

tion, 443 (DC). A max. 30 HOUSE FINCHES appeared at Eggertsville Jan. 1-Feb. 1 (Krists, DF); and up to 8 spent Feb. at Cheektowaga (PSc,RSc).

A HOARY REDPOLL was carefully identified at Alfred Feb. 26 (EB). Com. Redpolls numbered 150 on the RCC (none last year) and were reported from 26 areas. (What a flight!)

A Rufous-sided Towhee appeared for the Allegany Co. Christmas Census, outside the Scio Audubon Circle Jan. 3; others noted were 2 at Alfred Dec. 2-9, Jan. 24 (Cushing, Eisenhardt *fide* EB), and one in Cattaraugus Co. Dec. 13 (JF,MFr). An incredibly late Savannah Sparrow was found at Batavia Dec. 30 (Salways, Mason). Notable counts of other sparrows on the RCC were: Field, 7 (16 last year); White-crowned, 11 (low); White-throated, 245 (low); Swamp, 26 (13 last year); Song: 183 (144 last year). A Fox Sparrow, on the Allegany Co. Christmas Census, outside the Scio Audubon Circle, Jan. 3, was very late, as was the one in Olean, Dec. 18 (Woodard+) and another in Lake View, Jan. 30(!) (TB). The only reports of Lapland Longspurs were from the L. Ontario plains: 100 at Yates and 50 at Somerset Jan. 12 (WK,HK). Snow Buntings numbered 1908 on the RCC (3023 last year); max. individual count for the Southern Tier was 350 in Amity Jan. 11 (RP,VP); max. report for the northern counties was 2000(!) at Youngstown Jan. 12 (HK,WK).

Amity Lake, Belmont, New York 14813

REGION 2 – GENESEE

RICHARD T. O'HARA

In some respects this has been a contradictory winter. Early December was open and mild followed by almost two months of steady cold. Snowfall has been rather light, about 67 inches (1.7 m) but there was no real thaw until about Feb. 20 and the ground was continually snow-covered. Most water was ice-covered from early January until late February. January temperatures averaged a few degrees below normal but February was warmer than average. Only a few days had below 0° F (-17.7° C) readings. A long spell of remarkably mild weather set in about Feb. 22 and all snow and most ice was gone within a week. Record high temperatures, around 60° F (15.5° C) were reached on at least two dates in late February.

As might be expected this mild spell started a very early movement of the first spring migrants. Thousands of Canada Geese arrived by Feb. 24 and 25 together with many Whistling Swans, several species of ducks, blackbirds, robins and a few others.

The mild weather of late fall kept many species here to be noted on Christmas census counts and beyond. These, added to a good flight of several erratic winter visitors, resulted in high numbers of total species on both counts.

Rarities: American Bittern, Harlequin Duck, King Eider, Osprey, Virginia Rail, Common Gallinule, Ruby-crowned Kinglet, Northern Oriole, Dickcissel. Also the western races of both the Dark-eyed Junco and Rufous-sided Towhee.

Abbreviations: BB—Braddock Bay, Can L.—Canandaigua Lake, CL—Conesus Lake, HP—Hamlin Park, HL—Hemlock Lake, IB—Irondequoit Bay, LO—Lake Ontario, MP—Mendon Ponds, SC—Salmon Creek, SB—Sodus Bay, WP—Webster Park, WL—west lakeshore.

Observers: Ron & Kay Ballard, Bill Carlson, Michael Carlson, Julie Claffey, Robert Coffee, Jerry Czech, Robert Dobson, Joan Esley, June Feder, John & Arlene Foster, Genesee Ornithological Society, Genesee West Audubon Society, William Gordon, Evelyn Hamilton, William Hartranft, Norman Henderson, Allen Kemnitzer, Jim & Walter C. List-

man, Warren Lloyd, Haywood Madden, mob—many observers, Richard O'Hara, Chip Perrigo, Frank & Gerry Phelps, Al Shay & Marianne McAdam, Jeanne Shelby, Robert & Sue Spahn, Leo Tanghe, Steve Taylor, Mike & Tom Tetlow, Robert Thoman.

LOONS—DUCKS: A single Red-throated Loon was on IB on Jan. 3 (R&KB). Red-necked Grebes were noted twice in Dec. as were Double-crested Cormorants (late). Five Great Blue Herons on Dec. 21 is a good count (M&TT). An **AMERICAN BITTERN** seen at MP Jan. 3 and found dead a few days later is our latest date ever (mob). Whistling Swans stayed late—through Dec. and returned early in good numbers—best count was 180 on Feb. 28 (J&AF). Canada Geese were spectacular after Feb. 21 with 75,000 already on or near WL on the 28th. A few Snow Geese came too—both morphs(CP).

Ducks were better this winter than last but mergansers were still scarce. Greater Scaup, Redhead, Canvasback and Oldsquaw were all up and Ruddy Ducks were especially noteworthy—max. 15 Jan. 13 CL (JC&JS). All common migrant species were reported in late Feb. except both teal and Wood Duck, A **HARLEQUIN DUCK** (imm.) was seen at Russell Station on LO Jan. 10 (J&WCL) and two **KING EIDERS** were noted on BB Dec. 12 (WCL). Scoters were rather scarce.

HAWKS—ALCIDS: In spite of favorable conditions in late Feb. only a few hawks were migrating—accipiters, Red-tails, Marsh and Rough-legged Hawks. At least three Goshawks wintered near Webster (JC) and there were several reported elsewhere. Sharp-shinned and Cooper's Hawks were also noted several times each month. Up to 11 Rough-legged Hawks wintered near HP (WCL *et al.*). A very late **OSPREY** was reported in Hamlin Dec. 30 (EH *et al.*). An adult Bald Eagle was at CL Jan. 13 (JC&JS) while the nesting pair at HL was last seen late in Dec. (RO).

A wintering **VIRGINIA RAIL** at MP seemed healthy on Jan. 31 in spite of much ice and snow (J. Fed). American Coot wintered in large numbers on Can L. and elsewhere. A Ruffed Grouse in Webster Dec. 16-21 is unusual (DW) while another at Sodus and one at MP are more normal locations. A **COMMON GALLINULE** at SC Dec. 13 was late (WCL). A Killdeer on Jan. 18 was wintering (RD<) and migrants had returned by Feb. 26 (MC *et al.*). American Woodcock were back on the same date (R&SS).

Late shorebird records in Dec. included Purple Sandpiper Dec. 21 and 22 at IB (AK&ST). White-rumped Sandpiper Dec. 1-5 at BB (mob) and Red Phalarope Dec. 2-4 BB (NH&WCL).

A few Glaucous and Iceland Gulls were present as usual—max. 4 and 3 respectively. A very high count of 250 Great Black-backed Gulls at IB is noteworthy—Jan. 3 (AS&MM). Gulls were quite scarce for a while in mid-winter but huge flocks had returned by late Feb. A few Bonaparte's Gulls lingered into Jan. and one was seen on Feb. 26 at WP (WL). The last Little Gulls were noted at Rock Beach on Jan. 1, 3 birds (RS *et al.*).

PIGEONS—WOODPECKERS: Mourning Doves—more than ever, flocks of up to 100 or more at feeders everywhere. Both Screech and Great Horned Owls in good numbers—high counts of 14 and 27 respectively. One Barred Owl was noted in Bergen Swamp Feb. 21 (JS *et al.*). A Long-eared Owl was heard at HL Dec. 28 (M&TT). Short-eared Owls were present all winter south and west of Rochester—flocks of six to eight in both areas (mob). A Saw-whet Owl was at SB on Jan. 11 (WH *et al.*). Snowy Owls were entirely absent after Jan. 1, and only a few were seen before that.

A few Belted Kingfishers and many Common Flickers wintered as usual. Pileated Woodpeckers were reported several times each month and Red-bellied Woodpeckers are now too common to be noteworthy in this region. At least three Yellow-bellied Sapsuckers wintered here and the max. count of Red-headed Woodpeckers was five at Genesee on Jan. 25 (A&JF).

FLYCATCHERS—STARLINGS: A count of 616 Horned Larks on Dec. 13 is high (GWAS). A **RUBY-CROWNED KINGLET** stayed all winter at a Pittsford feeder (WG).

Water Pipit were noted last on Dec. 28 and reappeared on Feb. 25 (early). Brown Creepers and Golden-crowned Kinglets were scarce, so were Cedar Waxwings. Carolina Wrens apparently survived the winter well in spite of the long cold spell. A Gray Catbird at MP on Jan. 3 and a Brown Thrasher at HP on Jan. 2 were trying to do the same, and so was a Hermit Thrush seen at MP Jan. 17 (GOS). Am. Robins were not as common as some winters; E. Bluebirds were present in several places including Allens Creek, 1-4 birds Jan. 9-14 (RT). Northern Shrikes were widely distributed but not too common. The first Loggerhead Shrike was seen on Feb. 24 at BB (CP). Hundreds of thousands of Starlings were again roosting in Gates.

VIREOS-WARBLERS: At least 14 Yellow-rumped Warblers were seen Jan. 17 on the Nature trail in HP where they now winter each year (GOS).

WEAVERS-SPARROWS: Eastern Meadowlarks were scarce this winter until the first migrants appeared on Feb. 28. A Northern Oriole appeared at a feeder in Perinton on Dec. 12 and 13 (F&GP). The first migrant Rusty Blackbird was noted on Feb. 26 (WL). Eight thousand Red-winged Blackbirds were seen passing BB on Feb. 21 (CP&AS). These included many females. Grackles and cowbirds were becoming quite widespread by the end of Feb. **DICKCISSELS** were reported from Rush Feb. 18 (BC *et al.*). There were also two in Walworth all Jan. (JE).

Winter finches as follows: Evening Grosbeak—average numbers until early Feb., then dropped off sharply. Purple Finch—not many except for 70 Jan. 23 CL (HM). House Finch—regular in a few places now. Pine Grosbeak—scarce except at HP, apparently gone from there also after early Feb. Common Redpolls—good flight but quite local in distribution; max. 500 Dec. 28 HL (M&TT). Pine Siskin—only a few. American Goldfinch—normal, good numbers throughout. Red Crossbill—scarce, only two reported after Nov. White-winged Crossbill—only one all during Jan., Penfield (L. Brucks).

A Rufous-sided Towhee was seen Jan. 31 MP (J. Fed) and a **SPOTTED TOWHEE** (western race of Rufous-sided Towhee) appeared at a feeder in Chili during Feb. (RC *et al.*). One **OREGON JUNCO** (western race of Dark-eyed Junco) was noted in Kendall Feb. 8-15 (JS). Tree Sparrow numbers were good this year—up to 500 per day. Field and White-throated and White-crowned Sparrows were also present in small numbers, mostly at feeders. A single Fox Sparrow appeared in Webster Jan. 26-31 (R&SS). Lapland Longspurs were scarce until late Jan., then present in small numbers. Snow Bunting—good but quite local, best reported 1700 WL (R&SS).

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REGION 3 — FINGER LAKES

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November's warm fall weather continued to mid-December when the temperature plunged to below normal and the snows came. The December average was about normal. January averaged 7° F (4° C) below normal with a low of -20 (-29° C). Snow accumulated to a ten inch (.254 m) cover. The first ten days of February were the same. Then the temperature shot up, remained high and hit the 60's before the end of the month. At Ithaca it was the warmest February since 1957 averaging 6° F (3° C) above normal.

The "spring" weather of February triggered a migratory movement two weeks early. Canada and Snow Geese and Icterids poured in by the thousands. Lesser numbers of Mallards, Black Ducks, Pintails, American Wigeon and Ring-necked Ducks came. A scattering