

species in Sheldon Feb. 27, 48 *Eremophila alpestris alpestris* on the L. Ontario shore Jan. 28 and at Eden Feb. 28, and 12 *E. a. praticola* in the Somerset-Carlton area Feb. 24. Two COMMON RAVENS were identified at the entrance to Phillips Cr. SF near Alfred Dec. 20 (VP, RP) and one was found here again Jan. 5 (A. Klingensmith *vide* CK). For the season, nine scattered locations reported Tufted Titmice with a total of 15 birds. Belmont, Hume and Spring Brook noted single Carolina Wrens, and one or two Mockingbirds were seen at Orchard Park, Medina and on the L. Ontario shore. Single Gray Catbirds were at Middleport Dec. 1 and at S. Wales Dec. 2-28, and a Brown Thrasher was spotted at Spring Brook Dec. 31. Unusually large numbers of Am. Robins were seen throughout the winter in areas near the Great Lakes and four E. Bluebirds were found at Iroquois NWR Jan. 19 (Olsen). (We hope they made it through the rough weeks ahead of them.) Two E. Bluebirds arr at the Tonawanda Indian Reservation Feb. 24 (MZ). The total regional count of Golden-crowned Kinglets was a sorry 19 from only five locations, but Cedar Waxwings were found in better numbers than usual with max 250 at Holland Dec. 9.

VIREOS—WARBLERS: Only one Yellow-rumped Warbler was located for the season, at Buckhorn Is. SP Jan. 11 (Nutting).

WEAVERS—SPARROWS: E. Meadowlarks again were scarce with a total of ten birds noted from two areas, and Brown-headed Cowbird numbers also were low with regional max 20 at Cheektowaga Dec. 1-31. Although Evening Grosbeaks arrived as usual, flocks were smaller than common with max 75 at Limestone Feb. 13, and reported winter banding totals, 116 at Alfred Sta. (EB), 58 at Limestone (RV) and 23 at Farmersville Sta. (DC). House Finches continue to spread, reaching a max 92 in Eggertsville during Feb. (AM, WM) and three finding a new area near the Alfred-Almond school Dec. 3 (EB). The only Com. Redpolls for the season were ten at Stannards in early Jan. (HG) and two in Belmont Feb. 9-12 (Jordan *vide* DB). 14 Pine Siskins were counted from five areas. Notable sparrows include: a half dozen Rufous-sided Towhees wintering at feeders, a Field Sparrow at Beaver Meadow Jan. 6, a White-crowned Sparrow at Belmont Dec. 1-Jan. 1, and a Swamp Sparrow at Wilson Dec. 26. White-throated Sparrows were present in good numbers during Dec. and Jan., with a few reports for Feb., and max 70 birds at Irving Jan. 6. Unusually scarce were Lapland Longspurs with but 28 totaled from four areas, and Snow Buntings, too, were less common with regional max only 300 in Amity Feb. 8.

ADDENDUM: Results of the twelfth annual study of tower casualties from WGR-TV (Wales), WKBW-TV (Colden) and WIVB-TV (Colden) show a total of 359 birds (1397 in 1977) of 51 species (50 in 1977), the largest number, 168 birds, being found Sept. 22, 1978. High counts were: Blackpoll Warbler 44, Ovenbird 36, Swainson's Thrush 35, Red-eyed Vireo 25, Com. Yellowthroat 17, and 16 each of Gray-cheeked Thrush, Yellow-rumped Warbler and Bay-breasted Warbler. The count of individuals for 1978 is far below the 913 bird norm. A. R. Clark, compiler, reports that this year with one bird of each, the Olive-sided Flycatcher is new, the Least Bittern has been found once before, and the Pied-billed Grebe and Yellow-billed Cuckoo are only third records. (*The Prothonotary*, BOS publication, Vol. 44 No. 11, pp. 186 ff.)

Amity Lake, Belmont, New York 14813

REGION 2 — GENESEE

ROBERT SPAHN

Aside from a local feeder survey which reports numbers and variety of birds

stable to increased (after normalization of data for changes in numbers of observers) compared with the past three winters, all indicators pointed to a poor winter season for birding. Numbers of reports were down, as were numbers of species recorded, and, generally, numbers of individuals. In part, this reflects the drop in time spent afield by many observers when rarities are scarce. The local Christmas Bird Counts all tallied the same species count, 71, a new high for the relatively new Silver Lake area, a ten year low for Rochester, and a substantial drop for the Conesus/Hemlock Lakes area.

Once again, weather and its impact on birds and birders was a major influence in the records of this season. December, through Christmas, was very open and relatively mild. Most observers in the field and at feeders reported birds very scarce. For about ten days after the first major snowfall, 19 in. (48 cm.) on Dec. 24-25, there was a flurry of reports of wintering half-hardy species. Following the flush of New Year's listing and the annual waterfowl census the flow tapered off to near zero. From Christmas through late January every weekend saw snow, sleet, or rain. This certainly was a prime cause of the paucity of January reports after the first few days. At first, January's weather seemed torn between reaching for Spring and settling for Winter with alternating rain and snow, warm and cold, though averaging below normal temperatures. As the end of the month neared, Winter won and the daily snow showers gradually increased the general ground coverage. The first 18 days of February brought record cold day after day. Only a warm spell in the last week saved the month from an all time low average temperature status, second to 1934 by only 1° F. Lake Ontario within sight of land near Rochester froze except for a few open leads and outlets where warmed waters entered the lake. At worst, the lake coverage with ice was estimated at greater than 60% overall with the east end entirely frozen. As if this were not enough, freezing birders into their homes, the fantastic invasion of northern owls which failed to reach here pulled all those still active away on expeditions to Regions 5 and 6 or to Amherst Island, Ontario. Except for feeder reports and records to forward to other editors, February provided the least volume of records for many years.

Long-term trends are few this season. Among the most visible are decreases in Ring-necked Pheasants; Carolina Wrens, and locally wintering Red-breasted Mergansers and increases in House Finches, Red-bellied Woodpeckers, and Starlings wintering at the major local roost. Winter finches continue to follow their well-documented two and four year cycles with all virtually absent this year, following the presence of all last winter. In addition, there are several observations which bear noting for weighing against future records, though the nature of the fluctuation, long-term or cyclic, is not obvious: grebes were virtually absent, waterfowl were generally very low—was this “anticipation” of the near total freezing of the region's waters?, raptors were very scarce, gulls were low to absent at usual locations until near the season's end. Mockingbirds were again regularly reported from many widely scattered locations, Am. Robins were everywhere all season, Tree Sparrows were very low, and many half-hardy species were absent or scarce except for their sudden and brief appearance around January 1.

Rarities: Eared Grebe, Mute Swan, Harlequin Duck, Eastern Phoebe, Long-

billd Marsh Wren, Ruby-crowned Kinglet, Bohemian Waxwing, Rose-breasted Grosbeak, and Rufous-sided Towhee.

Abbreviations: BB—Braddock Bay State Park; CL—Conesus Lake; D—Durand-Eastman Park; H—Hamlin Beach State Park; IB—Irondequoit Bay; SB—Sodus Bay; and WL—west lakeshore area along Lake Ontario.

Observers: Sally Baumer, Nancy & Warren Boudrie, Carolyn Cass, Julie Claffey, Anne Clarridge, Roger Clark, Bill & Rhea Colman, Jerry Czech, Mike Davids, Dan & Fritz Davis, Frank & Robert Dobson, Jim & Kay Doris, Art Eisenberg, Joan Esley, June Feder, Arlieen & John Foster, Dick Garnham, Genesee Ornithological Society, Kevin Griffith, Robert & Sandra Hazen, Norm Henderson, Øivind Jensen, Allen & Bea Kemnitz, Bob & Jane Kesselring, Allan & Sandy Klonick, Steve Lauer, Jim Lenhard, Gerhard Leubner, David & Jane Levy, Walter Listman, Warren Lloyd, Hayward Madden, Peg Magee, Frank & Mary Mattei, Bob & Margaret McKinney, Gordon Meade, Hyde Miller, Ann Miranian, Jane Morris, Frank, Joyce, & Lon Myers, Richard O'Hara, Bernie Olin, Chip Perrigo, Mike & Tom Peter, Pat Reister, Rochester Birding Association, Marge Schmale, Allen Shea, Ann & Ray Shea, Chris Sheldon, Dominic Sherony, Jeanne & Sharon Skelly, Durward & Lillian Skiff, Robert & Susan Spahn, Ann Stear, Helen Steinhauser, Harriet Stride, Dan & Allan Strong, Mary Ann Sunderlin, Bill Symonds, Steve Taylor, David, Mike & Tom Tetlow, Syracuse Group: M. S. Rusk, C. G. Spies, C. G. Spies-Rusk, & E. A. Williams, Ann & Joe Watson, Eleanor Weld, Paul Weld, Kinsley Whittum, Munro Will, Alice Wood, Peter Zachmann, and Katherine Zarick.

LOONS—DUCKS: Loons followed normal patterns with few observed for the season. Peak counts were: Com. Loon: four CL Dec. 23; and four Canandaigua Lake Jan. 28; and Red-throated Loon: one WL Dec. 3. None were reported in February. The story was the same for grebes with isolated singles in the first two months. Notable records included: Red-necked Grebe: SB Jan. 1; EARED GREBE: SB Jan. 1 (M & RM); and Pied-billed Grebe: 10 Finger Lakes Dec. 23 (CBC); and four Canandaigua Lake Jan. 28. Heron records were scarce. By February even the Great Blue Herons had disappeared. A surprise was Am. Bittern: one BB Jan. 24 (NH). Waterfowl were generally notable for scarcity this season after late December. Most eastern species were recorded, often as singles or in very low numbers. Interesting reports include: MUTE SWAN: one imm. Pt. Breeze Dec. 6 (BS); one ad. Pultneyville Jan. 7 (WL, mob); and one ad. SB Feb. 3, 25 (mob), the latter two particularly tame; Whistling Swan: widely scattered records of one to three birds thru the season, one, an imm., retrieved from the ice at Pultneyville Jan. 14, only to die of its leg and wing injuries about ten days later at a rehabilitation center; Mallard: max 1600 Brighton Jan. 7 (CC); Black Duck: max 508 WL Dec. 5; Redhead: 2000+ Canandaigua Lake Jan. 15 (RO); Canvasback: max 178 CL Dec. 23; HARLEQUIN DUCK: one imm. male Lake Ontario, Greece Dec. 17 (RO); Black Scoter: five Webster Dec. 17; and Com. Merganser: max 5000+ Lake Ontario, Rochester Jan. 8.

HAWKS—ALCIDS: Accipiter reports were again typical of recent years. As one local group no longer records them as noteworthy, about one-half to three-quarters of the local records include: 12 Goshawk; 30 Sharp-shinned Hawk; and 23 Cooper's Hawk. Buteos were very scarce, particularly Rough-legged Hawk. Red-shouldered Hawk: one Brighton Dec. 17 (CBC), was an unexpected bonus. Marsh Hawk was virtually absent. Several observers reported Bald Eagle: one BB Dec. 12 (NH); one ad. Lake Ontario, Greece, Dec. 29 (*vide* RS); and one imm. Henrietta Feb. 22 (AE). Turkeys appear to be firmly established with: 24 Letchworth Park Dec. 16 (mob), and many seen there since. Rails were represented by the appearance of Virginia Rail: one Mendon Ponds Feb. 8 (KZ, mob), at a regular spot, but missed earlier; and by Am. Coot: max 275 Canandaigua Lake Jan. 28. Shorebirds too were scarce: Killdeer: four Rochester Dec. 17; Com. Snipe: two Penfield thru; three Genesee River Gorge Dec. 16; one CL Jan. 6; and two Mendon Feb. 11; and Purple Sandpiper: one Webster Dec. 12 (AK). Gulls were present in good numbers thru mid-December, then

dropped dramatically. "White-winged" gulls were few with only 10 Glaucous and two Iceland reported for the season. Great Black-backed Gull numbers were good early and late: 440 Rochester Dec. 17 (CBC); and 350 IB Feb. 25. Other good gull records were: Ring-billed Gull: max 25,482 Rochester (CBC); Bonaparte's Gull: max 2003 Rochester (CBC); and Little Gull: max 14 (13 ad., one imm.) IB & D Dec. 23 (AK), a new regional high; and one D Jan. 14 (CC, mob), late.

PIGEONS-WOODPECKERS: Though we missed the big invasion, owls are the news of this group. The November Snowy Owl invasion dropped to: one to four WL thru Dec. 19; one Kendall Jan. 1; and one IB Jan. 7-9. Other reports included: Barred Owl: one D Jan. 9 (ASH); Long-eared Owl: one Wyoming Valley Dec. 16; and Short-eared Owl: max three Avon thru, a location of usual concentration in recent years. An unusually high winter count was Com. Flicker: 13 Sodus Feb. 15 (WL1, DL, OJ). Among the scarcer winter woodpeckers, Red-headed was not reported at the usual Avon woodlot, but showed: five Leicester Dec. 16; one CL Dec. 23; and four Pt. Breeze Jan. 9; and Yellow-bellied Sapsucker was noted: one Penfield Feb. 15-16.

FLYCATCHERS-STARLINGS: As usual, flycatchers were scarce, represented only by a brief visit during the Christmas storm by an **EASTERN PHOEBE**: one Webster Dec. 25 (RS). Carolina Wren continues at a low ebb with only five reports, including the CBC's. Rare in recent winters was **LONG-BILLED MARSH WREN**: one Mt. Morris Dec. 16 (WL1, mob); and one CL Dec. 23 (RC, BS). Mockingbird seems to be recovering with over 30 records for the season. Single wintering half-hardies were: Gray Catbird: Mendon Jan. 1; D Jan. 6; and Mendon Ponds Jan. 18; and Brown Thrasher: H Jan. 1 (MD). Am. Robin was a symbol of the season, everywhere all season. Flocks of 100-200 were periodically reported from widely scattered points in the Region. The usual single Hermit Thrushes were reported wintering with a max three D Jan. 18 (GOS). There was a lone **RUBY-CROWNED KINGLET**: Irondequoit Dec. 17 (DS, KW, RS). Among the flocks of Cedar Waxwings there were scattered reports of **BOHEMIAN WAXWING**: seven H Dec. 31 (F & RD); one Kendall Jan. 1 (RS); one Kendall Jan. 15 (NH); 1-3 H Jan. 8-15 (RC, BS, mob); one Greece Jan. 8 (J & RK); and two Greece Jan. 11-12 (J & RK). The CBC census of the Gates blackbird roost revealed another surge in numbers of Starlings: 800,000 Dec. 17 (JS).

WARBLERS-VIREOS: No reports. For the first time in many years, no Yellow-rumped Warblers were to be found in Mendon Ponds Park. This year the bayberry (myrtle) crop was very poor.

WEAVERS-SPARROWS: Records in this group were low. Wintering blackbirds were far down from usual numbers. A late Eastern Meadowlark was seen: Webster Dec. 26. Finches too were scarce with Evening Grosbeak the only "winter" finch in any numbers and then mostly in the hills south of Rochester. Interesting finch records include: a first regional winter record of **ROSE-BREASTED GROSBEAK**: two, one imm. male and one ad. male, Greece Jan. 2-31 (MP, J & RK), erratically at several neighboring feeders, unfortunately never caught by photographers; continued increases in House Finch: max 90 Brighton Dec. 17 (CBC); and Purple Finch: max 100 Cumming Nature Center Feb. 15. Sparrows also were low, particularly Tree Sparrow. There were still interesting reports: **RUFIOUS-SIDED TOWHEE**: one Honeoye Dec. 23 (CBC); two H Dec. 29-Jan. 1 (KG, RS); and one H Jan. 6-12 (MD, MT); Field Sparrow: two Mendon Ponds Dec. 28 (DSH); one Greece Jan. 3-4 (J & RK); one H Dec. 12 (MT); and one Mendon Ponds Jan. 13-thru (mob); and White-crowned Sparrow: two H Dec. 31 (F & RD); and one Webster Jan. (A & BK). White-throated, Swamp, and Song Sparrows started the season in good numbers with a few yet present at season's end. Longspurs and buntings were scarce, too. The Snow Bunting max was 800 Kendall Jan. 26.

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