

15 (PT). Fox: arr, one Mar 18 Elmira (M. Smith); one Mar 23 and several reports the next week Ithaca. Swamp: one or two wintered Montour airport (JB). Song: a few wintered most areas; more than usual MNWR, max 11 Jan 12 (WEB). Lapland Longspur: scattered reports Elmira, Geneva, Waterloo, Watkins, Ithaca; max 12 Jan 1 Elmira (WH). Snow Bunting: reported everywhere; flocks of over 500 at several locations near Ithaca, many smaller flocks; several flocks estimated at close to 1000 Keuka (FG); about 600 Dec-Feb Geneva (CW); flocks of 30-300 over countryside in Jan Hornell (WMC); 2000 Feb 7 Waterloo (JW); max 55 Elmira Jan 1; numbers began to decrease in Feb.

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REGION 4 — SUSQUEHANNA

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According to figures from the U.S. Weather Station at Broome County Airport temperatures averaged below normal in each month of the period but were seldom severe. Only four days saw the temperature drop below zero and -4 was the lowest officially recorded reading. Snowfall was also below average, about sixty percent of normal for the season. Only once, February 9, did as much as four inches fall in a 24 hour period. Snow cover was fairly persistent but seldom exceeded three inches and, except for Jan 8 to Jan 18, never for more than two or three days at a time.

Light snow cover and an abundant rodent population combined for seemingly ideal conditions for raptors and they responded. Almost all species of hawks and owls that could be reasonably expected were recorded at least once and the more common species were definitely more numerous than usual. Four Goshawks, a Peregrine Falcon and a Golden Eagle seemed particularly noteworthy. A possibly nesting Saw-whet Owl is also of particular interest.

Winter finches, on the other hand, were disappointing after a promising start. Evening Grosbeaks were really rather numerous but the overwhelming numbers of a few years back have no doubt spoiled our perspective. Goldfinches, too, were quite prominent. Pine Grosbeaks, because of their less conspicuous habits, can be assumed to have been a good deal more common than the records seem to indicate. Siskins, redpolls and crossbills were decidedly scarce although only the White-winged Crossbill went unreported. The very real scarcity of Blue Jays seems to be explained by the poor mast crop last fall.

Mockingbirds continue to increase and Tufted Titmice at least held their own. Killdeer, two Catbirds, Robins, a Baltimore Oriole and Rufous-sided Towhees make up a respectable "half hardy" list.

Although not intense, uniformly cold weather persisted to mid March when the first balmy weather seemed to bring the first significant movement of early migrants such as Robins and blackbirds, two to three weeks behind schedule.

Place name abbreviations: Bing-Binghamton; Chen-Chenango; CVSP-Chenango Valley State Park; CC-Choconut Center, a couple of miles north of Johnson City; Pep Res-Pepacton Reservoir; Skan L-Skaneateles Lake; WP-Whitney Point.

Observer abbreviations: DB-Donald Bemont; LB-Leslie Bemont; LC-Mrs. Lynn Clark; GC-Gail Corderman; WC-Warren Corderman; BCC-Binghamton Christmas Count; CCC-Cortland Christmas Count; TCC-Tioga Christmas Count; MC-Mitchell Cubberly; A,MD-Anna & Marilyn Davis; C,JD-Carleton & Jeanne Davis; RD-Robert Dirig; EF-Elizabeth Feldhusen; CG-Clinton Gerould; JAG-John A. Gustafson; EK-Eugene Kirch; AL-Arthur Levy; ML-Margaret Lynch; HM-Harriet Marsi; MM-Michael Moore; HR-Hetty Rinker; D,MR-Dorothy & Margery Rutbell; R,JS-Robert & Jean Saunders; DS-Dorothy Sawyer; MS-Mary

Sheffield; JS—James Shuler; HS—Harvey Spivak; AS—Anne Stratton; RS—Richard Sutliff; DW—Donald Weber; MW—Mildred White; RW—Ruth Williams.

LOONS-DUCKS: Horned Grebe: one Dec 21, CCC and one Dec 27, Endicott (LB,DB); no more. Pied-billed Grebe: two Dec 21, CCC and one Dec 29, BCC (RS,LB,DB). Great Blue Heron: Jan 1, Berkshire (ML), and Jan 12 (A,MD). Canada Goose: Mar 6, Owego (MW, CG); Mar 16 on, in large numbers. Pintail: four Mar 23, CVSP (A,MD) and four more at WP (MS). Green-winged Teal: Mar 28, Smithboro Flats in Tioga Co (RW). Blue-winged Teal: one with no apparent injury picked up but then released on Susquehanna River at Owego remained between there and Nichols for the rest of the period (MW,JS). American Widgeon: two Mar 28, CVSP (A,MD). Wood Duck: one Dec 21, CCC; two Mar 23, Cortland (HS). Redhead: 121 Dec 21, Skan L, CCC; one Mar 14, Apalachin (D,MR); no others. Ring-necked Duck: two Mar 20, CVSP (A,MD); over 50 at WP Mar 29. Canvasback: one female Jan 19 and Jan 27, Oneonta (EF). Scaup (*Sp?*): 25 Mar 20, Apalachin (D,MR). Common Goldeneye: 40 Dec 21, Skan L, CCC; small numbers present on rivers all winter. Bufflehead: one female Jan 19, Oneonta (EF); Feb 20, Owego (JS); migrants at WP Mar 29. Hooded Merganser: one Dec 21, Skan L, CCC; Feb 28, Chen Forks (A,MD); frequent reports all Mar. Common Merganser: small numbers all winter; over 55 at WP Mar 29 (MS). Red-breasted Merganser: eight Feb 22, Oneonta (EF); over 26 at WP Mar 29 (MS).

HAWKS-OWLS: Turkey Vulture: three Mar 21, Hancock (RD); also Mar 23, Owego (MW,CG). Goshawk: two, one in adult and one in imm plumage, seen irregularly, but fairly frequent most of the period at CC (MS), both present the same day on two occasions; also Jan 1, Berkshire (ML) and one Mar 10 and 15, in adult plumage, Andes (MC). Sharp-shinned Hawk: three Jan 1, TCC; one Jan 3, at feeder in Norwich (R,SW); no others. Cooper's Hawk: four Jan 1, TCC; one Feb and two Mar records. Red-tailed Hawk: three Dec 21, CCC; 15 Dec 29, BCC where three or four would be good; four other Dec reports, four Jan and three Feb reports including five individuals on Jan 20; 15 reports of one or two individuals in Mar plus "common along Pep Res" during late Feb and early Mar. Red-shouldered Hawk: Mar 11, Owego (MW); two later Mar reports. Rough-legged Hawk: one Dec 21, CCC; six Dec 29, BCC; one other Dec report, six Jan reports totalling 13 individuals, two Feb reports and seven Mar reports, the last one Mar 28 at Berkshire (ML). Golden Eagle: an immature flying "over house—white at base of tail and base of primaries" Feb 1, Andes (MC). Bald Eagle: six sightings from Jan 5 to Mar 15 along Pep Res including two adult birds Feb 22 and one adult and one imm Feb 28 (MC); one near Cannonsville Reservoir Feb 9 (LC). Marsh Hawk: one Dec 29, BCC; Mar 9 Berkshire (ML); four later Mar records. Peregrine Falcon: one Dec 17, an imm "sat here on branch 5 min. within 15 feet, near feeder—mask grayish, buffish cheek, white throat, brownish streaked breast", Oxford (AS). Sparrow Hawk: three Dec 21, CCC; twelve Dec 29, BCC.

Ruffed Grouse: four Dec 21, CCC; seven Dec 29, BCC. Ring-necked Pheasant: seven Dec 21, CCC; 51 Dec 29, BCC, well above normal. Turkey: reported at Nichols, Berkshire, Owego, Candor and Tioga Center during the winter. Killdeer: Dec 29 thru Jan 9, Greene (C,JD); one Jan 11, Homer (JAG); one all winter at Delhi in a swampy area (LC); migrants Mar 1, Unadilla (DS). Am. Woodcock: first report Mar 16, Hinman's Corners north of Bing (R,JS). Common Snipe: Mar 21, Berkshire (ML). Herring Gull: three Dec 21, CCC; 20 Dec 29, BCC. Ring-billed Gull: one Dec 29, BCC. Mourning Dove: 31 Dec 21, CCC; two Dec 29, BCC; over 50 Jan 12, Ouquaga (R,JS); 30 Feb 14, Greene (C,JD); 30 or more still at Cortland Water Works to Mar 7 (HS). Screech Owl: two Jan 22, Endwell (MM); one Feb 15, Homer (JAG); also reported from Tioga Co. Horned Owl: one Dec 21, CCC; three Dec 29, BCC; fairly frequent reports. Snowy Owl: two Feb 16, Willet in Cortland Co (L. Barrows). Barred Owl: Dec 21 and Jan 25 in French Tract, south of Bing (GC,WC,EK); Jan 12, Nichols (HR). Short-eared Owl: flock at

E. Berkshire max 14 last seen Jan 19 (ML); one at Bing Jan 19 (MS, AL); Saw-whet Owl: an injured bird found Jan 28 and cared for at WP (Dr. C. Leahy, HM); first heard calling Feb 21 at Candor and two seen Mar 8—a box erected Mar 18, was being defended by owl against Starlings Mar 23—box occupied during daytime and one comes to opening “looking as fierce as possible” when approached (DW).

GOATSUCKERS-STARLING: Belted Kingfisher: two Dec 21, CCC; three Dec 29, BCC; regular reports all winter, even during Feb when seen daily at Greene (C,JD), heard once at Delhi (LC) and seen the 22nd at Unadilla (EF). Yellow-shafted Flicker: Mar 28, Berkshire (ML), the only report. Hairy Woodpecker: nine Dec 21, CCC; ten Dec 29, BCC. Downy Woodpecker: 19 Dec 21, CCC; 45 Dec 29, BCC. Eastern Phoebe: Mar 29, CVSP (A,MD); Mar 31, Berkshire (ML); the only ones. Horned Lark: 114 Dec 21, CCC; 5 Dec 29, BCC. Tree Swallow: Mar 26, Owego (MW,CG); two Mar 29, WP (MS). Blue Jay: 23 Dec 21, CCC; 48 Dec 29, BCC, a tenth to a fifth the number recorded the last couple of years; most areas mention reduced numbers. Common Crow: 981 Dec 21, CCC, a large roost at Homer (JAG); 266 Dec 29, BCC. Black-capped Chickadee: 61 Dec 21, CCC; 235 Dec 29, BCC. Tufted Titmouse: four Dec 21, CCC; 13 Dec 29, BCC; two or three daily until at least Jan 21, Hancock (RD); at Delhi during Jan and Feb (LC): at CVSP in Mar (A,MD). White-breasted Nuthatch: 17 Dec 21, CCC; 60 Dec 29, BCC. Red-breasted Nuthatch: seven Dec 29, BCC, at feeders in Vestal until Feb 1 (GC, WC) and in Cortland until at least Jan 10 (Robert Slauch); one or two at Cortland Water Works most of Mar (HS); one at Gilbert State Pk near Oneonta Jan 25 (EF). Brown Creeper: two Dec 21, CCC; three Dec 29, BCC.

Carolina Wren: “all winter”, Owego (MW); one Jan 22, Bing (Lois Minehan). Mockingbird: four Dec 29, BCC; at CC all winter as last year (MS); one Dec thru Feb at Delhi (LC); at Cortland, three Jan sightings, feeding on apples and bittersweet (A. Christopher *et al*) and one at a feeder in late Mar (Rev. and Mrs. Russell); at Endwell from summer at least thru Jan 21 (Mrs. Paul Saddle mire); Mar 13, Newark Valley (ML, Louise Dean). Catbird: one “spent the largest part of winter at the yard of Dewey Bendle in—Owego” (RW); one Feb 11, Candor (DW). Robin: one Dec 21, CCC; one Dec 29, BCC; up to four Jan 20 to Feb 21, Endwell (DB); migrants Mar 15, Endwell (D,MR). Eastern Bluebird: Mar 11, South Owego (Evelyn Williams); five more reports, the next Mar 22. Golden-crowned Kinglet: 17 Dec 29, BCC. Cedar Waxwing: fewer reported than usual; 30 at Cortland in Dec and Jan (JAG) and five other reports all after Jan 25. Northern Shrike: one Dec 21, CCC; one Dec 29, BCC; nine other scattered reports. Starling: 245 Dec 21, CCC; 3922 Dec 29 BCC.

VIREOS-SPARROW: House Sparrow: 197 Dec 21, CCC, lowest number in years; 900 Dec 29, BCC. Eastern Meadowlark: Dec 19, Greene (C,JD); one Dec 28, Vestal (GC, WC, EK); Jan 12 at Friendsville in nearby Pennsylvania (Claire Gottschall). Redwinged Blackbird: six Dec 21, CCC five Dec 29, BCC; “a greater number staying for winter” (JAG); migrants Mar 5, common after Mar 16. Baltimore Oriole: Feb 11, Endwell (C. Page) and Feb 15 less than a mile away by another observer. Rusty Blackbird: one in Jan at Delhi (LC); Feb 15, west of Endicott (MM); 30 or so migrants Mar 23 and 28, Cortland (HS). Common Grackle: two Dec 21, CCC; six Dec 29, BCC; one at Candor for five days in late Jan (Robert Pantle); migrants Mar 15, Unadilla (DS). Brown-headed Cowbird: 16 Dec 21, CCC; 22 Dec 29, MCC; migrants from Mar 14.

Cardinal: 24 Dec 21, CCC; 85 Dec 29, BCC; although “usually only seen in village of Delhi are (now) being seen in surrounding rural areas” (LC). Dickcissel: one Feb 11, Bing (Mr. & Mrs. William Knight), had been regular before. Evening Grosbeak: 101 Dec 21, CCC; 189 Dec 29, BCC; “a large flock present in Oneonta the entire period” (EF); also present in the Triple Cities area, Norwich and Delhi all period in lesser numbers while at Andes they “came early then disappeared” (MC). Purple Finch: three or four at Hinman’s Corners Feb 6 to Mar

21 (R,JS) and four other scattered reports and that is all. Pine Grosbeak: 12 Dec 21, CCC; seven Dec 29, BCC; twenty other reports during the period, rarely more than six birds at a time. Common Redpoll: two Jan 1, TCC; 35 Jan 19, Norwich (R,SW) and a like number at Oxford Dec 25 (AS) and at Chen Forks Feb 9 (A, MD); reported more regularly after Mar 15 but only in small numbers. Pine Siskin: Jan 1, TCC; the only report. American Goldfinch: seven Dec 21, CCC; 110 Dec 29, BCC; at Andes none since mid Dec—"most unusual" (MC); numerous at many feeders in Cortland and Triple Cities area all season and regular at Delhi. Red Crossbill: two Dec 25 at Union Center north of Endicott (D,MR); Jan 1, TCC. Rufous-sided Towhee: three Dec 29, BCC one of which was seen frequently all winter at a feeder at CC (MS).

Savannah Sparrow: Mar 30, Delhi (LC); Mar 31, Milford, in the Oneonta area (Cora Wellman). Slate-colored Junco: four Dec 21, CCC; 112 Dec 29, BCC; small numbers present at many feeders all winter; noticeable increase Mar 19. Tree Sparrow: 129 Dec 21, CCC; 357 Dec 29, BCC. Chipping Sparrow: Mar 18, west of Endicott (MM), very early if not a wintering bird, "saw the black eye-line clearly". Field Sparrow: one Jan 19, Bing (Mark Harris); Mar 19, Endicott (MM) and two Mar 28, Hancock (RD), the only migrants reported. White-throated Sparrow: four Dec 29, BCC, one of them at a feeder in Endwell all of Dec and to Jan 3 (D,MR). Fox Sparrow: one Dec 21, CCC; one Dec 6 and 7, Endwell (LB, DB); first migrant Mar 17, Nichols (Virginia Hudson). Song Sparrow: four Dec 21, CCC; 13 Dec 29, BCC; the usual few all winter; first report of singing Feb 17; migrants obvious by Mar 14. Lapland Longspur: three Dec 21, CCC. Snow Bunting: 340 Dec 21, CCC; 200 Dec 29, BCC; 13 other reports, the last Mar 17, Oneonta (John New).

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REGION 5 — ONEIDA LAKE BASIN

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Another Central New York winter! Mild early December, the annual Syracuse Christmas count snowstorm, below-zero temperatures for the Oswego Christmas Count, a sleet storm for the Oneida one, and severe freezing with howling NW winds for the Howland Island count. Early January had a less than horrendous temperature pattern, but by Waterfowl Census period severe bone-chilling cold had set in and more water areas were frozen over (including the majority of Oswego Harbor) than were open. By mid-January Lake Ontario ice formation looked like late February. Heavy snows and continued cold in late January decimated what few half-hardies were about, and the small local berry, seed, and cone crops were virtually exhausted by early February. The woodlots, fields, and hedgerows of February had that blank, birdless look, and a hardy observer afield all day would be lucky to come up with 20 species of landbirds. Such ordinarily common species as Blue Jay, Black-capped Chickadee, Purple Finch, and Goldfinch were singularly scarce and Cedar Waxwings were very nearly uniformly absent.

March showed no improvement. March 1-17 had steady below-freezing weather. The open lead at Brewerton on Oneida L had not expanded to one-fourth mile in length by March 20 (it is normally three-fourths to a mile by then). Spring arrivals were correspondingly very late (v.i. Robin, Red-winged Blackbird) and March hawk tallies at Derby Hill were low in numbers and variety. A push of waterfowl, primarily Canada Geese, Scaup, Ring-necked Duck, and Common Goldeneye, occurred on March 18-19 and the next week saw an influx of many early landbird migrants. However, severe freezing cold returned March 29-31 and the recently thawed marshes sealed over again, forcing hundreds of birds, notably Rusty Blackbirds and Common Snipe, to snow-rimmed pasture creeks and sewage plant outlets.