

Sparrow, yet soon recovered his senses as well as supper (Teresa Anson).

VIREOS—WARBLERS: Yellow-rumped Warbler: 1 Essex all winter; another same place Dec. 28-Jan. 3 (JP).

WEAVERS—SPARROWS: Red-winged Blackbird: 1 Dec. 8 Lake Placid (Mary McKinney); 1 Dec. 27-Feb. 13 TupL (CD); 1 SLCBC Jan. 2. Common Grackle: 3 ECBC Dec. 26. Brown-headed Cowbird: 72 SLCBC Jan. 2; 9 TupL Feb. 20 (CD). Cardinal: 2 ECBC Dec. 26; 77 SLCBC Jan. 2; 2 Indian Lake Feb. 12 (M&RM). Evening Grosbeak: none on FCBC Dec. 18 but ECBC Dec. 26 had 478 and SLCBC Jan. 2 had 741, both counts being record highs. Purple Finch: most common winter bird with 1033 on SLCBC Jan. 2. Pine Grosbeak: fairly common in flocks of 7 to 9. Common Redpoll: only 2 or 3 reports and these were traveling. Pine Siskin: 110 ECBC Dec. 26. Red Crossbill: 6 ECBC Dec. 26; 14 SLCBC Jan. 2; 2 Ray Brook Jan. 21 (RH); 6 Feb. 5 Piseco Lake (Dorothy McIlroy). White-winged Crossbill: 3 SLCBC Jan. 2; 2 St. Armand Jan. 23 (Jean Demottos). Dark-eyed Junco: 109 ECBC Dec. 26; plus a few TupL to Saranac L. Chipping Sparrow: 3 all winter except Christmas count day (RH). White-throated Sparrow: many all areas; 25 SLCBC Jan. 2; 9 Essex Feb. 22 (JP). Song Sparrow: 1 TupL all winter (CD); 2 ECBC Dec. 26; 1 SLCBC Jan. 2; 2 Jan. 26 Saranac Lake (RH). **LAPLAND LONGSPUR:** 1 Essex Dec. 31 (JR,CS); 35 Platts Jan. 3 thru period (PW).

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REGION 8 — HUDSON-MOHAWK

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This report represents a "changing of the guard" for the Hudson-Mohawk Region. Gladys Snell, who has devoted much time and energy in compiling these reports over the last few years, is following her doctor's advice and is cutting back on some of her many involvements. I am sure that the many who have benefited from Gladys' tenacious devotion to these reports will join in extending many thanks to Gladys for a job well done.

The winter of 1976-1977 will stand out in the record books because of its prolonged periods of below normal temperatures. A record -1°F (-17.5°C) on Dec. 3 caused an early freeze over most streams and ponds and much of the Hudson River. The January mean temperature was 6°F (3°C) below normal with a minimum reading of -15°F (-29°C) on the 28th. February was closer to its normal mean temperature. A slight thaw on Feb. 10 thru 14th re-opened much of the Hudson. However, lakes and reservoirs remained frozen thru the period.

The wild food crop this winter was abundant, with some berries remaining on shrubs thru the season. Winter finches were few and far between for most species except for Purple Finches and Evening Grosbeaks. The Purple Finches started out slowly but by the middle of January were at everybody's feeders. Wintering raptors continue what appears to be a long-term increase in populations. An astounding 150 Red-tailed Hawks were tallied on five Christmas Counts. A few interesting half-hardies remained thru the winter.

Rarities of the season include: Mute Swan, Brant, Barn Owl, Varied Thrush and Lincoln's Sparrow.

Abbreviations: ADBC—Allen DeVoe Bird Club; CC—Christmas Census; Col Co—Columbia County; HR—Hudson River; Cox-Ath—Coxsackie-Athens.

Contributors: Ken Able, Arlene & Tom Brown, James Bush, Juanita Cook, Paul Connor, Jeff Davis, Peter Feinberg, Mabel French, Ron LaForce, Bill Lee, Bob Marx, Tom Palmer, Walt Sabin, Robert P. Yumick, Richard P. Guthrie, Barbara & Hugo Gardina.

LOONS-DUCKS: Great Blue Heron: 1 thru Jan. 11 Stephentown and Jan. 25 Ghent (BHG). **MUTE SWAN:** 1 Cohoes Falls Jan. 2-late Feb. (R. Phillion). **BRANT:** 2 HR at Hudson Dec. 18 (ATB). **SNOW GOOSE:** 16 HR at Hudson Dec. 18 (ATB). **Pintail:** 1 Cohoes Feb. 21. **WOOD DUCK:** 1 thru HR at Castleton (JC). **Redhead:** 1 Cohoes Falls Feb. 21 (PF). **Ring-necked Duck:** 4 HR Feb. 27. **Canvasback:** 80 Cohoes Falls Feb. 9 (KA). **Bufflehead:** 2 Cohoes Falls Feb. 9 (KA). **White-winged Scoter:** 1 Cohoes Falls Feb. 9 (KA). **Hooded Merganser:** 1 Castleton Feb. 27 (JC).

HAWKS-ALCIDS: Turkey Vulture: 1 Catskill Feb. 12 (early) (JB). Only 4 Goshawks reported: 1 Troy CC Jan. 2, 2 Amsterdam CC Jan. 2, 1 Freehold, Greene Co. Feb. 18. **Sharp-shinned Hawk:** 8 reported on four CC's incl. 4 Cox-Ath CC Dec. 27. **Cooper's Hawk:** three widely scattered Jan. reports. **Red-tailed Hawk:** 150 reported on five CC's incl. 50 So. Rensselaer CC Dec. 26. **Rough-legged Hawk:** 24 Cox-Ath CC Dec. 27. **Red-shouldered Hawk:** 1 So. Rensselaer CC. **Marsh Hawk:** thru max. 16 Cossackie Flats Dec. 19 (RPG). **Common Snipe:** 1 Troy CC Jan. 2.

PIGEONS-WOODPECKERS: Mourning Dove: numbers well up (1300+ four CC'S). **BARN OWL:** 3 poss. 4 reports (one found dead) (RPG&KA). **Screech Owl:** 6 Troy CC Jan. 2, 7 found dead on road, scattered locations (all gray phase). **Snowy Owl:** only 3 reported. **Barred Owl:** 1 Ballston Spa Jan. 30. **Short-eared Owl:** 2 Cox. Flats (Cox-Ath CC) Dec. 27. **Belted Kingfisher:** 1 thru Castleton (JC). **Common Flicker:** 13 reported incl 5 Troy CC. **Pileated Woodpecker:** 5 Amsterdam CC Jan. 2, **Hairy Woodpecker:** 103 total four CC'S. **Downy Woodpecker:** 270 total four CC'S.

FLYCATCHERS-STARLINGS: Eastern Phoebe: 1 Buskirk, Washington Co. Dec. 28 (JD). **Blue Jay:** 572 So. Rensselaer CC Jan. 2. **Red-breasted Nuthatch:** very few reports outside of CC's, 19 Troy CC Jan. 2. **Winter Wren:** only three reports, last Jan. 5 Buskirk (JD). **Carolina Wren:** 3 reports thru. **Mockingbird:** thru max. 20 So. Rensselaer CC Dec. 26. **Gray Catbird:** only report-1 thru Dec. 29 Buskirk (JD). **Brown Thrasher:** 1 Troy CC Jan. 2. **VARIED THRUSH:** 1 Dec. 24 thru at least mid-Feb. St. Johnsville (Folmsbee feeder). **Hermit Thrush:** 11 reported from scattered locations. **Eastern Bluebird:** 16 reported thru. **Northern Shrike:** 7 reported thru.

VIREOS-WARBLED: Yellow-rumped Warbler: 8 reported, thru Jan. 6. **PALM WARBLER:** 1 near Amsterdam Dec. 2 (TP) a very late date. **Common Yellowthroat:** 1 Schenectady CC Dec. 18.

WEAVERS-SPARROWS: Eastern Meadowlark: 50+ Cossackie Flats, thru. **Northern Oriole:** 1 Schenectady Jan. 6 (Ellis feeder). **Rusty Blackbird:** 6 Schenectady CC Dec. 18; 7 W. Crescent Jan. 10 (RPY). **Cardinal:** thru. 485 total of four CC's. **Evening Grosbeak:** thru. 1,555 So. Rensselaer CC. **Purple Finch:** 11 Schenectady CC Dec. 18; 59 So. Rensselaer CC Dec. 26; 164 Troy CC Jan. 2, increase continued thru January. **House Finch:** 78 Schenectady CC; 28 So. Rensselaer CC 13 Cox-Ath CC. **Pine Grosbeak:** a few scattered reports of single birds, max 7 Lk. Luzerne, Warren Co. Jan. 20. **Common Redpoll:** only reports: Dec. 2 Cohoes; 9 So. Rensselaer CC; 5 Amsterdam CC Jan. 2. **Pine Siskin:** only a few small flocks reported from scattered locations. **Rufous-sided Towhee:** 4 reported, late Dec-early Jan. **Savannah Sparrow:** three Jan. reports, 1 banded at Schenectady (A. Schroeder). **Vesper Sparrow:** 1 Castleton Dec. 1-2 (JC); 1 Troy CC Jan. 2. **Field Sparrow:** 1 E. Greenbush Dec. 2 thru; 1 So. Rensselaer CC Dec. 26. **White-crowned Sparrow:** 1 Loudonville Dec. 18 (MF); 3 Schenectady CC Dec. 18; 2 Troy CC Jan. 2. **White-throated Sparrow:** 274 total of four CC's. **LINCOLN'S SPARROW:** 1 thru, Ghent, at feeder (BHG,mob). **Swamp Sparrow:** 21 total of four CC's. **Lapland Longspur:** 6 on-and-off thru, Cossackie Flats. **Snow Bunting:** 979 total of four CC's; max 500 Amsterdam Jan. 12.

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REGION 9 – DELAWARE-HUDSON

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This was one of the coldest seasons on record with below freezing temperatures through most of December and all of January. The latter month brought the lowest temperatures in years, with higher elevations below 0⁰ F (-17.7⁰ C) most of the month. February brought a warming trend, and by mid-month the lower Hudson was almost free of ice. Snow came to stay on Dec. 25, and was frequently added to thru January. The ground did not clear until late February.

The biggest news of the period was the oil spill of Feb. 4, when a barge carrying 2.5 million gallons of No. 6 heavy fuel oil struck a rock just south of Conn's Hook in the Hudson R. (3 mi north of Bear Mt.). Over the next 4 days 420,000 gallons of its cargo spilled into the ice-choked river. Tides carried the oil several miles upstream, and the natural flow of the river carried it south past N.Y.C. to coat the outer beaches of Long Island. Its total damage to wildlife will never be fully known. Several hundred birds were observed to be affected by the oil. Of the 70 taken to the Hi Tor Animal Shelter and cleaned, many of the larger waterfowl, swans and geese, were found to be suffering from malnutrition. This was probably due to the very hard freeze for more than a month before. About 12 Herring Gulls and 20 female Common Mergansers were observed oiled as far north as Cornwall Bay, Feb. 12 and several oiled Herring Gulls were seen Feb. 25 as far away from the river as Rondout Res. some 40 miles from the scene of the spill. The ice was probably instrumental in preventing even greater destruction since much of the oil was kept in midstream and might have affected even more birds had it invaded shallows. Most of the oil was far downstream when a mid-Feb. thaw released the ice from shore and allowed some of the oil to get at some of the dabblers. Hopefully more information will be received for publication in future issues.

Most area Christmas counts did well with clear weather and numerous participants. Most counts experienced record Red-tailed Hawks, Goshawks and Hermit Thrushes. The latter was probably an echo of the big fall migration.

Northern Shrikes were present in most areas as were Yellow-rumped Warblers. House Sparrows have most reporters speculating on the reason for their steady decline. Turkey Vultures and the common blackbirds were returning by the last week in February. Northern finches went entirely unreported with the exception of Evening Grosbeaks in small numbers thru the period, and Pine Grosbeaks only once or twice.

Contributors and observers cited: Gene Brown; Martin Borko, Tom Burke, Robert F. Deed, Valerie Freer, Florence Germond, Jim and Mary Key, Ken McDermott, Al Merritt, John C. Orth, Benton Seguin, John Tramontano, Otis Waterman.

Abbreviations: The first four or five letters of each county, CB—Cornwall Bay; MC—Marshlands Conservancy, Rye; PL—Playland, Rye; BCC—Burroughs Christmas Count, 12/26; MCC—Mearns Christmas Count, 12/19; RCC—Rockland Christmas Count, 12/26; WCC—Waterman Christmas Count, 12/27; FWC—Federation Waterfowl Count, 1/9.