

early Dec Ray B (JK); one Saranac L Mar 30 (ED); one Saranac L last week in Mar (EB). Tree Sparrow: 12 thru period Saranac L (ED); seven to eight Gabriels, one to three Tupper L (AA); one or few Ray B (JK). Song Sparrow: one Mar 30 Saranac L (EB). Snow Bunting: 25 Jan 1 Saranac L (DY); 14-20 late Jan thru Feb 5, Saranac L (GK); 30 Jan 17 Normans Ridge (HD); 15 Chateaugay, 25 Clayburg Feb 5 (JH); flock L Clear Dec 14 and Feb 16 (AA).
Trudeau Road, Saranac Lake

REGION 8 — MOHAWK - HUDSON

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After a mild, rather wet Dec, Region 8 experienced three cold, dry months. Temperatures in Dec averaged 27.9° at Albany, 1.4° above normal and precipitation totalled 3.28 in., 0.69 in. above normal. Much of the latter occurred as rain or as freezing rain. Temperatures at Albany in Jan, Feb, and Mar averaged 18.1°, 22.3°, and 31.2°; these were 4.6°, 1.4°, and 1.8° below normal, respectively. Precipitation in Jan totalled 1.95 in., 0.52 in. below normal; in Feb, 1.92 in., 0.28 in. below normal; and in Mar, 1.73 in., 0.99 in. below normal.

Despite the cold weather, the ground in the Hudson and Mohawk valleys was without snow cover most of the winter. This was because much of the precipitation fell as rain, sleet, or freezing rain. The lack of snow cover undoubtedly dispersed winter birds more than usual, and feeders in the area had few visitors when compared with other years. Even allowing for this fact, however, most fringillids seemed far fewer in numbers than usual throughout the area. High numbers of gulls and ducks remained on the Upper Hudson above Troy well into Jan for the first time in several years. Although it appeared in the fall that a widespread invasion of northern hawks and owls was to take place, relatively few remained and most raptors were decidedly uncommon. The only exceptions to this were Rough-legged Hawk and Great Horned Owl. Northern Shrikes seemed much more widespread than usual, perhaps also an indication of influx of northern predators.

Unusual or rare species reported during the period included the first records for Region 8 of Harris' Sparrow from two localities, Bald Eagle, Peregrine, Gyrfalcon, Virginia Rail (wintering), Glaucous Gull, Iceland Gull, Long-eared Owl, Black-backed Three-toed Woodpecker, Boreal Chickadee, Bohemian Waxwing, Migrant Shrike, Dickcissel, White-winged Crossbill, Savannah Sparrow, Oregon Junco, and White-crowned Sparrow.

Abbreviations used: ADBC—Alan Devoe Bird Club; GCBC—Greene County Bird Club; SBC—Schenectady Bird Club; ADCC—Alan Devoe (Chatham) Christmas Count; GCC—Greene County (Catskill) Christmas Count; SCC—Schenectady Christmas Count; TCC—Troy Christmas Count; arr—arrived; imm—immature; I—Island; L—Lake; Max—maximum; R—River; SCR—Stony Creek Reservoir; SL—Saratoga Lake; SS—Stockport Station; UH—"Upper Hudson", the Hudson River between Troy and Stillwater; VFG—Vischer Ferry Game Management Area; WR—Watervliet Reservoir.

Observers: TB, AB—Tom and Arlene Brown; JHB, BB—James and Barbara Bush; JC—Juanita Cook; HE—Hazel Eddy; PE, GE—Paul and Georgia Erlenbach; JF—John Fuller; AG—Aden Gokay; EH—Esly Hallenbeck; MJ—Mary Johnston; MK—Marcia Kent; MDM—Mary Mickle; WN—Wendy Neefus; DR—David Rothaupt; WBS—Walton Sabin; BRS—Benton Seguin; HT—Henry Thurston; DJT—Dr. Donald Tucker; PPW—Peter Wickham; RPY—Robert Yunick; GMZ—Gladys Zimmer; bsh—Guy Bartlett, Benton Seguin, Barry Havens.

Loons — Ducks: No loons were reported during the period. Horned Grebe: last Dec 6, SL (BRS); no Mar reports. Pied-billed Grebe: only one, Mar 6-8, UH (bsh). Great Blue Heron: late individuals Dec 6, SCR (BRS) and Jan 10, Chatham Center (AG); only spring reports, Mar 23 and 28, Colonie (JF, DR). Black-crowned Night-heron: three Mar 5 over Delmar (R. Darrow) were unusually early. Canada Goose: last Dec 6, SL (BRS); first Mar 7, SS (PPW); good-sized flocks (70-100 birds) appeared Mar 24-28. Mallards and Black Ducks concentrated at Green I, appearing sporadically elsewhere until early Mar, high counts 227 and 1373 respectively, Jan 9 (SBC). American Widgeon: 1-2 remained on the UH through Jan 10 (SBC); first (spring) Mar 6, SS (WN), few in Mar. Pintail: an unusually high number remained late on the UH, max 26 TCC Jan 2, last Jan 10 (bsh); first spring Mar 6, SS (WN). Green-winged Teal: up to 3 remained on the UH to Jan 10 (SBC); first spring Mar 7, SS (PPW). Blue-winged Teal: first Mar 27, VFG (bsh) and in several other places later in Mar. Wood Duck: first Mar 7, SS (PPW), gradually increasing throughout area in Mar. Ring-necked Duck: last, four, SL Dec 6 (BRS); first Mar 9, Embought (JHB). Canvasback: last, sixteen, SL, Dec 6 (BRS); no Mar reports. Scaup: last two (Greater), ADCC Jan 2; first Mar 27, several areas. Common Goldeneye: a few remained throughout winter, increasing in late Feb and Mar. Bufflehead: last, ten, Dec 6 SL (BRS); first, two Mar 9, Hudson R south of Albany (bsh). Hooded Merganser: one ♀ remained on the UH through Jan 9 (SBC); first arr Mar 7, VFG (DJT); two males at Schroon L outlet Feb 27 (bsh) may have been very early migrants or wintering birds. Common Merganser: 1-9 remained on the UH throughout the winter; numbers rapidly increased in Mar, max 200 SS Mar 17 (PE, GE). Red-breasted Merganser: arr Mar 27, Mohawk R (bsh).

Hawks — Owls: Turkey Vulture: first Mar 2, Kiskatom (JHB). Goshawk: only three reports, all in Jan (ADBC). Sharp-shinned Hawk: five reports scattered through the winter; probable migrants Mar 27, Hudson (TB, AB) and Mar 28, Colonie (JF, DR). Cooper's Hawk: five reports during period, including two Mar 28 at Colonie (JF, DR) and at Schodack Center (Lee & Virginia Burland). Red-tailed Hawk: rather scarce in most localities this winter. Red-shouldered Hawk: four reports Dec-Jan; a return movement noted in Mar, with individuals reported at Catskill Mar 16 (BB) and at three localities Mar 28. Rough-legged Hawk: the most common hawk in most areas Jan-Mar., max 10 Feb 13 between Albany and Catskill (WBS et al.). **Bald Eagle:** an adult observed in flight near Chatham Center Feb 16 (Murray Giddings, George Milne) and an imm was observed in flight over VFG Mar 28 (SBC). Marsh Hawk: only three different reports throughout the period. Osprey: a very early individual was south of Hudson Mar 27 (ADBC). **Gyr Falcon:** one (dark phase) Jan 21, ADBC Sanctuary, Old Chatham; one dark phase (the same?) Feb 1 near Chatham Center; and two (dark phase) Feb 13, a few miles south of Albany (all reports from Dr. E. M. Reilly, Jr.). **Peregrine:** an adult was observed at close range bedeviling a flock of Cowbirds and Blue Jays on Feb 6 at Canaan (AG).

Bobwhite: at Meadowdale and Lyons L, Nassau. Wild Turkey: reported from Red Rock (Fred & Myra Smilow) and Windham (Blanche Wasson). **Virginia Rail:** 1-2 were at a spring-fed marsh near New Salem from late Dec-early Mar (many observers); this appears to be the first winter record for this Region. Killdeer: last Dec 13, WR (bsh); no winter reports, first Mar 3, near Castleton (PPW); gradual influx throughout Mar. Woodcock: an injured individual came to a feeder in Burnt Hills from Dec-Feb (DJT); first migrants Mar 24, Colonie (JF, DR), late. Common Snipe: 1-2 wintered at the same marshy area near New Salem as the rails did; this is the same marsh in which at least one Snipe has appeared for the last three winters; no migrants reported during Mar. **Glaucous Gull:** one adult was on the UH Mar 6-8 (bsh) and another was at SS Mar 20 (SBC), as well as

at least one additional unidentified "white-winged" gull. **Iceland Gull:** one in very dusky plumage, judged a first-year imm, was on the UH Dec 19 and 27 (bsh)—the only report. **Great Black-backed Gull:** numbers remaining on the UH throughout Dec and early Jan were unprecedented, including 20 Dec 19 (bsh) and 23 TCC Jan 2; numbers dwindled rapidly to one Jan 9-10 (SBC) but a few remained all winter; large influx in early Mar, max 40 SS Mar 7 (PPW) and Mar 20 (SBC). **Herring Gull:** good numbers remained late on the UH into early Jan—e.g., 95 TCC Jan 2—these dwindled rapidly, a few remained throughout the winter, with a general influx from Mar 3 on. **Ring-billed Gull:** similar in pattern to the Herring Gull, but fewer numbers.

Mourning Dove: wintered quite locally in very high numbers—e.g., 187 ADCC and 134 TCC Jan 2. **Screech Owl:** only four reports received. **Great Horned Owl:** the most common owl of the winter, present throughout the Region. **Snowy Owl:** relatively few were present, contrary to expectations, after their early appearance in 1964; a total of nine probably different birds were reported, Dec-Mar. **Barred Owl:** only three reports—Dec 24, Altamont (Beverly Waite), Jan 16, Guilderland (MJ) and Mar 29, Hudson (TB, AB). **Long-eared Owl:** one was picked up after flying into the side of a barn and breaking its neck on Feb 17 near Cairo (Norma Bondy). **Short-eared Owl:** only one, near Dormansville Jan 31 (fide MK). No Saw-whet Owls reported.

Goatsuckers — Shrikes: Belted Kingfisher: about six scattered winter reports, no appreciable influx in Mar. Yellow-shafted Flicker: more reports than usual: two in Dec, eight in Jan, five in Feb; there appeared to be a slight influx throughout Mar. Pileated Woodpecker: rather few. Yellow-bellied Sapsucker: one female in Niskayuna, at the same feeding station at which a female appeared last winter, on Dec 20, Dec 24 and Jan 2 (RPY). **Black-backed Three-toed Woodpecker:** one, Feb 7 in the Schroon L area (JF). **Horned Lark:** numbers seemed somewhat low in most areas. **Common Crow:** remained into Jan in larger numbers than past three years—e.g. 589 SCC Dec 26 and 466 ADCC Jan 2. **Boreal Chickadee:** only one verified report for the winter—one, Colonie, Dec 30 (JF). **Tufted Titmouse:** holding its own or increasing, 24 reported on the ADCC. GCC, SCC and TCC combined. **Red-breasted Nuthatch:** only from areas where it nests and usually winters, such as ADBC Sanctuary, Tomhannock Reservoir, and northern Warren County. **Winter Wren:** one, WR, Jan 6 (EH)—only report.

Mockingbird: at least 4-5 in different areas throughout the winter. **Catbird:** one at a Schenectady feeder Dec 26 and 28 (DJT)—only report. **Brown Thrasher:** one remained at a Niskayuna feeder through Jan and into early Feb (Mrs. Frazer Price) and another was at a feeder in Catskill from Dec 20 through Jan (fide JHB). **Robin:** remained in small numbers in many sections and in larger numbers in Greene and Columbia Counties; migration late; large waves Mar 28 and 29. **Bluebird:** reported at Colonie, Ghent, Bethlehem Center and Greenville during the winter; returned Mar 9 to a nesting area in East Greenbush (fide PPW) and Mar 10 in Catskill (JHB); it was absent then from the East Greenbush site for about two weeks, then reappeared; also appeared at Gallupville nesting sites Mar 26 and 29, (GMZ), suggesting waves early and late in Mar. **Golden-crowned Kinglet:** very scarce except in larger evergreen tracts. **Bohemian Waxwing:** one, Dec 6, feeding in a Mountain Ash tree in Niskayuna with several Cedar Waxwings following the severe ice storm Dec 5 which coated most things with an inch of ice (RPY). **Cedar Waxwing:** a few were reported throughout the winter, with definite increase in Mar, when flocks of up to 50 appeared. **Northern Shrike:** probable flight year: at least nine adults reported in four counties, Dec-Feb; surprisingly, no Mar reports. **Migrant Shrike:** only one, Black Creek Marshes Mar 28 (BRS).

Blackbirds — Sparrows: Meadowlark: more common locally than usual, with 22 SCC and 40 ADCC. Redwinged Blackbird: a few wintered, first migrant flocks Mar 1 and 2, Castleton marshes (PPW), appearing widely Mar 5-7. Common Grackle: followed same pattern, first Mar 2, Castleton marshes (PPW). Rusty Blackbird: at Loudonville Dec 20 (MWF), near New Salem Dec 28, Jan 17 and 24 (WBS, BRS) and Niskayuna Jan 13-23 and Feb 1 (HE); returning birds seen Mar 2, Castleton marshes (PPW), followed by a few later in Mar. Cowbird: many wintered, max 376 ADCC; appeared to return later than the other blackbirds; a large influx occurred Mar 24-31, when flocks of 20-50 appeared in all sections.

Cardinal: still increasing throughout Region, with 139 on GCC, ADCC, SCC and TCC combined. Dickcissel: an adult ♀ was seen Feb 2 at a feeder near Catskill (BB). Evening Grosbeak: rather rare most of winter except possibly in mountainous areas; increased considerably in Mar when flocks of up to 30 were seen at feeding stations. Purple Finch: almost wholly absent, early winter, but increased rapidly after mid-Feb to become easily the most common finch in Mar; at Niskayuna, RPY banded 202 from Feb 21-Mar 31, none before. Pine Grosbeak: two reports—five, Hannacroix, mid-Feb (T. & M. Zaph) and twelve, Schroom L area, Feb 27 (bsh). Redpoll: only five reports Dec-Feb. Pine Siskin: even less common, a "few", Durham, Feb (Vernon Haskins) and one in Troy Mar 29 (Mary Kilcawley). Goldfinch: less common than last winter; a large group of about 500 was near Schroom L Mar 13 (DR). **White-winged Crossbill:** the lone report of crossbills—group of three near Schroom L Feb 7 (JF). Rufous-sided Towhee: two reports—one at a Chatham feeder, Jan-Mar (MDM); one to Dec 6, Burnt Hills feeder (BRS).

Savannah Sparrow: up to three at feeders in Greene County in Jan and Feb (fide JHB). **Oregon Junco:** three reports, all of adult males in which dark hood sharply separated from brown back with rusty flanks: one, Colonie, sporadically at feeder, Jan 1-Mar 28 (JF); one, Catskill, Jan 25-Feb 6 (JHB); one, Claverack, Feb 4-10 (HT). **Field Sparrow:** appeared this winter at Colonie (JF), Chatham (MDM), Claverack (HT), Elnora (DJT), Ghent (PE, GE) and Loudonville (Mabel French). **Harris' Sparrow:** the first records for this Region. An adult appeared at a feeder in Voorheesville "sometime late last fall" and remained to Feb 24. The "black cap, face and bib, pink bill, large size, clear gray breast, ocher cheeks, long tail" were noted by many observers, including WBS, bsh, HE and DJT. An imm appeared at a feeder near Athens Jan 27 after a snowstorm. This bird displayed "pink bill, large size, erect stance, ocher cheeks, clear gray breast which was traversed across the upper part by irregular black blotches forming a necklace-like pattern." It was also seen by many observers including Geoffrey Carleton, WBS, JHB, PPW and DJT, and was still present Mar 31. **White-crowned Sparrow:** two at a feeder in Castleton (JC) and one at a feeder in Ghent (PE, GE); both appeared in mid-Feb and remained into Mar. **White-throated Sparrow:** at least ten winter reports: scarcer than in 1963-64. **Fox Sparrow:** late at Guilderland (MJ, Mary Lynch) and East Chatham (P. & N. Schwabe)—to mid-Dec. Spring migration quite late, first Mar 24, Kiskatom (Walter Smith) and Mar 26, Westerlo (MK). A very large wave occurred Mar 29 following a snowstorm when 1-15 appeared at almost every feeding station in the area. Observers in the field the previous weekend, Mar 27-28, did not see any, so it seems likely the birds moved in (or were grounded) the night of Mar 28. **Swamp Sparrow:** very scarce, only reports SCC Dec 27 and at Black Creek Marshes (one) Feb 21 (bsh). **Song Sparrow:** fewer than usual. **Lapland Longspur:** only from Meadowdale, Dec 6-Feb 7, max 4 (several observers) and near Kinderhook Feb 13 (HT, PE, GE). **Snow Bunting:** very few, last Mar 21 near Canajoharie (GMZ).

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