

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-WARBLEDERS:** 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

of Killdeer and American Woodcock appeared.

The Boreal Chickadee irruption mentioned in the Fall Season report continued and equaled, if not surpassed, the big invasion of 1961-62. All the winter finches were observed with Evening Grosbeaks the most abundant and both crossbills hard to find. Am. Goldfinches were everywhere.

The New York State Waterfowl Count registered increases. Brubaker reported many more ducks on the south end of Seneca Lake. Jones writes of an extraordinary raft of 50,000 Redheads observed by Jack Weise on Seneca Lake January 28-30. With the small rodent population low and under a heavy snow cover, buteos moved out in January, but returned with the February thaw. The same reasons may explain the increased predation of small birds at feeders by Am. Kestrels.

The recent Carolina Wren build-up seems to have survived the severe weather. There were several reports of wintering Eastern Bluebirds. A Cape May Warbler and an immature Rose-breasted Grosbeak, both at Penn Yan feeders, were noteworthy.

Rarities: Raven, Fish Crow, Boreal Chickadee, Yellow-headed Blackbird.

Abbreviations: Cay—Cayuga; CC—Christmas Count with Cent Cay for Central Cayuga, E for Elmira, G for Geneva, I for Ithaca, M for Montezuma, WG for Watkins Glen; MNWR—Montezuma National Wildlife Refuge; SAD—Seneca Army Depot; Sen—Seneca; WFC—Waterfowl Census.

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LOONS—DUCKS: Common Loon: 6 WFC; 1 Cay L. thru. Red-necked Grebe: 1 WGCC. Horned Grebe: down on all the lakes; 100 WFC. Pied-billed Grebe: CCs; 1 I, 1 WG; 22 WFC. Great Blue Heron: usual few wintered. Black-crowned Night Heron: 2 on open stream Elmira Feb. 21 (Joe DeCanio) and 1 same area Feb. 24 (Ruth Rogers) both *fide* MW, no verifying details. Mute Swan: 1 Mud Lock north end Cay L. all Feb. (RSJ). Whistling Swan: 15 Elmira Feb. 21; 11 Branchport Feb. 25; 9 MNWR Feb. 26. Canada Goose: WFC 7640; 50,000 MNWR Feb. 29. Snow Goose: 6,000 MNWR Feb. 29.

The following duck counts at MNWR were made Feb. 28-29. Mallard: 6998 WFC; 1500 MNWR. Black: 1349 WFC; 1000 MNWR. Gadwall: 125 WFC; 50 MNWR; 3 wintered Branchport. Pintail: 9 WFC; 450 MNWR; 1 wintered Dresden; 10 Elmira Dec. 22. Green-winged Teal: 1 wintered Union Springs and Branchport; 1 Sapsucker Woods Feb. 12-25. Am. Wigeon: 69 WFC; 50 MNWR. Wood Duck: 1 wintered Sapsucker Woods and Elmira. Redhead: see opening remarks; 12,272 WFC; 40 MNWR; 1 Horseheads Feb. 10-20. Ring-necked Duck: 25 WFC; 20 MNWR. Greater Scaup: 1024 WFC. Lesser Scaup: 153 WFC. Com. Goldeneye: 557 WFC; 30 MNWR; 8 Elmira Jan. 18. Bufflehead: 225 WFC; 20 MNWR; 1 Elmira Jan. 18. Oldsquaw: 78 WFC. White-winged Scoter: 1 WFC; 1 Sheldrake Feb. 13; 2 MNWR Feb. 15. Hooded Merganser: 24 WFC. Com. Merganser: 97 WFC; 30 MNWR. Red-breasted Merganser: 27 WFC.

HAWKS—ALCIDS: Goshawk: CC's: 2 G, 1 I, 2 M; singles at Sen Falls, Geneva, SAD, Horseheads, Big Flats. Sharp-shinned Hawk: CC's: 3 G, 1 I, 1 M, 3 WG; MJ reports a concentration along eastern shore of Sen L. after first week of Jan. Cooper's Hawk: CC's: 1 Cent Cay, 3 E, 2 G, 2 I, 3 M, 1 WG; regular SAD thru; 1 Niles Jan. 10. Red-tailed Hawk: at Elmira WH reports groups of 3 moving north on Jan. 12, 17 and 26; MJ saw a dozen moving north SAD Feb. 29. Rough-legged Hawk: down greatly from last year's unusual numbers; few after early Jan. Bald Eagle: adult Penn Yan Feb. 19 (D. Pinckney *fide* ML). Marsh

Hawk: more reports than in recent years; 9 on the CC's; remarkable concentration of 11 in a field on Yerkes Rd. near Romulus Dec. 14 gone by Jan. 1; reported from Ithaca, Clifton Springs, Clyde, Newark, Elmira, Hall (2), MNWR (4). **MERLIN**: 1 Union Springs Jan. 1, 6 and Feb. 9 (Carl Strickland *fide* PD) no verifying details. Am. Kestrel 210 on 6 CC's.

Ruffed Grouse: CC's: 1 E, 3 G, 20 I, 1 M, 4 WG. Turkey: CC's: 2 E, 1 I. Am. Coot: 1634 WFC; up on Keuka L. Killdeer: wintered Phelps (3), Ithaca (3); arr. Myers Point Feb. 22 two weeks early; widespread by Feb. 29. Am. Woodcock: arr. Ithaca Feb. 23 (Cox) 3 weeks early; several late Feb. sightings. Common Snipe: 3 wintered thru Jan. at a spring near Phelps; 2 ECC. **GLAUCOUS GULL**: 1 Union Springs Jan. 3 (Carl Strickland).

**PIGEONS—WOODPECKERS**: Mourning Dove: new highs on CC's totaling 2858 birds. Barn Owl: 1 Fayette Dec. 27 and Jan. 11 (MJ). Screech Owl: CC's: 1 Cent Cay, 6 G, 3 I, 2 M, 4 WG. Great Horned Owl: CC's: 2 Cent Cay, 2 E, 8 G, 15 I, 30 M; 1 Niles Dec. 21. Snowy Owl: very white bird MNWR Jan. 2 (MJ). Short-eared Owl: King Ferry roost abandoned; only occasional birds at Watts Rd. Quarry Sen. Co.; 7 at Jennings farm roost Yerkes Rd. Romulus; 1 Elmira Jan. 2; "several" Penn Yan; 1 Watkins Glen. Belted Kingfisher: usual wintering at favored locations. Com. Flicker: CC's: 10 Cent Cay, 1 E, 24 G, 20 I, 28 M, 5 WG. Pileated Woodpecker: CC's: 4 G, 11 I, 1 M, 3 WG. Red-bellied Woodpecker: CC's: 18 Cent Cay, 1 E, 37 G, 8 I, 16 M, 6 WG. Red-headed Woodpecker: CC's: 1 Cent Cay, 4 G, 1 WG; 1 Interlaken Feb. 9. Yellow-bellied Sapsucker: CC's: 1 Cent Cay, 1 G, 1 I.

**FLYCATCHERS—STARLINGS**: Horned Lark: good numbers including many of the northern sub-species. **RAVEN**: 1 Arnot Forest Jan. 31 heard and reported by Ken Wilson and Betsy Vander and also independently by Doug Basset (*fide* PD); 2 Monterey Feb; 1 Oak Hill near Alpine Feb. 28-29 (Barlow Rhodes *fide* JB). **FISH CROW**: 1 Ithaca Feb. 22 (Ken Rosenberg) and Feb. 25 (Fred Atwood). **CAROLINA CHICKADEE** (hypothetical): identified by call by WH and Prof. Merrill of Elmira College independently of each other at Elmira Dec. 14 (*fide* MW). **BOREAL CHICKADEE**: up to 8 birds reported from 6 locations in the Ithaca area; 7 birds at Elmira feeders; 2 Union Springs. Tufted Titmouse: CC's: 16 Cent Cay, 23 E, 25 G, 29 I, 3 M, 5 WG; 4 Canandaigua; 1 Clyde, "several" Clifton Springs. Red-breasted Nuthatch: CC's: 3 Cent Cay, 5 E, 4 G, 21 I, 2 M, 2 WG; "numerous" Elmira; few other reports.

House Wren: 1 Ithaca Feb. 26 (S. Sabo). Winter Wren: CC's: 1 G, 2 WG; 1 Elmira Feb. 10. Carolina Wren: CC's: 1 Cent Cay, 5 E, 2 G, 8 I, 6 WG. Long-billed Marsh Wren: 1 WGCC. Mockingbird: widespread reports. Gray Catbird: 2 ICC. Brown Thrasher: 1 ICC. Hermit Thrush: CC's: 2 G, 1 I, 1 WG. **VEERY**: 1 GCC well seen by Paris Trail and Cathy Walsh. Verification report on file. Eastern Bluebird: wintering reports from Geneva, Ithaca, MNWR, Watkins Glen, Elmira, Penn Yan, Clyde. Golden-crowned Kinglet: CC's: 3 E, 1 G, 46 I, 8 WG; 2 Niles Jan. 10, down at SAD. Ruby-crowned Kinglet: 5 GCC. Water Pipit: 1 ICC; 1 WGCC. N. Shrike: CC's: 1 Cent Cay, 1 E, 2 G, 7 I, 4 M, 1 WG; 1 Cohocton Jan. 10; 1 Newark; none Penn Yan.

**VIREOS—WARBLERS**: Yellow-rumped Warbler: 1 Big Flats Dec. 6-Jan. 19; 1 Cay L. State Park Dec. 7 Junius Ponds Dec. 27; 1 Milliken Station Rd. Jan. 6; 1 Stewart Park Feb. 24. Cape May Warbler: 1 Penn Yan feeder late Dec.-early Jan. (ML,mob).

**WEAVERS—SPARROWS**: Eastern Meadowlark: amazing 90 on Cent Cay CC; most sightings in Dec. **YELLOW-HEADED BLACKBIRD**: immature Montour Falls WGCC (JB, mob). Rusty Blackbird: CC's: 5 G, 2 WG; arr Ithaca Feb. 7. **ROSE-BREASTED GROSBEAK**: immature Orcutt's feeder Penn Yan Jan. 25-mid-Feb. (ML). Evening Grosbeak: heavy invasion. Purple Finch: scarce except Elmira and Penn Yan. House Finch: CC's: 38 E, 5 G, 52 I; 1 at feeder Penn Yan; 1 Odessa thru; 17 Watkins Glen. Pine Grosbeak: CC's: 2 E, 2 I, 3 WG; Hammond Hill State Forest 25 Dec. 10 and 30 Feb. 27; 36 Turkey Hill early Feb. Com. Redpoll: widespread; 1000 plus flock Penn Yan (ML). Pine Siskin: CC's: 13 Cent Cay, 93 E, 14 G, 119 I, 20 M, 1 WG; more than usual Penn Yan and Elmira. Am. Gold-

finch: numerous. Red Crossbills: 14 GCC; 15 ICC. White-winged Crossbill: 2 WGCC; 2 Ithaca Feb. 2; 2 Six Mile Creek. Rufous-sided Towhee: CC's: 2 Cent Cay, 2 E, 1 I.

Savannah Sparrow: CC's: 2 Cent Cay, 2 G. Dark-eyed Junco: Plentiful. Tree Sparrow: Plentiful. Chipping Sparrow: CC's: 2 Cent Cay, 1 E. Field Sparrow: CC's: 4 Cent Cay, 3 E, 1 G, 7 I, 2 M; 1 Newark late Dec. White-crowned Sparrow: CC's: 2 Cent Cay, 8 I, 2 M. White-throated Sparrow: CC's: 40 Cent Cay, 31 E, 80 G, 108 I, 42 M, 119 WG. Fox Sparrow: 1 Cent Cay CC. Swamp Sparrow: CC's: 2 G, 9 I, 11 WG; 1 Niles Dec. 13; 1 Newark late Dec.; 2 Ithaca Jan. 2. Song Sparrow: CC's: 39 Cent Cay, 16 E, 66 G, 61 I, 70 M, 27 WG. Lapland Longspur: CC's: 2 G, 2 I, 1 M; 2 Elmira Dec. 4; 1 Clifton Springs Jan. 25; 7 King Ferry Jan.; 1 Sheldrake Feb. 1; 35 Penn Yan. Snow Bunting: reported on all CC's and from Loon L. Steuben Co., Clifton Springs, Newark, Slaterville.

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## REGION 4 – SUSQUEHANNA

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In spite of January with its almost month-long spell of severe weather, the winter, on average, was fairly mild. Several daily low temperature records were broken and there were frequent heavy snowfalls in January but December was warmer than normal and February was really mild, sometimes truly balmy. A warm February is still February so the melting of the heavy snow cover, while rapid, was interrupted enough to keep severe flooding to a minimum.

It was not a particularly good winter for raptors, though Red-tailed Hawks and Am. Kestrels were at least up to normal and accipiters seem to increase a little each year. Speaking of accipiters, Goshawks would have been reckoned rarities in this Region 20 years ago but now outnumber Cooper's Hawks and approach Sharp-shins in reports received, although that is at least partly because they are more conspicuous. The three Marsh Hawk reports are encouraging.

One report of an apparently winter-killed Carolina Wren appeared in a Binghamton newspaper during January but two birds were still coming to a feeder in Vestal at the end of the month. A less equivocal estimate of the effect on the species of our first prolonged severe winter weather in three or four years will have to wait until breeding season. There was no evidence of a significant effect on Tufted Titmice or Mockingbirds and a Brown Thrasher made it thru February.

Wintering White-throated Sparrows and Dark-eyed Juncos seemed particularly numerous and Am. Robins above normal, but after early January the only pre-migration Icterids were Brown-headed Cowbirds and they were none too numerous. Of the winter finches only Evening Grosbeaks and Common Redpolls appeared in numbers but all the reasonably possible species were reported.

The warm February temperatures brought a real rush of Canada Geese during the last few days of the month and several exclamations about "the largest flock, ever." Of the small land birds only Red-winged Blackbirds had responded in real numbers by the end of the period but most of the normally early migrants had been reported.

The Bald Eagles at Cannonsville Reservoir can't properly be classed as rarities since they are reported there more years than not, but in this region a Gray Catbird and a Yellow-rumped Warbler in winter and Red-bellied Woodpeckers at any season can be so classified.