

the home of Mrs. Dorothy Hull — for about ten days. She had known the species in Florida and could not quite believe her eyes, when she saw this bird come to her feeder. The bird came regularly to the feeder until Mar 25, and was not seen after this time alive. It was found dead by children either the same day or the next day. I was told of these events on Mar 27 and the bird was brought to me that day."

75 N. Sable St., Keeseville

REGION 8 — MOHAWK - HUDSON

JAMES K. MERRITT

The winter months in the Mohawk-Hudson region were generally warm and wet. The only severe cold wave that hit was the one immediately following the February 16 "blizzard of '58" which dumped about two feet of snow in the Mohawk Valley and considerably more at higher elevations. A fairly severe snow on March 14 delayed what we had hoped would be an early arrival of spring. This one deposited up to two feet of white stuff in the northern Catskills and lesser amounts elsewhere. The region was not severely affected by the March 21 snowstorm that did so much damage along the middle Atlantic seaboard.

The period was highlighted by an excellent northern finch flight and by a continued infiltration of certain southern land birds. Of especial interest among the individual records were an Iceland Gull, a Baltimore Oriole, and perhaps most surprising of all, a Grasshopper Sparrow. There were no confirmed reports of Snowy Owls, and the Barrow's Goldeneye was missed along the upper Hudson for the first time in three years.

Forty-one varieties were noted on the annual Schenectady Christmas count, and thirty-seven were recorded at Troy. Thirty-one species were observed at East Chatham on the first annual count taken there by the Alan DeVoe Bird Club.

Loons — Ducks: A Common Loon was seen along the Hudson on the Troy count Dec. 28 (Schenectady Bird Club). Horned Grebes were present at Saratoga Lake at least until Dec 15. Two Green Herons were near Old Chatham on Mar 17 (Reilly). A few Canvasbacks were present during the winter. Two were near Troy on Dec 28 (SBC), forty were at Saratoga Lake on Jan 1 (Angst), and three were along the upper Hudson on Feb. 22 (Stone, Yunick). Unfortunately, this species could not be located during the duck count. Three Redheads were on the Hudson near Troy on Feb 15 (SBC) and again on Feb 22 (Stone, Yunick). Several Greater Scaup were reported in February. A lone Pintail was at Troy on Dec 28 (SBC). On Dec 8 three Old-Squaws were at Saratoga Lake (Hallenbeck), and two were still there a week later (Foote). One near Schenectady on Dec 21 constituted the first Christmas count record for the species there since 1953 (SBC). Several White-winged Scoters, not a common bird locally, were at Saratoga Lake on Dec 15 (Foote, Merritt). By late March the waterfowl migration seemed to be up to expectations in the lower Hudson area (Alan DeVoe Bird Club).

Hawks — Owls: At Old Chatham a Turkey Vulture was seen on Jan 20 (Reilly). The two Goshawks seen near Oppenheim, Fulton County, on Mar 22 were the only ones reported (Murphy). The Cooper's Hawk was noted on several occasions in the East Chatham area (Radke, Reilly). Several Rough-legs were observed. The first of the season were the two near Troy on Dec 28 (SBC). One was at Scotia on Jan 1 and Feb 25 (Hallenbeck), and another was along the Thruway near Catskill on Feb 2 (Merritt). An early Broad-winged Hawk was seen near Troy on Mar 29 (Austin, Hipple). The period's only report of the Bald Eagle was of an adult at Germantown on Jan 12 (ADBC). Marsh Hawks were definitely scarce this winter. A Duck Hawk was noted at Livingston on Feb 15 and again on Feb 19 (Munson).

Several Bob-whites, very probably birds released in the area, were seen near Schenectady on Dec 21 (SBC), and two were noted at Old Chatham on Dec 29

(Reilly). Pheasants seemed to be not as common as might be expected. The six Coots at Saratoga Lake on Jan 1 constituted the only period report (Angst). Great Black-backed Gulls seemed quite common along the upper Hudson in early January. A count of 29 was made on Jan 1 (Angst, Gardner). Numbers declined sharply late in the month. There were several March observations of individual birds. An Iceland Gull along the Hudson at Mechanicville, on Jan 1 permitted close study (Angst, Gardner), but subsequent attempts to relocate it were in vain.

A flock of about 45 Mourning Doves was at Voorhesville on Jan 11 (Grace). Other winter reports were of individuals or very small groups. On Dec 1 an injured Barn Owl was picked up near East Chatham (fide Radke); the bird was released a week or so later. A Short-eared Owl was found dead at Castleton on Jan 11 (Cook). There seemed to be an above-average number of reports of Great Horned, Screech, and Barred Owls. Snowies, however, were unrecorded.

Goatsuckers — Shrikes: Pileated Woodpeckers seemed to be reported in good numbers, but unlike last winter, no Three-toed Woodpeckers were observed. No late March Phoebe or Tree Swallows were reported. Red-breasted Nuthatches were scarce throughout the period.

One of the amazing events of the winter was the number of reports of the Tufted Titmouse. Eight or nine were recorded. Two were at a Niskayuna feeder until early March (Simpson), and one was at an Alpaus feeder until Mar 15 (Lundy). These birds were not recorded thereafter, and one can only conjecture as to whether they succumbed to the late winter storms. However, two Tufted Titmice first seen at Scotia on Dec 21 were still present at the end of the period (Hallenbeck). One was at Hillsdale at least until early March (Green), and another was a feeder visitor at Chatham from December until Feb 24 (Mickle). I know of at least one feeder report from Ballston Spa, and Doug Ayres informs me that a Tufted Titmouse was reported by two observers in Canajoharie.

A Winter Wren was reported on several dates at Scotia (Hallenbeck), and one was at Old Chatham on Jan 18 and 25 (Reilly). Reports of Carolina Wrens were frequent, especially early in the period. It is perhaps a bit too early to tell yet how this species survived the winter. There were several December and January Robin observations. Five were seen near Schenectady on Dec 15 (Kaskan). One was in Niskayuna on Jan 16 (Nowak), and another was in Alpaus on Jan 31 (Heitkamp). Others were reported from the Chatham region (Radke, Reilly). The regular March migration of this species was extremely late throughout the region. By March 31 the Robin was still not a common lawn bird. Northern Shrikes seemed to be very generally distributed, with perhaps fifteen to twenty individual birds being reported by various observers during the winter.

Warblers — Sparrows: Three Myrtle Warblers were at Old Chatham on Dec 2 (Reilly), and at Oppenheim a Yellow Palm Warbler was noted on Dec 6 and 7 (Murphy).

Three Meadowlarks were at Burnt Hills on Dec 15 (Foote), and from Dec 8 until at least the 15th a Grackle was a Greenfield Center (Meador). Other Grackles were reported at Amsterdam on Jan 1 (Fitzgerald) and at Niskayuna on Jan 19 (Novak). Several wintering Cowbirds were observed. A group of about 25 Rusty Blackbirds was seen near Scotia on Dec 1 (Bartlett). An unusual winter record is that of a Baltimore Oriole. The bird was present at a Castleton feeder from Jan 8 until Jan 25 (Cook).

Cardinals continued to spread throughout the area, and I can see no point in listing all the individual records submitted. Of especial interest, however, are the four pairs of Cardinals in the Fort Plain-Canajoharie area, the first there within the memory of one veteran observer. It will be interesting to see how many spring nesting observations are made.

The northern finch flight was in virtually every respect a fine one, with the White-winged Crossbill being the only member of this group to be unrecorded. Evening Grosbeaks were widely reported at feeders, with the high count being the 350 or so at Amsterdam (Fitzgerald). Pine Grosbeaks were reported with greater frequency than they have been in several years. No less than 45 were seen on the Troy count. During late January and February, however, the number of reports of the Pine Grosbeak declined. Redpolls were reported in good numbers throughout the period, while Pine Siskins were reported in somewhat lesser numbers. Purple Finches

were scarce. At Old Chatham several Red Crossbills were seen on Dec 2, 3, and 20 (Reilly).

The rarity of the period is very probably the Grasshopper Sparrow seen at Livingston on Jan 18. During a high wind and heavy snowstorm that day Howard Munson was called to check on two sparrows that had appeared at a sill feeder. By the time he arrived one of the birds had flown. The other, however, was so weak that it was easily picked up. The bird died shortly thereafter. The specimen was turned over to the New York State Museum at Albany, where verification of the identification was made. One can only conjecture as to whether the second bird was also a Grasshopper Sparrow.

Some forty to fifty Fox Sparrows, the first of the season, were near Chatham Center on Mar 29 (ADBC). A White-crowned Sparrow was at Amsterdam on Dec 31 (Fitzgerald), and for the second January in a row one appeared at Burnt Hills. An individual was present there between Jan 13 and 22. Another, or perhaps this same bird, was noted there on Mar 3 (Foote). A White-throated Sparrow was at Amsterdam from Jan 21 on (Fitzgerald).

Snow Buntings were reported much more frequently than in recent winters. Most of the records were made during February and March. The high count was the 300 or so at Oppenheim on Mar 23 (Murphy). During February flocks of up to 200 were noted in Columbia County (ADBC). There were many reports of flocks ranging from 50 to 100 in the Schenectady area. Lapland Longspurs were unrecorded.

16 *Ellen Lane, Scotia 2*

REGION 9 — DELAWARE - HUDSON

FRED N. HOUGH

As compared to last winter (56-57), birds remaining in the Hudson Valley following the Fall migration showed a lower normality. Numbers of common migrants were down and the drain out seemed progressively greater as one traveled up the Hudson from Rockland and Westchester. The Northern visitors were not numerically high except for the Siskin in Rockland where it was very abundant (Deed). The vagrant and rarity list shows several interesting finds and new records. It is worthy to note that the number of bird watchers operating feeding stations has increased considerably in the past decade and that this practice has paid off in influencing birds to remain in the vicinity for the season. This is one way to attract rarities that would otherwise not be discovered.

Winter did not settle upon us with any great severity until the season was half over. December was warm and wet followed by some snowfall and cooler weather in January. In early February, however, Winter tightened its hold — dropped its temperatures more and dumped a series of snows upon the ground to a total accumulation of 5-6 feet or more in some areas up in the Catskills. As of April 1 much snow still remained in the mountainous areas, kept there by cool north to east winds that had been constant through almost all of March.

March snowfalls along the Atlantic Coast coupled with the almost constant winds gave the Hudson Valley one of the latest and poorest Spring migrations in a number of years. Although a few birds managed to come through close to on time most flights however, were two weeks or more late. In the northern part of our region at least, the scarcity of migrants during the last two weeks of March was amazing.