

## BIRDWATCHING AROUND SARANAC LAKE

GORDON M. MEADE

For birdwatchers the Saranac Lake region provides much that differs from their usual downstate and out-of-state birding fare. Many species which elsewhere are seen only as fleeting spring migrants or obscurely plumaged fall transients here can be observed in brilliant breeding plumage and full song on their breeding grounds. At least 19 species of wood warblers are regular breeders in the area. There are species that are found only locally or uncommonly in other parts of the state which here are summer or permanent residents—Ring-necked Duck, Broad-winged Hawk, Goshawk, Ruffed Grouse, Barred Owl, Pileated Woodpecker are some such. For the birder who “has seen everything” at home there is opportunity to add species to his Life List which do not breed elsewhere in the state—Spruce Grouse, Black-backed and Northern Three-toed Woodpeckers (the latter is now very scarce), Yellow-bellied Flycatcher, Gray Jay, Boreal Chickadee, Red Crossbill and Lincoln’s Sparrow.

Birding is best from mid-May to mid-July when the singing and breeding period is at its peak. By early August most birds have stopped, or greatly reduced their singing; and many have already begun to move south. Winter birding is only for hardy lovers of winter willing to brave the cold to find the 25-30 winter resident species.

The varied terrain with open fields and farmland, meadows, ponds and lakes, each provides its own particular species. If you want to bird, just take off in any direction, find the lesser roads, stop where you will and you’ll soon find birds. For specific locality suggestions here are a few.

*Chubb River Swamp*—A moist spruce-tamarack-cedar swamp area where warblers, Boreal Chickadee, Yellow-bellied Flycatchers, and Three-toed Woodpeckers can be found. Wear waterproof footgear. In Lake Placid village go south on Main St. past the Olympic Arena to stoplight at junction of Route 86 and 73. Turn right on 73. At 0.2 mile turn right onto Averyville Road. Keep straight on for 2.0 miles to bridge over the Chubb River. Park car on left of the near side of the bridge. The trail takes off from the parking lot and goes along the river into the swamp.

*River Road*—A paved road but good birding. Stop frequently to listen, look and explore paths and openings leading to the river which parallels the road. Go south in Lake Placid village on Main Street to stoplight at junction of Routes 86 and 73. Proceed straight ahead on 86 for 3.4 miles to bridge over the river. Just across the bridge turn right on River Road (may be unmarked). Follow this road until eventually it joins Route 73 opposite the Olympic Ski Jump.

*Paul Smith's to Madawaska* — This area offers some of the best and most varied birding territory, where one can find Spruce Grouse, Gray Jays, Boreal Chickadees, Lincoln's Sparrows (in the bogs), etc. Go to junction of Routes 30 and 192 at Paul Smith's. Turn left onto Otisville-Keese's Mills Road. From here on bird as you go along. After 6.5 miles turn right at Rockefeller estate gate house. For the next several miles birding is good all the way. At 6.0 miles there is a woods road to the right. Park and walk in to a large shallow pond (about 1½ miles). Along this road is best place for Spruce Grouse.

*27 Mill Valley Road, Pittsford, N.Y. 14534*

## NEW YORK STATE WATERFOWL COUNT, JANUARY 1973

DAVID B. PEAKALL

The annual waterfowl census was held 13th — 21st January with most observations being made on the target data of the 14th January. An aerial count was made by the New York Conservation Department at the same time. In general the ground count produced the larger counts with the exception of the important Brant population off Long Island. It is hoped that an article on recent populations changes revealed by the waterfowl census will appear shortly.

I would like to thank all persons that took part in the census. The regional leaders were:

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|-------------------------|------------------------|
| (1) Mr. Harold Mitchell | (6) Mr. Robert Walker  |
| (2) Mr. Walt Listman    | (7) none               |
| (3) Dr. James Tate      | (8) Mr. Guy Bartlett   |
| (4) Mr. Les Bemont      | (9) Mr. Edward Treacy  |
| (5) Dr. Fritz Scheider  | (10) Mr. Steve Dempsey |