

REGION 5 — ADIRONDACK

In general the Adirondack area had another mild winter with poor snowfall. However, the most central parts — the Lake Placid and Saranac Lake areas — had the hardest winter since 1947-48. Temperatures were consistently lower than for several years and snowfall was decidedly the heaviest in five years. The first heavy snow came November 27th and stayed with us until a thaw in mid-January. During that period some snow fell almost every day.

Loons — Ducks:

Lake Champlain did not freeze over except in isolated bays and small coves.

Snow Geese — December 25th Lesperance had 15 Snow Geese on Lake Champlain, off the mouth of the Salmon River. Ducks were seen in large numbers throughout period off Au Sable Point (Lesperance). These included Mallard, Black Duck, Greater Scaup, Golden-eye and Bufflehead. This failure of the lake to freeze over may account for the fact that Golden-eyes and Mergansers failed to show up in the Saranac River at Saranac Lake (village) in mid-January as they usually do. I have felt that they follow the river up from the lake as it freezes over; the river remains open even during the coldest winters. Migrant Ring-necked Ducks appeared at Tupper Lake between March 23rd and 28th (Amstutz and Kingsbury).

Hawks — Owls:

Ruffed Grouse — Indications of a decline in grouse this winter.

Parasitic Jaeger — This very unusual record was made on December 13th on Lake Champlain at Au Sable Point by Thomas Lesperance. He reports that the bird (along with the Dovekie) appeared following a storm over New England. I am not able to check the nature, date and extent of that disturbance to see if it seems a plausible explanation.

Dovekie — Another very unusual record made by Lesperance on December 13th, on Lake Champlain off Au Sable Point.

Morning Dove — I don't think there is any question that this bird has been infiltrating the central Adirondacks in the past three years. Last year several reports. An early bird at Saranac Lake this year on March 22nd.

Saw-whet Owl — One bird on January 1st at a feeding station in Saranac Lake. It is becoming evident to me that this bird is a year 'round resident in this area.

Snowy Owl — None this winter.

Larks — Shrikes:

Horned Lark — Considerable flocks came into Northern New York between February 18th and 20th.

Brown Creeper — Seemed perhaps to be more common than most winters. First heard singing on March 5th.

Carolina Wren — The bird which came to the feeder of Mrs. R. E. Mason in Essex in October, was banded November 9th and remained there until December 28th.

Shrikes and Waxwings — None of either reported this winter.

Thrushes — Sparrows:

The first real wave of migrants into central Adirondacks occurred between March 18th and 22nd when Meadowlarks, Red-wings, Grackles, Cowbirds, Bluebirds, Robins, Flicker, Song Sparrows, Juncos came in numbers. Up until the 18th the daily maximum at Saranac Lake had been no higher than 37° but it rose steadily to 55° on the 23rd. This influx of migrants corresponded with the peak at maple sap flow.

Evening Grosbeaks — Only a few birds around at most points during December and first half of January. Then there was a decided increase. Numbers then sustained until March 23rd when they abruptly declined in numbers. It is perhaps significant that this coincided with the rise in temperature which brought in the wave of spring migrants from the south.

Crossbills — Both species have been consistently present in moderate numbers in central Adirondacks throughout winter. On the other hand, Lesperance at Keeseville, near Lake Champlain, complains of a complete lack of the birds. We saw no evidence here of the influx which occurred in the New York area.

Redpolls, Siskins, Snow Buntings — Redpolls in large numbers all winter. Pine Siskins, following the heavy influx in October, the birds declined in numbers with a few flocks around all winter. Snow Buntings, small flocks all winter.

White-throated Sparrow — One bird spent winter at Saranac Lake feeder.

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