

THE 1976 FEDERATION STATEWIDE SPRING MIGRATION SURVEY

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The third annual statewide spring migration survey of the Federation tallied a new high number of 286 species in the state during the period of May 8-23, 1976 (one pelagic trip on June 12th was included). Thirty-two counts by 24 clubs and 7 individual groups (one club did two counts) made statewide coverage a reality with all ten regions included. Three pelagic trips enhanced the survey considerably this year. Well over 600 persons, in groups from two to 139, participated.

Count totals ranged from 85 to 214 species, with the combined total of the Genesee Ornithological Society and the Rochester Birding Association being the highest. The Buffalo Ornithological Society tallied 200 species. Many groups felt their results were mediocre but thirty new species were added to the three-year cumulative total, bringing it to an even 300 species.

The additions were Northern Fulmar, Sooty, Greater, Cory's and Manx Shearwaters, Wilson's Storm-petrel, Harlequin Duck, King Eider, Black Scoter, Gray Partridge, American Golden Plover, Whimbrel, Western Sandpiper, Red and Northern Phalaropes, Parasitic Jaeger, Skua, Black-legged Kittiwake, Franklin's Gull, Short-eared Owl, Boreal Chickadee, Yellow-throated Warbler, Connecticut Warbler, Yellow-headed Blackbird, Blue Grosbeak, Pine Grosbeak, Common Redpoll, Dickcissel, Clay-colored Sparrow and Lapland Longspur.

Despite the diligent efforts of the Adirondack observers of the High Peaks Audubon Society some typically northern species, such as Spruce Grouse, Northern Three-toed Woodpecker and Gray Jay, were missed but the Common Raven and Boreal Chickadee were located. Other disappointing "misses" were Red-necked Grebe, Peregrine Falcon, Black Rail, Gull-billed Tern and Orange-crowned Warbler.

Lingering "winter species" seemed to be the rule this year with several Whistling Swans reported; Evening Grosbeaks and Pine Siskins were present in most regions; and late Pine Grosbeak, Common Redpoll, Fox Sparrow, Tree Sparrow and Lapland Longspur rounded out the species late in leaving.

A number of interesting points can be found in reviewing the survey as a whole: the Turkey continues its spread; Cattle Egrets now seem well established in the state; Chuck-will's-widow, which was found breeding on Long Island last year, was reported there again this year and on Staten Island—another southern species apparently moving north; the Common Nighthawk appears definitely reduced in numbers in some areas; the Acadian Flycatcher appears to be moving back into upstate New York; the Tufted Titmouse now is found throughout the state except in the Adirondack area; the Carolina Wren seems to be following the Tufted Titmouse in its invasion of the state; the Loggerhead Shrike is in deep trouble—for the third year in a row only one bird was reported for the entire state; the House Finch is now reported from all regions except the Adirondacks and the westernmost part of the state. The changing status of a number of these species is of special interest and this annual survey can make a real contribution by keeping careful counts of them—the ones that are declining, increasing or altering their distribution pattern.

Other interesting observations were reported; a Louisiana Heron found its way to the Rochester area, a Mute Swan was seen near Buffalo and a Fulvous Whistling-Duck appeared near Phoenix. There were no Peregrine Falcons or Merlins but a late Rough-legged Hawk and three Bald Eagles were recorded. A King Rail was located in Fair Haven (Region 5). Several groups indicated that shore birds were abundant which is reflected in the occurrence of an American Golden Plover at Braddock Bay, and a report of a Baird's Sandpiper in the Rochester area (this bird, while carefully described, will have to be considered as hypothetical for the spring survey records because as yet there is no *spring* record of a Baird's Sandpiper for the entire state verified by a specimen or photograph). Franklin's Gulls are now turning up almost yearly in the western part of the state. Caspian Terns were again scarce—reported by only two parties. Seven species of owls were located. The Carolina Wren, Mockingbird, and Cardinal, all southern species, are now found widely through the state. White-eyed Vireos appeared this year in three upstate regions as well as downstate. Warblers were well represented by 35 species (plus both *Vermivora* hybrids) with a Yellow-throated and Connecticut well documented.

With continued effort such as was demonstrated this year, important and useful information on spring migration in New York can be gathered. All participating clubs and individuals are to be congratulated and thanked. Hopefully in 1977 several more of our member clubs in addition to this year's 24 will participate. The dates for 1977 will be May 7-22.

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LETTER TO THE EDITORS

Dear Sirs:

John Bull (1976, *Supplement to Birds of New York State*, p. 42) mentioned one occurrence of a Hawk Owl (*Surnia ulula*) in Oneida Co., from Dec. 15, 1974 to March 15, 1975. Actually, there were two occurrences of this species in central New York, in two successive winters; the listing in the *Supplement* is an amalgam of these. The earlier record was of "a single bird . . . at Vernon [Township] Dec. 15 [1973] to Mar. 3 [1974] (M. Stooks, mob)" (*The Kingbird*, 24: 82, 1974). The second was of a bird "at North Gage [Deerfield Township], Oneida County Dec. 20 (E. VanDresar) thru the period [*i.e.* to March 31, 1975]; the second bird in two years; though two birds were never seen at once, there may have been two birds involved (M. Stooks)" (*The Kingbird*, 25: 103, 1975).

When I pointed out this error in the *Supplement* to John Bull, he suggested I write a note to *The Kingbird* correcting it.

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