

The warbler, apparently placed in a ridiculous situation, lost interest and immediately departed.

Some further hunting occurred as the Olive-sided acquired a few more insects, but at 7:09, after some 114 minutes under observation, and with daylight lessening, the Olive-sided left, apparently to bed down elsewhere for the night. I saw it no more, nor did I see any others that season. John J. Elliott, 3994 Park Avenue, Seaford, L. I.

THE WINTER SEASON: DECEMBER 1 TO MARCH 31

There is little to say about the season just past except that it was a fine demonstration up-state of the effects of the "real old-fashioned winters." Each regional report has its story about the February blizzards and their toll of bird life. This year especially after the mild weather extending through Christmas which held many of the half-hardy species over, we had an opportunity to witness how destructive the inclement weather can be. It will be interesting to note continuing levels in the populations of such birds as the Tufted Titmouse and the Carolina Wren. It will be interesting too to speculate on the differing effects on birds which utilize feeders and those which do not.

Noteworthy was the winter finch flight with Redpolls in the vanguard. 14 Snowy Owl reports, six from Finger Lakes. There was very little evidence of an echo flight of Three-toed Woodpeckers. The Cardinal continues to spread to the northeast, this winter bringing a report from the central Adirondacks. It is unfortunate that this bird did not make it through the winter. GRR

REGION 1—NIAGARA FRONTIER

ROBERT F. ANDRLE

The cold and stormy weather of November continued to mid-December but the marked higher temperatures during the latter half of the month made it the warmest December in 26 years. A sleety, snowy and comparatively cold first three weeks of January followed but a "thaw" in the last week saw temperatures fluctuating little from the freezing point. There was no ice in Lake Erie nor much in Buffalo harbor until February which ushered in severe weather with more snow (54.2 inches) than in any month on record. It was also a cold month with a record low of -5° F on the 18th after a weekend storm left more than two feet of snow over much of the region. Alternate thawing and freezing late in the month and through March removed much of the snow cover without causing flooding. During the last month of the period near normal temperatures prevailed (average 34.5° F) and precipitation was very light. Unusually low wind velocities occurred and prevailing easterly winds during the latter part of March caused open water by moving much Lake Erie ice to the westward. Great numbers of gulls continued to be present through December but soon after the advent of harsher weather and the formation of the ice bridge below Niagara Falls in January they decreased greatly. Slightly more than the normal number of half-hardy birds were observed through December and the flights of Evening Grosbeaks, Common Redpolls and Snow Buntings continued quite heavily during the period. The feeders south of Buffalo were well patronized by the Grosbeaks. Tufted Titmice and Carolina Wrens also appeared

irregularly although some of the latter may not have survived the cold and the heavy snow of February. Bald Eagles do not seem to be appearing in the winter as frequently as they did formerly and this past winter continued the trend with none at all being observed.

Loons — Ducks: Loons and grebes are generally uncommon throughout most of the period in this region. However, the gorge below Niagara Falls is particularly favored by them and a Red-throated Loon, several Common Loons, a Pied-billed Grebe and as many as two dozen Horned Grebes remained until early January. An Eared Grebe, presumably one of those seen upriver earlier, was found dead in the gorge on Jan 1 (Andrle). It was preserved and is the first specimen of this species from the Niagara Frontier area. Whistling Swans were quite scarce on their northward migration but Canada Geese, first noted on Mar 15, '36 at Springbrook (Coggeshall), were estimated by Axtell at 22,000 birds in the Oak Orchard Swamp and Wolcottsville areas on Mar 30. Four Canada Geese on the Niagara River Jan 4 (McCanns) is one of the few winter records for the species in the region. Among the geese in the Oak Orchard area were three Snow Geese on Mar 29-30 (McCanns et al) and four Blue Geese (Wendlings et al). Low fields and stream valleys east and northeast of Buffalo were well filled with water and the surface feeding ducks began to arrive on schedule in late March although seemingly not so numerous as in some prior years. Wintering waterfowl on the Niagara River as usual fluctuated considerably in numbers. Several Gadwall, American Widgeon and a few score Pintails were observed on Grand Island and at Niagara Falls until late December. A maximum of 7000 Canvasbacks were estimated on the river Dec 14 (Mitchell et al). The two Harlequin Ducks continued to be observed irregularly in the rapids above Niagara Falls until March. A King Eider on the Niagara River Dec 5 (Axtell, Andrle) was the only one observed during the period. Common and Red-breasted Mergansers were quite numerous and several Hooded Mergansers remained at Niagara Falls into the winter.

Hawks — Owls: The first Turkey Vultures appeared on Mar 13 at Gainesville (Smith). A Sharp-shinned Hawk at East Aurora Feb 22 (Mitchell) was the only report of a species which is rarely seen here in winter. Many reports of Cooper's Hawks indicates that they perhaps were wintering in above normal numbers. A report of single Red-shouldered Hawks at Boston Dec 1 and Hamburg Dec 4 (Bourne) was noteworthy. Rough-legged Hawks were observed in scattered localities but seemed less common than usual although their winter status is perhaps too variable to establish a norm. At Chestnut Ridge Park just south of Buffalo on Mar 29 Bourne reported a Peregrine Falcon. Like the eagle this species also seems to be occurring less often in the region. Turkeys seem to have suffered some losses from the heavy snows as evidenced by Eaton's account of one found in a weakened condition and caught on Feb 23, and six others picked up dead in southern Cattaraugus and Allegany counties. Stanley writes that six American Coots are wintering in Dunkirk harbor. Of interest was the report of individual Killdeer at Jamestown Dec 27 and Jan 11 (Beal). Great Black-backed, Glaucous, and Iceland Gulls (two races) were conspicuous on the Buffalo water-front and at Niagara Falls among the thousands of Herring Gulls. A number of interesting and often puzzling immature and sub-adult plumaged birds, particularly in the gorge, fascinated avid gull-watchers in the area. The usually wary Great Black-backed Gulls, both adults and immatures, were noted feeding on the dumps at Buffalo more than in many previous winters and could be approached very closely. The ubiquitous Bonaparte's Gulls appeared irregularly through the period, maximum numbers being 2000 on the Niagara River Dec 14 (Mitchell et al) and 1000 on January 15 (McCanns et al). A Snowy Owl on Jan 14 in Tonawanda (rep by Mitchell) was the only record for the period in a winter when a flight was expected. Short-eared Owls appeared to be more common than normally, the largest flock being 25 at Niagara Falls Feb 1 (Abbott). Eaton writes about the finding of a Screech Owl Feb 26, and a Barred and Great Horned Owl Mar 24, all in weakened condition. Apparently the deep snow and the hard crust which could, according to Eaton, support Turkeys, deer and men on Mar 9, contributed to this interesting situation.

Goatsuckers — Shrikes: On Feb 7 a Red-bellied Woodpecker, very uncommon in the region, was seen by several observers near East Aurora. A Yellow-bellied Sapsucker was noted on Dec 5 at Hamburg (Bourne) and another on Feb 12 in Williams-

ville (Wendlings). This species, though a common migrant, is very seldom seen here in winter. Phoebees were not reported in March, an unusual circumstance considering the fine weather in the latter part of the month. Tree Swallows were also unreported although ice covered inland water areas could possibly have a bearing on this. Some Horned Larks of both races appeared in January and the main migration through the area in February apparently was not affected by the adverse weather. Widespread observations of Red-breasted Nuthatches seemed to indicate that they were more numerous than in previous winters. A Long-billed Marsh Wren on Dec 22 on Grand Island (Axtell et al), is an outstanding observation. There was a Brown Thrasher wintering in Kenmore just north of Buffalo (Allen rep. Mitchell). Four Cedar Waxwings on Jan 22 at Niagara Falls (Rogerson) and two flocks of 15 and six on Feb 1, 24 (Wendlings) were of note. Northern Shrikes were regularly reported from many localities.

Vireos — Warblers: Individual Myrtle Warblers were seen on Grand Island Dec 22 (Axtell et al), and at Wilson on Jan 11 (Drobits, Webb) and also there on Feb 2 (Lehrer). A very unusual observation was a Yellowthroat on Grand Island Dec 22 (Andrle, Gampp).

Blackbirds — Sparrows: Cardinals continued to be numerous in many localities and seemed to be unaffected by the severe weather. A striking report is that of an immature male Rose-breasted Grosbeak which has been coming to a feeder in the vicinity of Dunkirk since early November (Feb 8, Stanley). Pine Grosbeaks have been noted only in small numbers and nowhere were concentrated as were the Evening Grosbeaks south of Buffalo. Very few crossbills have been observed since they first appeared in November. Of interest is a flock of 200 Goldfinches at Elma Jan 31 (rep. Mitchell). Although March temperatures were above normal in the latter half of the month and there were no storms and little precipitation it is interesting to observe that Rufous-sided Towhees, Savannah, Vesper, Field and Fox Sparrows went unreported. Factors which might be considered in speculation on this situation are the rather heavy snow cover which remained from earlier storms, the fact that the prevailing winds were northwesterly to east-north-easterly on 11 of the last 12 days of the month or perhaps the lack of thorough coverage in the region.

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REGION 2 — GENESEE

HOWARD S. MILLER

December was an extremely mild month with little snow. At the end of the month there was absolutely no snow cover and all waters were entirely free from ice. This of course resulted in the presence of a good number of species which in an ordinary year would have migrated much earlier. With the advent of the New Year, however, the weather pattern suddenly changed and winter conditions prevailed during the whole month. The temperature hardly went above freezing at any time and snow cover appeared along the lake early in the month. Inland there was less snow until about the middle of January.

If winter weather prevailed in January, the weather during the first three weeks of February was nothing short of devilish. A snowfall of $3\frac{1}{2}$ times normal coupled with gale winds and very low temperatures much of the time, made the month as bad as possible for both man and bird. The few Mockingbirds which had worked their way into this area disappeared, Carolina Wrens dropped sharply in numbers and some other half-hardy species disappeared about this time. Cardinals on the other hand seem to have survived this winter without any apparent decrease in numbers. 75,000 pounds of bird seed donated by the R. T. French Co. of Rochester