ed Treacy in Highland Falls, Orange County on Dec 1 and stayed until Feb 17. It was attracted to the suet feeder (Ed Treacy). Cardinals were abundant all through the region. A Dickcissel was found singing in Katonah, Westchester on Mar 12 at the home of Mr. and Mrs. Edward Kurka. Evening Grosbeaks were fairly common in some sections, less so in others. Feeding stations have a tendency to keep the flocks around. Purple Finches were generally scarce throughout the region. Pine Grosbeaks showed spotty occurrences and were not very common. A few flocks of Redpolls wandered about the region during the winter and some of the Redpoll subspecies were identified by alert observers. Three **Greater Redpolls** were studied carefully by Helen Braem as they visited her feeder in Mt. Kisco, Westchester on Mar 20. William Russell also carefully identified a **Hoary Redpoll** on Mar 20, near Katonah, Westchester. It was in a flock of Goldfinches. If flocks of Redpolls were studied persistently more such records would undoubtedly come up. Pine Siskins were decidedly common down state especially in Rockland (Deed) but were scarce up in the Ulster region. On Jan 24 Eugene Brown estimated one flock near Nyack, Rockland to contain over 1,000 birds. A nice concentration! Both Crossbills were very scarce.

The RAS Xmas count tallied six Vesper Sparrows on Dec 28, the second time on count. Only one Savannah Sparrow was reported anywhere in the region during the Winter. It was found on the RAS Xmas count. Tree Sparrows were one of the more common winter birds in the Region. A **White-crowned Sparrow** was observed visiting the feeder of Helen Sterley in Kingston, Ulster County on Feb 7 and thereafter. It was checked by Henry and Ilse Dunbar and the find makes a first winter record of this bird for Ulster. Two or three Fox Sparrows wintered in Rockland (Deed). Song Sparrows were scarce in the upper part of the Region. They were over two weeks late in arriving as Spring migrants. A few Snow Buntings were wandering through parts of the region.

Accord 1

REGION 10 — MARINE

JOHN J. ELLIOT

Winter settled on the land early in 1958 and although late December Audubon Counts were high, South Nassau topping 120 species, rapid diminishing of less hardy birds showed by middle to late January. Three heavy snowfalls, including one March 20-22, brought a food shortage and hundreds of feeding stations in the region catered to numerous House Finches, Juncos, Tree and Song Sparrows. A mass migration westward on Long Island in October left Blue Jays comparatively scarce this winter in many eastern areas and fewer early winter Red-winged Blackbirds and Cowbirds were reported.

A surprisingly large number of Red-necked Grebes and Eiders showed up on Long Island waters during the winter. The fourth Annual Statewide

Waterfowl Count, organized and directed by our editor, Gerald R. Rising, of Rochester, was successfully covered in Region 10 similar to the last three years. Most of the inland fresh-water streams and lakes were frozen, as well as large areas on the various bays, and counts of fresh water ducks, except for Baldpates, were low.

The 1958 grand total was 103,807, which included 81,332 for Long Island and 22,475 for New York City (including Staten Island) and Westchester County to the Connecticut state line. This was considerably under the 141,520 for 1956 and 139,246 for 1957.

Highlighting the winter was the unprecedented number of Cardinals on eastern Long Island; also some 33 were listed in the Port Washington area in the Lyman Langdon Christmas count. An early winter showing of both Crossbills, Pine Grosbeak and a few flocks of Evening Grosbeaks disappointingly diminished to practically no records by late winter.

Loons — Ducks: More than half of all the Common Loons (108) in the waterfowl count were in the Montauk — Amagansett area. One or two Eared Grebes were reported on western Long Island around the first of the year, but none in the January 11-19 count. Of a total of 1567 Horned Grebes, 804 were recorded on Long Island and 763 in the New York City area. The total Long Island count of Pied-billed Grebes was 84 with only one around the city. European Cormorants were reported in late December along western Long Island Sound and later at Montauk.

A good showing of Gannets were present at the end of the year at Montauk. There were 38 Great Blue Heron in one flock north of Jones Beach, on a marshy island, Dec 29 (L. Alperin, Elliott, C. Ward). 1956's lingering American and Snowy Egrets at Jamaica Bay into late November were not duplicated last fall.

The extended hunting season over the past several years has been a probable factor in the reduction of waterfowl which appears mostly in those species more vulnerable to the hunter. For example, the Golden-eye diminished in numbers from 5,611 in 1957 to 2,213 this year. The total Bufflehead population was less than one-half that of 1957, and those of Oldsquaws and Canvas-backs were one-quarter to five-eighths less, respectively. The Greater Scaup, by far our most abundant duck, shows a fondness for waters around city wharves and harbors and made up six-sevenths (18,419) of all that area's ducks. Widespread over eastern Long Island as well, this year's total Scaup count was 50,389, almost 33,000 less than the tremendous 1956 count of 83,336 and over 17,000 less than last year's Scaup total of 67,687. The wary Black Duck's sixteen and eighteen thousands, respectively, of 1956 and 1957 were cut this year to 11,819, and the Red-breasted Merganser has also suffered greatly during the four years since censusing began.

Brant, although plentiful were not found in the usual enormous flocks on western bays this winter. Increases showed in all three Scoters during 1958 and 20 Red-necked Grebes, 17 King Eiders and seven Common Eiders at Montauk set the high records for these species for all four years of the waterfowl counts. Since the census — in Feb and Mar. — Montauk buildups of Eiders reached maximums of 40 King and 20 Common Eiders, Feb 21 (Puleston, Raynor) and 30 King Eiders were counted as late as March 16 at which time three Harlequin Ducks and 12 Red-necked Grebes were seen (P. Buckley, E. Eisenmann, R. Grant). On western Long Island, four King Eiders were seen at Atlantic Beach, Jan 26 (Bull). Surprising was the scarcity of Ring-necked Ducks this winter and spring after a consistent buildup of numbers since the general influx of this species a decade or more ago. In fact spring numbers among fresh water ducks were very poor — no European Teal this winter; the only good showing of Gadwall — 31 at East Patchogue (good spring location) Feb 15 (Puleston).

Hawks — Owls: Several Accipiter records in March; few or no Goshawks seen; three Red-tailed Hawks at Brookhaven, Mar 1; one Red-shouldered, same place Mar 16, and two Bald Eagles, Feb 13 to Mar 15 (D. Puleston). Practically no falcons except for a few wintering Sparrow Hawks. About the only Rough-legged Hawks

were on eastern Long Island. There were one or two reports of Ruffed Grouse, no word of how Bob-white or Pheasant fared in snowy weather.

King Rail: one in Brookhaven cattail swamp, Feb 18 - Mar 5; Virginia Rail wintered in Van Cortlandt Park swamp, New York City; also Wilson's Snipe. Piping Plover lingered with one at Moriches on Jan 1 (Raynor, Wilcox) and two at Montauk, Jan 10. A Black-bellied Plover appeared at Jones Inlet, Feb 2 (Bull) a good showing of 23 Purple Sandpipers were found on the new Jones Inlet breakwater on cold and blustery Mar 1 and about 80 Sanderlings were wave-chasing in the modified surf near the Breakwater on the same day (Baldwin Bird Club). Other shore birds were: nine Knots at Short Beach; two Semipalmated Plovers, Dec 29 (Buckley).

Among gulls were: Glaucous at Jones Inlet, early Mar (D. Guthrie); Iceland at Montauk, large part of winter; Laughing Gull, Riverdale, late Dec, adult; Black-headed Gull at Central Park reservoir, Jan 10 (P. Post); 50 Bonaparte's Gulls at Montauk, Jan 18 (G. Raynor).

Alcids were rare. About half-dozen records of Dovekies, one found dead, Dec 20 at Jones Beach (I. Alperin); one seen at Montauk, Jan 25. A report came in of one Snowy Owl and one found dead at Shinnecock, Jan 1 (Wilcox). There was a fair number of Barn Owls reported: maximum of four at Montauk, Dec 28; one Great Horned, Baldwin, Mar 3 in yard in early morning; large size, ears, and white at throat noted (Mr. and Mrs. Edwin Way Teale); good Short-eared Owl records, maximum, four at Jamaica Bay, Mar 18 (E. Mudge), also two at Montauk, Jan 18 and singles noted in several other locations; one Long-eared Owl Mar 29 at Jones Beach and a Saw-whet in same grove of Japanese black pines (Queens County Bird Club); there was also one at Montauk, Mar 8.

Swifts — Shrikes: Fair numbers of Flickers on Audubon counts; Downy Woodpeckers scarce. No Three-toed Woodpeckers this winter; Phoebe on Lyman Langdon Audubon count, Dec 29. Tree Swallows were unreported after late Dec, when several birds were found on eastern Long Island; no Jones Beach wintering Tree Swallows noted this year, presumably because of very poor Bayberry crop and Myrtle Warblers scarcer probably for same reason, although the latter feed on poison ivy berries at Jones Beach.

Tufted Titmouse, Dec to Mar 15 at a Lynbrook feeding station (Mrs. W. Arthur) and 10 Carolina Wrens were listed in the Port Washington Christmas count. Two Mockingbird reports, one wintering in Center Moriches (Raynor); one at Inwood, L. I., Mar 5 (B. Berliner); Robins scarce; five Bluebirds, Westhampton, Jan 4 (Raynor). Shrikes scarce: Northern Shrike, Orient, Jan 12 (Latham).

Warblers — Sparrows: Several Palm or Yellow Palm Warblers were reported on Christmas censuses: Chat, singles, Riverdale, Dec 31 (Scully); Orient, Jan 8 (Latham); 14 Red-winged Blackbirds and two Cowbirds, Heckscher Park, Jan 19 (Elliott); Baltimore Oriole, Freeport, late Dec to Feb 1 (A. Penberthy); seven Meadowlarks were seen at Orient, Jan 12 (Latham).

Cardinal numerous and widespread. Unprecedented records from eastern Long Island — half a dozen locations, maximums: four at Brookhaven and five or six at Wading River in early winter. Several small flocks of Evening Grosbeaks, Baldwin to Brookhaven, Jan and early Feb; a Pine Grosbeak at Orient, Jan 13; two Redpolls, same day (Latham) and three Feb 25 at Hewlett (Berliner). A Dickcissel appeared at a Freeport feeding station Feb 1 and two later (A. Dignan). Small flocks of Siskins throughout winter. Fair numbers of Ipswich sparrows: Three at Moriches, Jan 1; two at Orient, Jan 13; also present on Christmas censuses and half a dozen other records from Short Beach, Jones Beach and Gilgo to latter March (numerous observers).

Field Sparrows, Tree Sparrows and Juncos were numerous; a Vesper Sparrow Jan 18 and Feb 1 at Garden City — "only record here of overwintering" (J. T. Nichols). Lapland Longspur, one at Gilgo, Dec 27; (Alperin); two at Great Kills, Staten Island, Jan 12 (Brooklyn Bird Club). Snow Buntings were present throughout the winter with maximum of 40 reported (Bull); also 20 at Short Beach, Mar 1 and 10 at Captree, Mar 8 (Baldwin Bird Club).

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