

early Chipping Sparrow was seen Mar 30 at Castleton (Benton). Field Sparrows apparently wintered in southern Rensselaer and northern Columbia Counties (Radke, Cook, and Erlenbach). A very early White-crowned Sparrow was seen at Catskill Mar 14 (Bush), for the only report of this species. White-throated Sparrows wintered in a few locations in the Region. Regular spring migrants began to appear during the last week of March. Fox Sparrows persisted through December in Columbia County. First arrivals were recorded from Mar 14-31 at Livingston (Munson). The last Swamp Sparrow was seen Dec 23 on the Schenectady Christmas Census (SBC). First spring migrants were detected at Black Creek Marshes on Mar 31 (Arnold). Song Sparrows wintered in a surprising number of places, more than usual. Lapland Longspurs were recorded on the Troy (SBC) and Chatham (ADBC) Christmas Censuses, Jan 12 and Feb 21 on the Voorheesville-Altomont Road (Shedd), and on Mar 1 near Delmar (Betts). Snow Buntings were reported in usual numbers from most areas where expected. The latest date was Mar 7 in Columbia County (ADBC).

652 Kenwood Avenue, Slingerlands

## REGION 9 — DELAWARE - HUDSON

EDWARD D. TREACY

Compared with the winter of 1960-1961, the winter of 1961-1962 was almost tropical. Temperatures remained average throughout most of the region, and although snows were frequent they were of short duration and slight depth. Unfortunately most of them took place on weekends tending to keep Saturday and Sunday birders at home. The ground remained relatively free of snow until February's normally colder temperatures preserved it, but March brought a number of warm days and what promised to be an early spring.

The most common greeting among birders was "What happened to the Blue Jays?", and "Have you seen the Pine Grosbeaks at . . . ?". Where the former bird was conspicuous by its absence, the latter bird was reported more frequently than ever before. Most reporters in the region offered a low acorn yield as the cause of the Blue Jay's disappearance, and surely something must have happened to the seed crop farther north to bring the Grosbeaks in as they were.

This was a winter marked by a serious depletion of Common Mergansers and Canvasbacks, and a marked incursion of Boreal Chickadees, Horned Larks and Snow Buntings.

The following abbreviations are used in this report. Edgar A. Mearns. Bird Club — MBC; Rockland Audubon Society — RAS; R. T. Waterman Bird Club — WBS; Counties — Dutchess - Dutc, Orange - Oran, Putnam - Putn, Sullivan - Sull, Ulster - Ulst and Westchester - West.

**Loons — Ducks:** Common Loon: a flock of undetermined number was heard Mar 19 over S. Nyack (Deed). Red-necked Grebe — two Mar 18 off Piermont on the Hudson. Horned and Pied-billed Grebes were down in numbers but were passing through the area by mid-March. Great Blue Heron — one Dec 2 (late date) Marlboro, Ulst (Dye). Mute Swan — which have been on the increase of late, have suddenly exploded with reports from most areas, especially in the southern part of the region; two were at Ashokan Res. during Mar; three in Dutc during Dec; about 30 wintered in Rockland Lakes area where several regularly nest. Canada Goose — flying over Rock Mar 14 (Deed); over Putn Mar 29 (Little) and over Dutc Mar 13, 17, and 30, flights were small however. Snow Goose — a flock of 50 to 60 over Dover Plains, Dutc Mar 29 (Decker); one Mar 31 Crugars Island (Waterman). Blue Goose — one Feb 25 on Hudson River at Jones Point, second record for Rock (Deed).

The annual Waterfowl count on Jan 14 showed numbers up almost double due to a high Black Duck count and it also showed Canvasbacks and Common Mergansers seriously down in numbers. Shoveler — seven arrived Dec 19 and remained until Dec 24 at Lederle Lab's in Pearl River, Rock; four returned in early Jan and remained thru Mar 2, the second record of this species for Rock (Steffens). Wood Duck — as last year, two were reported on this year's Waterfowl count, one Basher Kill, Sull (Niven) and one Amenias, Dutc (Strauss); two Dec 22 Katonah, West (S. Grierson). Ring-necked Duck — Several large flocks were reported during the season in Rock, Putn and Dutc. Canvasbacks are down severely in numbers from several hundred in past years to four birds this year which remained to the end of the period. Ruddy Duck — not reported from this region. Common Merganser — 157 was one half of last year's count and only one tenth of the 1957 count.

**Hawks — Owls:** Turkey Vulture — Mar 14 (first) in Rock; in Oran Mar 15; in both Dutc and West Mar 18, this date is generally late in comparison with records of previous years. There were several reports of Sharp-shinned Hawks visiting feeders in Dutc, and not for seeds either. Cooper's Hawks — two Dec 12 Walden area (Phelps). Red-tailed and Red-shouldered Hawks were well represented throughout the season. Rough-legged Hawks — about usual to slightly below in certain areas; four Feb 4 Cornwall area (C. Carnwright). Broad-winged Hawk — one, a most unusual record, Feb 21 Lake DeForest, Rock, the bird was perched for some time offering careful study (Ed. Gamble). Golden Eagle — reports like we've never had them before were made this season; one Jan 14 at Ashokan Res. (Al. Feldman); two immatures wintered in Dutc (WBC). Bald Eagle — only two reported during National Audubon's eagle census were among lower Hudson River (Steffens), though a half dozen birds were known to be residents in this area. Marsh Hawk — two wintered in Verbank area, Dutc (Brown, Davis). Peregrine Falcon — one, on two occasions in Lagrangeville in Jan (WBC). Ruffed Grouse — were well represented again this year from most areas. Bobwhite — two coveys were flushed in Dutc during Dec (Germond).

Virginia Rail — one wintering bird was reported on Bear Mt. Christmas Count one in Dutc during Jan. Common Snipe — one Dec 29 Lake DeForest, Rock which remained through the following week (Steffens). Great-Black-backed Gull — absent from mid-Hudson Valley for local Christmas counts. Owl reports were better than usual, with a number of species being represented, some with rather unusual behavior, Barn Owl — one Dec 17 Hawthorne (Malone); Great Horned Owl — one Jan 1, Waccabuc, West, hunting mice near Mrs. L. Elder's bird feeder; Barred Owl — one, hunting in broad daylight on a fence along the Palisades Pkwy, only a few feet from traffic (Treacy); Snowy Owl — two wintered once more within the walls of Greenhaven Prison, Dutc; other reports were from Vassar College, Poughkeepsie (Chrystal), Walden, Oran (Phelps) and Cornwall, Oran (Faurot). Short-eared Owls — perhaps better represented than other years, at least four were reported from three separate locations in Dutc, one in New Paltz, Ulst and one at Grassy Pt., Rock, a first record for Rock.

**Goatsuckers — Shrikes:** Red-bellied Woodpecker — one in West, no details given. This is an extremely rare bird to the Hudson Valley, it was first reported last year wintering in Dutc. Red-headed Woodpecker — one Dec 31 Suffern, Rock (Bruggeman), although this species is resident in Oran only a few miles north, it is rarely found in Rock. Hairy and Downy Woodpeckers — maintained good numbers throughout the region. M. Earl banded six Hairy and five Downy, at her home in Blooming Grove, Oran. On the afternoon of Mar 21 there were eight Downy and two Hairy without bands at her feeder. Could this be the date these partially migratory species started traveling thru Oran? Phoebe — returned the last week in Mar, throughout the region; one wintered at Tomahawk Lake, Blooming Grove, Oran (Mrs. B. Whitcomb). Horned Lark — were reported as never before in the area. Christmas counts showed high counts of 264 in eastern Oran and 510 in Dutc and 15 in Rock, first record of the species in this county.

Blue Jay was mentioned in the introduction. There just weren't any! Fish Crow — in late Nov and Dec near Poughkeepsie (K. Davis); Feb 3 Barrytown (Brother Michael); Mar 21 Barrytown (H. Hanson). Boreal Chickadee — made news with reports of one to several birds from five areas in the region, two locations in Ulst; four in Rock; six in West; six in Dutc. Carolina Wren — were not exterminated by last winter's weather, but numbers were definitely down. Mockingbird — wintered in two areas of Oran and three of Dutc. It appears this species is definitely spreading its range northward. Catbird — usual wintering reports. Brown Thrasher — numbers of wintering individuals seem to be up.

Hermit Thrush — Feb 14 Upper Nyack (Hopper); Feb 25 Cornwall (Todd); one spent most of Feb and Mar in Poughkeepsie (H. Saltford). Eastern Bluebird — Usual numbers throughout the season, but all to rare. One record seems worthy of mention, Mr. & Mrs. Geo. Williams of Katonah found five bluebirds on the Christmas wreath on their door eating berries. Bohemian Waxwing — a small flock, in his yard in New Paltz Dec 17 (H. Meng); one on feeder in Valhalla Mar 8 (Fennel). Northern Shrike — one Jan 1 to Feb 12 in the Blooming Grove area, Oran (Earl); reported regularly in Dutc during the winter. Starling — 5 to 6000, the biggest roost ever recorded in Rock were at Mt. Ivy during Jan and Feb (H. Kelsey).

**Vireos — Warblers:** Orange-crowned Warbler — one Nov 30 to Dec 29 and Jan 25 to Mar 1 in Upper Nyack (Hopper). Wilson's Warbler — one well observed Nov 23 and again Dec 19 Stony Pt., Rock (I. Kennedy) (a truly remarkable record). Ovenbird — One, positively identified Dec 23 at Pond Ridge (Radosins, Griersons). Yellow-breasted Chat — one, feeding on rose hips, Mt. Kisco (at home of W. Taylor).

**Blackbirds — Sparrows:** Eastern Meadowlark — maintained good numbers throughout the region. Red-winged Blackbird — not reported on Christmas counts of the MBC, WBC, or SMAS this year. 106 a record count for the Rockland group, perhaps this is where they all were!, they returned a bit late, Mar 13, in Oran and Dutc. Baltimore Oriole — were at feeders in Chappaqua, West Feb 26 thru Mar 4 (Wurtzburg) and in three places in Dutc; in Pleasant Valley Nov 8-11 (Van Wagner); in Millbrook Dec 9-19 (Brown); one much of Dec in the Standford area, which died in Jan. Rusty Blackbird — 10 (unusually high) Dec 23 Bear Mt. Christmas Count; three Dec 30 RAS count; migrant birds were first seen at Cornwall Mar 30 (Dye). The following two records give evidence that many *Icterids* withdraw from the northern counties only to winter in large numbers in the southern counties of Region 9. Common Grackle — withdrew completely from Ulst, Dutc, Oran, and Putn only to produce a record count of 394 in Rock Dec 30 (Steffens). Cowbirds — likewise show record lows in Dutc and record highs in West and Rock Christmas counts.

Cardinals — If the trend continues, the northern counties of the state can expect, in a few years, to encounter the flood of cardinals now present in Dutc which only a few years ago reached Rock. 18 or 20 birds are now found about feeders in the Dutc area. Out of our area but worthy of mention is the Rose-breasted Grosbeak at the feeder of J. Worrall, a RAS member from just across the border in Mahwah, N. J. This bird was present Feb 4-14. Dickcissel — reported during the week of Dec 10 from Valhalla (Fennel) and from Pleasantville (Laire) and from Germonds, Rock Jan 2 (Gamble). Evening Grosbeaks — are frequently reported but not in great numbers. House Finch — one remained during Jan in Chappaqua at Mrs. J. Matsumoto's feeder. Pine Grosbeak — as mentioned before, established records in their frequency and numbers. They were first in Dutc Nov 5 and continued to the end of Mar. Goldfinches had a good year. Redpolls were widespread but in modest numbers, first in Dutc and Oran on Jan 31 and continued to the end of the period. Pine Siskins — Feb 28 to the end of the period, Cornwall; four West (SMAS Christmas count); one Feb 21 Pleasantville (Howe); M. Dye had two siskins take seed from her hand. In all, this species was either overlooked or absent to produce so few records. Rufous-sided Towhee — three at Poughkeepsie and one at Clinton Corners, first wintering record for WBC in four years; once again, no record from Ulst; 23, a record count, Dec 30 (RAS). Savannah Sparrow — wintered in New Paltz area (Pyle); there were enough reported from Dutc to suspect wintering there. Vesper Sparrow — few reports from Dutc and Rock through the winter. Field Sparrow — few records from Ulst, Oran, and Dutc. Oregon Junco — Dec 23 Lake Sebago, Rock (Steffens); Dec 19 - Mar 26 Cornwall, Oran (Dye); Mar 10 Lagrangeville, Dutc (Brand, Claire). Tree Sparrow — seem to be in greater number this year. Chipping Sparrow — six, a remarkable count on the RAS Christmas Count. White-crowned Sparrow — Dec 25 Cornwall (Fenton); Dec 2 Mt. Kisco (McWaters). Fox Sparrow — generally late throughout most of the area; one, first migrant, at Poughkeepsie Feb 27 (Butler). Lincoln Sparrow — one late Dec thru Feb 16 (banded) Blooming Grove area, Oran (M. Earl). Swamp Sparrow — one wintered at Stissing, Dutc (Haight); one at feeder in Highland Falls Mar 3, 4 (Treacy). Lapland Longspur — Dutc was amply endowed with this species this season; Dec 31 and Jan 1 near Lagrangeville (Waterman, Key); 10 Feb 1 Barrytown (Brother Michael), two with spring coloration in evidence Feb 22 near Millbrook (Waterman et al). Snow Bunting — best year yet for eastern Oran (M. Earl); 29 on MBC Christmas count; 27 RAS count; 56 RTW count; about 100 Feb 17-21 Viola, Rock and over 300 fed in the fields thru Feb near Amenia, Dutc.

Pellwood Lake, Highland Falls.

## REGION 10 — MARINE

JOHN J. ELLIOTT

Cold weather around the end of the year reduced the previous abundance of smaller land birds, but the variety counts on the Audubon Christmas tabulations