

Oregon Junco: Dec 7 and Jan 3, Oneonta (RB); 1, Dec 10 and 11, Afton (Mrs. C. Kessler), brown back, darker head and pink sides from about seven feet through a window in good light. Field Sparrow: 2, Dec 21, Cortland (CW); 1, Dec 22 and 29 and Jan 23, Glenwood Cemetery in Binghamton (MS, et al); 1, Feb 22, Vestal (SL); Mar 23 and 24, Castle Creek (BB); also 1, on and off during winter, Newark Valley (LD). White-crowned Sparrow: 1, Dec 21 and Jan 4, Hancock (RD); 1, Jan 13, Binghamton (Mrs. Warren Jennings). White-throated Sparrow: many feeders in region had 1 or 2 all winter. Fox Sparrow: 1, Dec 4, Cortland (CW); 2, Dec 21, Sidney (HW); 1, Dec 29, BCC; Jan 28 at feeder in Owego and remained for rest of the period; migrants from Mar 7 and quite numerous. Swamp Sparrow: Dec 21, Homer (JG); 1, Dec 29, Chenango Br (LB); Mar 28, Hancock (RD). Song Sparrow: a few everywhere all winter and must have added up to a quite considerable number; Feb 25, Homer (JG), singing: migrants really noticeable from about Mar 15. Lapland Longspur: Mar 7, Oneonta (RB). Snow Bunting: a few small flocks after Dec 29; 100, Feb 9, Sanitaria Springs (E, NW) and 100, Feb 14, Freetown (AC), the largest: 75, Mar 8, Ingraham Hill (CH), the last.
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REGION 5 — ONEIDA LAKE BASIN

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December was extremely cold; otherwise temperatures were around normal except for a short warm spell in early March, which brought the first landbird influx. Snowfall was low, except in December, and total precipitation was 30% below normal. Most of the winter was considerably more sunny than usual.

The outstanding feature of the season was the fine varied winter finch flights. The invasion of White-winged Crossbill was especially noteworthy. Waterfowl census figures were slightly higher than last year but still lower than average. Numbers of wintering hawks were low.

Abbreviations: BBFS — Dr. Ben Burtt's feeder survey, held the first week of each month; figures cited are per 100 reports; CC — Christmas Count, Syracuse's on Dec 22, Oswego Dec 29, and Oneida Jan 1; HIGMA — Howlands Island Game Management Area; Onon — Onondaga; RSP — Rome Sand Plains; Skan — Skaneateles; Syr — Syracuse; WFC — Waterfowl Count, held Jan 18-26; L — Lake; R — River; arr — arrived; max — maximum.

Regular observers: DA — Dorothy Ackley; JB — Jon Bart; GMC — Gerald and Marge Church; DD — Dorothy Dawley; C, EF — Charles and Esther Farham; GG — George Gage; JH — John Haugh; JP — Jean Propst; CS — Christian Spies; BS — Betty Starr; IS — Ina Stone.

Loons — Ducks: Common Loon: singles at Baldwinsville and Oswego on WFC, neither wintered. Horned Grebe: 22 on WFC, back into the normal range after last year's low count. Pied-billed Grebe: singles wintered at Baldwinsville, Pheonix, and Oswego. Great Blue Heron: no wintering records; (first) Fulton, Feb 29.

Whistling Swan: four Onon L Mar 7 (JP), five Otisco Mar 24 (JP), two HIGMA Mar 26 (GG), and two over Syracuse Mar 27 (R. Seaman). Canada Goose: first main flight noted in several parts of the Region Mar 6-7; about 9000 in evening flight, Seneca R flats Mar 30. Snow Goose: one, Seneca R near Baldwinsville Mar 8 (JP). Mallard and Black: total numbers wintering were low due to less artificial feeding. Counts of Mallard (194)

and Black (373) on WFC for the whole Oswego R (away from game management areas) were about normal. Pintail: six, Oswego R falls, WFC; at least four wintered successfully; first migrants Mar 7 Derby Hill; max 1,100 HIGMA. Green-winged Teal: arr Seneca R flats Mar 22. Blue-winged Teal: arr Pompey Mar 26 and Seneca R flats Mar 30. American Widgeon: arr Onon L Mar 6. Wood Duck: arr Scott Swamp and Derby Hill Mar 6.

The regional counts, given elsewhere, of the principal species of diving duck on WFC were generally on the low side of normal. The early January build-up of numbers of the common wintering diving ducks is shown by comparison of the Oswego CC (Dec 29) and WFC (Jan 18). Counts are for the same areas (thus figures of WFC are not total). Goldeneye 66 to 851, Scaup 1000 to 5700, Common Merganser 431 to 3162. Ring-necked Duck: four (Baldwinsville, Oswego, Skan L) WFC; first migrants Oneida L Mar 8; only poor numbers to the end of the period — max 30/day. Bufflehead: 93 WFC; rise in numbers in Feb; max 165 Oswego Feb 23. King Eider: one-four Oswego harbor Jan 18 — late Mar. Harlequin: female or imm, Oswego harbor Feb 8-16 (J. Foster, A. Maley, T. Tetlow), fourth record in nine years. White-winged Scoter: 150 Oneida L Dec 3 (JP); one-four through winter at Oswego. Surf Scoter: one, Oswego, Dec 29-Jan 5. Ruddy Duck: five occurrences involving seven birds during the winter.

Hawks — Owls: The intensive study of hawk migration at Derby Hill, Lake Ontario, was continued this year by John Haugh. Hawk counts covering the entire migration period will be given in the spring issue. Wintering accipiters were scarce; no records of Goshawks and few of either of the other species. Numbers of wintering Roughlegs were low, not exceeding two/day except for eight, Sherrill, Mar 12, which may refer to migrants. Bald Eagle: adult, Otter L, late Feb (Whitmans); imm, Oswego, Mar 7 (JB, BS).

Killdeer: departure Dec 11, Otisco L; one Jan 4, Tully; one wintered near Eaton; arr Derby Hill Mar 4. Woodcock: arr Mar 16, Liverpool. Snipe: arr Mar 20, Eaton. Greater Yellowlegs: arr Mar 30, Seneca R flats.

Glaucous Gull: max four, Oswego, Feb 23. Iceland Gull: high count of about 12, Oswego, Feb 23 (F. Scheider). Great Black-backed Gull: 343 Oswego CC is lower than last year and in general numbers seemed lower. Bonaparte's Gull: arr Onon L Mar 27 (CS).

Snowy Owl: two Onon L Dec 23; one present there most of the winter. Long-eared Owl: one-two E. Syracuse, Feb. Short-eared Owl: recorded at Shepp's Corners, Clay, and E. Syracuse during period. Saw-whet Owl: one HIGMA late Dec (GG).

Goatsuckers — Shrikes: Kingfisher: four on Christmas counts and two still wintering in Jan in the southern parts of the Region; spring return Mar 22 Derby Hill. Flicker: unusually many into Dec (nine BBFS); eleven on Syr CC; high numbers through Jan and Feb (nine and eight respectively, BBFS); spring arrival Mar 8 Onon L. Pileated Woodpecker: new locations are Highland Forest near Fabius, Taberg (a pair Feb), and Derby Hill (regularly present Mar). Red-bellied: new location is Camillus, a male at the D. Beebes' feeder intermittently through the winter; one at Pratt's Falls Jan (JB); almost regular now at New Haven — one present to Feb 9 (IS); two reports from near Otisco L; noted at Baldwinsville, Plainville, Cato, Lysander, and Port Byron — all in the Seneca R vicinity where the species is commonest; up to five in a day at HIGMA. Sapsucker: one Syr CC attempting to winter. Black-backed Three-toed Woodpecker: a migrant male passing Derby Hill alighted momentarily on a telephone pole, Mar 9 (JH).

Phoebe: arr Mar 17 Derby Hill, a bit early. Horned Lark: reported on two of the four Christmas counts; max for winter 150 Oswego Feb 15 (JB); otherwise no reports of over 50; several observers noted a paucity of them. Blue Jay: BBFS showed the highest Dec count in five years; record numbers (212) on Syr CC confirm that they were plentiful in early winter. A Jan Crow count by Dwight Chamberlain and BS at the Onon Hill roost totaled

about 13,000. First migrant Crows noted at Derby Hill Feb 17; the big Mar flight there had two peaks, with an estimated 11,300 passing on Mar 7 and 15,000 the 24th (JH).

Black-capped Chickadee: BBFS showed normal numbers after the highs of the past two years; largest field report is 50 in a day, RSP Mar 12. Boreal Chickadee: one in spruce plantations near Centerville Feb 23 (C, EF) is the only report outside of the Adirondacks. Tufted Titmouse: two Sherrill Dec BBFS; two regular in Mexico Jan (fide IS); regular at Baldwinsville and up to five at Brewerton (BBFS); three Kirkville Mar (BBFS); one Jan 19 Fabius (JB) in the upper Limestone Creek valley, recalls a Manlius Titmouse location of several years ago; none at North Bay this winter. Red-breasted Nuthatch: frequent and regular in the field in all parts of the Region all winter — up to six in a day; 11, a record high, Syr CC; singles and pairs at feeders, in some cases for the first time.

Winter and Carolina Wrens: one each, Syr CC, the last wrens reported. The usual scattering of winter mimids — Mockingbird: the Mexico and Fayetteville individuals (see fall **Kingbird** report) present into early Dec; one each Marcellus (W. Lang) and Elbridge (Dr. J. Nichols) early Jan. Catbird: one at New Haven (See fall **Kingbird** report) remained to Dec 17; a pair through Dec, Skan (Mrs. L. Miller). Brown Thrasher: two from Dec 7 at the same New Haven feeder as the Catbird — one Thrasher stayed to Jan 18. Robin: 22 Syr CC, an all-time high, and one each on Oswego and Oneida CCs, the latter bird present to Jan 28; Jan BBFS had 11 instead of the usual one or two; several small flocks of seven to 17 in Jan in the field, near Syr and to the SW of there; drop in numbers Feb; first migrant Derby Hill Mar 1, with Mar influx the 7th to 8th. Bluebird: about six Mar reports of birds returning to former nesting areas.

Ruby-crowned Kinglet: unusual is three in early Dec (Syr, BBFS) one of which remained to Jan 5 (DD). Cedar Waxwing: 20-30 noted flycatching around buildings in Kenwood during the Jan 19-24 thaw which produced a hatch of insects (DA). A shifting flock of up to 700 Cedar Waxwings spent Feb and Mar in a berry-rich swamp near Onon Hill. One Bohemian Waxwing was noted in this vicinity Feb 20 (C. Ives); two Bohemians were with Cedar Waxwings Mar 24 at Fish Gulf (BS, JP) — this group of waxwings may have been a detachment from the big flock 10 miles away. Northern Shrike: surprisingly, none on Syr CC (nor on any of the other counts); present during the period in all parts of the Region, but never more than three in a day (late Feb, L. Ontario); singing noted in late Feb and early Mar. Loggerhead Shrike: first, Mar 20 (JH), another Mar 28 (P. Paquette) both Derby Hill.

Warblers — Sparrows: Myrtle Warbler: one each, early Dec, Richland (Mrs. E. Riley), Syr to Dec 17 (DD), and Baldwinsville Jan (Wilfreda Mott); two Syr CC. Northern Waterthrush: one heard singing on the extremely early date of Mar 21, Onon Hill (CF).

Meadowlark: none on Christmas counts; a few in late Dec Skan, and two intermittently in Jan in Sherrill are the only reports before Mar, despite the low amount of snow. Baltimore Oriole: a late lingerer 1st week of Dec at a Sandy Creek feeder (Mrs. C. M. Carpenter). Rusty Blackbird: two, late Dec Liverpool (CS) are the last. Grackle: BBFS showed three times normal numbers in Dec, but only two individuals remained by Feb. Cowbird: Dec BBFS numbers five times the normal — did the early heavy snow drive them to feeders? Spring influx of Meadowlark, Redwing, Rusty and Grackle Mar 7 (JH at Derby Hill, and BBFS), a few days late; Cowbirds arrived a little later.

Cardinal: BBFS shows the population to have now leveled off; territory gained in recent years around the SE corner of L. Ontario remains occupied. Dickcissel: one from Dec 21 to early Jan, Onon Hill (C, EF) and two in late Mar — Marcellus (fide CS) and Sherrill (P. Wayland-Smith) all three males with an indistinct black V — the first time for more than one report per winter.

Certainly the outstanding event of the winter has been the invasion of northern finches, with eight forest species well represented and the White-winged Crossbill in numbers roughly ten times the previous high since the beginning of Regional reports. Evening Grosbeak: Dec numbers were moderate, but high enough to indicate a big flight; Jan BBFS tally of 1220 was almost as high as in the biggest previous year, 1959-60, and the Feb BBFS figure of 1870 was the highest ever; Mar already showed a marked drop-off, to 1270 BBFS, but many remained through the period. Purple Finch: present through the period, though in nothing like last year's numbers; BBFS showed a steady increase from ten in Dec to 48 in Mar, which is usual; in the field, birds reappeared first (in Jan and Feb) in the southern parts of the Region, later to the north. Pine Grosbeak: a scattered few in Dec, mostly near Syr; the increased number of sightings in Jan was chiefly from NE of Oneida L and the SE corner of L Ontario; by Feb they were common pan-regionally, with the highest counts for the winter — flocks of 75 each at Big Moose Feb 2 (JB) and Eaton Feb 8 (GC), and a total of 43 birds along L Ontario Feb 22; most had disappeared by mid-Mar; in sum, about as large a flight as Region 5 experiences one year in three, but not as massive as the 1961-2 invasion. Redpoll: only a scattered few Dec; reported more frequently Jan — from various parts of the Region — but difficult to count accurately as they were often in mixed flocks with Siskins and/or Goldfinches passing overhead; BBFS numbers were highest in Jan but Redpolls were most widespread in the field in Feb and Mar, with highest flock counts 300 Feb 29, Highland Forest (JB), 160 Mar 1 RSP (DA) with Siskins and Goldfinches, 100 Pleasant L Mar 21 (CS) and 150 Mar 22 Otisco L (BS); northbound migrants over Derby Hill in numbers up to 100 in a day Mar 8 and still passing after the end of the period. Siskin and Goldfinch: both present all four months, but Siskin numbers climbed steadily from Dec to Mar both at feeders and in the field; maximum counts are moderate — 60 Siskins Mar 19 Fischer Bay and 50 Goldfinch Mar 29 Oneida; flocks of both Spinus together, or of one or both with Redpolls, were more frequent than flocks of only one species. Red Crossbill: about six reports in Dec, of flocks of up to ten; in Jan, more frequently noted and at feeders for the first time; widespread in Feb (no part of the Region seemed to be favored over others) with 50 at Highland Forest Feb 1, the highest flock count of the winter; Mar BBFS 31, highest feeder count; present through the end of the period. White-winged Crossbill: appeared suddenly in late Nov and early Dec in a spectacular pan-regional irruption, feeding in cedar and hemlock as well as spruce; largest flock for the period is 400, Dec 23, Eaton (GC) but several other flocks of over 100 were reported in Dec; numbers declined in Jan as those of the Red increased; by Feb it was difficult to find White-winged away from spruce groves (e.g. s Madison Co, Cicero Bog); in Mar, migrating flocks of up to 20, especially over Derby Hill, and a few remaining at the end of Mar.

Towhee, late and wintering: one Fulton (Dec BBFS); one Dec 15 Tully (JP); one survived until Jan 1 (Oneida CC) when it succumbed to cold or starvation; a pair Camillus (Jan BBFS); two females New Haven (IS) one into Jan and the other to Mar 1. Junco: present in the field all winter in numbers of up to about 20/day.

Half-hardy sparrows — Chipping: one at a feeder into early Dec Syr (BS). Field: four Syr and six Oneida CCs is unusual. White-crowned: in Jan and Feb, only two or three reports, of singles, at feeders. White-throated: about a dozen reports, the majority from feeders. Fox: several late migrants on Dec BBFS; two Oneida and one Syr CC; a sizeable mid-Mar influx starting with four at Eaton Mar 8 (G, MC). Swamp: last in the field were five Syr CC. Song: many more than usual at feeders (BBFS Dec 52, Jan 60, Feb 69, Mar 55) and small numbers in the field all winter (max 10 Port Byron Jan 1); despite the presence of wintering birds, an influx of migrants the first week of Mar was noted.

Lapland Longspur and Snow Bunting: in contrast with the forest finches, occurred in quite low numbers; only report of Longspurs is of up to 12 Derby Hill Jan 26-Feb 12 (JB) in a flock of up to 500 buntings, by far the largest flock of the latter all winter; 150 buntings Pompey Jan; no other flocks over 40; up to 35 in a day migrating past Derby Hill in late Mar.

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