

Rusty Blackbird at Oxford Mar 6 (A. Stratton). A Common Grackle was in Endicott Feb 8 (A. Carter) and two or three appeared regularly at a feeder in Unadilla "up through Feb 28". Migrants Mar 28. There were many reports of Brown-headed Cowbirds at feeders throughout the region and period.

This year brought a distinct acceleration in the Cardinal population increase that has been going on for years. At Cortland, Oxford and Deposit five or six were seen at a time where one was a noteworthy sight in other years and at Unadilla at least three were regular visitors at feeders (H. Wisner). They have now been reported from Bainbridge, Sidney and Guilford. In fact only the Norwich and Oneonta reports failed to mention them. In the Triple Cities it is becoming commonplace to have otherwise disinterested people describe a Cardinal or its call and want to know what it is. Again it was the "best Evening Grosbeak year, ever" At Deposit 1300 were banded during the period (S. Wilson) and they have been abundant everywhere. During Feb an almost albino was seen at three different feeders (Yateman, Carlin, Washburn) in the Triple Cities and in the middle and again at the end of Mar a similar, if not the same, bird was at Greene (R. Gray). Purple Finches were not especially common and Pine Grosbeaks were reported only twice, eight at Harpursville Dec 21 (Samson) and two at Chenango Valley State Park Feb 21 (B. Evans). Redpolls were everywhere. They were first common Dec 22 and reached a peak in Mid-Jan. They continued very plentiful through Feb then seemed to taper off slowly but were still quite common at the end of the period. Until the middle of Feb they were often in flocks of several hundred but after that they more often came to feeders in small groups or even individually. At Cortland some were feeding from the hands of children (J. Gustafson). A small group of Pine Siskins was near East Maine Dec 22 & 23 (J. Beaver), twenty-one were found during the Binghamton Christmas Count and two were at Binghamton Mar 19 (C. Morehouse) and that's all. Goldfinches were about normal, but after last winter seemed scarce. Two widely separated Rufous-sided Towhees were found on the Christmas Count Jan 1 and on Jan 10 a third one was found at Hillcrest (C. Morehouse).

Slate-colored Juncos were scarce at Unadilla (H. Wisner) and Bainbridge (B. Smith), but were otherwise normal. One Junco banded at Deposit and several banded at Endwell had distinct white wing bars but were believed to be Slate-colored, nevertheless. Tree Sparrows were perhaps a little better than normal. Two Field Sparrows appeared at a feeder in Endwell Mar 1 (G. Smith) and returned for several days. An immature White-crowned Sparrow was at Unadilla from Dec 5 to Dec 14 (H. Wisner). Another was at Union Center Jan 1 to Jan 10 (H. Stevens, L. Bemont). Three White-throated Sparrows were at Endwell from Dec 8 to at least Jan 14 (G. Smith) and one was at Binghamton from Jan 13 to the end of the period after it was banded (H. Marsi). At Newark Valley "a neighbor fed White-throated Sparrows off and on all winter" (L. Dean). One Fox Sparrow was counted during the Binghamton Christmas Count Jan 1 (P. Warren) but no more until four were at Deposit Mar 30 (S. Wilson). There were the usual few reports of wintering Song Sparrows. A few migrants came in Mar 16 but the main waves waited until Mar 27. One Lapland Longspur was at Norwich Jan 2 and three more were at Cortlandville Mar 19 (Mulholland). There were a lot of reports of Snow Buntings with several flocks numbering in the hundreds. A Jan 10 flock estimated at over a thousand near Binghamton (R. & M. Sheffield) was the biggest. One of the census teams picked up a slightly injured one near Endicott Jan 1 and brought it back to the meeting where it was banded. After a few days to recover it was released. On Jan 2 a flock of Snow Buntings was observed "snow bathing", in much the same manner as a hen dusting itself, after they had been feeding in freshly spread manure.

710 University Ave., Endwell

REGION 5 — ONEIDA LAKE BASIN

FRITZ SCHEIDER

"If Winter comes, can Spring be far behind?" — Shelley.

Yes, darn it! Dec was a mild, wet month with a single zero day (Dec 23), a condition severe enough, however, to promptly ice over Oneida, Beaver, and Delta Lakes, and Sandy Pond. Snow cover was light thru Dec (maximum of four inches on Dec 8); local Christmas counts were essentially snowless (tho' not rain free) and rich in half-hardies. Christmas Count scores include: Dec 26, Oneida, total 35 with five half-hardies; Dec 27, Syracuse, 68 with 11 half-hardies; Jan 1, Montezuma —

HIGMA, 66 with 12 half-hardies; and Jan 3, Oskego, 39 with four half-hardies. The heavy rains of late fall and early winter, along with the rapid melting of what snow did come, produced flood and near-flood conditions along the Seneca and Oswego Rivers; consequently, locally favored riverside areas for waterfowl were inundated, then frozen, and alternate channel areas became too deep for dabblers, and concomitant low counts ensued (vide Dabblers). Further, these same flood conditions prevented channel freezing, and the usual concentrations of Common Mergansers and Goldeneyes at the ice-edged flow holes on the Seneca River did not occur. Bad ice storms (30 Dec - 1 Jan, and 11 - 14 Jan) did extensive tree and shrub damage, especially in the western third of the area, and created difficult feeding conditions. Jan temperatures averaged normal, but snowfall was 30% greater than usual, and nearly three quarters of it came during the week of the Waterfowl Census. Feb temperatures were slightly (approximately 2°) above normal, but the snowfall, the majority of which came during the last two weeks of the month, was excessive — 50.5 inches with 18.3 inches Feb 14 - 15. Of interest is the light ground snow (trace to eight inches of short duration) present to Feb 15, followed by eight to 20 inches of persistent snow cover from that date to Mar 17. This change in snow cover literally buried weed seeds, berry bearing bushes, and most small rodents, and matched neatly the crash in half-hardies (vide infra), the appearance of Tree Sparrows, more Juncos, and hundreds of Redpolls as feeding station and dooryard birds, and a rapid decline in the number of wintering Buteos. Mar was the coldest of record with a mean temperature of 24.4° (9.8° below normal), and daily temperatures were below normal on 27 days. With this sustained cold, ground snow lingered late (Mar 25 - 27). The cold weather and strong NW winds delivered a harvest of pack ice to the south shore of Lake Ontario (Oswego to Sandy Pond). Ice quantity was at its peak (1.5 - 3.5 miles) in late Mar rather than the usual time of late Jan and early Feb. A sharp rise in temperature and south winds Mar 27 - 31 produced much thawing, local flooding, and a rapid influx of migrants. Migration normally extending over three weeks was accomplished in five days, with Robin, Turkey Vulture, Woodcock, Phoebe, and Barn Swallow all reported within a few days of each other.

The mild Dec weather, low Jan snow cover, and abundant food (weed seeds, berries, infected elms, many feeders) induced a notable holdover of half-hardies (Virginia Rail, long-billed Marsh Wren, Brown Thrasher, Rose-breasted Grosbeak, Baltimore Oriole). This wealth of half-hardies abruptly dropped with the heavy snows of Feb, and further dwindled with no augmentation from migration thru the cold and snowy Mar. Other positive features included 1) good tallies of Scaup and Goldeneye, 2) excellent numbers of wintering Accipiters and Buteas, 3) a very good white-winged gull flight, 4) an enormous invasion of Redpolls and Evening Grosbeaks, and 5) a light movement of Snowy Owls and a fair flight of Gray Shrikes. A thorough waterfowl census tallied 14,205 individuals of 28 species, despite hazardous highways and frequent storms.

Negatively outstanding were 1) the paucity of wintering loons and grebes, 2) the very low counts of Redhead and Canvasback, 3) a poor owl winter, and 4) a near absence of Purple Finches, Pine Grosbeaks, and Crossbills.

Regional rarities for the season include: Harlequin Duck, King Eider, Red Phalarope, Franklin's Gull, Bohemian Waxwing, and Dickcissel.

LOONS — DUCKS: Common Loon: the only wintering bird was a cripple present on Onondaga Lake to Jan 17 (Estoff, Propst). Red-necked Grebe: two, Dec 5, near Lakeview are undoubtedly late migrants, as no wintering birds were noted. Horned Grebe: maximum of 18 seen on Skaneateles (Farnham, Rusk); none wintered at Oswego Harbor, their first winter absence there in eight years. Pied-billed Grebe: three wintered successfully along the Oswego River; one Mar 30 on the Oneida River is an early migrant. Great Blue Heron: first migrant noted Mar 6, rather early in view of local marsh (solid ice) and river (mostly ice) conditions.

Mute Swan: a single adult stayed Jan 12 - 17 on the Oswego River at Oswego, then disappeared as abruptly as it appeared. Equally strange is the presence of an adult Whistling Swan Jan 16 at Howland's Island Game Management Area (Ernst) as it is unknown locally as a wintering bird. Canada Goose: 65 - 70 birds wintered again at HIGMA; they appeared to do well at local cornfields until mid Feb, then became dependent on the largesse of the NYS Conservation Dep't at feeding ponds there (Bauer). First migrants on Mar 13.

Howland's Island GMA near Port Byron must now be considered in the winter an enormous feeding station for ducks. Over 90% (1000+) of the wintering Mal-

lards and 75% (2000+) of the wintering Black Ducks noted on the Waterfowl Census were tallied there; also present thru the winter were: Gadwall (Three), Pintail 22 - 25), one Green-winged Teal (first wintering record), Shoveler (three - six), Wood Duck (ten - 12); also a single free-flying male Blue-winged Teal Jan 16 (not seen since) — Ernst. The situation at HIGMA contrasted strikingly with the paucity of Mallards and Black Ducks (less than 100 and 600 respectively) at Skaneateles and Onondaga Lakes, Baldwinsville, Fulton, and Oswego, and most notably at Brewerton where the construction of a new bridge has reduced open water to a narrow deep channel suitable only for divers. A Gadwall in early Feb at Cross Lake, and scattered Pintail and Wood Ducks along the Seneca River (Port Byron, Weedsport, Jack's Reef) are almost certainly birds wandering to and from the anatine fleshpots at HIGMA. At least 13 Black x Mallard hybrids, a melanistic Mallard, and a beautiful Redhead x Gadwall hybrid also wintered there. However, a Pintail and five Wood Ducks on Dec 20, and two Wood Ducks on Dec 27 at Syracuse were apparently attempting to winter under natural conditions.

Migrant dabblers, primarily Mallards, Blacks, Baldpates, and Pintails, came in a wave in the last five days of Mar. Migrant Baldpate was first noted Mar 13, migrant Pintail first noted Feb 28.

Wintering Redheads and Canvasbacks were at record low counts, especially along the Oswego River, at Oswego, and at Brewerton. Peak counts were 125 (Waterfowl Census) and 55 (30 Mar at Brewerton) respectively. The usual late Feb - early Mar buildup of Canvasbacks did not occur at Baldwinsville and Brewerton, and it is a moot point whether this is due to the scarcity of the species or to severe ice and/or food conditions locally. Greater and Lesser Scaup: Three to four thousand (300: one Greater to Lesser ratio) wintered along the Oswego River along with 700 - 1200+ Common Goldeneye; of note was the rapid appearance of these species in numbers (300+) plus dozens of Buffleheads when flooding created small lakes in the bottomlands around Bridgeport and Kirkville in the last week of Mar. No wintering Ring-necked or Ruddy Duck reported. Oldsquaw: the usual 100 - 150 were seen at Oswego and along Lake Ontario, but their complete absence from all other areas of open water, including the Oswego River, even thru Mar, is most unusual. Harlequin Duck: a female, Dec 25, on Round Lake at Green Lakes State Park (Spofford) is only the third record in six years. King Eider: an immature male Dec 5 at Derby Hill near Texas (Richardson, Estoff, Propst) was prelude to a fine influx of these birds at Oswego; five were noted on the Waterfowl Census, and a maximum of five immature males and four females was attained Feb 28; four remained at least to Mar 26. All three scoters were recorded in the season, a time when only White-winged Scoters can be expected. White-winged Scoter: one - eight/ day thru the winter along Lake Ontario and four, Dec 19, at Bridgeport. Surf Scoter: two Dec 5 at Lakeview and one Jan 3 at Oswego. Common Scoter: one Dec 27 at Brewerton (Whitman) and two, an immature male and a female, intermittently thru the winter at Oswego (Cade, Spofford, Rusk).

Hooded Merganser: 13 noted on the Waterfowl Census with a 12: one female to male ratio, distinctly lopsided, more so in comparison with the Common Merganser (three: one male to female) wintering status. Common Merganser: maximum of 2150 at Oswego Harbor Jan 17 with a steady decline — 1200 Jan 23, 1000 Feb 7, 400 Feb 28 and Mar 13, without any evidence of migratory increase; 1200 at Cross Lake Jan 24 were probably those birds that usually winter at flow holes along the Seneca River when it is ice-bound.

Hawks — Owls: Turkey Vulture: First reported Mar 27 at Scott Swamp and Texas (Spofford). Goshawk: unreported thruout Dec and Jan; singles (? return flight) reported on Feb 22 at Liverpool and Mar 6 and 13 at Oneida; also three noted Mar 27 in a hawk flight along Lake Ontario. Sharp-shinned and Cooper's Hawks: about two species per month noted hunting about feeders; reports of wintering Cooper's Hawks definitely up (two - three/ week), usually singles, rarely two - three birds. Red-tailed Hawk: winter numbers very good, usually five - 26/ day; nest building noted in early Feb and coition noted in three resident pairs Mar 6 (Spofford). Red-shouldered Hawk: one wintered for the second successive year near Baldwinsville (Mathis). Rough-legged Hawk: reported in numbers (three - eight/ day) thru Dec and early Jan; a steady drop to one - two/ day thru Feb except around Bridgeport (Cade), with a fine return of numbers (15/day) in mid-Mar when snow cover decreased. Harrier: a few thru Dec and last noted on Jan 9, Bridgeport; none reported until the general flood of migrants on Mar 27. Kestrel: counts of five - seven/ day may point to a somewhat higher wintering population but more

likely shows the avidity with which this species has been sought out preparatory to a special study (Cade).

Migrant hawks were nil until WSW winds Mar 26 produced a minor flight of 40+ birds near Texas, a mere smidgin compared to the flight of 350+ birds on SW winds there Mar 27 (Spofford), which included 13 Sharp-shinned, 23 Cooper's, 86 Red-tailed, 172 Red-shouldered, five Rough-legged, 14 Harrier (n.b. none on Mar 26), one Merlin, and seven Kestrel. A single Merlin Mar 27 near Amboy (Farnham) is also noticeably early.

Virginia Rail: one Jan 9, Fayetteville, the third winter record in six years, is evidence of the mildness of Dec and Jan. Killdeer: one, Dec 22, at Mycenae (Cade) is late; one, Feb 13, DeWitt, is hard to place — ?? early migrant, stubborn half-hardy; tho reported as early as Feb 27, these birds came mainly in a wave Mar 27, further augmented on Mar 30 when Woodcock were also noted. Red Phalarope: a single tame bird Dec 5 at Sandy Pond Inlet (Richardson, Scheider) is the first locally recorded since the three observations in the fall of 1957.

Glaucous and Iceland Gulls: single Glaucous Nov 1 and Dec 5, Sandy Pond, were forerunners of a wonderful flight of these birds along the Seneca and Oswego Rivers and at Lake Ontario; on Jan 17, 14 Glaucous and 11 Iceland (including two definite Kumlien) were seen along the rivers from Baldwinsville to Oswego; from Jan 18 to Jan 23 nine different white-wingers (five Glaucous, four Iceland) were noted at Baldwinsville (Richardson) where one - two are the rule; counts thru Feb and Mar were lower (one - four per species per day) but the slightly higher number of Glaucous vs Iceland was quite persistent. Great Black-backed Gull: an all-time high of 330 along the Oswego River Jan 17 with a two: one adult to immature ratio (Spofford et al) is noteworthy, particularly in view of the open conditions of the local rivers and the Lake Ontario bays. Herring and Ring-billed Gulls: the Herring Gull counts of 2000 - 4000 seemed quite low, more so when contrasted with the high number (e.g. 2500 Jan 17) of wintering Ring-billed; the ratio of eight: five Herring to Ring-billed had reversed — one: two by late Feb and went on to two: five in mid-Mar. The expected Ring-billed Gull — as well as the Feb crow movement occurred about ten days later than usual; contrast this with the failure of the Canvasback rise which also usually occurs at this time. Franklin's Gull: a second-year bird observed for 30 minutes at Oswego Harbor Jan 3 (Richardson, Rusk, Scheider) is the second record in as many years; the first was recorded in Mar 1959, and to date no fall birds have been seen.

Mourning Dove: winter numbers distinctly up, with 150 Dec 26 at Oneida, 49 at Syracuse Dec 27, and four - 35 at Fayetteville, Cross Lake, and HIGMA; a few were even noted intermittently in the snow belt at Westerville (May), Rome, and Utica.

Owls were frankly scarce at local roosts, with a maximum of four Short-eared Jan 10, Bridgeport, and there were just two Long-eared Owl reports, both singles. Screech and Horned Owls were somewhat better, with best counts of ten Dec 27 and six Jan 1, respectively. Snowy Owl: singles reported at Canastota (Hoke fide Burt), Camden (Mrs. Snyder), Oneida (Jones, Gregory), and North Syracuse; none noted in the flatlands north of Syracuse or around Oswego Harbor.

Goatsuckers — Warblers: Flicker: scattered birds (one - five) at Oneida, Fayetteville, DeWitt, Syracuse, Port Byron, and HIGMA; one known to winter north of Oneida Lake or along the Oswego River; no migrant Flickers as of Mar 31. Red-bellied Woodpecker: maximum of five Jan 1 at HIGMA; singles wintered at Oneida (Ackley, Nodecker, Paquette) and Port Ontario (Woods). Hairy and Downy Woodpeckers: Dr. Burt's feeder survey showed the following Hairy to Downy ratio — Dec 88: 137, Jan 107: 192, Feb 120: 125, Mar 150: 235; the greater feeder patronage (all computations scored as per 100 feeders) is obvious, and the one: one Feb score is quite different (usually one: two).

Tree Swallow: first noted Mar 30 along Lake Ontario; first Barn Swallow Mar 29 near Amboy (Farnham) is a record arrival date.

Blue Jay: a steady rise in the feeder survey — Dec 297, Jan 274, Feb 332, Mar 385, but Feb and Mar numbers in the field were quite low; ?? were they forced to feeders to survive thru the snowy Feb and Mar weather? Horned Lark: first northward movement noted Jan 27 (Cade); several minor flights noted Feb 6 (60+) and 13 (500+) but the major movement (flocks of 100 - 500) occurred Feb 28 - Mar 6 (Ackley, Felle, Farnham); local birds paired by the 3rd week of Mar. Black-capped Chickadee: numbers at feeders built up from a Jan low of 146 to a Mar high of 552; conversely, Jan field counts were good but Chickadees were really scarce in local woodlots thru Mar. Tufted Titmouse: singles reported from Syra-

cuse, Fayetteville, Mexico, Baldwinville, Skaneateles, and a startling total of 12 at Morrisville (Dexter); this number of reports as with the Carolina Wren would indicate another invasion to the north in late fall and winter, said invasion being made more obvious by the proclivity of birds of these species to appear at feeders. Half-hardies for the winter include two Catbirds (Syracuse — Mrs. Webster), two Brown Thrashers (Lacona — Mrs. Hommer, and Syracuse), a Mockingbird (Fayetteville — Evans), few Robins (one - 13), three Hermit Thrushes (Syracuse — Abbott, Eastoff and Propst, MacAndrews), a Long-billed Marsh Wren (Fayetteville — Scheider), and a veritable rash of Winter Wrens. Carolina Wren: reported regularly from Clark's Reservation (Beaver), Chittenango (Stickles), Elmcrest on the Seneca River, HIGMA, and most persistently at Fayetteville. Most appeared to survive the heavy Feb - Mar snows.

Bohemian Waxwing: a single well seen with a flock of 37 Cedar Waxwings Jan 8 near Fayetteville (Estoff and Propsts), and three Jan 10, 13, 19, 22, and 28 at Utica (Curtis) the latter series of observations supported by color photographs; these are the first noted in recent years (past 18) for the area. Gray Shrike: frankly a mediocre season for this species, far poorer than even last year's weak influx, and confined mostly to the flat country north and west of Syracuse and Fayetteville; the monthly score was ten in Dec, nine in Jan, four in Feb, and four in Mar; three of the four individuals in Mar were seen in the last ten days of the month and might point to northbound birds.

Blackbirds — Sparrows: Meadowlark: reported on only the Syracuse Christmas count; remarkably scarce thru Dec and Jan, a time when other Icterids were repeatedly reported and ground snow was light; a flurry of reports in late Feb and early Mar (one - 14/day) across the Region might indicate returning birds or, more likely, what few wintering birds were around attracted to recently manured fields, as all but two reports mention this correlation. Dr. Burt's feeder survey showed the following Icterid tally:

	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar
Red-winged Blackbird	21	1	3	1
Grackle	60	34	34	24
Cowbird	88	185	102	137

The rapid decline in Grackles and Red-winged Blackbirds and the continuing wintering success of Cowbirds are obvious, as is the lack of an early Mar buildup in Icterid numbers. Of note is the complete absence of Icterids from the lakeshore migrant flight near Texas Mar 27 (Spofford), tho thousands were seen in the next few days. Baltimore Oriole: single birds, certainly rare winter items, at Skaneateles (Sheppard), DeWitt (MacAndrews), and Camillus (Wagner fide Estoff) persisted until mid-Feb, then disappeared. Rusty Blackbird: singles wintered at Syracuse and Oneida (Felle) and two at Fayetteville (Scheider); five years ago no one suspected these birds wintered.

Cardinal: a steady increase in counts at feeders with Dec 107, Jan 152, Feb 146, Mar 203; up to three reported at Westernville, 12 at Oneida (usually only singles at both places heretofore), and 63 were reported on the Syracuse Christmas Count. A total of 22 on one hillside at HIGMA Jan 1 is also notable. Rose-breasted Grosbeak: a winter first was a female Dec 24 - 29 at the Paquette feeder at Oneida; it was carefully checked to be certain it was not a stray Black-headed Grosbeak; it wasn't! Dickcissel: two were seen regularly Dec 12 - 24 at Mrs. Bratt's feeder in Manlius, the first locally since 1953.

Evening Grosbeak: a winter-long flood of these birds; they were besieging feeders early in Dec, and counts of 100 - 200/ feeder were noted; Dr. Burt's feeder survey showed such tallies as Dec 1140, Jan 1440, Feb 1800, Mar 1745; some brief singing noted in late Mar. Purple Finch: these were as scarce as Evening Grosbeaks were common, with the feeder survey thus — Dec three, Jan zero, Feb five, Mar eight; no report listed more than five and no Mar increase was detected. Pine Grosbeak: one Dec 10, Syracuse, and three in late Dec at Camden (Mrs. Snyder) were the only records, quite in contrast to the glut of Evening Grosbeaks. Common Redpoll: the open-country counterpart of the feeding station Evening Grosbeaks, reported by the hundreds thru Dec, Jan, and Feb (maximum of 700+, Jan 9); in late Feb and early Mar, numbers, already high, increased sharply; flocks of hundreds were reported daily, dozens were killed by cars as the birds fed by plowed roadsides, and everybody had them at feeders; contrast 12 at feeders in Dec and Jan with 308 in Feb and 554 in Mar; a sharp decline noted with the thaw of late Mar, but lesser numbers persisted, both at feeders and in the field to the end of the period. Pine Siskin and Goldfinch: small groups of each (five - 55) present thruout

the winter but no seasonal pattern apparent other than a moderate drop in counts in late Feb thru Mar. Red Crossbill: five - 25 reported on and off at Fayetteville, Syracuse, Brewerton, and Selkirk Shores State Park thru Dec and Jan; no Feb and Mar reports, and no White-winged Crossbills noted. Single towhees, both females, wintered at Oneida (Thurber) and Brewerton (Barclay); we have yet to find a wintering male Towhee.

Half-hardy sparrows include a Savannah Sparrow Jan 9 at Fayetteville (first wintering record), five Vesper Sparrows Jan 17 at Onondaga Lake (Estoff, Propst), and three Field Sparrows at Fayetteville Dec 20 to Jan 31 plus one each intermittently at Westernville (May) and Oneida (Felle). White-crowned Sparrow: one stayed at Westernville to Dec 5, and an adult was seen Jan 23 at Manlius (Gould); however, single immatures wintered over at Oneida (Felle), Fayetteville (Biggs), and Syracuse (Chamberlaine).

Slate-colored Junco: winter numbers definitely up with all monthly feeder tallies over 100. Oregon Junco: singles wintered at DeWitt (MacAndrews) and Syracuse (Scheider). Tree Sparrow: Dr. Burt's feeder survey scored 246 in Dec, 456 in Jan, 190 in Feb, and 1040 in Mar; the high Mar count is probably a combination of lack of food forcing these birds to seek feeders and of beginning migration.

White-throated, Swamp, and Song Sparrows: Dec numbers were excellent with three, six, and 90 (a winter peak), respectively, reported on the Syracuse Christmas Count; three - four White-throateds/ feeder were frequent, and a single small marsh or brushy hillside had 20 - 35 Song Sparrows; numbers held up well until the latter half of Feb when all field counts on these species dropped sharply with no compensatory feeding station increase in early Mar. Lapland Longspud: unreported thru the winter until a scatter of reports (two - six birds/ trip) in the heavy Horned Lark - Redpoll movement in early Mar.

Snow Bunting: flocks of 60 - 100 thru Dec and Jan; quite scarce during the heavy snow of late Feb, a time when flocks of thousands can be seen, and flocks of only 80 - 100 reported with the heavy Horned Lark - Redpoll movement of early Mar; two spring-plumage males noted flight singing at Derby Hill Mar 26.

151 Seventh North Street, Syracuse 8

REGION 6 — ST. LAWRENCE

FRANK A. CLINCH

There was only light snow until Dec 29 when at least a foot fell. More snow came on several occasions, and there was little mild weather except for a brief time in Jan. This thaw only served to settle the snow and make room for more which soon came. Only about one year out of eight do we have a fall of snow as great as we had by the first of Mar this year. Some of the coldest weather was Dec 20 - 24 and Jan 8 - 12, but there were few days when the temperature was below zero.

Mar was clear and cold; in fact the first 26 days were the coldest in Watertown for this period in the sixty years for which we have records. Jan was the coldest month, but the Mar average before the 27th was less than two degrees warmer. However, the last few days of Mar were mild and the snow began to melt rapidly.

The continued cold of late Dec and early Jan left little open water and as a result waterfowl were scarce. The deep snow seemed to make the birds seek food at feeders. Many people are putting out food for the Evening Grosbeaks and as a result more species are coming to feeders in the winter. The Mar migration was delayed and such birds as Robins, Grackles and Killdeer were not seen until the last four or five days of the month.

Loons — Ducks: A bird, described only as a Grebe, was found by the side of a road in St. Lawrence Co. near the end of Mar. It was kept for a time until open water could be found. A rather late date for Great Blue Heron was Dec 14 near Dexter. The first spring record was about Mar 25 in St. Lawrence Co. Ducks seemed to be scarce most of the winter because there was so much ice. A Pintail drake wintered with Black Ducks near Waddington (Johnston). A King Eider was found on Lake Ontario Jan 17 (Mayhood, Wagner, Allen). Two dates for Hooded Merganser are Dec 15 near Crogan in Lewis Co. and Dec 26 near Sackets Harbor.

Hawks — Owls: Red-tailed, Red-shouldered and Marsh Hawks began to appear during the last few days of Mar. The flight of Rough-legged Hawks was first noted as heavy during Nov. and it has been extremely heavy throughout the winter.