

REGION 2 — GENESEE

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After three seasons of 100-plus inches of snow, Rochester finally experienced what could almost be called a normal winter. Snowfall for the period totaled only 45.1 inches. The warm days with rain that we had throughout the period rapidly dispersed most of this, leaving us only a few days with snow cover on the ground.

We had only four days when the temperature dropped below zero. Three of these were in February when the temperature averaged 2 degrees below normal. December and January averaged 3.5 degrees above normal and March climbed to 10 degrees above normal.

With the exception of February, local ponds and Irondequoit Bay remained at least partially open throughout the period. This in no way seemed to help wintering ducks which remained low in numbers.

The two Christmas bird counts held in the Rochester area produced a total of 26,668 individuals of 92 species. The total count was down considerably from the previous year. We can probably attribute this to lower numbers of Crows and Starlings and a wider dispersal of the wintering birds due to the openness of the winter.

Rarities Include: Yellow-crowned Night Heron, Common Eider, Golden Eagle, Bald Eagle, Peregrine Falcon, Red Phalarope, Little Gull, Common Raven, Boreal Chickadee, Bohemian Waxwing, Baltimore Oriole, Rose-breasted Grosbeak.

ABBREVIATIONS: BB—Braddocks Bay; DEP—Durand Eastman Park; HBSP—Hamlin Beach State Park; IROND—Irondequoit; IB—Irondequoit Bay; LLCC—Little Lakes Christmas Count; MB—Manitou Beach; MP—Mendon Ponds; OB—Oklahoma Beach; PB—Point Breeze; RCC—Rochester Christmas Count; WEB—Webster; WLS—West Lake Shore.

OBSERVERS: JC—Jerry Czech; GD—Gertrude Davis; RD—Robert Dobson; J&AF—John & Arleen Foster; GOS—Genesee Ornithological Society; AK—Allen Kemnitzer; WL—Walter Listman; WL—Warren Lloyd; J&TM—Joseph and Thelma McNett; LM—Laura Moon; NM—Neil Moon; RO—Richard O'Hara; GP—Glen Perrigo; MAS—Mary Ann Sunderlin; MT—Michael Tetlow; TT—Thomas Tetlow; D&EV—David & Edna Vollmer; MOB—Many observers.

LOONS—DUCKS: High water and the riley condition of the lake shore waters due to continuous heavy runoff throughout the period may possibly be the reason for the low numbers of wintering ducks.

Most dabblers were reported in fair numbers by the end of March, with the exception of Pintail and American Widgeon which apparently bypassed us on their journey north.

Common Loon was reported up until mid-January and then absent for the rest of the period. Our only report of Red-throated Loon was from Point Breeze on January 14 (WL). The mild winter kept only two Great Blue Herons in our area, neither in the Genesee River, their normal wintering grounds—both were inland reports. Immature *YELLOW-CROWNED NIGHT HERON*: first winter report, seen in Genesee River Gorge December 17 (TT&MT)—this bird was observed at distances varying from 20 feet to 100 yards for approximately one hour—its plumage was later compared with museum specimens. Whistling Swans: only one report of 21 birds seen in WEB March 15 (WLL-MAS). Blue-winged Teal: 4 March 4 Kendall (RD)—an early date for our region. Wood Duck: although this bird was missed on both RCC & LLCC, it apparently spent at least part of the winter with us in above normal numbers with a total of five birds being reported—1 Dec 22 Round

Pond (M Carlson & J. Borek), 3 Jan 14 Conesus Lake (R&J Ambrose & J Robertson), 1 Jan 28 Penfield (JC). Ring-necked Duck: 1 Dec 22 Round Pond (M Carlson & J Borek). Greater Scaup: a good indication of the scarcity of wintering ducks is reflected in the counts of this bird—total count for both the RCC & LLCC was only 544—the RCC produced only 306—of all the reports received during the period, only one exceeded 300—400 Feb 2 Rochester to HBSP (J Connor). Common Goldeneye: max 610 RCC. Oldsquaw: max 3800 Dec 11 OB (AK). *COMMON EIDER*: a single bird at Mantiou Beach Dec 14 (WL). White-winged Scoter: 700 Dec 11 OB (AK). Surf Scoter was unreported during period and the RCC produced our only Common Scoter. Hooded Merganser: 22 Dec 3 (TT&MT), one of our best counts in recent years.

HAWKS—OWLS: our first Turkey Vulture arrived Mar 7 WEB (JC). Goshawks were reported from several locations throughout the period indicating above usual numbers of this sometimes rare bird; there were several reports of 1-3 migrating birds during March climaxing with record counts on March 28-29, 15 WEB (JC); 25 BB (GP), respectively. Sharp-shinned Hawk: present throughout period—first notable flight, 20 Mar 15 HBSP (J&TM); 28 Mar 29 BB (LM et al). Coopers Hawk: also reported throughout period in small numbers—migrant birds were reported almost daily during March with counts never exceeding four birds. Redtailed Hawk: in good numbers throughout period—the flight of Mar 29 produced 90 of these birds—because of altitude and light conditions, 366 buteos were unidentified in this flight BB (LM et al) Red-shouldered Hawk: 2 Dec 31 (LLCC); 70 Mar 15 HBSP (J&TM); 28 Mar 29 BB (LM et al). Rough-legged Hawk: this bird was very low in numbers, extensive coverage did produce 5 birds Dec 31 (LCC); 35 Mar 15 HBSP (J&TM). *GOLDEN EAGLE*: 2 imm Mar 29 BB (LM et al). *BALD EAGLE*: 1 Dec 31 (LLCC); 1 imm Mar 28 WEB (JC); 1 adult Mar 28 BB (LM et al); 1 imm Mar 29 BB (LM et al). Marsh Hawk: reports of 1-2 birds were common throughout the period from areas west of Rochester along the lake shore; 22 Mar 29 BB (Julie Claffey). *PEREGRINE FALCON*: 1 Mar 28 WEB (JC); 1 Mar 28 WEB (WLI); 1 Mar 29 WEB (WLI). Pigeon Hawk: 1 Dec 31 (LLCC); 2 Mar 29 WEB (JC). Sparrow Hawk: good numbers reported throughout period. Virginia Rail: 1 Dec 17 (RCC). American Woodcock: 3 Mar 7 WEB (JC); 3 Mar 8 Palmyra (W Hartranft)—these were new early dates for our region and the bird remained common thereafter. Killdeer: 4 Feb 18 Lima (J&AF)—this was the only report for the period. Common Snipe: 1 Dec 24-31 Pittsford (GP); 1 Feb 13 WEB (D Spier). Greater Yellowlegs: 1 Mar 16 HBSP (GP)—this was our only shorebird report through the end of the period except for the birds listed above. *RED PHALAROPE*: 1 Dec 3 Charlotte (MT&TT). Only two reports of white-winged Gulls—both Iceland Gulls; 1 Jan 7 IB (D&E V); 1 Feb 21 IB (RO&AK). *LITTLE GULL*: 3 reports all from IB—I Dec 3 (WLL&MAS); 1 Dec 29 (M Carlson&RO); 2 Jan 7 (D&E). Snowy Owl: only one known to have wintered in our area, seen in Kendall by several observers; another bird bearing a red plastic patch on its right wing made an appearance in late Feb and was seen by many between HBSP and BB. Long-eared Owl: two reports for period—1 Mar 16 Riverside Cemetary (NM); 1 Mar 25 HBSP (NM&GOS). Short-eared Owl: 4 reports—max 12 Mar 11 Avon (J&AF). Saw-whet Owl: 1 report Mar 26 and 27 Irond (NM).

GOATSUCKERS—STARLINGS: all woodpeckers were reported in good numbers throughout the period. Red-bellied especially seems to be increasing in numbers. *COMMON RAVEN*: 1 Mar 16 WEB (WLI)—this is the third report for the region—it was seen flying at close range and in close proximity to crows—all field marks were noted with the exception of voice. *BOREAL CHICKADEE*: several reports of 2-4 birds all from HBSP Jan 21 thru Mar 16 (WL et al). Tufted

Titmouse: this bird is still on the increase in our area—a total of 65 were reported on the local Christmas counts, 58 on the RCC and 7 on the LLCC—previous highs were 52 and 5, respectively. Carolina Wren: 2 Dec 26–Jan 31 Rochester (F Meyers); 1 all Jan Avon (J Haller). Mockingbird: the population of this bird seems to remain steady and is mainly concentrated on the lake shore east of the Genesee River—there were 9 birds seen Dec 17 on the RCC. Brown Thrasher: 1 Dec 5 Brighton (E Lank); 1 Dec 17–31 WEB (R Happ fide B Kemnitzer); 1 Feb 24 Irondequoit (GOS). Hermit Thrush: 1 Feb 24 DEP (GOS). *BOHEMIAN WAXWING*: 1 Dec 3 DEP (MT&TT); 5 Jan 14 HBSP J&AF); 1 Jan 14 DEP (G Meade & J Taylor); 5 Jan 21 HBSP (R Spahn); 7 Mar 3 HBSP (TT). Northern Shrike: reported throughout period both inland and along the lake shore—max 5 Jan 14 WLS (WL); single birds were still being reported from the lake shore at the end of March.

VIREOS—WARBLERS: Myrtle Warbler: 5 Jan 27 Mendon Ponds (MT&TT)—this was the only report during the period.

BLACKBIRDS—SPARROWS: Red-winged Blackbird: reported throughout period in small numbers. *BALTIMORE ORIOLE*: female Dec 17 Irondequoit (NM et al); adult male Dec 18 Greece (WL). Cardinal: seems to be still on the increase in our area—a new high was reached on RCC Dec 17 when 415 birds were reported—previous high was 313. *ROSE-BREASTED GROSBEAK*: sub-adult male 1 Jan 27–Mar 31 Irondequoit (D Walker fide NM, MAS, G Leubner)—this is our first winter record for the species. Evening Grosbeak: several reports of from 1–30 birds throughout most of period—max 341 Dec 17 RCC. Purple Finch: reported throughout period—max 160 Mar 10 Palmyra (W Hartranft)—this is a very high count for the area, but almost a duplicate of a large group that was seen in April '72 at Dansville; also of interest is a group of up to 10 that spent most of the winter at a feeder in Penfield (GD). Pine Grosbeak: missing only in the last two weeks of March, probably our commonest finch in mid Jan—max 64 Jan 14 East Lakeshore (WLI et al); 50 Jan 20 MP (J&J Connor); several reports of smaller groups. Common Redpoll: 1 Dec 17 Irondequoit (NM); 1 Jan 23–25 Penfield (GD); 1 Feb 7 and 11 Penfield (GD); this was the least common wintering finch. Pine Siskin: max 350 Dec 3 WLS (MT&TT); 40 Dec 17 DEP (NM et al); abundant only in the first weeks of Dec, several sightings of smaller groups throughout period. Red Crossbill: 3–12 Mar 3–25 HBSP (MOB); 1 Mar 23 Riverside Cemetery (NW). White-winged Crossbill: 6 Dec 31 LLCC. Rufous-sided Towhee: Reported throughout period—at least 10 individuals spent the winter in our area. Tree Sparrows: low in numbers. Field Sparrows: up to 5 birds were reported from a feeding station in Lima Feb 1–Mar 31 (J&AF). Lapland Longspur: very scarce throughout the period—max 7 Feb 11 Carlton (GOS)—our only reports came from the Kendall area where they were always seen in the company of a large flock of Snow Buntings. Snow Bunting: our only report during the period was of a group of up to 500 birds seen in the Carlton area (GOS)—these birds stayed throughout the period.

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