

Sparrow: 1 TCC. Song Sparrow: 12 BCC; 5 TCC; several Jan reports; migrants from Feb 24, regular from Mar 6 and abundant from Mar 16. Lapland Longspur: 2 Jan 22 near Montrose, in nearby Penna., (CG, AC). Snow Bunting: Dec 28 Union Center, near Endicott (CG, AC); a flock of 1000 or more Jan 24, Sherburne (CB) was much the best count of 6 Jan and Feb reports.

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REGION 5 — ONEIDA LAKE BASIN

Winter weather (and months) seemed interminable, albeit mild with only moderate snowfall fortunately coupled with sufficient warm periods to prevent massive snow accumulations. By mid March the snowfall was twenty inches shy of normal; however, when spring should have come, winter returned and by the end of March, snowfall was fifteen inches in excess of the average 108 inches (Syracuse) and the migration, well advanced by March 15, had halted completely. March waterfowl numbers were uniformly low and the hawk migration at Derby Hill had less than 1200 birds for the season to date similar large Icterids tallies did not appear until after March 31.

Winter positives included 1) a few half-hardy species of waterfowl attempting to winter; 2) above average (for recent years) numbers of Accipiters; 3) excellent numbers of Red-tailed Hawks 4) large numbers of wintering Ring-billed Gulls; 5) a moderate flight of white-winged gulls; 6) increased numbers of wintering Mourning Doves; 7) increasing reports of Carolina Wren; 8) above average numbers of wintering American Robin and Golden-crowned Kinglet; 9) a very good Northern Shrike incursion; and 10) a few finches, more notable for variety than for numbers.

Negatives included 1) a paucity of virtually all wintering waterfowl with even a drop in the local welfare-state Mallards; 2) a very poor Rough-legged Hawk and Snowy Owl flight; 3) continued decline in Ring-necked Pheasant and, to a lesser extent, in Ruffed Grouse; 4) a frank scarcity of small landbirds, particularly Black-capped Chickadee, White-breasted and Red-breasted Nuthatches, and Brown Creeper, in the local woodlands; 5) no wintering warblers despite the mild weather; 6) a winter-long absence of Purple Finch; 7) reduced numbers of wintering sparrows and Snow Buntings.

Rare birdst for the season were few but included Barrow's Golden-eye at Little Sodus, Harlequin Duck at Lakeview, and Hawk Owl at Vernon.

Abbreviations: FH—Fair Haven; LOL—Lake Ontario littoral; LSB—Little Sodus Bay; NPT—Northern Pompey Township; SSSP—Selkirk Shores State Park; Syr—Syracuse; Syr CBC—Syracuse Christmas Bird Count Dec 15; Skan CBC—Skaneateles Christmas Bird Count Dec 16; WFC—NYS Federation Waterfowl Census.

Observers: DWC—D.W. Crumb; PAD—P. A. DeBenedictis; GM—G. Maxwell; JWP—J. W. Propst; MSR—M. S. Rusk; FGS—F. G. Scheider; GAS—G. A. Smith; CGS—C. G. Spies; CW—C. Wernick.

LOONS—DUCKS: Common Loon: 1-2 Dec 23 to Feb 6 Oswego only reports (GM, CW) Horned Grebe: Dec max 23 Dec 2 LOL with winter max 14 WFC Jan 19. Great Blue Heron: singles only in hill country creek valleys and sewage outflows thru winter; first migrant Mar 28 Wampsville B&S Peebles). American Bittern; emaciated bird found Jan. 1 near Westvale (Mrs. Herrold); treated at local zoo.

Whistling Swan: 1-4/day Mar 10-30 Oneida L and SSSP (PAD, GAS), only a few but better than nothing. Canada Goose: spring arr Feb 20, 14, E. Syracuse (A & B Brosseau); max 9000 SRF Mar 31, probably mainly Montezuma NWR spillover. Brant: 2 imm present to Dec 15 (very late) Onondaga L.

Mallard: WFC total 1666 (mainly from waterfowl feeding areas—Syr, Brewerton,

Baldwinsville), down 600 from last year. Black Duck: up slightly—WFC 357 and in somewhat better numbers in late Mar. Single Pintail, Green-winged Teal, Northern Shoveler, American Wigeon, and Wood Duck attempted to winter; only the Pintail survived. Mar max for Pintail only 55 Mar 9 SRF and for American Wigeon 70 Mar 30 Oneida L and LSB (both very low). Redhead: only 11 on WFC (very low) and equally scarce were Canvasback with only 4 wintering over. Greater Scaup: up slightly with best numbers 3903 on WFC; however, Lesser Scaup were very scarce with only 1-3/day thru the period. (normally Gr: Lesser Scaup ratio 100:1). Common Golden-eye: 676 on WFC quite low: Mar max 289 Mar 2 LSB and Oneida L. *BARROW'S GOLDEN-EYE*: adult male Mar 9 LSB (FGS). Oldsquaw frankly a crash species this winter—max 55 Jan 26 east of Oswego with most counts a pitiful 6 to 20/day, even from L Ontario. *HARLEQUIN DUCK*: 1 Dec 2 Lakeview (PAD, MSR, FGS) is only report. *KING EIDER*: winter max 4 Oswego Harbor thru Jan and Feb with last report there Mar 2. White-winged Scoter: only 2 on WFC; winter max 26 Mar 2 FH and Oswego, incredibly low throughout the winter.

Hooded Merganser: Dec max 236 Dec 1 south shore Oneida L; only 2 on WFC. Common Merganser: like Oldsquaw, a disaster species thru this winter—max only 400 Feb 3 Oswego Harbor (they used to be there in the thousands) and only 3 Skaneateles L Jan 12 (MSR).

HAWKS—OWLS: Goshawk: 16 individuals from 17 observers with 15 Sharp-shinned Hawks and 12 Cooper's Hawks from the same 17; definitely an increase in wintering Sharp-shinned Hawks, particularly surprising in view of the paucity of small landbirds, their normal prey. Red-tailed Hawk: the wintering raptor with counts of 6 to 22/day plus such numbers as 15 Oriskany area Feb 8 (M. Stooks), 32 Clay Jan 16 (GAS), and 81 on the Syr CBC Dec 15. Red-shouldered Hawk: 2 singles Dec Fulton (FL) and Jan 25 Oneida (R & J Van Scoy); arr date Mar 2 near Marcy (A Steinbacher), early. Rough-legged Hawk: 1-3/day thru period with max 5 near Brewerton Jan 12 (PAD) and none in the southern sections of Onondaga Co; many observers saw none for the entire winter and the south shore of Oneida L, though rich with microtines, had almost no Rough-legged Hawks (but lots of Red-tails). Harrier: total of 4 wintering birds (low). American Kestrel: fall numbers into winter with 1-14/day and numbers persistent thru Feb.

Ruffed Grouse: max only 5 Jan 9 Eaton (G Church); most counts only 1-2/day and many observers didn't see any all winter. Ring-necked Pheasant: terrible—incredibly scarce with max only 6-7/day and most reports showing either none or 1-2, and those often at backyard feeders.

Wintering shorebirds include 5 Killdeer at DeWitt and 6 Common Snipe at Fayetteville. Pectoral Sandpiper: arr Mar 23 2 S Onondaga (JWP) is a record arr date; present there to end of period but unreported elsewhere.

Glaucous and Iceland Gulls: winter max 12 Glaucous and 10 Iceland Jan 6 Oswego River and Harbor area; away from the Syr dumps and the Oswego River axis, undetected. Great Black-backed Gull: max 150 Jan 13 Fulton and Oswego (PAD, CGS). Huge numbers of Ring-billed Gulls wintered at Oswego Harbor with max 7000 Jan 6 and still 4000 there Jan 27 compared to 3000 and 1100 Herring Gulls on those dates respectively.

Mourning Dove: definitely increasing as a wintering bird with 198 Syr CBC Dec 15; 300 Jan 4 Tully Farms Rd near Tully (JWP); 150 Vernon Jan 3; some drop in numbers with the severe weather of early Feb. Great Horned Owl: max 10 Eaton (G Church); many reports of 1-2 thru the winter. Snowy Owl: 3 singles for entire winter and none from the LOL—definitely not a flight winter. Hawk Owl: single bird (but extraordinarily cooperative) at Vernon Dec 15 to Mar 3 (M. Stooks, mob); seen by hundreds of observers and photographed ad infinitum—the one bit of strigiforme spice to a lackluster winter.

GOATSUCKERS—STARLING: Belted Kingfisher: max 8 Syr CBC Dec 15; 1-5/day thru remainder of winter; definitely helped by the mild winter. Common Flicker: max 10 Syr CBC Dec 15; 5 on Skaneateles CBC Dec 16 lesser numbers thru Jan with a marked drop in early Feb. Red-bellied Woodpecker: spreading thru the floodplain woodlots of the south shore of Oneida Lake (Maple Bay, Shackleton Point, Short Point Bay); also 2 Halfway Swamp near Elbridge Dec 16 and up to 4 west of Oswego (CW). 3 Red-headed Woodpecker (DWC, T. Riley, Timmerman) and 2 Yellow-bellied Sapsucker (Mrs. C Maxwell, S. Sage) reported for the winter—usually only 1/winter. Hairy: Downy Woodpecker ratios this winter are 15 to 45 Oswego CBC; 20 to 70 Syr CBC; 13 to 42 Skaneateles CBC, a slight shift from the usual one to two ratio.

Horned Lark: terrible spring flight—most counts only 6–20/day and the high count was only 50 (very low) Feb 1 (M Stooks). Blue Jay: rather scarce afield with max for both Syr and Skan CBC below 100; only Oswego-Fulton CBC up with 202 Dec 23. Tufted Titmouse: 1-3/day at Oneida (Dodges), New Haven (Kidney), and Skaneateles (MSR). Red-breasted Nuthatch: incredibly scarce this winter—total of 7 individuals for entire region for entire winter—actually scarcer than Goshawk. Brown Creeper: present in numbers thru Dec (20 Syr CBC 16 Oswego CBC) but scarce thru remainder of winter (1-2/day). Winter Wren: max 7 Syr CBC Dec 16; 3 wintered thru at Onondaga and at Camillus Valley. Carolina Wren: at least 6 individuals noted, primarily at feeders at Oneida, Fayetteville, DeWitt, Syracuse, and Marietta; 1 at Camillus Valley wintered thru apparently without feeder help. Gray Catbird: 1 wintering Onondaga Indian Reservation Feb 24 (PAD, FGS).

Robin: the wintering bird—flocks of 50–150/day in sheltered valleys south of Syracuse with max 200 Jan 21 Onondaga Valley (FGS, PAD). Hermit Thrush: single wintered to Jan at Jamesville (A. Harmon). Golden-crowned Kinglet: slightly increased wintering numbers—24 Syr CBC, 29 Skan CBC. Cedar Waxwing: large flocks thru winter (165–180/day) but, as is typical with waxwings, highly erratic (JWP, M Stooks, PAD).

Northern Shrike: totals (from 17 observers) by month are Dec 31, Jan 19, Feb 24, Mar 13 (no significant return flight); max 6 Dec 2 LOL and 8 Syr CBC Dec 15—a very good flight. Loggerhead Shrike: 1 Feb 28 Derby Hill (DWC) is a record arr date.

VIREOS—WARBLERS: None for the period.

BLACKBIRDS—SPARROWS: Eastern Meadowlark: 1-2/day thru winter, actually rather scarce considering how open the winter was. Red-winged Blackbird: a few wintered; spring arr date Feb 22 four Tully (JWP); 10,000/day thru the last ten days of Mar. Rusty Blackbird: 5 individuals wintered, primarily at creek and canal margins at the base of the Onondaga Escarpment. Common Grackle: Mar 11,300 Mar 31 near Conquest. Brown-headed Cowbird: 2-35/day (less than usual) with most from feeders and dump margins.

Cardinal: definitely increasing—22 Feb 7 Pompey (DWC), 16 Oriskany Feb 1 (M Stooks), 12 near Oswego Dec 22 (CW); 30 Feb 24 Nedrow and S Onondaga indicates how common this species has become in the southern valleys. Evening Grosbeak: Dec and Jan counts 20-60/day but numbers lower in Feb and rather scarce thru Mar except at select feeders. Purple Finch: dep date Dec 8 eight Trenton (Van Dresar); none for rest of winter with no returning birds reported in Mar. Common Redpoll: modest numbers thru winter; flocks of 6-35/day with max 200 Feb 8 N Pompey (DWC); migrants in small numbers (15-30/day) passing DH in late Mar. Pine Siskin: small flocks (five-3\$/day) thru winter. Red Crossbill: 1 Jan 19 NPT (DWC) and 2 DeWitt Feb 17 (MSR) only reports—very scarce. White-winged Crossbill: small flocks (2-15/day) after mid-Jan, primarily from

Niger thistle, feeders in the hill country south of Syr and Utica; none reported after Mar 8.

Rufous-sided Towhee: 6 individuals, mainly feeder based, in period—a bit more than usual. Dark-eyed Junco: reduced numbers thru winter—55 Skaneateles CBC, 55 Syr CBC, 24 Oswego-Fulton CBC; no return flight in late Mar detected. Tree Sparrow: high counts thru Dec and into Jan (100+/day) but sharp drop in Feb (15-20/day); small numbers (40-75/day) in last third of Mar but no major return push noted. White-throated Sparrow: 19 Skaneateles CBC and 30 (high) Syr CBC; lesser numbers (one-12/day) thru the rest of winter. Fox Sparrow: 1 Jan 16 Lakeview Rd near Oswego (GM) only winter report; arr Mar 17 one Cedarville (R & J Van Scoy) with max 4 (low) Mar 24 Oneida (fide D Ackley). Song Sparrow: 34 Skaneateles CBC and 64 Syr CBC; good numbers thru winter with max 25 Jan 13 Cedarville area (R & J Van Scoy) and 22 Feb 24 S Onondaga; arr Mar 5 3 Syr (T Dittrich); Mar max 120 Mar 26 Tully area (JWP). Snow Bunting: flocks of 45-700/day, mainly from the three widely separated but ecologically similar areas—the farmed hill country south of Syr, and open fields along L Ontario, and the open farmland between Oneida and Utica.

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REGION 6 — ST. LAWRENCE

LEE B. CHAMBERLAINE

Winter of 1973-74 was one of the mildest experienced in many years. Snow fall was very light with Tug Hill depths seldom exceeding 30 inches on the ground as compared to normal depths of 60 to 70 inches on the level. Warm weather was with us into December and open water conditions resulted in an excellent Christmas Census for Watertown with a total of 53 species.

A new species Carolina Wren was added to the regional list and some other note worthy observations for the period include many late dates for waterbirds and waterfowl, good Goshawk numbers, Glaucous and Iceland Gulls, Black-legged Kittiwakes, Hawk Owls, Short Eared Owls, Saw-whet Owls, a late Brown Thrasher, Varied Thrush, Bohemian Waxwing and good numbers of winter finches to make the winter such as it was pass quickly.

Location Abbreviations: DH—Dry Hill; JCC—Jefferson County Community College; PRWMA—Perch River Wildlife Management Area; PP—Point Peninsula; RM—Robert Moses Power Dam; WHMWA—Wilson Hill Wildlife Management Area; CC—Christmas Count Watertown, New York December 15, 1973.

Observers: JB—John Belknap; RB—Richard Brouse; TC—Tom Carrolan; LC—Lee Chamberlaine; FC—Frank Clinch; NL—Nick Leone; JV—Joe VanRiet; RW—Robert and June Walker; mob—many observers.

LOONS—DUCKS: Common Loon: 1 Dec 1 PP (RW). Horned Grebe: last Dec 7 Sherwins Bay. Great Blue Heron: 1 Dec 26 St. Lawrence River (JV). American Bittern: 1 Dec 1 PP (RW) a late date. Canada Goose: 350 CC; 52 Dec 28 last date; 55 March 2 DH (TC). Mallard: around in greater numbers this winter. Black Duck: 193 CC; around in greater numbers this winter. Mallard X Black Hybrid: 1 RM (JV). Gadwall: 2 Dec 29 RM (NL); 1 Jan 1 PP (NL); 6 Jan 5 very late (JV). Pintail: 1 Jan 25 (JV) last date; 3 Mar 6 first date (JV). Blue-winged Teal: 1 female CC (NL); 1 Dec 26-29 seen flying (JV) *very late*. American Wigeon: 1 Feb 12 (RW) early; 6 Mar 10 PRWMA (NL). Northern Shoveler: 8 Dec 15 (JV) *very late*. Wood Duck: 1 CC; 1 Mar 4 first date. Ring-necked Duck: 2 Dec 15 RM (JV); 3 Mar 10 PRWMA. Canvasback: 2 Jan 1 PP (TC); 1 Mar 25 (JV). Greater Scaup: 3000 est Dec 7 Black River Bay (JB);