

REGION 10 — MARINE

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Winter came on gradually with a few northeasters causing high tides and strong northwest winds occurring around the end of the year — the time of the Audubon Christmas bird counts. Following a moderate snow-storm, January cold settled on the region, progressively increasing into the current week of the waterfowl count so that by January 20 the Great South Bay was frozen over except for a very few "ponds" in channelways or in tidal rifts. The rest of the winter was moderate with little snowfall.

Fall migration terminated with late reports on several species of shore birds notably White-rumped and Baird's Sandpipers. Both American and Snowy Egrets remained into December at Jamaica Bay. The Waterfowl Count — January 13-20 in Region 10 — amounted to 139,246 individuals, approximately 2,600 less than last year. This year in Region 10 it was ably carried out by 55 observers: 35 on Long Island and 20 in the New York City area.

By late January midwinter land bird observations slowed considerably as delicate and half-hardy species disappeared and no influx of winter finches showed up to fill the void.

Loons — Ducks: Most Common and Red-throated Loons were found around Montauk and westward to Shelter Island, whereas most Horned Grebes were seen on extreme western Long Island and in the New York City area. Both Gannets and European Cormorants were reported at Montauk. On the waterfowl count there was a large increase of fresh-water ducks over last year. Most spectacular were 4,510 Baldpates compared to 1,535 in 1955 and 1,489 in 1956. Closely alike in numbers in the past two years were: Common and Red-throated Loons; Pied-billed Grebe, Gadwall, Pintail and Redhead. Last year's Whistling Swan, Blue-winged Teal and Tufted Duck were missing; replacements were one more Red-necked Grebe and a Cinnamon Teal (*Massapequa*) possibly an escape. A maximum of five Harlequin Ducks were reported several times this winter at Montauk. Unfortunately all were missing the day of the census. As to Eiders, there was only one Common Eider this year on the count; three last year; last King Eider — two in 1955. Pelham, in Westchester, the same as last year, contributed the only Wood Duck. 1,000 more Canvas-backs and White-winged Scoters were counted than last year. There was also about double the number of American Coot over the two former years. The 67,687 Greater Scaup listed in the entire Marine Region is nearly half way between the 83,336 counted last year and the 55,638 of 1955. The only records on the count of European Widgeon came from Eastern Long Island; European Teal was missing; the much hunted Red-breasted Merganser, numbering 2,193, has declined for all three years that the census has been taken from a maximum of 3,557 in 1955. The 1957 count of Black Ducks (18,452) was about half way between last year's 15,882 and the 1955 count of 21,121. The increase from 1956 appeared to be some 3,000 Blacks in the combined protected areas of Hempstead Lake and the Jamaica Bay waters; this year's total count for both areas was 7,597.

Waterfowl aside from the census: Whistling Swan, Moriches, Mar 10, one (Puleston); European Teal, Jamaica Bay, Dec 1-3, one (P. Buckley, et. al.); good winter counts of 950 Canvasbacks, 50 Redheads, South Haven, Feb 16 (Elliott).

Hawks — Owls: Fair numbers of hawks reported. One mid-January Westchester County report of Goshawk (Spofford); several Red-shouldered and Red-tailed Hawks, Mill Neck eastward, and Rough-legged, Eastern Long Island; a Bald Eagle at Van Cortlandt Park, Jan 4, (Buckley); two at Brookhaven Jan 5 (Puleston). Most unusual hawk record: Osprey, Hither Hills (near Montauk) Jan 12, one sitting on dead tree stub (G. Bouck, M. Russek).

Clapper Rail, Oceanside, Dec 29, one (Baldwin Bird Club); one King Rail, Pelham Bay Park, seen walking around on ice, Jan 21-24 (numerous observers).

As for shore birds a Piping Plover was reported at Point Lookout, Jan 27 (Buckley, Post, Restivo); several wintering flocks of Sanderlings and Red-backed Sandpipers; Killdeer at Moriches, Mar 3 (Puleston); Wilson's Snipe wintered at Baxter Creek, Van Cortlandt Park, New York City and Seaford, L. I. Weather conditions caused the following concentration at Shinnecock, Feb 17: three Black-bellied Plover, one Ruddy Turnstone, one Knot, 10 Red-backed Sandpipers, 60 Sanderlings (C. McKeever).

A fairly good flight of white-winged gulls was reported with singles of Glaucous, Iceland and Kumlien's at Prospect Park Lake, Mar 9 (Buckley, Clermont, Restivo). Several reports of European Black-headed Gull came in and a great flight of an estimated 1,750 Kittiwakes were reported at Montauk, Dec 29, (Buckley, et. al.) and a Laughing Gull, Montauk, same day (N. Smith).

Swifts — Shrikes: An Arctic Three-toed Woodpecker at Mill Neck stripping bark off dead pine trees during early Feb (Lyman Langdon Audubon Society); several Western Kingbirds to end of year — latest Jan 12 at Riis Park. Phoebe: Bellmore, daily for two weeks into January (Mr. and Mrs. F. Mangels); one record of Tree Swallow — Van Cortlandt Park, Dec 23 (Buckley, Kane); no winter reports on Long Island where, for several years, fair sized flocks stayed through. There were no Brown-capped Chickadees nor Tufted Titmice, and most unusual, a practically complete absence of Red-breasted Nuthatches. Two Long-billed Marsh Wrens were seen at Moriches, Dec 29, a Magpie there on the same day, and presumably the same one at Mastic, Jan 5 (Puleston, Raynor, Stoutenburgh, Wilcox). Several Mockingbird records showed on Christmas counts.

Three Catbirds were in a Riverdale thicket into mid-January. Thrushes, Robins, Hermit Thrushes and Cedar Waxwings very scarce or absent in midwinter. One or two Ruby-crowned Kinglets into mid-January; only American Pipits: Orient, Jan 20, seven (Latham). A fair number of Shrike records came in.

Vireos — Sparrows: Myrtle Warblers wintered in fair numbers with a reasonably good crop of bayberries. A Cape May Warbler was seen Dec 30 at Point Lookout (Bull, Penberthy) and a Bay-breasted Warbler was seen at Riis Park, Dec 7 (numerous observers); a Yellow-throated wintered into mid-January at Riverdale and three Chats were found at the end of the year at Jones Beach. Latest Western Tanager: Jones Beach, Jan. 1.

A Spotted Towhee (female) was found at Jones Beach, Dec 29 (Grant), collected Feb 16 (Buckley), and identified as *articus* subspecies at American Museum of Natural History. In the Manhasset to Cold Spring Harbor census by the Lyman Langdon Audubon Society, 27 Cardinals, 874 Juncos and 848 White-throated Sparrows were counted. Reports thinned after mid-January cold, and meager records came in through Feb. There was a White-crowned Sparrow at Freeport, Jan 12-19 (Peters). About a dozen Ipswich Sparrows reported; Vesper Sparrows scarce; fair numbers of Field and Tree Sparrows wintered. The fall flight of Lapland Longspurs and Snow Buntings was good — maximum winter flock, the latter: East Hampton, Feb 24, count of 157 (Levine, Penberthy).

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