

The treat of the winter, of course, was the abundance of northern finches. Records are too numerous to list in detail, but the following is a summary:

Evening Grosbeak — Sullivan County had a flock of 35 to 50 from November to March. A half dozen in Dobbs Ferry on Feb. 7 (N. Woodford, reported by Watson Hastings); a female at New City on Feb. 13 (Mrs. Frank Steffens); a pair at Milwood, Westchester, on Feb. 15 (Mr. and Mrs. C. F. Kuyk) and at Mt. Kisco on Feb. 22 (Andrew MacWaters).

Pine Grosbeak — Two males and four females or immatures at Shrub Oak on Jan. 3 (Ralph W. Odell, Jr.).

Pine Siskin — Abundant throughout the winter in the southern portion of our region; seen in Sullivan County during January only, but then in flocks up to 500 or more.

Redpoll — Greatest number in upward of 25 years. Earliest date, Feb. 11 at Katonah (Hammerschlag) and Feb. 12 in all other counties. Latest date before presstime, Mar. 22 at New City (**Rockland Audubon Society**). One flock of 250 at Katonah on Feb. 17 (Mrs. Frank McKown); a flock of 500 at Mount Ivy, Rockland, about the same date (Dr. Hopper); flocks of 500-plus in Sullivan County (Carr).

White-winged Crossbill — Noted at several points in Westchester and Rockland on Feb. 6 (Mr. and Mrs. Ralmond Wood, William Russell, Mrs. Edmund Barron) and Feb. 7 (Col. Allen M. Pope, Mrs. Javius Matsumoto). A flock of 15 at Palisades on Feb. 8 (Rockland Audubon) was the largest reported, but there were dozens of records for bands of 9 or 10 birds. Seen in Sullivan County only at Bethel (Carr).

Snow Bunting — Only one large flock, about 200 birds, is reported from the region, and this flock only for one day in Sullivan (Carr).

Robert F. Deed
50 Clinton Ave.
Nyack, N. Y.

REGION 8 — LONG ISLAND

February and March were mild with very little snow and migration began early. Wintering birds apparently suffered little; practically no freeze-ups allowed ducks to remain on most of the ponds and lakes. This resulted in large numbers of Anatinae (surface-feeding ducks) over-wintering, even around the shallow, easily-frozen Jones Beach Sanctuary pond. The surprisingly great numbers of Red and White-winged Crossbills, Siskins and Redpolls disappeared in February, and with their departure large flocks of Grackles, Red-wings and Cowbirds arrived. This vanguard of spring migrants was more marked than for several years and there was no cold weather to retard the movement. Song Sparrows appeared about the same time in early February as Meadowlarks began singing; and by February 10 Prairie Horned Larks were on territory, 17 pairs being counted at Jones Beach east of the tower along the ocean causeway grass strips. Soon Killdeer arrived and since there have been several record-breaking early reports of shorebirds.

Loons — Ducks:

There was a good flight of loons from March to mid-April: maximum 200 Red-throated Loons April 12. Horned Grebes were also common in late March; a few Double-crested Cormorants appeared in mid-April and on April 12, 75 Gannets were observed on the ocean off Jones Beach. The White Pelican which has been at Mill Neck Pond since last June set a new winter record here, and although its local movements may indicate an escaped or released bird, it forages for itself and added a tropical touch to a winter flock of swans and ducks. Large flocks of Brant were present on western bays into April and a big concentration of Canada Geese, with up to 20 Snow Geese, was reported on the potato fields of eastern Long Island near Wainscott. Among ducks large numbers of Gadwalls, Baldpates, Pintails and Green-winged Teal wintered. The European Teal, common wintering species a decade ago on western Long Island, has now become a very rare migrant: one at Jones Beach, March 21 (J. Elliott). The Harlequin Duck was recorded from Montauk, Atlantic Beach and the Rockaways; latest report: Atlantic Beach, April 12, two females (J. Mayer). Great concentrations of all three scoters were present in the ocean off the south barrier beaches in late March, early April, and a solid flock of 1,150 Oldsquaws in more sheltered waters at Fire Island Inlet, March 21-28.

Hawks — Owls:

There was one Goshawk record: Shelter Island, February 11 (R. Latham).

Cooper's Hawks and Duck Hawks were scarce through the winter and spring; there were no Gyrfalcon records since last fall. Sora was reported at Idlewild, April 12, and there were four Florida Gallinules at Lawrence on April 18 (J. Bull, J. Mayer, G. Rose), while on April 25 a King Rail was seen (R. Sloss). Early shore-bird dates: Spotted Sandpiper, Jamaica Bay, March 14 (R. Clermont); Knot, Mecox, April 16 (C. McKeever); Solitary Sandpiper, Idlewild (Mayer, Rose), Willet at Shinnecock and Least Sandpiper at Sagaponack (McKeever) all on April 19. Another early record was that of a Marbled Godwit at Jamaica Bay (The Raunt), April 12, (Brooklyn Bird Club). Red-backed Sandpipers and Sanderlings continued plentiful through the winter into March and April. Piping Plover came back to the dune lands in mid-March and Greater Yellow-legs a week or so later. There were several records of Glaucous and Iceland Gulls, but very few Kumlien's Gulls were reported. A Barn Owl was seen at the Jones Beach tower in late winter (G. Komorowski); there were no Snowy Owl reports; Long-eared Owls were scarce, but the Short-eared still resorts the rat-infested Jamaica Bay dumps. The little Saw-whet Owl was present at Riis Park for about a month in mid winter, but was scarce elsewhere.

Swifts — Shrikes:

Two early Nighthawks, one at Seaford (E. Morgan) and one at Lawrence (Mayer) were reported on April 12. The Yellow-bellied Sapsucker was common by mid-April; the Phoebe came through sparsely around April 1; Tree Swallows wintered at Gilgo as they did last year; Purple Martins showed up on western Long Island on April 18 and a Mockingbird is back in the same location where it was heard singing at Merrick last summer but was not known to breed. Goodly numbers of Thrashers, Towhees and White-throated Sparrows appeared April 25. Blue-gray Gnatcatcher: one at Seaford, April 16 (Morgan) and two at Woodmere, April 25 (Mayer, Rose). The Northern Shrike went unrecorded since early winter.

Vireos — Warblers:

Blue-headed Vireo appeared on western Long Island, April 19, and a White-eyed Vireo was seen in the Botanic Garden (Brooklyn) a week earlier. 10 Pine and eight Yellow Palm Warblers were seen at Manorville, April 11, 12 (G. Raynor). An Orange-crowned Warbler showed up at Woodmere, April 19 and Louisiana Water-Thrush at Far Rockaway, same date (J. Bull).

Blackbirds — Sparrows:

The Rusty Blackbird was reported into late April. A Western Tanager, observed at Jones Beach late November to January 16, was not seen later.

The White-winged Crossbill invasion was the greatest in 50 years. A Dickcissel wintered at a Wantagh feeding station. Practically no Evening Grosbeaks were reported in winter or spring; Purple Finch has been scarce to date, but the House Finch is increasing so rapidly as to be now included in one's daily list while birding on western Long Island. The Ipswich Sparrow passed through early with very few of the usual April records coming in. Savannah Sparrows arrived in numbers in early April and the Vesper Sparrow appeared on the coastal strip April 12. As to be expected Longspurs and Snow Buntings departed for the north this mild spring a month earlier, being generally present into early March at Jones Beach and Idlewild.

John J. Elliott
3994 Park Ave.
Seaford, Long Island, New York

REGION 9 — Central New York

With mild weather during late February and early March, there was a noticeable increase in bird activity such as the spring song of Black-capped Chickadee, Cardinal, Red-wing Blackbird, and the Song Sparrow. Several flocks of Canada Geese were observed during week of February 23. It appears that some geese may have wintered on the Finger Lakes. Mild weather continued throughout most of March and certain spring migrant species were observed. The present report carries on from the previous one which covered the fall and winter season up to March 1. Few reports have been received since that time, but a composite record of wintering and migrants to about April 1 follows: