

had decreased very sharply by the end of the period. Snow Buntings also first appeared Oct 12 when three birds were seen around Braddock. They were present in rather small numbers for the rest of the period, no large flocks being reported.

61 Richland Street, Rochester 9

REGION 3 — FINGER LAKES

SALLY F. HOYT

Although November brought some rain and snow, in general the Region shows the effects of the long drought. Many small ponds have been dried up, and mud flats exposed in other places, yet in the Keuka area, for example, shore-bird populations did not seem to increase any.

Everyone has remarked to me that natural food is extremely scarce. "What are the birds going to do later in the winter, when they are already eating 'emergency foods' such as barberry?" is the frequently-asked question. Even sumac is scarce. Weed seeds are abundant, but will soon be covered or gone.

The most striking feature of the season has been the early arrival, in numbers, of Evening and Pine Grosbeaks. Other winter finches are slow in showing up. Rough-legged Hawks are having their second big season locally, in succession.

Loons — Ducks: Common Loons have been scarce, or perhaps just slow in showing up. Keuka Lake has more Horned Grebes than usual this fall (Guthrie), and they are in good numbers on Cayuga. An immature Double-crested Cormorant spent two weeks in October in the Branchport Basin (C. Spiker). Great Blue Herons were in usual numbers at Montezuma Refuge, and 11 were seen flying over Elmira on Oct 16 (K. Fudge). The final early fall count of American Egrets at Montezuma showed approximately 100, somewhat below last year's number. One appeared at Stewart Park and on the south shore of Cayuga Lake on Nov 7 and stayed for almost a week. It had a broken upper mandible. Four Black-crowned Night Herons remained in Elmira on Oct 19 (Harvey), and one Sept 16. Numbers of Green Herons were seen at the Brick Pond (K. Fudge). American Bitterns and Green Herons were in better than usual numbers at Montezuma Refuge (J. Morse).

Canada Geese passed through the area somewhat early and in lower numbers. The last ones left Montezuma on Dec 4, where the count had been much lower this year than in the past (see below). American Brant continue to increase in this area in the fall migration. Flocks of up to 200 were reported passing over Ithaca, with smaller groups stopping briefly on the lake. Three were killed at the north end of Cayuga on Oct 23 (Walker). Five appeared at Lakeside Park at the south end of Seneca on Oct 30 (H. Mitchell, L. Helfer). One individual has joined the tame Mallards at Stewart Park, Ithaca, again this year. Six Blue Geese, which kept to themselves (3 ad., 3 imm.) were at Montezuma from Oct 2 into December.

Baldpates and Canvasbacks were in fair numbers at the north end of Cayuga in November (Walker). Six Blue-winged Teal appeared on the Rhodes Pond at Elmira on Sept 15 (M. Welles) and five Green-winged Teal at the Horseheads Dump on Oct 9 (K. Fudge). Four Ring-necked Ducks were on the Chemung River on Oct 27 (K. Fudge). A female King Eider was shot on Oct 24 on the north end of Cayuga, taken to Montezuma, and then turned over to the Cornell collection. Few Scoters of any species have been reported this fall.

John Morse, Assistant Manager of Montezuma Refuge, has been making careful counts of the waterfowl there this fall, and his report seems worthy of lengthy quotation or excerpting.

From a count of 11 geese and 3810 ducks on Aug 17, the numbers increased

to 7725 ducks on Sept 13, which included 2500 Mallards, 1500 Black Ducks, 600 Pintail, 900 Blue-winged Teal, 800 American Widgeon and 500 Shovellers. By Sept 28, the Mallards had increased to 2600, the Pintails to 1200, the Green-winged Teal to 400 and the American Widgeon to 4000, while the Blue-winged Teal had dropped to 100. (All of the latter left shortly, although one pair was seen on Oct 26).

The peak number of waterfowl on the Refuge was reached on Nov 7, with 116 Geese and 10675 ducks present. By that date, the Mallards had reached 3500 and the Black Ducks 2800. At the end of November there were still 1500 Mallards, 2000 Blacks, 25 Gadwalls, 100 Green-winged Teal, 25 American Widgeon, 25 Shovellers, 150 Ring-necked Ducks, 10 Canvasbacks, 100 Hooded Mergansers, and 300 American Mergansers. The peak number compares very unfavorably with the last two years. In the fall of 1955 there were 3000 Geese and over 100,000 ducks. A contributing factor was undoubtedly the lack of water, for the storage pool had been drained for carp control, and did not fill up because of the dry fall. But the numbers of geese should not have been affected by this.

The pond at Sapsucker Woods was used again this fall by small groups of Dabblers which dropped in to feed with the captive waterfowl each afternoon at dusk. The appearance of Wood Ducks in numbers was particularly gratifying. On the afternoon of Oct 17, 87 Wood Ducks, only 15 of which were captive, filed slowly out of the woods to feed on the corn under the office windows. It was a stirring sight.

A late November afternoon brought an unusual sight to observers on the Inlet at the south end of Cayuga, where 300 Hooded Mergansers gathered to rest awhile. A. A. Allen reported it to be by far the largest flock he'd ever seen, and some Supercoschromes he took are evidence of the numbers.

Hawks — Owls: A Sharp-shinned Hawk was seen by K. Fudge on Harris Hill on Oct 22 in the act of picking a Red-breasted Nuthatch off a pine cone on which it had just landed. Cooper's Hawks have been more in evidence than usual in the Elmira area (Welles), and several individuals of the species have heckled the birds in the outside aviary at the Research Center at Sapsucker Woods. It has been a good fall for Buteos, ever since Aug 18 when Mrs. York watched a small flock of Red-tailed, Red-shouldered and Broad-wings pass over her hill. Other good hawk days were Oct 29 when numbers of Rough-legs and Red-tails were seen by a group I took to Montezuma, and Nov 17, when Dr. Spofford drove from Montezuma to Ithaca and saw 16 Red-tails, 12 Rough-legs and 3 Harriers. It's the second winter in succession that Rough-legs have been abundant in the fall and early winter in the Finger Lakes. The first one at Montezuma Refuge was seen Oct 4, the first one near Sapsucker Woods was Oct 8 and they are reported as abundant near Keuka and Seneca Lakes. Mrs. Bardeen reports one attempted to take one of their fancy pigeons at Burdett, which is certainly unusual for a Rough-leg. Marsh Hawks were abundant at Montezuma Refuge all fall. An Osprey appeared over the Chemung River on Sept 15 (K. Fudge, M. Smith). The two adult Bald Eagles were a common sight at Montezuma through the reporting period. Sparrow Hawks were scarce around Avoca.

Sora Rails remained at Montezuma Refuge until Sept 20, Virginias until Oct 5. The Florida Gallinules also left Oct 5. Coots are abundant at the south end of Cayuga Lake, and also on Keuka.

There were five Golden Plovers at Montezuma Refuge on Sept 23 (Morse), one Black-bellied on Sept 8. A Wilson's Snipe spent two weeks in September at Rhodes Pond in Elmira, and A. A. Allen saw them at several locations near Ithaca. Both Yellowlegs were seen in usual numbers throughout the Region. Pectoral Sandpipers seemed slightly scarcer, while there were more reports than usual of White-rumped. There were the usual flocks of Red-backed Sandpipers at Montezuma Refuge, and small flocks were on the exposed mud flats of Keuka Lake and along the Watkins inlet. Dowitchers occurred in good numbers at Montezuma from Aug 27 to Oct 18 (Morse) and some were still present there on Oct 29 (Hoyt). Three Western Sandpipers, not always noted, were seen on the beach at Stewart Park, Ithaca, on Oct 22 (N. Case).

Prof. Guthrie saw a Northern Phalarope in the Branchport Basin on Sept 27. A Parasitic Jaeger was seen briefly at the south end of Cayuga on Nov 10 (I. Nisbet).

Great Black-backed Gulls continue to appear early in the Finger Lakes. One

was seen at the north end of Cayuga on Sept 21 (Walker). The first one at the south end of Cayuga appeared on Oct 10 (Case) and one was seen on Seneca on Nov 15 (Bardeen).

Mourning Doves are scarcer than last year at Keuka, Geneva and in the Ithaca area. Snowy Owls have been spotted at different locations: at the Branchport Basin on Nov 18 (Spiker), in downtown Geneva on Nov 30, on Snyder Hill near Ithaca Dec 1 and a picture of one in Auburn appeared in the newspaper there on Nov 23. I have probably overlooked other reports. A Short-eared Owl was caught Oct 30 at the Cornell Turkey Farm, and is under observation at the Laboratory of Ornithology Research Center.

Swifts — Shrikes: There were several reports of Ruby-throated Hummingbirds remaining until mid-October in the Finger Lakes (Ness, Shepherd).

A migrating flock of over 100 Flickers was seen at Breeseport from Sept 13 to 19 (Brimmer). The Pileated Woodpecker has been found at two new stations near Geneva (Ward). Although three nesting pairs of Red-headed Woodpeckers were known in the vicinity of Elmira, no juveniles were seen, and in September four adults were seen on the Welles farm. All Flycatchers, except Phoebe and Pewee, were scarce at Geneva. Blue Jays and White-breasted Nuthatches are up in numbers around Geneva, Blue Jays and Black-capped Chickadees are abundant around Keuka, and Chickadees also are in good numbers at Geneva. Three Tufted Titmice have put in an appearance on the Keuka College campus (Guthrie) and at least one other station near there. Spiker reports that his only previous records around Keuka were of single birds Aug 1936 and May 1947. While this species has been resident for some years at Ithaca, it rarely appears in the higher elevations of the area. K. Fudge saw 2 adults and 3 juveniles in her yard in Elmira on Sept 30. While there have been very few reports of Red-breasted Nuthatches at Ithaca, and none at Watkins, many were seen around Elmira after Oct 4, on the higher elevations where pitch-pines have seeds. One has been at the Carter feeder in Avoca since Nov 18, and one at Walker feeder in Romulus from Sept 9 on. Several pairs of Carolina Wrens seem established at Keuka now. A Carolina was seen Sept 9 by Mrs. Munford at Clifton Springs, and on Sept 29 at Geneva (Gambrell). Six Short-billed Marsh Wrens were seen on Sept 18 near Horseheads (Raabe). The Mockingbird reported last year near Ludlowville at the Shepherd home put in its appearance again on Nov 16. Catbirds seemed to leave Geneva early, but remained in Etna through the first week of October.

J. Walker reported good numbers of Bluebirds in migration, and the same seemed true around Ithaca. During a heavy rain on Sept 16, 100 Bluebirds came down in Horseheads and were still there the next morning (rep. Welles).

Northern Shrikes have been reported from several areas, and one heckled the English Sparrows at the Research Center feeder on Nov 18.

Vireos — Sparrows: Following a heavy rain on Oct 1, the yard of K. Fudge in Elmira was filled with migrating Vireos, Red-eyed, Blue-headed and Yellow-throated, as well as Nashville, Magnolia, and Cape May Warblers. The birds remained for about three hours. Black-throated Green Warblers were seen in numbers the previous day in Elmira by Smith, and Bay-breasted Warblers were seen on Harris Hill in numbers on Oct 9 (K. Fudge). No other areas reported migrating Warblers. Malcolm Lerch trapped a Connecticut and a Mourning Warbler on Sept 14, near Penn Yan, and another Connecticut the next day. These often slip by us without being observed.

Jason Walker reports that the largest flock of Redwings and Grackles he ever saw passing over the village of Cayuga on Oct 26. It took an hour to pass, and was three levels high, the top level being larger than the other two combined. Grackles have been unusually abundant around Elmira and stayed late (Welles). Rusty Blackbirds, in all plumages, have been daily visitors at the feeder at the Research Center at Cornell since Sept 27, remaining into December. Large flocks of Cowbirds gathered around Elmira in late September and early October.

There were two Dickcissel reports. Lerch banded one on Oct 5 at Penn Yan, and W. Spofford saw one in a flock with English Sparrows near Aurora on Nov 17.

Evening Grosbeaks made an early arrival, being seen first at Hornell on Sept 29 (Groesbeck) and at Ithaca on Sept 30 (DGAllen). Small flocks have been reported from most towns in the Region, in most cases still feeding on box Elder, but they

found my feeders in Etna in midOctober and I'm feeding up to sixty daily, and had banded 100 by Dec 1. This early arrival at stations has made it possible to do some studies of first-year plumages, as bill color gave clues to age. Much remains to be learned. Purple Finches have been abundant at Elmira this fall.

Reports of Pine Grosbeaks have poured in, especially during the hunting season when flocks, small and large, were spotted in woodlots. Others have been feeding on frozen apples, but the sumac crop is so poor that search of sumac thickets has not produced these birds. The earliest report was from Harris Hill where four were seen on Oct 9 (K. Fudge). On Dec 4, a female Pine Grosbeak was seen at Montezuma, making a new species for the Refuge. There have been a few scattered reports of Siskins and Redpolls, but none of Crossbills in this Region.

Two **Lark Sparrows** were reported from a field just north of Ithaca on October 22 by Neil Case, who has just come to Ithaca from the mid-west, where he was familiar with the species. This may be a first record for the Cayuga Basin. Slate-colored Juncos are not very abundant. Tree Sparrows are certainly scarce so far and were late in arriving. Chipping Sparrows migrated in numbers the third week of September in Horseheads (Welles). Apparently White-throated and White-crowned Sparrows were in local concentrations, since reports from part of my Region said "Never had so many," while others said they were extremely scarce. I banded more White-throats and fewer White-crowns than usual at Etna. Song Sparrows do not seem to be wintering here this year. Scattered reports of Lapland Longspurs, the first coming from Big Flats on Oct 2. Snow Buntings appeared at Geneva on Oct 3, two weeks early (Ward).

Correction: In the July, 1957 issue, page 58, 4th line from top, read "25 years" instead of "2 years".

Laboratory of Ornithology, Cornell University, Ithaca

REGION 4—SUSQUEHANNA

LESLIE E. BEMONT

The whole period, from August 16 to November 30, has been fairly dry. Precipitation averaged 75 to 80 per cent of normal for the period. In no month was the precipitation total as high as normal, although November, as dry as it was, was the wettest in three years. The heaviest rains were recorded Sep 22 and Oct 8 with other appreciable rains coming Aug 25-26, Oct 24 and Nov 18-19. The first appreciable snowfall came Oct 27, with the next Nov 27 and another Nov 30, but at no time was there a significant amount of snow on the ground for more than a few hours.

The latter part of August was cool, September was about normal, October the coldest in five years and November the warmest in four years. The first period with frost or near frost at night came during the last four days of September.

Loons — Ducks: Our latest Green Heron report was from Sherburne Sep 15 (Whites). A late Black-crowned Night Heron was at Sherburne Nov 10 where one or two have been seen several times during the period (Whites). An American Bittern was at Boland's Marsh north of Binghamton Aug 18 (Bemont) and another at Sherburne Sep 2 (Whites). This species is reported rather infrequently in the region. A number of flocks of Canada Geese have been reported, usually with rather indefinite dates. The earliest, a flock of 34 at Deposit, were seen Sep 6 (Wilson). The latest, so far, were in the Unadilla area about Nov 15 (Wisner). The pair of Egyptian Geese reported from the Whitney Point area in the last issue suddenly disappeared before the hunting season but no one has been found who admits knowing what happened to them. A farm where they are raised has been found near Deposit and it seems likely that this is where the two "wild" ones came from (Loomis). There are few reports of migrating ducks, perhaps because observers are reluctant to be around marshes and ponds where hunters are apt to be.