

year included Meadowlarks in all areas, a few Redwinged Blackbirds, two Baltimore Orioles (one in Watkins Glen, and one in Dec in Ithaca) and many Cowbirds.

Rarely has there been a winter with no winter finches. Evening Grosbeaks were almost completely absent, as was last the case in '56-'57. Perhaps a dozen reports came in of one to 10 birds, in March—no more. There were almost no Purple Finches, no Redpolls, no Siskins, Crossbills, or Pine Grosbeaks. A few small Goldfinch flocks remained, and came to feeders. Tree Sparrows were more in evidence after Mar 15 than before—whether a reflection of a decrease of food in the fields, or simply of the beginning of northward migrations of those that had been farther south. Fewer White-throats wintered. Oregon Junco: one, Jan, Elmira (ER), one Montour Falls (BS). Snow Buntings: several hundred, Jan 24, south of Ithaca (GAS); one flock of 200, Feb 4, near Hornell (WMG).

Laboratory of Ornithology, Cornell University, Ithaca

REGION 4 — SUSQUEHANNA

LESLIE E. BEMONT

It was a relatively warm and open winter, with all the sub-zero temperatures and persistent snow cover coming in January and the first week of February. In mid March, after the arrival of some early migrants there was a short period of below normal temperatures accompanied by snow that slowed the migration. No casualties were reported, but bluebirds, after being reported for 4 days, disappeared for about 10 days. The last 3 days of March were well below normal in temperature and migrants of a number of species such as Cowbirds, Grackles, Robins, Juncos and Fox Sparrows were present in large numbers, possibly the result of a "damming" effect of the cold weather.

The relative warmth prevented Skaneateles Lake from freezing over as it usually does, making it possible for several species of diving ducks to winter there for a change. Among raptors the winter belonged to the Rough-legged Hawks, although Red-tailed Hawks remained in some numbers and a Goshawk and two Pigeon Hawks seem noteworthy.

Among the "irregular" passerines only Cowbirds, Goldfinches and Cedar Waxwings were present in any real numbers during the heart of the winter. There were no reports of crossbills, but most other winter finches were reported at least once, although in drastically reduced numbers. Even Tree Sparrow numbers were well below normal. Hopefully this was due to bountiful supplies of natural foods in other areas. A side effect of such a dull winter is that it causes observers to stay home more willingly, making the reports even duller than the winter.

Contributors: LA—Mrs. L. Atkinson; LB—Leslie Bemont; M&AD—Marilyn & Anna Davis; RD—Robert Dirig; GF—G. Field; CG—Clinton Gerould; SG—Selena Gorton; JG—John Gustafson; CH—Claude Howard; FL—Florence Linaberry; HM—Harriet Marsi; LN—Mrs. L. Newman; JO—Jack Osadchey; RP—Robert Pantle; R&MS—Robert & Mary Sheffield; DW—Don Weber; MW—Mildred White; R&SW—Ruth & Sally White; RW—Ruth Williams; SW—Stuart Wilson; HW—Herbert Wisner.

Loons — Ducks: Common Loon: 3, Jan 10, on Delaware River at Shin-hopple for the Waterfowl Census (RD) and 4, Mar 14, flying over Skyline in Tioga Co. (CG, MW, RW)—only reports. Red-throated Loon: 1, Dec 27, Chenango Valley State Park (P. Kalka, Jr., P. Kalka, Sr., R&MS) for the Christmas Census; still in the same area the next day (R&SW); only the second reported in the Region in about 12 years. Horned Grebe: 1, caught

Dec 4 at the Cortland Water Works, held at Cortland State Teachers College until Dec 17 and then released (JG). Pied-billed Grebe: 1, Mar 27, at Owego (CG, MW) and 1, "in March", on Skaneateles Lake (JO). Great Blue Heron: wintering birds reported at Owego (E. Howe), Cortland (LA) and Sidney (Mrs. G. Terryvilliger); migrants Mar 24, Owego (D. Raftis); arrived at heronry at Candor Mar 30 (DW).

Whistling Swan: 1, Mar 17 to 30, Marathon (JG); 2, Mar 20, Upper Lisle (SG), at least 1 remaining to Mar 31; 5, Mar 27, Campville (MW); 3, Mar 27, Owego (M. Hills). Canada Goose: a flock, Jan 4, Oquaga Lake (SW); first migrants Mar 3, Ingraham Hill (CH); heavy flights, particularly Mar 22 and 23; several flocks grounded by a snow storm at Candor Mar 23 (DW). Pintail: 2, Jan 17, Binghamton for the Waterfowl Census (HM, G. Corderman); 1, Endwell, Feb 14 (E. Washburn); migrants from Mar 18. Green-winged Teal: 1 on Skaneateles Lake during Jan and Feb (JO); at least 15 at Upper Lisle, Mar 13 (SG). Blue-winged Teal: "seen during the last week of March", Oneonta (J. New). Am. Widgeon: Mar 18, Binghamton (HM, FL). Wood Duck: 1, Jan 9 and 10, Sherburne Game Farm (R&SW); migrants Mar 18, Binghamton (HM, FL). Redhead: up to 150, Skaneateles Lake, "all winter" (JO). Ring-necked Duck: Mar 9, Binghamton (FL). Canvasback: thru the winter on Skaneateles Lake (JO); 1, Jan 10, Hancock (RD); 1, Feb 14, Binghamton (C. Jennings); Mar 23 and 31 at Owego (J. Shuler, RW, MW). Scaup: thru the winter on Skaneateles Lake (JO); 3, Mar 13, Whitney Point Dam (SG), first migrants. Common Goldeneye: thru winter on Skaneateles Lake (JO); usual small numbers on rivers after Jan 1, the largest flock 40, Feb 21, Owego (CG, MW); increased numbers at Whitney Point Dam the last few days of Mar. Bufflehead: Feb 7, Owego (CG, MW, RW), the only report. Old Squaw: 1, Dec 27, Endicott for the Christmas Census (LB, EW); the only report. Ruddy Duck: 1, Jan 1, Cortland Christmas Census, the only one. Hooded Merganser: 1, Mar 7, Lounsberry in Tioga Co. (CG), the first; noticeably more numerous than in most years. Common Merganser: wintering population not significantly different from normal; migrants appearing about Mar 13 seemed up in numbers. Red-breasted Merganser: 1, Jan 7 and 8, Sidney (GT)—only report.

Hawks — Owls: Turkey Vulture: 1, Mar 2, Windsor (SW), the first; reported regularly from Mar 6 at Hancock (RD). Goshawk: 1, Jan 19 and 20, Oxford (Mrs. A. Stratton), second hand reports of this bird hanging around feeders in Oxford for nearly a month previously. Sharp-shinned Hawk: substantially more reports than in other years from Feb 4 on. Cooper's Hawk: the usual small number of reports. Red-tailed Hawk: more than the usual number of winter reports, and a marked increase in numbers after Mar 14. Red-shouldered Hawk: 1, Jan 16, Lordville (SW); 2, Mar 6, Upper Lisle (SG)—the only reports. Rough-legged Hawk: in good numbers everywhere all period; 7, Feb 18, Whitney Point (HM, FL), all in view at the same time. Bald Eagle: 1, Mar 5, 12 and 27, Walton (RD); 1, Mar 13, Skyline (RW); 2, Mar 20, Cortland (LN). Marsh Hawk: Dec 8, Chenango Bridge (SG); no more until Feb 4, Cortland Co. (JO); migrants from Mar 18. Pigeon Hawk: 1, Feb 13 to 15, Cortland (L. Stone, A. Christopher); 1, Mar 27, Ingraham Hill (CH). Sparrow Hawk: wintering birds seemingly became more numerous after Jan 1; migrants from about Mar 13.

Bobwhite: 4, at least thru Feb, Freetown in Cortland Co. (L. Stone); 1, Mar 15, in Cortland area (Blanchard). Turkey: Jan 5, Oquaga Lake (SW); 2 birds at Candor (DW). Killdeer: Feb 28, Cortland (F. Newman) and Candor (DW). Woodcock: Mar 25, Chenango Forks (M&AD) and Choconut Center (R&MS). Common Snipe: Mar 21, Candor (RP). Herring Gull: the usual number wintering; at least 100, Mar 13, Whitney Point Dam (SG). Ring-billed Gull: Dec 17, Cortland (GF); no more until Feb 28, Endwell (HM, G. Corderman). Great Black-backed Gull: Feb 1, Skaneateles

eles Lake (JO); Feb 18, Cold Brook (JG); rarely reported in the Region. Mourning Dove: 34, Dec 20, Homer (GF); 6, Endwell, Dec 27 (LB); seen daily all winter, Cortland (LA); no others until Mar 6. Screech Owl: numbers still low but improving. Horned Owl: number of reports increasing each year; reported nesting at Homer, Mar 6 (GF, Griffin); at a Candor nesting site eggs hatched about Mar 15 (DW); active nest found at Ingraham Hill Mar 18 (CH). Snowy Owl: Jan 12, Campville (Urban); 1, Mar 10, at Montrose in nearby Pennsylvania, the only ones. Barred Owl: one, Dec 27 and Feb 5, Hancock (RD); 1, Dec 28 and Feb 13, East Sidney (HW).

Goatsuckers — Shrikes: Belted Kingfisher: only absent between Jan 31 and Mar 6. Yellow-shafted Flicker: 1, Feb 14, Owego (MW); 1, Mar 7, Whitney Point (R&MS); 1, Mar 30, Owego (Mrs. T. Flavin); the only reports. Pileated Woodpecker: a noticeable increase in the number of reports from year to year. Yellow-bellied Sapsucker: Mar 24, Sidney (F. Quick), reported nowhere else. Phoebe: Mar 30, Candor (RP) and Cortland (LN). Horned Lark: singing Feb 21, Endicott (R&MS); "nesting", Mar 1, Cortland (LN). Tree Swallow: 20, Mar 29, Cortland (LN), the only ones. Blue Jays: reported to be either numerous or scarce depending on the locality; at E. Sidney, 6 to 8 birds all winter except Feb 2 to 12 when numbers temporarily jumped to 27 to 37 (HW). Tufted Titmouse: reported regularly for at least part of the period at Hancock (RD), Candor (RP) and Cortland (Davis); also reported at Chenango Forks (M&AD) and 11 on the Binghamton Christmas Census. Red-breasted Nuthatch: 2, regular at Freetown to mid Feb (A. Christopher), otherwise absent. Brown Creeper: Mar 25, Deposit (SW), several singing.

Winter Wren: Dec 10, Deposit (SW); 1, Mar 6, E. Sidney (HW). Mockingbird: 1, Mar 8, Binghamton (LT). Catbird: Dec 6, Binghamton (HM). Robin: regular reports to about Dec 20; the usual scattered winter reports until about Mar 4 when early migrants started appearing; numbers increased noticeably from Mar 15 until Mar 28 when the main wave of migrants arrived; Mar 29 and 30, "big migrating flocks—thousands", Deposit (SW). Eastern Bluebird: 2, Mar 13 Candor (RP); 14, Mar 14, Owego (R.&F. Benedict); after Mar 16 none until Mar 28. Golden-crowned Kinglet: scarce all winter. Ruby-crowned Kinglet: Dec 19, Cortland (GF). Water Pipit: Mar 26, Owego (HM), no others. Cedar Waxwing: seemed more numerous than in other years. Northern Shrike: a few reports from almost everywhere in the Region.

Blackbirds — Sparrows: Eastern Meadowlark: 1, Dec 9, Cortland (LN); 1, Jan 1, South Owego (CG); Mar 4, Chenango Bridge (SG); migrants from Mar 23 on. Redwinged Blackbird: a few stayed until Jan 6, then none until 200 males arrived at Ingraham Hill, Mar 2 (CH); common from then on. Rusty Blackbird: 1, Dec 18, Cortland (LN) and 1, Jan 1 thru 11, Cortland (LA); spring migrants from Mar 14, Chenango Bridge (SG). Common Grackle: a few wintering birds at Cortland and Binghamton; migrants from about Mar 2. Brown-headed Cowbird: reported fairly frequently all winter, migrants starting to swell numbers about Mar 10, and large flocks arriving Mar 29.

Cardinal: 70, Dec 27, Binghamton Christmas Census; 40, Jan 1, Cortland Christmas Census; regular at Unadilla (HW); "firmly established" at Deposit (SW). Dickcissel: 1, Dec 27, Nanticoke (LB); Jan 12, Sidney (GT). Evening Grosbeak: almost completely absent from most of the Region, but a few stayed around Norwich (R&SW) and Deposit (SW); Cortland also appears to have had more than most other parts of the Region. Purple Finch: very few in Dec, numbers increasing slightly during Jan and Feb; numbers increased a little more rapidly in Mar but they were still not very numerous at the end of the period. Pine Grosbeak: 8, Dec 17, Walton (RD); 7, Jan 1, Cortland Christmas Census. Redpoll: "only a few during winter", Oneonta (J. New); none anywhere else. Pine Siskin:

2, Mar 12, Cortland (LN), the only ones. Goldfinch: fairly common all winter, but more so after about Feb 27. Rufous-sided Towhee: a male regularly at a feeder near Sidney until Feb 12; 1, Mar 3, Endwell (HM); no more until Mar 30. Slate-colored Junco: reported regularly all winter in most of the Region but in small numbers for the most part; large numbers of migrants at Deposit Mar 29 to 31 (SW). Oregon Junco: 1, about Jan 1, Binghamton (R. Schumann); 2, Jan 23 thru end of Mar, near Deposit (SW); 2, Feb 13, Choconut Center (R&MS) and at the same place Feb 28 and Mar 7; Mar 29 to 31, Chenango Forks (M&AD). Tree Sparrow: much lower numbers than in other years. Field Sparrow: 1, Mar 6, Vestal (R&MS) and 2, Mar 16, Ingraham Hill (CH); only reports. White-crowned Sparrow: 1, Dec 27, Chenango Bridge (SG, R. Saunders). White-throated Sparrow: the usual small number of scattered individuals wintering at feeders. Fox Sparrow: 1, all winter at Scott in Cortland Co. (Paquette); Mar 16, Chenango Forks (M&AD); Mar 29 to 31, 104 banded at Deposit (SW) and large numbers reported at several other localities. Song Sparrow: wintering birds regular at a few feeders all winter; 33, Dec 27, Binghamton Christmas Census; migrants noticeable about Mar 2. Snow Bunting: relatively small number all winter; 100 or more, Feb 20, Candor (DW), the largest flock reported.

710 University Ave., Endwell 17363

REGION 5 — ONEIDA LAKE BASIN

Fritz Scheider

The mild Dec weather with scant snow cover and brief freezing periods was abruptly terminated by early January's severe freezing. Intense cold and only modest snow cover characterized the latter two-thirds of Jan and Feb. Ice conditions along the Oswego River and Lake Ontario attained record proportions; from late Jan to late Mar the pack ice in Mexico Bay and at Selkirk Shores State Park extended from hill to horizon. Bridgeport and Brewerton, open-water points on Oneida Lake, froze solidly, and Onondaga Lake iced over except for the sewage outlet on the west shore. Despite the severe cold, snow cover was in general slight, and in Dec and Feb weeks passed with no snow cover present. The absence of accumulated snow in the hill country, both north and south of Oneida Lake, portends another dry, perhaps even dusty, summer. The period was bracketed by damaging ice storms Dec 6 and Mar 29. The former created havoc, breaking large tree limbs and even felling small trees in woodlots along Lake Ontario; the latter forced recently arrived passerine migrants, Mourning Doves, and Killdeer to road edges for sustenance and/or grit.

Positive features of the birding winter included 1) a heavy Snowy Owl flight, 2) a marked flight of Glaucous and Iceland Gulls, virtually confined to the Seneca River—Oswego River axis, 3) a minor irruption of Northern Shrikes, most evident Dec thru Feb, 4) a heavy wintering concentration of Common Goldeneye and Bufflehead along Lake Ontario, and 5) an array of aquatic half-hardies (Great Blue Heron, American Widgeon, Green-winged and Blue-winged Teals, Coot, Common Snipe, Kingfisher) attempting to winter, probably held north by the mild Dec weather; few survived the severe freezing of mid-Jan.

On the negative side, the general paucity of landbirds received almost uniform comment—"woods are empty"; "I can't even locate Tree Sparrows"; "a whole day without one woodpecker seen"; "where are the birds this winter?" were typical comments on this winter's birding. Patronage at feeders, however, did not seem to be reduced, as ascertained by Dr. Burt's monthly feeder survey. Also on the debit side were 1) a continued deficit of accipiters, and an absence of Marsh Hawks, 2) very low counts on