

Deposit and at the end of March were still being seen primarily in large migrating flocks. The first Bluebird reported was at Deposit 3/2 (Wilson).

Golden-crowned Kinglets were present in normal numbers until the end of January in Binghamton and a little later in Deposit, but since then there have been none reported from the whole region. One Ruby-crowned Kinglet was seen at Endicott 3/30 (Carter) — early, but not a record.

Gray Shrikes have been reported almost as frequently this year as last, but were more scattered. A Migrant Shrike was seen east of Cincinnatus in Cortland Co. 3/18 (Thurber).

VIREOS — WARBLERS: 2 Myrtle Warblers were seen at Chenango Valley State Park 1/23 (Bemond, M. Sheffield). One was seen at the same place 2/13 (Hannans). A Yellowthroat was seen 12/1 in Binghamton (Yereckey).

BLACKBIRDS — SPARROWS: Wintering Meadowlarks were seen at Norwich 1/10 (R. White) and a flock of 9 was seen at Chenango Valley State Park 2/13 (Hannans). The first migrants were at Binghamton, Bainbridge and Deposit 3/12. There were no reports of wintering Redwings. The first reported were 9 at Whitney Point 2/27 (TCNC). They were common in most places after 3/4 but no females were seen until 3/17.

A Rusty Blackbird was seen at Unadilla 1/6 (Wisner) and has been seen regularly since. Another was seen 1/1 at Cortland (Axtell). 8 Cowbirds, 6 males and 2 females, were seen at Cortland 1/1 (Axtell) and another was a regular customer at a feeder in Binghamton most of the winter (Shanley). The first migrant was noted at Binghamton 3/17 (Bemont).

Evening and Pine Grosbeaks have both been as common as at any time in the last four years, everywhere except Deposit where a single flock of each was recorded once all winter. Purple Finches, on the other hand, were completely absent from all reports all winter. Siskins have also been absent and Redpolls and Goldfinches have been uncommon.

A late Red-eyed Towhee was seen 12/16 at Deposit (Wilson). A White-crowned Sparrow was seen at a feeder in Binghamton regularly thru December and January (Davis) and a White-throated Sparrow was seen in Binghamton 1/1 (TCNC). The first recorded Fox Sparrow was at Deposit 3/11 (Wilson). The first of the migrant Song Sparrows was at Unadilla 2/28 (Wisner). One was heard singing 3/8 when the temperature was 10 degrees F (Bemont). Snow Buntings have been seen fairly frequently. The largest single flock was made up of over 300 birds and seen near Norwich 3/4 (R. White).

R. D. #3, Binghamton, N. Y.

REGION 5 — ONEIDA LAKE BASIN

FRITZ SCHEIDER

The first two weeks of Dec. were relatively mild with no sharp cold snaps but progressive freezing over of local marshes. The week prior to Christmas brought severe cold weather, freezing over Lake Oneida in 3 days. A mild spell (12/27-1/8) followed, but from 1/9-2/8 the weather was consistently cold, most of the time far below freezing and only occasionally rising as high as 32 degrees. 2/8-2/9 had a brief thaw, but this terminated on the 10th with a severe cold spell lasting until the 17th. A pronounced thaw then developed and extended from 2/18-3/2. On 3/4-3/5 a sleet storm crystallized the landscape. However, the week of 3/8-3/14 more than compensated for the previous cold; continuous warm weather brought hordes of migrants into the area. The next 2 weeks were primarily intermittent warm weather alternating with longer snow flurries and freeze-ups. On 3/26-3/28, a 22" snow, which rapidly melted starting 3/29, covered the area. However, enough snow remained into April as a mute and chilly remembrance of a cold and tempestuous winter.

The winter was noteworthy primarily for the following increases or decreases: 1.) the marked increase in wintering accipiters, 2.) the sharp reduction in "mouse" hawks (Red-tail, Rough-leg, Harrier, Kestrel) and the low owl counts, 3.) the flight of white-winged gulls along the Oswego River

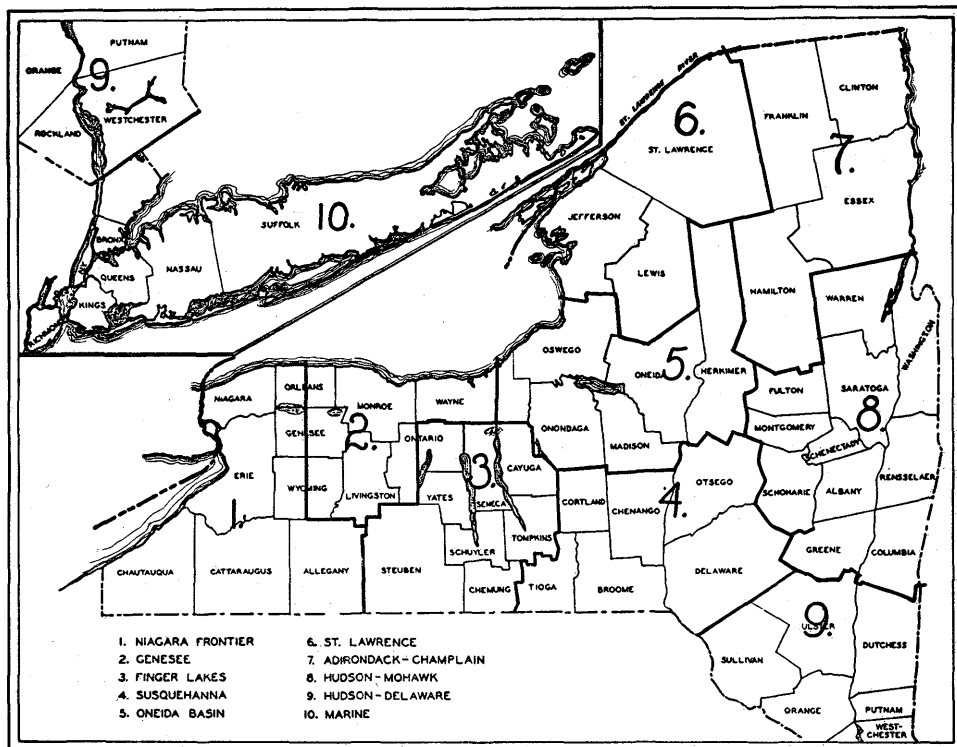
(even better than last year's which was considered very good), 4.) the duplication of last year's shrike flight, 5.) the marked scarcity of Golden-crowned Kinglets and Brown Creepers, and 6.) the almost spectacular show of winter finches.

LOONS — DUCKS: Last Common Loon on 12/19 Oneida Lake; again no wintering records. Horned Grebe — a few wintered at Oswego Harbor and Skaneateles Lake. Pied-billed Grebe — 3 successfully wintered in a small patch of open water on the Oswego River at Minetto. Great Blue Heron — 3 on 12/26; 1 on 12/27 at Onondaga Lake is last record. Canada Goose — 1st birst back at Syracuse on 3/10 (about 2 wks. late). For wintering duck populations, see Waterfowl Census Report. Green-winged Teal — 3 on 3/11 at Clay Swamp, northwest of Syracuse, are a few days early, but the 3 Blue-winged Teal on 3/12 at the same place are about 10 days early. The spell of warm weather (3/8 - 3/14) brought many marsh ducks into the area, but the following 2 weeks' weather forced the majority of them south again. Baldpate — 1 male on 2/27 at Oswego is 1st date. Wood Duck — 2 Dec. records (4 on 12/12 at Clay Swamp, 1 male on 12/19 at Fulton); arrival date is 1 pair on 3/12 at Onondaga Valley. In Feb. the Bufflehead, Canvasback, and Redhead counts at Oswego Harbor went up to 2- or 3x the **Regional** totals of the Jan. Waterfowl Census. Harlequin Duck — 1 adult male watched for 30 min. at 200 yds. with 30x BALScope at Oswego Harbor on 2/20; strangely enough, the bird was not about the rock breakwaters but feeding at the base of a piling in a quiet stretch of the harbor (Wrangell, Scheider). Surf Scoter — 1 female on 3/6, Oswego Harbor (Paquette, Wayland-Smith). Hooded Merganser — 2 wintering at Minetto; good spring flight (fairly common), starting with the warm spell in 2nd week of March.

HAWKS — OWLS: All accipiters reported in increased numbers — Goshawk — 3 reports, Sharp-shin — 5 reports (Dec. thru Feb.) where usually none or occasionally one. Cooper's — 17 birds reported, about 3x the usual winter quota. Red-tail — markedly reduced numbers. Rough-leg — only 6 birds reported all winter; interestingly enough, 2 were late Feb.-early March reports (Mathis, Mrs. Curtis) from the hill country south of Syracuse, an area the Rough-leg usually does not frequent. Bald Eagle — singles reported from Oneida Lake (Dec.), Oswego (3/2), and Delta Lake (March). Dr. W. R. Spofford located an active (bird incubating) Bald Eagle nest along Lake Ontario on 3/26. Harrier — 1 immature male on 12/12 at Clay Swamp; **not one** other winter report. Kestrel — like Red-tail, severely reduced in numbers (1-2 per field trip instead of usual 4-6). Woodcock — 1 on 3/20 at Otisco Lake, west side, is early. White-winged gulls — better flight than '53-'54 which was considered very good. Single high count was 7 (2 Glaucous, 4 Iceland, 1 Kumlien's) on 1/30 along Oswego and Seneca Rivers and Oswego Harbor. Other gulls — during and following the severe cold spell of Jan., the gull population along Oswego River axis (Phoenix to Oswego) dropped from the usual 5000 to 6000 to less than 1500. Surprisingly enough, when the numbers began to build up in late Feb., the Ring-bill Herring ratio was approximately 1:1 instead of the usual 1:10. Snowy Owl — the promise of a flight, which the 4 Nov. records gave, did not materialize; 1 in early Dec. near Syracuse and 1 on 2/12 at Westernville (Mrs. May) are the only subsequent records. Long-eared Owls — only 2 winter records. **No** Short-eared Owls reported for **entire** period.

SWIFTS — SHRIKES: At least 6 different Kingfishers successfully wintered in the Region (normally 1-2 attempt it, but do not last). Red-bellied Woodpecker — 1 male reported until 12/26 in tract of dead timber just SW of Syracuse (L. Chamberlaine). Phoebe — 1st reported on 3/8 near Van Buren, west of Syracuse. Horned Larks — a scarce bird this winter; on 2/20, marked flight of these birds flying singly east along Lake Ontario. Tree Swallow — 2 on 3/12 at Clay Swamp is a record first date. Black-capped Chickadee — flocks up to 50 throughout winter, but sudden, sharp drop in numbers in latter half of March. Brown-capped Chickadee — 5-6 birds reported wintering near the Hahn residence on the Black River in NE Oneida County (fide Paquette, Ackley, Mrs. Aspinwall). Tufted Titmouse — 1 reported from several local feeders and by several birders in Feb. in Valley Drive section of Syracuse. Golden-crowned Kinglets and Brown Creepers — very, very scarce all winter; this appears to be a Region-wide condition as practically all correspondents have commented on this scarcity. Red-breasted Nuthatch — single individuals wintering at 5-6 places in Oneida and Onondaga Counties. Carolina Wren — 1 in full song on 3/20 at S. Onondaga; apparently the bird present there last June successfully wintered despite the severity of the weather. Brown Thrasher

REPORTING REGIONS



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

— 1 on 12/20 at Clark Reservation (Mr. & Mrs. Burdick). Hermit Thrust — 1 on 12/12 at Syracuse (Wrangell) as record last date. Bluebird — 1 on 2/20 at Phoenix, 1st arrival. Gray Shrike — 1-2 featured on every winter field trip; a marked increase in numbers reported in 2nd week of March may represent a return flight or increased numbers of observers dured out-of-doors by warm weather.

WARBLERS — FRINGILLIDS: *Myrtle Warbler* — 1 at south side (Syracuse) feeding station (L. Chamberlaine) from 12/4 to 12/11 (trapped & banded). Meadowlarks were the only wintering icterids, and even these were scarce. The **winter finch show:** in contrast to last year's dismal winter finch counts, the '54-'55 finch flight was the highlight of the winter season. Evening Grosbeak reports were predominantly from Oneida County (numerous flocks of 10-40 birds), with smaller numbers south and west of, and in, Syracuse — many still present at end of period. Purple Finches — not **one** winter report, which is a complete reversal of last year's numbers. Pine Grosbeaks were widely reported, but greatest number of reports and quantity of birds came from the hill country south of Syracuse, and from northern Oneida Co. (the two terrains are remarkably similar). Despite increased field work, there are no further reports of these birds after the end of Feb. Redpolls — after the last week in Dec., these birds literally flooded the open fields and birch copses of the area; flocks up to 300 reported; still present at end of period. Pine Siskins — like the Purple Finches, completely absent despite the abundant presence of their winter companions, the Redpolls. Junco — present only as singles or small

parties of 2-4 birds; no marked flocks even at the end of March. Tree Sparrow — no large wintering flocks but every trip produced at least 15 or 20. White-throated and Swamp Sparrows — usual few wintered, mostly in protected gullies south of Syracuse. Lapland Longspur — 1 on 12/26 at Bridgeport, 1 on 3/13 at Clay Swamp are the only period records. Snow Buntings — for sheer numbers, this winter finch stole the show; usual flocks ranged from 100-300 with occasional flock of 500-1500 reported; present to end of period in numbers, which is unusual since most go north in mid-March.

Corrigenda to Regional Report in Vol. IV, No. 4, p. 110 — Stilt Sandpiper, 1 on 9/11, Sylvan Beach; p. 111 — Shrike total should be 6 (3 unidentified to species).

151 Seventh North St., Syracuse 8, N. Y.

REGION 6 — ST. LAWRENCE

FRANK A. CLINCH

The weather was near normal, although there were periods of very cold temperatures followed by mild spells. Many of the March migrants were first reported earlier than most years. A newspaper report tells of ducks, geese, grackles and redwings feeding on unharvested corn after the heavy snowfall of March 26. Many fields of corn were not entirely harvested because of the frequent and heavy rains last fall which made the ground too soft for machinery.

LOONS — DUCKS: A Red-throated Loon was found alive beside the road near Evans Mills on Dec. 21 (Belknap). A Loon was heard, but not seen near Henderson in the middle of January. An immature Pied-billed Grebe was found on land in the City of Watertown on Dec. 12. It seemed healthy, but almost too young to fly and did not live long. There were several records of Canada Geese, the first at Henderson Harbor March 12, and about 200 at Perch Lake the last of the month. Two Whistling Swans were noted at Sackets Harbor March 24, one in Black River near Herrings late in the month and three at Perch Lake April 1. They are sometimes along the eastern part of Lake Ontario, in the spring and fall, but not often away from the lake. There probably are more Black Ducks in this region in winter than the 30 recorded at the time of the January Waterfowl Census might indicate. Pintails were first seen March 15 and became common by the end of the month. Scaup Ducks were common along the shore of Lake Ontario in late March. A male Hooded Merganser was found in the river at Watertown in late December and again in the middle of February. Several were seen in other places late in March.

HAWKS — OWLS: A Turkey Vulture was seen near Pillar Point March 12 (J. Blake). Marsh Hawks were unusually numerous in March (Belknap). Few Rough-legged Hawks reported, one early in December and one late in March. Belknap reports 21 Snowy Owls in Jefferson with some duplication probable. One was still present near Philadelphia April 1. A Barred Owl spent New Year's Day in a tree in Watertown and one was seen Feb. 2 in Antwerp. Saw-whet Owls appeared in Potsdam and in Canton (L. Blake). A few Great Black-backed Gulls were seen this winter.

SWIFTS — SHRIKES: Horned Larks first appeared in the middle of February and were common in March. The Pileated Woodpeckers are said to be quite numerous around Potsdam and one of them chisled out a nice big hole in a tree in Potsdam (L. Blake). J. Wilson saw ten Ravens near High Falls, St. Lawrence Co. on Feb. 23, but found no evidence of their nesting there. He also says that the Canada Jays are increasing in the same section. Several reports indicate that Shrikes were more common than usual this winter. Starlings were more numerous than usual in Potsdam.

WARBLERS — SPARROWS: A female Cardinal was seen near Henderson late in March (Belknap). Belknap reports that Evening Grosbeaks were scarce, but they were frequently seen in Watertown from November to the present time (Apr. 12).