

Ivory Gull—Details by observer J. VanRiet

Seen from Hawkins Point Overlook Massena Dec. 8, 1977. 4:00-4:10 P.M. Clear sky, setting sun.

Immature bird—compared to Ring-billed Gulls, among which it was flying, it appeared to be smaller. Its wingbeat was faster, it moved faster. Wings and tail narrower. Wingtips more pointed.

Noticed this bird by its whiteness and by a smudge on the front part of its small head. It had a dark eye and a small dark bill. Followed the bird with a 20 power Balscope. It settled on the water and drifted along for 1/4 mile. It rose and returned within about 80 yards. As it banked at that distance, rows of spots were visible on the upper wing. Too far to see any tailband.

Jan. 13, 1978. 4:00-4:15 P.M. Fog off water. Light snow.

Looking over a flock of gulls (Great Black-backed, Herring, Iceland and Glaucous) resting on the ice-edge between the Dam and Hawkins Point, a small white gull was seen with a 20 power Balscope. It had a dark smudge on the head which was accentuated by a small dark bill and dark eye. Dark tips on primaries running along the bird.

As this bird was only barely visible and it was snowing, I approached the flock. The Ivory Gull flushed last. It flew over Hawkins Point Overlook, made a turn and flew over at a height of less than 30 feet. It was smaller than an Iceland Gull. Noticed spots on the upper part of the wing, dark tips on the primaries, also dark tips on the tail. Narrow pointed wings. Tail almost square, not fanned out much.

Two dark spots on the body where the feet were tucked in. The rows of spots on above birds were not nearly as dark as shown in Robbins "Birds of North America."

REGION 7 — ADIRONDACK-CHAMPLAIN

THEODORE D. MACK

This was a cold winter for the inland region. There were two days in January that were above freezing, but none in February. February's coldest day at Paul Smith's was -40° F. Many days were -30° F. or colder. Any day with a low of -20° F. or warmer was a decent bit of weather. The cold combined with snow seems to drive birds out of the area. Obviously, waterfowl must retreat to Lake Champlain, if open water exists there, or else go further south, but the passerines seem to be driven out as well. The Adirondack area is not so vast that most birds can't fly out if lack of food and cold feet so indicate. This seems to be exactly what most of them did. Perhaps birds wintering in more northern areas do not have as easy a choice. One day in February, Gary Randorf climbed Mount Marcy and returned without once seeing or hearing a single bird. Several others had similar days. At the start of winter, Common Redpolls passed southward with few lingering. By late February flocks of this same species had returned as afternoon temperatures became more reasonable.

Lake Champlain characteristically had the most unusual species. The presence of a rather stationary flock of over 200 Bohemian Waxwings was noteworthy but overshadowed by the Great Gray Owl and Black Guillemot sightings. Two adult Little Gulls and a Glaucous Gull were new species for the Essex County list.

Abbreviations: E'town—Elizabethtown; FCBC—part of the Ferrisburg, Vt. Christmas Bird Count is in our region; Platts—Plattsburgh; Tupper—Tupper Lake; valley refers to the Champlain Valley.

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LOONS—DUCKS: Great Blue Heron: 1 late bird North West Bay of Lake Champlain Dec. 17 (FCBC). Canada Goose: 9 Tupper L. were probably local birds (CD); 350 Essex thru mid-Jan. fed in corn fields. An artificial open area in ice at Ticonderoga had on Feb. 16 2 Canada Geese, 20 Mallards, 45 Black Ducks, 1 Pintail, 3 Wood Ducks, 2 pair of Hooded Mergansers, and 12 Common Mergansers (BM). A female Wood Duck was at Ausable Point Dec. 15 (PW). Canvasback: max 49 at Platts. Phil Warren says the flock of 2000 seen the previous four years did not show. Hopefully they are in good health elsewhere. Redhead and Oldsquaw were noted.

HAWKS—ALCIDS: a Red-shouldered Hawk seen during the E'town CBC period in mid-Dec. and one in Essex Jan. 2 (DN) were out of season. Good numbers of Red-tailed Hawks and excellent counts of Rough-legged in the valley. Platts had 17 Rough-legged on their Christmas count; 3 were seen on the E'town Christmas count; and 1 at Tupper (CD), both being unusual locations as was 1 at Malone Dec. 22 (RH). Bald Eagle: 1 Keeseville Jan. 23 (JD, CJ); 1, perhaps a fourth year bird, Ausable Point Jan. 28 was eating a fish (PW); another was reported from Wilmington Jan. 30. Hungarian Partridge: 9 Malone Dec. 23 (RH). American Coot, a late bird Essex Jan. 29 (mob). **GLAUCOUS GULL:** 1 at North West Bay Dec. 17 (WS, PT) was new for Essex County list as were 2 adult **LITTLE GULLS** Dec. 20 at the same place and carefully studied by GC. A healthy winter-plumaged **BLACK GUILLEMOT** was photographed Jan. 7 at Essex (Hudson-Mohawk Bird Club, GC, JP). This is a bird not expected away from the ocean. It remained until Jan. 10.

PIGEONS—WOODPECKERS: Mourning Dove: max 50 Essex all winter (Lester Sweatt) must be some sort of North Country maximum for winter. Screech Owl: 1 Essex Dec. 24 was photographed (JP, CS, GC, EM). **GREAT GRAY OWL:** 1 Platts Jan. 24 (Harold Lieberthal). Seen at 20 feet, so large size, yellow eyes, lack of ear tufts and black chin seen clearly. On Jan. 28 what was probably the same bird was seen at Essex for a five minute close look (BB, IB, RB); a nice find! Short-eared Owl: 1 Platts Dec. 17 (RP, PW). Saw-whet Owl: 1 Lewis Feb. 23 (Peggy Basile). Belted Kingfisher: 1 Westport until Jan. 9 (GC, JP). Common Flicker: 1 Essex thru Dec. (JR, CS). Black-backed Three-toed Woodpecker: a female Chubb River Dec. 24 (Larry Master) and a male there Dec. 26 (JR, CS).

FLYCATCHERS—STARLINGS: Gray Jay: a few Brandon; 3 Tupper Dec. 4 (MV). Common Raven: Paul Bishop is doing a study of New York ravens. He has listed 340 sightings from 100 locations. Many are from the southern Finger Lakes and Catskills. He reports more than 14 young were fledged in the Adirondacks last season. Tufted Titmouse: GC had 2 at E'town in Nov. They rarely stray from the valley. Hermit Thrush: 1 Lake Alice Dec. 3 (PW, RP, SS). Water Pipit: 1 Saranac Lake Dec. 1 was very late (CD). **BOHEMIAN WAX-WING:** Essex had up to 155 and Platts up to 225 for over a month. The Essex birds ate cherries while the Platts flock dined on buckthorn (*Rhamnus*) berries which many other birds do not like. Northern Shrike: everybody saw one or more. JP banded one Feb. 25 that was dining on banded chickadees. Another shrike was banded the same place (Essex) Feb. 28 unless they know how to remove bands, which they may.

VIREOS—WARBLERS: Addendum to previous reporting period—**CONNECTICUT WARBLER** at E'town Sept. 23 (GC). Complete eye-ring clearly seen.

WEAVERS—SPARROWS: Redwinged Blackbird: 4 (2 injured) Tupper Dec. 1 (CD). Brown-headed Cowbird: 3 Tupper thru Dec. (CD). Any inland blackbird is a good find in this region in winter. Cardinal: many in valley and still at least 3 at Tupper (MV). Evening

Grosbeak: Ruth Meier's max of 30 all season was more than most people had. They were scarce. Purple Finch: absent. They are erratic. House Finch: PW still has 7 at Platts. Pine Grosbeak: everywhere. PW found 206 Jan. 15 in Clinton and Essex Counties. **HOARY RED-POLL**: PW at Platts on Jan. 29 saw a male redpoll with almost no streaks on flanks, a plain rump tinged with pink, and bird was so chunky that wings did not cross over the back as in the companion Common Redpolls. Common Redpolls increased dramatically in the interior during late Feb. Crossbills were very scarce. White-crowned Sparrow: 1 very late bird Platts Dec. 21 and 22 (William Kreuger). Tree Sparrow: scarce. Lapland Longspur: 1 Westport Dec. 17 (FCBC); 4 Malone Dec. 22 (RH); 1 Wadhams Dec. 31 (GC).

Paul Smiths, New York 12970

REGION 8 — HUDSON-MOHAWK

RICHARD P. GUTHRIE

The winter of '77-'78 set in with more than 15 inches (39 cm) of snow falling the first two weeks of December and a record low temperature of -6°F (-21°C) on the 12th. Although the temperatures moderated somewhat, the snowfall continued its preponderous way through the season with an excess of 33.2 in. (84.3 cm) over the normal of 43.2 in. (109.7 cm). An absence of a real thaw and regular snowfall kept the ground covered through the period.

Reports received were thin, as might be expected from a rather routine winter. This however gives us an opportunity to recapitulate the status of winter residents. The most comprehensive mechanism for this review is the National Audubon Society Christmas Bird Count, six of which were conducted in this region as follows:

Date	Count Name	County	No. Species
12/17	Schenectady	Schen.-Albany	58
12/17	Chatham	Columbia	53
12/26	So. Rensselaer	Rensselaer	51
12/28	Coxsackie-Athens	Greene	58
12/29	Ft. Plain	Montgomery	35
12/31	Troy	Rensselaer	57

Evident from a review of the Count tallies are a few revelations of interest (which we may have been supposing all along). To begin with, the recent colonists from the south, *i.e.* Cardinal, Tufted Titmouse, and Mockingbird, are firmly entrenched. The House Finch, another recent immigrant, has also successfully established itself in the area. Others such as the Carolina Wren have survived the recent harsh winters only in a few sheltered areas. Other attempts at northward movement such as that of the Red-bellied Woodpecker, have not been successful yet. Finally, this winter proved to be a bit too severe for the half-hardies, most of which were poorly represented on the counts; the majority disappeared as the season progressed.

Of particular interest to many is the continued good showing of most raptors, and especially Red-tailed and Rough-legged Hawks. The Coxsackie Flats, an area about 2 miles (3.2 km) wide by 10 miles (16 km) long, once again supported