

One Red Crossbill was seen near Irondequoit Bay on Dec 5 (Kemnitzer, Listman), and a flock of 12 was noted that same day in Powder Mills Park (G.O.S. hike). These were the only reports of this species. A Rufous-sided Towhee was noted in Durand Dec 27 (Moons et al), one was seen at Conesus Jan 2 (Listman et al), and two were observed around the Collins feeder near Durand on Feb. 13. Two Vesper Sparrows spent most of February and early March around the Whites' feeder at Mendon. An Oregon Junco was seen Dec 27 at Greece (Corcoran), and one was an irregular visitor to the Munson feeder in Penfield from Dec 29 on. A Chipping Sparrow was seen near Conesus on Jan 2 (Listman et al). The presence of this species so late is very unusual.

A White-crowned Sparrow was observed near Braddock's Dec 27 (Lloyd, McKinney), one was seen at a feeder in Sodus Point Jan 24 (Foster), and one appeared regularly at John Foster's feeder in Rochester from Feb 6 to Mar 19. White-throated Sparrows wintered in much smaller numbers than a year ago; two were seen Jan 16 at Ling Road (Listman), and single birds spent the winter around the McNeth-Sunderlin and Kemnitzer feeders. An unprecedented record was that of a Lincoln's Sparrow which appeared at the Rohner feeder in Greece Jan 3 and remained at least until Mar 28. It was carefully observed by many of the area's birders. Lapland Longspurs were rather scarce, the largest number being six reported Feb 18 in Webster (Kemnitzer). Snow Buntings, however, were well distributed; a flock of 300 seen Jan 24 in Webster (Lloyd) was the high count.

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REGION 3 — FINGER LAKES

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Winter weather and birding conditions leave me fumbling for the proper descriptive terms. December and January were actually slightly above normal in temperature, with December quite wet and January moderately so. The moderate, open conditions continued until almost mid-February, with a complete thaw the second week. Then came the snows and the cold. Most of the region received over four feet of snow the last two weeks of February and the first week of March, and the great number of winter finches which had been driven this far south by conditions to the north found their food supply buried. Coupled with this, the month of March produced record-breaking low temperatures almost every day, the monthly average being almost ten degrees below normal. In Etna, for example, I had below zero readings every morning from March 7-17 (minimum of —20) and again several mornings between March 2-25.

While other years have undoubtedly brought as many Redpolls into the region, they have previously remained in the fields where they were well camouflaged in the weed patches. The sudden burying of food, however, drove them to feeders this year. Typical of the unusual situation was the presence from March 17 on of over 100 Redpolls daily at the third floor feeder of the Robert Fickens at an apartment on E. State Street hill in Ithaca. These scrappy, friendly little birds were everywhere — in downtown gutters, on single weed-tops along sidewalks. Others fed along roadsides, and Dilger reported that he saw "many thousands" of them on March 1 between Ithaca and Waterloo. The numbers dwindled north of Waterloo.

Small numbers of Purple Finches, Pine Siskins, and Goldfinches came with Redpolls to the feeders. Horned Larks and Snow Buntings came to feeders in small villages and on farms. Of additional interest is the fact that I had three reports of Redpolls and Snow Buntings "diving into the Snow," hollowing out little burrows, and resting or roosting overnight in these protected spots.

Many Redpolls and some of the other winter visitors were starving by the time they found feeders. Dead birds brought to the Laboratory were exceedingly thin in every case. Many were also hit by cars.

Evening Grosbeaks and Red Crossbills were the other winter finches reported. Waterfowl have been discussed in the body of this report. Montezuma remained iced too late for a March census. The January 17 waterfowl census revealed a drop in divers, with dabblers about normal.

The severe conditions ended on March 27, and migrants, evidently dammed up south of here by snow which extended into southern Pennsylvania, poured into the Southern Tier about three weeks late. The same south wind that brought them in took away the Horned Larks and many of the Redpolls.

Loons — Ducks: While Horned Grebes were seen in good numbers during the winter (and no iced-in or crash-landed birds were brought to the Laboratory of Ornithology, in contrast with the last two years), only one Pied-billed Grebe and one Red-necked Grebe were found on the waterfowl census in mid-January. The Horned Grebe count, on the other hand, was 302 for the Finger Lakes, a 40% increase over 1959. One Great Blue Heron was found at Montezuma Refuge on Jan 1; migrants came the last week in March. One Whistling Swan lingered near Montezuma until Dec 11.

About 200 Canada Geese remained on Keuka until Dec 13, late for this lake. Three stayed with the captives at Sapsucker Woods all winter, and there were about 70 wintering on Cayuga near King Ferry and feeding in fields until heavy snows came. Approximately 1000 stayed at Montezuma until Dec 18, along with four Blue Geese. Seven Canadas spent the rest of the winter there. Geese were late in returning — scattered small flocks were seen in mid-March, but the main migration did not get underway until Mar 26.

On Jan 1 the following waterfowl were found at Montezuma: Mallard 1, Black Duck 4, Pintail 1, Common Goldeneye 15, Hooded Merganser 2, and Common Merganser 15. The same species, plus Canvasbacks, were seen occasionally on the Cayuga-Seneca canal throughout the winter (Morse).

Keuka Lake remained open later than usual, and more waterfowl wintered there than normally (2683 found on the census on Jan 17, almost three times the 1959 count). Seneca Lake, too, had an increase over '59 on the waterfowl count, but Cayuga dropped about 70% in its total. The loss was in diving ducks, particularly Redheads and Canvasbacks. Scaup maintained their numbers. The count of dabbling ducks was comparable to past years. Mallards and Blacks wintered in good numbers at Elmira (Welles), and up to 200 (mixed flock) visited Sapsucker Woods pond almost daily with an occasional American Widgeon and Pintail. Only one Wood Duck was seen on the waterfowl census. Four returned to Montezuma on Mar 29; the first ones at Sapsucker Woods were seen on Mar 31, later than usual.

Over 1000 Redheads remained on the channel at the north end of Keuka until mid-February, when they disappeared, probably going to Seneca. They returned to Keuka at the end of March (Guthrie). Some 320 Redheads and 35 Canvasbacks were at the north end of Cayuga on Mar 20 (Rusk). Goldeneyes appeared in numbers on the river at Elmira on Mar 27. There were more reports of Red-breasted and Hooded Mergansers this winter, fewer of Common.

Hawks—Owls: A Turkey Vulture was seen over Elmira on Mar 28 (M. Smith), about on schedule. A Goshawk (rare at any time) spent some time in the airport and Big Flats area of the Elmira region; the bird was seen on Feb 21 by Al Fudge and on Feb 29 by M. Smith and K. Fudge. Of note also is another report of a Goshawk, just outside the region, seen by several observers near Sayre, Pa. (Campbell, Core) about the same time. A male Sharp-shinned Hawk took a sparrow in the village of Forest Home on Jan 24 (E. Little) and ate it ravenously in full view of the house; an immature female was almost a daily visitor to the Sapsucker Woods feeder, but had poor hunting. AAA obtained good photographs of it. There were few reports of Cooper's Hawks this year. Most sections reported more Redtails wintering than usual. Of note is the count of 38 on an 1 just in the Cayuga Basin. We listened enviously to reports of the big Rough-legged Hawk invasion farther north. They were unusually scarce in Region 3 — only one all winter at Keuka, five around Elmira on Jan 1, and until the heavy snows, four at Montezuma. There were two reports at the south end of Cayuga. Both adult Bald Eagles were seen at Montezuma on Dec 5 (Spofford); an adult and the bird with unusual plumage were there on Jan 1. An adult was seen perched in a tree on Mar 1 at the south end of Cayuga (Mrs. Gordon Seldon). The only wintering Marsh Hawks were one seen at Montezuma in early January and another at Sapsucker Woods on Jan 9 (Munroe).

A most unusual record is that of a Peregrine Falcon, in the Elmira airport vicinity, seen repeatedly from December through March. It was observed catching a male Cardinal in late February (M. Welles). Sparrow Hawks seemed more abundant both at Elmira and Odessa (Strath), but they were rarely reported elsewhere.

Kelsey reported that Ruffed Grouse made out well in the region, and several were photographed by Dave Allen feeding on bittersweet berries in a back yard in Ithaca. The species was absent from Sapsucker Woods this year after early January. Pheasants were scarce and were not seen until the deep snows brought them to roadsides in small numbers. More Turkeys have been released in the Connecticut Hill area, and I have an unverified report of one being seen near South Canisteo.

A **King Rail**, rarely reported in the region even in summer, was found freshly dead on the Thruway near Montezuma on Jan 6 (J. Cummings), and a Sora was taken in a muskrat trap on Jan 9 (Morse). Coots were found in expected numbers on the waterfowl census, but again this year they were almost absent at the south end of Cayuga.

Except for a report of a wintering Killdeer near Auburn, which I have been unable to pinpoint, and one seen by Walker on Feb 17 at Waterloo, none was reported until the weekend of Mar 27-28. One Woodcock was found at Elmira on Jan 1. The migrants were almost two weeks late in returning, coming in around Mar 30. The first Common Snipe appeared at Elmira on Mar 27, the first at Ithaca on Mar 31, equally late.

No white-winged gulls were reported in the region this winter. Great Black-backed Gulls were not as numerous at Ithaca as in some years (the maximum count was 21 on Jan 1). Four were reported on Mar 5 at the north end of Seneca (Gambrell). The Jan 1 count of Herring Gulls in the Cayuga Basin this year was 270, of Ring-billed Gulls, 350, unusually low. Twelve Bonaparte's Gulls were seen at Elmira on Mar 31 (K. Fudge).

Mourning Doves were reported as wintering at Burdett, Geneva, Waterloo, Elmira, and Ithaca. Again this year the maximum count at Arthur Lane's feeder at Sapsucker Woods was 35. Great Horned Owls returned to Stewart Park, Ithaca, after a two-year absence and are presumed to be nesting there. A Snowy Owl was seen by Morse at Montezuma on Dec 31, and there was one at Geneva on Feb 27. There were no other reports. One Long-eared Owl was seen at Montezuma on Jan 1, but none was found at their "old hang-out" near Ithaca. It was a fairly good Short-eared Owl year. Several were seen regularly near Elmira, where they sometimes came close to buildings and afforded good views. One was found on Jan 1 at Montezuma. Descriptions of several pale owls near Ithaca seemed to indicate Short-eareds. One was wounded near Freeville on Feb 14, had surgery by a veterinarian, and is thriving on my sunporch until he fully recovers. The only Saw-whet Owl report was of one at Geneva on Mar 26 (P. Trail).

Goatsuckers — Warblers: Seven Kingfishers were found at Elmira on Jan 2. Elsewhere few wintered, but there was one along Fall Creek in Etna — the stream remaining open this year. One Flicker wintered in Stewart Park, Ithaca. There were frequent reports of Pileated Woodpeckers within village and city limits during the winter. One bird, near Speedsville, reportedly fed daily on doughnuts (fide M. Guinan). A Red-bellied Woodpecker was infrequently present at a Hornell feeder (Groesbeck), one came to a feeder in Aurora in December (R. Brown), another regularly visited the Nivison home near Jacksonville all winter, and there was one at Sheldrake on Feb 26 (Robinson). There is one apparently good report of a Black-backed (Northern) Woodpecker male at a feeder in Pine Valley (Mrs. Celia Buckholz). Phoebe's were late in returning, arriving at the very end of March.

I have contradictory reports on Horned Larks. There were no large flocks at Watkins Glen this year (Bardeen), they were scarce around Elmira until Mar 5 (Welles), but around Ithaca I have never seen so many as from Jan 30 until the last week in March, when they left with the same south wind that brought in other migrants. During most of February and March I could see 150-200 daily in the six-mile drive from Etna to Sapsucker Woods. Walker reported seeing some Northern Horned Larks northwest of Waterloo.

A most unusual winter record is that of two Tree Swallows at the north end of Cayuga Lake on Jan 1 (F. Scheider). Migrants did not appear until Mar 27. At Elmira there were hundreds over the river on Mar 31 (K. Fudge).

A radio request for information on numbers of Blue Jays this year in contrast to other years revealed a drop of from 50% to 70% throughout the region, except at Geneva. Crows were scarce until March — and reportedly absent entirely around Jasper (Margesan). A count of Black-capped Chickadees indicated no drop in numbers and perhaps a very slight increase.

Tufted Titmice have shown a wonderful ability to adapt to our winter conditions. In previous winters, in Ithaca, they have left Stewart Park to visit feeders along the slopes above the lake, but not up to the 900-foot altitude. This year they reached the top, or 1000-foot elevation, and spread out. Tufted Titmice were reported at Sapsucker Woods, Freeville, Groton, Moravia, Dryden, and other villages for the first time. They are well established at Keuka Park (Guthrie). Two pairs wintered at Hornell, where there are only two or three previous records (Groesbeck), and a pair was found in Waterloo. White-breasted Nuthatches seemed somewhat scarcer than usual, but it was a superb winter for Red-breasts. I heard of eight to ten Ithaca

feeders with a Red-breast all winter; the woodlot at Monkey Run usually produced five or six. Avoca was the only part of the region in which they seemed to be missing (Mattice). Winter Wrens were absent everywhere, or else overlooked. While four pairs of Carolina Wrens were found in Watkins Glen, only one was known at Elmira and there were none in Stewart Park. Ithaca did have two pairs and a single, but the birds still have not recouped their losses of a few years ago. A Long-billed Marsh Wren was seen at Montezuma on Dec 5 (Spofford) and was still here on Jan 1 (Scheider).

A Mockingbird came to an Aurora feeder in December (Shakelton), and one turned up in Cayuga Heights, Ithaca, at the Mesics' feeder on Feb 20 and was still there at the end of the period. In the Keuka area, one Mocker was found dead on the road north of Branchport, but a second bird made it through the winter there. A Catbird came to the Lawrence feeder on Lowman Road, Elmira, on Dec 24 and remained all winter. Two Brown Thrashers wintered near Elmira also.

Except for one flock of 25-30 Robins seen in sumac on Feb 28 northwest of Ithaca (deForest), none arrived until almost three weeks later than normal — coming in with the south wind of Mar 27-28. No Bluebirds had appeared by the end of March, although there was one winter record — Jan 1 at the city airport, Ithaca (M. Leighton). Golden-crowned Kinglets seemed scarce around Ithaca, although reported on Jan 1, whereas at Elmira 30 were found on Jan 2. A rather late Ruby-crowned Kinglet came to my feeder in Etna on Dec 12.

Northern Shrikes were scarce this year. There was an individual on Feb 1 on Tug Hollow Road (Bardeen), one report at Keuka, and only three reports around Ithaca. A late one was seen on the Elmira road south of Ithaca on Mar 27 (Dillon, Allan), the same date the first Loggerhead was reported. Starling flocks were everywhere pleasantly smaller this year, but the birds returned in late March in huge numbers. The entire winter produced only one Myrtle Warbler report — at the Smiths' feeder in Elmira on Dec 6. House Sparrows continued to increase, according to census reports.

Blackbirds — Sparrows: Meadowlarks, Redwings, Grackles, and Cowbirds did not arrive at Ithaca, Watkins, Elmira, and Jasper until Mar 27 and thereafter — and it was interesting that more female Grackles than usual appeared in the first flocks, probably because of the delays en route (Ficken). The only blackbird to winter in some numbers was the Cowbird, but these numbers were not equal to last year's. I had a small flock all winter in Etna, and Paul Kelsey fed 100 in Dryden after the ice storm in January. We had none at Sapsucker Woods. Five were at the Groesbeck feeder in Hornell, and some were at Watkins Glen feeders. An albino Cowbird was at Elmira on Dec 8. An adult male Rusty Blackbird wintered at Jacksonville (Graham), and three were seen at Horseheads on Jan 12. The first migrant Rusties appeared about the same time as the Grackles. The Redwing flocks reached the Auburn area on Mar 29 (Coalson), and they appeared at Geneva the same day (Ward). One Redwing wintered at Avoca (Mattice).

An immature male Baltimore Oriole was identified by M. Smith at Mrs. Jessup's feeder in Elmira on Jan 2 and was there for some time. An adult male was seen by Mrs. Harry Iszard at her home in Strathmont Park, Elmira. Cardinals seemed to thrive everywhere this winter, in contrast to last year. B. Coalson spoke of a big increase at Auburn. They were called "very numerous" at Elmira, where 49 were counted on Jan 2. At Hornell they enjoyed a good winter, and at Watkins Glen a flock of 25-30 was seen regularly at the Spencer residence just off W. Lake Road. There was a flock of "close to 100" seen near Geneva — almost unbelievable. I had many more phone calls than usual this winter reporting more Cardinals than ever before. My own feeders supported four males and three females.

In early February a male Dickcissel spent some time at the home of the Alfred Grahams in Jacksonville, affording good views as it perched or fed a few feet from the window. Another, or more likely the same bird, appeared later in February at a feeder three miles away. Other reports of this species turned out to be yellowish first year House Sparrows, as is so often the case. Evening Grosbeaks were described as being in good numbers everywhere — but the individual flocks seemed smaller. Banding only on my windowsill feeder, and only a few mornings a week, I trapped 350 before the end of March. Purple Finches turned up at many feeders, but there were only a few birds at a time. The species was absent at Hornell. Two unverified reports of single Pine Grosbeaks at Elmira and one at Ithaca are our only reports of this species.

The bird of the winter was the Redpoll. Appearing in late December and early

January in flocks of 50-300 at various places in the countryside, they seemed, at least around Ithaca, to disappear in late January although Mary Welles reported a flock of 1000 Jan 29 at Elmira. Then came the heavy snows of mid-February, and suddenly we were inundated with Redpolls. Everyone I have spoken to called it the biggest invasion ever noted, but the most remarkable aspect of it was their acceptance, everywhere, of feeders (see also remarks in the introductory section of this report). With the Common Redpolls were a few Hoarries. Pine Siskins were reported at feeders in Watkins Glen, Elmira, Moravia, Ithaca, and Etna, usually in twos and threes. Goldfinches came to many feeders — most unusual in this area — and we had many calls asking about them from people who did not recognize them in their winter plumage (some called them "baby Evening Grosbeaks"). While not a single report of a White-winged Crossbill came in, a flock of 25-28 Red Crossbills remained from early January to the end of the period in the Monkey Run evergreens east of Ithaca, where the Stuart Brown family kept close watch on them. Two were killed feeding on the road. Towhee wintered at the F. Brown feeder at King Ferry, and there was another in Ithaca on Highland Road, at the Meeks' feeder.

Tree Sparrows were in better numbers this winter and were new visitors to many feeders, judging from telephone calls I had. One Chipping Sparrow wintered in Jacksonville (Graham). Field Sparrows were found on the Elmira census Jan 2, and one spent most of the winter at Candor (Hollenbeck) but was found dead at the feeder on Mar 22. Another which probably had wintered turned up at Jacksonville on Mar 8 (Graham). An immature White-crowned Sparrow was banded in Etna in late December and remained in the vicinity until late January. An adult was at the Laboratory of Ornithology feeder for a short time in January. Eight or ten White-throated Sparrows were known to winter in Ithaca, and others were at Elmira feeders. Mary Welles had one immature Swamp Sparrow at her Elmira feeder Jan 25 - Feb 4. Song Sparrows wintered in unusual numbers: 88 were counted on the Cayuga Basin census Jan 1, and 12 were at Elmira on Jan 2. Migrants appeared at the very end of March.

Individual Lapland Longspurs were seen in flocks of Snow Buntings in a number of places. They were quite a few such flocks, but except for one of "2000 or better" seen near Dryden by Paul Kelsey on Jan 1, all were small. Around Ithaca most of them had left by Mar 10, but then I saw 30 on Mar 24 near Etna. In a few places on the edges of villages, the Buntings came to feeders, along with Redpolls.

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REGION 4 — SUSQUEHANNA

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This has been a decidedly warm winter on average. On only one day, Dec 23, did the temperature go down to zero at Broome County Airport. Until about the middle of January it was also an open winter. Precipitation was quite heavy in December but most of it was rain, especially at lower elevations. There were appreciable snowfalls Dec 6 and Dec 21-22 but they melted in a few days and it was not until Jan 10 that we had persistent snow cover. From then until about Mar 25 snow fell so frequently that in spite of mild temperatures and fairly rapid melting and evaporation there was snow covering the ground almost all the time. The heaviest accumulation in Binghamton was 13 inches Feb 20.

The mildness of the weather produced a number of winter records of normally migrating species, more interesting for the number of species and individuals than for the species represented. A Wood Thrush and a Catbird were the most out of place. Our three "non-migrant southerners", Cardinals, Titmice and Carolina Wrens, all registered population gains and territory acquisitions and were reinforced by three Mockingbirds. Northern Raptors were well represented by Goshawks, Rough-legged Hawks, Snowy Owls and Short-eared Owls. Evening Grosbeaks, Redpolls and Snow Buntings, and plenty of them, were the main story among the "winter finches".

Although the winter was mild it was in no hurry to leave and many reports complained of the slow arrival of spring migrants. A "probable" Golden Eagle was the prize record of the period.

Loons — Ducks: The only wintering Pied-billed Grebe reported was one seen several times on the Chenango River at Norwich (R. & S. White). No migrants had been reported by the end of the period. A Great Blue Heron that was recorded Jan 1 on the Binghamton Christmas Bird Count at Chenango Valley State Park (R. Sheffield)