

REGIONAL REPORTS

HIGHLIGHTS DECEMBER THROUGH MARCH

Throughout the State generally, it has been a Gray Shrike - Chickadee - Pine Grosbeak - Evening Grosbeak - Snow Bunting winter. The smaller winter finches were few in number, on the whole, but certain species were common in restricted areas. Goldfinches were common in the Finger Lakes; Redpolls common in the Oneida Basin, St. Lawrence, Champlain Valley and Mohawk-Hudson regions; both Crossbills were abundant until late January on Long Island. Evening Grosbeaks left breeding areas in the Adirondacks in late September and were present during the winter in moderate numbers elsewhere.

The Snowy Owl appeared in small numbers in areas bordering the larger inland lakes and Long Island. Rough-legged Hawks and Short-eared Owls were low in numbers reflecting a generally low field mouse population.

Kinglets, Brown Creepers, Red-breasted Nuthatches, Tree Sparrows and Juncos were scarce or absent in most areas.

Meadowlarks, Mourning Doves, Flickers and a few Myrtle Warblers wintered successfully in upstate New York despite the severity of the winter.

The blackbird migration started in the lower Hudson Valley on February 16 and by March 14 they had reached Plattsburg. Grackles appeared to precede the Red-wings by a few days in several areas.

Phoebes appeared in Rockland County on March 10, the Binghamton area March 19, near Syracuse March 8 and near Batavia March 30. Tree Swallows wintered on Long Island and were first seen in Rockland County on March 19, near Binghamton March 20 and near Syracuse March 12.

REGION 1 — NIAGARA FRONTIER

CLARK S. BEARDSLEE

The 1954-55 winter was closer to normal than most. Neither temperatures nor snowfall were such as to affect our winter bird populations very much. The total of 91 species and subspecies reported in January and February compares with 91 for January alone in 1954, when a very mild December encouraged many half-hardy species to stay over. Our share of the Federation waterfowl census was taken on January 16, and found most of our inland waters solidly frozen. Outstanding for the period was the unprecedented flight of Gray Shrikes, which was almost too great to chronicle.

LOONS — DUCKS: Grebes reported during the winter months included two Red-necked and one Pied-billed counted on January 16 during the waterfowl census. Single cormorants were found December 19 (Grand Island, Coggeshalls) and February 26 (Dunkirk, Elderkin). Whistling Swans arrived a bit early (2 Grand Island and 6 Oak Orchard on March 12) and within a week were represented on almost every lake in the territory; on the 19th and 20th from 1500 to 3000 were on Lake Chautauqua, largest number ever reported here. One Snow Goose was among the 1200 Canada Geese at Oak Orchard March 12 (Beardslee) and a Blue Goose joined them the 15th