

REGION 9 — DELAWARE - HUDSON

EDWARD D. TREACY

It was a close to normal winter in the Hudson-Delaware region. Temperatures were mild when compared to those of recent years. This is the first year that your reporter can remember that the lower Hudson River failed to freeze solid, although it was often choked with floes. Snow was in fair amount with a number of light falls, and as much as twelve inches deposited on Jan 13. Ten inches were deposited on Feb 19. The month of March was free of snow throughout much of the region. The first week of March brought warm weather and the first migrants. To date the spring migration has been largely on time with no spectacular changes.

Birding was also average, with no great changes. There was a good influx of some northern species, but most were to be expected. The cone and seed crop was good to excellent for most plants.

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Abbreviations: Arr — Arrived; Counties — first four letters; Is — Island; imm — immature; Jet — Junction; L — Lake; Res — reservation or reservoir; Sanct — Sanctuary.

Loons — Ducks: Open water allowed many waterfowl species to linger longer than usual this winter, and the early thaw allowed an early return for most. The tenth annual waterfowl count in Jan produced the largest number of species (seventeen), and the third highest number of individuals (2,082). Common Loon: two reported on the Hudson; one at Poughkeepsie on Dec 29, and another at Ft. Montgomery on Dec 28. Migrants began arriving in the Middletown area on Mar 7, and were heard calling to the end of the period. Mr. and Mrs. Bruce North plan to keep a careful watch for nesting evidence which becomes increasingly improbable. **Red-throated Loon:** This very rare transient was found Dec 9 at Stissing L, Pine Plains (PG, AJ). **Pied-billed Grebe:** A few winter records; first migrant at Basher Kill, Sull on Mar 15, and regular thereafter. **Great Blue Heron:** Several winter records. Migrants appeared in the usual places about the third week in March. **Black-crowned Night Heron:** Rock had its second winter record, again on a Christmas Count, when one bird was found below the L DeForest Dam (TW). **Mute Swan:** A peak count of 68 on the Rock Lakes about Congers on Dec 1 (FS). **Whistling Swan:** One imm identified on Tomahawk L Oran on Dec 1 & 2 (BW). **Canada Goose:** About 40 birds wintered in West. First migrants appeared in Dutch on Feb 27 & 29. Bulk of migrants reported from most areas about Mar 14. **Gadwall:** An extremely rare bird in our area. Rock had its fifth record of one bird at Rock L on Dec 14 (MI). Dutch had its first record in more than 20 years with a pair at Crugers Is (MK, AJ). **Pintail:** Also an uncommon visitor; Dutch had two or three wintering at Pine Plains; Rock and West reported migrants in Mar and Oran had several dozen birds in the Goshen area from Mar thru April. **Green-w Teal:** Last fall birds reported from Dutch on Dec 2. Waterfowl count produced eight in Jan, and migrants were passing north on Mar 7 in Dutch and Mar 18 in Oran. **Blue-w Teal:** No winter records, first migrants Mar 24 at Crugers Is. Numbers appear to be good at this writing. **Widgeon:** A hybrid of the American and European species spent its third winter in Hawthorne, West, and was well photographed by many observers. **Shoveler:** Two birds on Rock L Dec 14 made the third record for that county (MI). This species was reported in Oran during Mar

at Goshen, and was still present at this writing. This is the first record for the county in modern times. Wood Duck: Very few reports during winter. First migrants in mid-Mar. Heavy movement throughout region after that. Redhead: Always rare; six on L DeForest Mar 15 (MH, AP). Ring-neck Duck: Numbers down during winter, but migration numbers up during Mar and Apr. Canvasback: So abundantly reported in migration only a few years ago, now seriously low on the Hudson flyway. Bufflehead: More numerous than usual on the Rock Christmas count, with 26 in view at Piermont Pier. None reported anywhere on Waterfowl Count in Jan. Usual migrants during Mar. Oldsquaw: One at Piermont Pier Dec 28 (RD). Hooded Merganser: Many winter reports; heavy migration in late Mar. Red-breasted Merganser: Three Mar 14 on the Hudson in Dutch (MV, MK).

Hawks — Owls: Turkey Vulture: Most returned in mid-Mar, but single reports were made from Dutch on Feb 29, and from West on Feb 9. As many as 75 birds were reported at the Queensboro roost in Bear Mt. Park in late Mar (HP). Goshawk: One reported from Rio Res, Sull, Dec 28 (JK). Sharp-shinned Hawk: None reported. Coopers Hawk: Only two reports, one from Dutch, and the other from Sull. Both were in Feb. Red-tailed Hawk: Scarce all winter. Reported on the nest on Mar 15 in Dutch. Red-shouldered Hawk: More scarce than the previous species. Only one wintering record, several March migrants reported. **Broad-winged Hawk:** Very late date of Dec 22 over Rye, West (EE), and Dec 23 over Hawthorne (BA). Probably the same bird. Rough-legged Hawk: Although Dutch reports them as scarce, at least three reports per month from that county seems fairly good to your reporter. Reports of wintering birds came from each county, and in all showed one of the best seasons for the species. Bald Eagle: Numbers better than for the past few years, but still very low. As many immatures reported as adults, a hopeful sign. Marsh Hawk: One over Greenville, Oran Dec 30 (ID); three birds in Dutch: one at Thompson Pond on Dec 28 (TH), one Mar 3 (MK), and one Mar 16 at Hyde Park (AJ). Sparrow Hawk: Quite scarce; first migrants second week of Mar, numbers up at the close of the period. Ruffed Grouse: Numbers excellent, about the same as last year. Bobwhite: Six birds at Mt. Airy, near Newburgh on Jan 16. A pair of birds at a feeder throughout the winter in Stissing, Dutch, and covies of five or six in three different locations in the northeast corner of that county. Coot: Good wintering numbers in West, but very scarce or absent elsewhere. Killdeer: Two wintered in Dutch near Poughkeepsie, with the first migrants noted Mar 3. Woodcock: First reports during first week of Mar. Numbers seem to be normal. Common Snipe: An interesting report of a bird found in a muskrat trap and released after amputation of a leg on Dec 6. Bird appeared well and active (KN). **White-winged Gulls:** A Glaucous Gull was observed at Croton Pt. West on Jan 4 and again Mar 7 (BA, PS). Two Iceland Gulls were also observed there on Jan 4 (BA). This latter species was also observed at the Beacon city dump throughout most of the month of Feb (OW). Ring-billed Gull: Absent from Dutch, during the winter, but apparently normal elsewhere. Numbers are good along the Hudson this spring. Mourning Dove: Normal throughout most of region, but reported in record numbers from Rock. Barn Owl: Rock had its third record in recent years when one turned up on the Christmas count, Dec 28 (JM). Screech Owl: One observed in a Kestrel nest box at Tri-Loba Sanct, Katonah, West on Feb 7; and was heard calling on Feb 29 (SG). Paul Jeheber reports "one for the books" when on Feb 9 a work crew at West Point cut down a tree, cut it into sections, and were preparing to burn them when they noted a Screech Owl in a hole in one of the logs. They took him out and released him. Great Horned Owl: Reported from most areas, no change in numbers. Snowy Owl: One reported from Rock during the month of Feb; another from West at New Rochelle on Dec 7; and three from Dutch: one at Vassar College Dec 10, another at Clinton Corners Jan 18, and the third at Salt Point on Feb 12. Barred Owl: One reported killed by a car at Cross River, West on Feb 2. Long-eared Owl: Only reports from Dutch with a bird at Poughkeepsie from Jan 15-17 (WBC), and three at Croton Point from Feb 2 (RA) to Mar 7 (BA). Saw-whet Owl: Only report that of a bird killed by a car at Katonah on Feb 11.

Goatsuckers — Shrikes: Flicker: Wintering birds reported from most regions; numbers were especially good in Dutch. Pileated Woodpecker: The usual reports, numbers being maintained. Margaret Dye reports a bird visiting suet feeders in the Cornwall area; suspects possibly more than one. Red-headed Woodpecker: Several reported from Dutch and Oran, and one reported from Sull. Yellow-bellied Sapsucker: More winter reports than usual. Black-backed Woodpecker: One report, that of a bird in the White Plains area Mar 24-28. Phoebe: Dutch reported birds of this species on Dec 29 and Feb 24 at Hopewell Jct (AJ, PG). One was at Carmel, Putn on Feb 29 (ML). The rest arrived on schedule in mid-March, and the numbers were good to the end of the period. Horned Lark: Scarce in Dutch, but normal elsewhere. Rock had good numbers throughout the season. Tree Swallow: Arr as usual in mid-Mar. **Gray Jay:** One from Nov 26-Dec 15 and again in Feb at Bowman's Farm, Clinton Corners, Dutch. May be the same bird reported last autumn in this column although location was some 15 miles away (WBC). Blue Jay: Normal winter population. Black-capped Chickadee: Normal. Boreal Chickadee: Good wintering reports; one arrived at West Park, Ulst on Dec 9 and remained thru the season. Three spent the winter in the Hawthorne area of West; and the same number were found at Moore's Mills, Dutch from Mar 16-21, the same area where they were found in 1962. A single bird was reported in the Sackett L area of Sull on Dec 28. Tufted Titmouse: Numbers increasing in the northern counties. Red-breasted Nuthatch: An exceptional year for this species. One wintered on the grounds of the Middletown State Hosp. Six were found on Dec 28 in Sull (JK). Dutch turned up three in Dec, four in Jan, one in Feb and three in Mar. Oran & West produced one bird each in Jan. Winter Wren: Numbers down; only two reports. Carolina Wren: Numbers down, but widely scattered birds appeared to come through the winter well. Mimids: Catbirds and Thrashers were reported as usual to slightly better. Mockingbirds continue their increase with several reports from the northern counties, and from 10 to 20 birds evident in Dutch. Thrushes: A little better than the usual reports of wintering Robins, Hermits and Bluebirds. March migrants were arriving on time. Golden-crowned Kinglet: Less than the usual population. Rock missed them entirely on their Christmas count. **Bohemian Waxwing:** At Kripplebush, Ulst on Mar 15, about a dozen working over dried-up crab apples. Observed at very close range (FH). Cedar Waxwings: Numbers reduced in the southern counties. None reported all season from Oran, and missed on the Rock Christmas count. Northern Shrike: Four reports from Dutch spanning Dec 15-Mar 11. One report from Sull on Mar 4.

Vireos — Sparrows: Myrtle Warbler: Reported five times in Dutch from Dec 13-Feb 10. One each time. Only other report from Ulst at New Paltz. Red-w Blackbird: First noticeable wave Mar 7 throughout region. Abundant after Mar 13. Wintered sparingly. Baltimore Oriole: Only winter reports from West (No details). Rusty Blackbird: Fewer reported wintering in West than usual. Single birds reported in Dec, Jan and Feb in Dutch, with 13 reported on Mar 5. Several Oran records, but all in Mar at Cornwall. Rock had one Jan report, and two in Feb. Cardinal: Numbers appear to be stabilizing in all counties but Sull where they are increasing. More this winter at feeders than ever before. **Blue Grosbeak:** "A bird fitting the description of this species (male was seen in Pleasantville Feb 9 by Mrs. J. Duple," (BA). Dickcissell: **Four** on the Rockland Christmas Count, and one all winter at a feeder in New City (FS). Two more wintered at Stone Ridge Ulst at the feeder of Mrs Howard Van Winkle (FH). Evening Grosbeak: Population good throughout the season with many flocks, but small numbers in each. Continued to the end of the period. Purple Finch: Rock reports them in good numbers, but other counties show them to be low. House Finch: Returned to the feeding stations frequented last year, and spread to Oran and Dutch. Pine Grosbeak: Reported from all counties, but numbers low everywhere except Dutch where 40-50 were found Dec 31 and Jan 1, and five reports in Feb totaled 25 birds. Common Redpoll: Very scarce, largest flock about 100 on Old Storm King Road, Cornwall (JD). Pine Siskin: Most people cannot remember when we've had so many before. The large flocks of the fall continued into the winter, but were much smaller

toward the end of the season. Goldfinch: Numbers good in all counties. **Red Crossbill**: This rare and irregular winter visitor appeared several times in the region. Twelve were reported during Feb, and five on Mar 11 in Dutch. Three were at Bear Mt. Rock on Jan 3, and a small flock in Nyack on Jan 8. One bird was found in Somers, West on Jan 29, and five were there on Feb 1. **White-winged Crossbill**: More common than the former but still rare, this species made a good appearance. Reported in small flocks from every county in each month of the season. **Towhee**: The usual wintering reports. **Savannah Sparrow**: Wintered in the Chester area from Jan 18 thru early Mar (SU). **Vesper Sparrow**: Five or six wintered in the Hawthorne area of West, and three were reported from Dutch. Two of the latter were found in Mar, and one on the Christmas count. **Oregon Junco**: Three reports: one on Dec 28 at Monticello (KN); another male wintered again near Pine Plains (BD); and the third spent the winter at Cornwall (JD). **Tree Sparrow**: Normal to good winter population. **Field Sparrow**: One wintered at Middletown (FK). **White-crowned Sparrow**: Unusual wintering reported from Dutch. Five birds at Amenia during Jan and Feb (WS). A single bird was reported Jan 1 at Pine Plains (TH). **White-throated Sparrow**: Nothing unusual. **Fox Sparrow**: The usual wintering birds; a very good Mar movement. **Snow Bunting**: A few winter records. One at Carmel, Putn on Jan 18 (ML); ten or twenty at Dutch Co. Airport in Feb (AJ); and "a large flock" at Granville, Oran on Mar 2 and 3 (ID).

Pellwood Lake, Highland Falls

REGION 10 — MARINE

PETER W. POST AND GUY A. TUDOR

In general the winter season was characterized by colder than average temperatures during December, warmer than average temperatures during January and temperatures during February that were only slightly below normal. The major feature of these three months, however, was the excessive amount of snow: 11.3 inches, 13.3 inches, and 8.8 inches during December, January and February, respectively.

The combined total of the 11 Christmas Counts which were taken wholly within Region 10, was 158 species (not including several additional species present during the count period). Four of these counts recorded 100 or more species, the "big three" being Central Suffolk, Southern Nassau, and Bronx-Southern Westchester, with 119, 122, and 123 species, respectively. It would be of great interest if some of these counts could be repeated during late January or February when migration is at a standstill and most of the "half-hardy" species have disappeared because of the severe weather, and/or diminishing food supply. In most cases we have tried not to utilize data from the Christmas Counts, but a certain amount of overlap is inevitable. As a rule, we have included this information when it involves either late records or unusual species, and in those certain cases where we have tried to document the widespread distribution of a particular species.

Temperatures for March were above normal with mild weather dominating much of the month. There were three periods of springlike conditions, from the 1st to the 10th with the temperature in NYC climbing to 71 degrees on the 5th; from the 13th to the 17th; and from the 23rd to the 26th with the temperature reaching 75 degrees on the 25th. Movements of migrants into the region coincided with these warm periods. The first warm period brought in numbers of Wood Ducks, Fox Sparrows and Song Sparrows. Piping Plovers and more Sparrows arrived during the second period. The last spell produced a widespread flight of Flickers, Phoebe, Golden-crowned Kinglets and a few Pine Warblers.