

The majority of wintering Towhees are female or immature, but two of the four this season were adult males.

Wintering half-hardy sparrows include an adult Chipping Sparrow at the Barclay feeder in Brewerton (fide Burtt) and single White-crowned Sparrows at Jamesville (fide Burtt), DeWitt (Scheider), Oneida (Ackley), and Red Creek (Hallock); the DeWitt bird, an adult, seemed to fare quite well without benefit of local feeders. Junco and Tree Sparrow: winter numbers were up slightly (120+ feeder survey for Juncos; 600+ feeder survey for Tree Sparrows); no appreciable Mar influx of Tree Sparrows noted before Mar 11 although much early Mar singing was noted and enjoyed by local observers. Oregon Junco: singles seen at Green Lakes State Park Dec 26 and at VanderKamp Woods north of Constantia Mar 11 (Rusk) are rare winter visitants to the area. The Dec scant scattering of wintering White-throated, Swamp, and Song Sparrows remained briefly for local Christmas Counts, then dwindled with the early Jan snows; no Swamp Sparrows were reported after Jan 1, and most of the Jan and Feb White-throated Sparrows noted were feeder-dependent birds at Oneida, Syracuse, Baldwinsville, and Brewerton. Lapland Longspur: a fine Mar flight with scattered singletons and small groups from Oneida to Baldwinsville; max count of 45 Mar 26 on the sparsely grassed wastebeds at Onondaga Lake (Thomas, Thurber).

N. B.: Special thanks to all those hardy observers who participated in local Christmas Counts and on the Waterfowl Census, thereby providing abundant quantitative data in a difficult season.

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REGION 6—ST. LAWRENCE

FRANK A. CLINCH

The weather in December and January was cold, and there was plenty of snow. Much of the snow fell between December 12 and January 2. These storms usually came on a Saturday or Sunday. As a result of the cold there was little open water by Christmas. The period from January 19 through February 3 was especially cold, with many temperature readings below zero. More moderate temperatures prevailed for the two weeks thereafter, and the sun began to melt the snow in spots sheltered from the wind. February 19 to March 8 was mild, and much of the snow melted. By March 7 two large flocks of Red-winged Blackbirds, a few Robins and Grackles, and at least one Killdeer had reached southern Jefferson County. However, snow covered the ground again on March 9. The remainder of March was cool except for milder weather March 22-24 and again on March 27-28.

It is interesting to note some of the birds that survived, at least for some time, the severe winter weather of December and January. These included a Rufous-sided Towhee, Cowbird, Junco, Red-necked Grebe, and several Robins.

Loons—Ducks: A Red-necked Grebe was picked up alive a little south of Watertown during the first week of February, but it died a day or two later. A Great Blue Heron appeared at Chaumont Mar 25. Eight Canada Geese flew over Watertown early on the morning of Mar 26. Many could be seen at the Perch River Game Management Area two or three days later. The Conservation Department has 22 pairs of Canada Geese which they hope will breed in the Perch Lake section, and the same number will be sent to the Wilson Hill Game Management Area between Waddington and Massena. By the end of March Pintails were numerous at Perch River Flats, and there were some Blacks, Mallards, Goldeneyes, Ring-necked and Wood Ducks, and also Blue-winged and Green-winged Teal. Several Hooded Mergansers were seen the last part of March.

Hawks—Owls: Marsh Hawks were seen during the latter part of March. The first date for the Red-tailed Hawk was Mar 12. Gordon says Rough-legged Hawks were numerous most of the winter, with the light phase outnumbering the dark phase about four to one. The first Killdeer was seen near Adams on Mar 7. An early date for Common Snipe was Mar 30 near Watertown. Belknap saw a Glaucous Gull at Fishers Landing on the St. Lawrence River on Mar 1. Great Black-backed Gulls were last seen near Watertown Dec 26. Ring-billed Gulls were back before the end of March.

Snowy Owls were noted throughout the area all winter. There may not have been any more owls than last year, but people did more talking about them this winter. Perhaps the greatest concentration of Snowy Owls was near Lake Ontario where Gordon reported at least seven on Point Peninsula Mar 25. Short-eared Owls were seen at Point Peninsula, and one was at Dexter Jan 21, but they seemed scarce in the rest of the region.

Goatsuckers — Shrikes: A male Belted Kingfisher was found near Baggs Corners Mar 30. The first Flicker appeared near Watertown Mar 31. Crows stayed around Watertown all winter where they fed on garbage. Robins were also seen every month this winter. A flock of ten or more was seen near Watertown Dec 26, and another group of that size was found in January. A Mockingbird was discovered near Watertown early in January and was seen several times until about the middle of February when it probably was killed (by a Cooper's Hawk?). Golden-crowned Kinglets were reported Jan 7 near Fargo and Mar 30 in Adams Center. Flocks of at least 35 Cedar Waxwings were seen near Watertown in December, February, and March. Northern Shrikes appeared at feeders in Carthage and Watertown in December. Later they were found in other parts of this region. Gordon saw the first Loggerhead Shrike near Lowville Mar 31.

Blackbirds — Sparrows: The first Red-winged Blackbirds appeared in Watertown Mar 3, and about that time two very large flocks were reported south of Watertown. Two Common Grackles arrived in our back yard Mar 7, and they survived the snow and cold that soon followed. Cardinals seemed about as numerous as last year. A Cowbird banded in Watertown Dec 19 was found injured early in February and died.

It is not easy to describe the Evening Grosbeaks this winter. They were present in good numbers in some places while scarce or absent in others. A few were around during December and January but seldom showed much interest in sunflower seeds. Their numbers at feeders increased in February, and by about Feb 15 large numbers were being seen daily at a few feeders. Evening Grosbeaks arrived in Watertown in large numbers just after the snow of Mar 9 and were seen daily the rest of the month.

Purple Finches were unusually numerous in March. In December Pine Grosbeaks were found near Wanakena and in January near Fargo and in Lewis County. Belknap found Redpolls very scarce all winter. They did come to a few feeders in small numbers for a short time. Pine Siskins were numerous, especially in March. They were seen at Fargo and Point Peninsula in January, at Tug Hill in February, and at Henderson Harbor and other places in March. Allen found White-winged Crossbills at Wanakena Dec 11. Red Crossbills were noted several times in Lewis and Jefferson Counties. They were seen near Barnes Corners Feb 11 and in Watertown and Adams Center late in March.

A Rufous-sided Towhee found shelter in a garage and food at a feeder in Watertown and was still around late in March. Slate-colored Juncos were seen near Watertown Dec 26, at Point Peninsula Jan 15, and in Watertown Mar 16. Another stayed around a feeder in Adams Center. Tree Sparrows seemed to be numerous. A Song Sparrow came to Allen's feeder Mar 23. The only Lapland Longspurs were two at Point Peninsula Jan 15. People frequently saw Snow Buntings.

173 Haley Street, Watertown

REGION 7 — ADIRONDACK - CHAMPLAIN

THOMAS A. LESPERANCE

The early defoliation of last fall provided the only ground cover until New Year's Day. To start the year off locally, there was a 15-inch snowfall which remained, with only a small flurry added, until late in February. During this period we experienced, as did most of the northeast, prolonged frigid weather. Temperatures went below -30° and for one continuous 18-day period never went above -5° . Another snowfall occurred in early March, but lengthening days and a warming sun made short work of it. Lake Champlain was completely frozen over, with ice in some protected coves and bays as thick as 25 inches. At this writing (April 12) the Lake Champlain Transportation Co. is unable to operate at Cumberland Head,