

Fargo Jefferson Co. on Fort Drum, Feb. 28 (Richard Adams); Depauville birds thru with reports in next period. **LONG-EARED OWL**: one near Watertown on Parker Road Dec. 27 and 28 (Tim Dawson); one at dump on Point Peninsula near Three Mile Bay late Feb. (Lloyd Higgins). **SHORT-EARED OWL**: one WCC; one Parker Road Dec. 27 and 28. Belted Kingfisher: one Ogdensburg Bridge Jan. 6. Pileated Woodpecker: through. Common Flicker: one Robert Moses Park Feb. 11 (J. VanRiet). **RED-BELLIED WOODPECKER**: one adult in back yard feeding on cracked corn or sunflower seed in snow near feeder in Henderson Feb. 25—familiar with species—two years in Florida—two pictures taken—total time eight minutes (L. Chamberlaine). A bird seen on Amherst Island in Ontario on Feb. 22—very strong NW winds on that day when observation made—same bird? Hairy: 14 WCC; nine MCC; numbers still down in Henderson. Downy: 20 WCC; 11 MCC; some improvement in Henderson area.

FLYCATCHERS—STARLINGS: Horned Lark: seven WCC; one MCC; 12 Three Mile Point Feb. 17; four, Point Peninsula Feb. 25; numbers way down. Gray Jay: "have seen more than last year" South Colton and vicinity (L. Wallace); seldom any reports on this species. Blue Jay: 102 WCC; 105 MCC—numbers up? Common Crow: stayed late and returned early—more than usual wintered on Lake Ontario Plain. Black-capped Chickadee: 106 WCC; 133 MCC. White-breasted Nuthatch: 21 WCC; four MCC. Red-breasted Nuthatch: two WCC; one Brasher Center Feb. 1. Brown Creeper: two WCC no others reported for period. **MOCKINGBIRD**: one WCC at feeder through (D. Nagle). Am. Robin: one WCC; two Dry Hill Feb. 11; two all season Robert Moses Park. **BOHEMIAN WAXWING**: one mixed in with flock of Cedar Waxwings Jan. 31 (B. Bond); one Robert Moses Park Feb. 1 (J. Van Riet). Cedar Waxwings: 42 WCC; few in February. Northern Shrike: two WCC; four MCC; more than last year.

WEAVERS—SPARROWS: Red-winged Blackbird: one WCC; two MCC. Brown-headed Cowbird: six WCC; one immature Henderson Jan. 14, Feb. 4 and Feb. 18—until last winter (1977-78) five or six always wintered (L. Chamberlaine). Cardinal: three WCC; two in Henderson all winter; numbers down. Evening Grosbeak: 65 WCC; 474 MCC; daily through; one partial albino Dry Hill Jan. 10 (R. Walkers). Purple Finch: eight WCC; daily at feeder Dry Hill since Jan. 17; numbers down. **HOUSE FINCH**: two WCC. Pine Grosbeak: one Brasher Center Feb. 3; six Feb. 11; eight Feb. 13 and 14 (J. VanRiet)—only ones reported. Common Redpoll: 14 Robert Moses Park Dec. 21; two Dry Hill Feb. 9 and 11; four Dry Hill Feb. 10—very scarce. Am. Goldfinch: 36 WCC; 42 MCC; 20 daily Henderson through. Dark-eyed Junco: nine WCC; 1 MCC; Tree Sparrow: 115 WCC; 36 MCC; six Feb. 4—very scarce. White-throated Sparrow: 2 WCC; one Watertown feeder Jan. 22 and 27 and Feb. 25. Song Sparrow: one Jan. 27 at feeder. Snow Bunting: 172 WCC; 25 MCC; 12 Feb. 11, 8 Feb. 15, 1000 Pt. Peninsula Feb. 25—generally a poor year.

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REGION 7 — ADIRONDACK-CHAMPLAIN

THEODORE MACK

This was apparently a reasonable winter for birds in this region. Snow cover was about two-and-a-half to three feet in the Paul Smiths area with less as you neared the more tropical (?) Champlain Valley which seemed to have perhaps six inches on the ground near Plattsburgh much of the time. The chief weather factor for the period was a bitter cold spell lasting about two weeks in February. January had some cold mornings with -25° F. at Paul Smiths on the twelfth, not

unusual for that month. Some temperatures for some of the days from Feb. 8 to the 18th were -23° F., -27° F., -38° F., -36° F., -42° F., -33° F., -38° F., and -45° F. at Paul Smiths. Some days the high in the afternoon was -10° F. Cross-country ski trips on some warmer weekend afternoons didn't prove very profitable birdwise since the mind was preoccupied with keeping on the go and the icicle on the nose was distracting.

In spite of the cold many individual birds were about if not a great many species. There were White-breasted Nuthatches in the hardwoods away from towns. This species would normally be absent in deep forests in the dead of winter. Black-capped Chickadees, Brown Creepers, Golden-crowned Kinglets, Hairy and Downy Woodpeckers were also in generous numbers. The woods were not silent as they can be some winters. My only conjecture about the unusual presence of insectivorous birdlife this winter is that these birds may be favored by cold weather snow. Sticky snow freezes on and covers food. Our snow this year has been cold and easily swept from trees by the winds so that even the evergreens have been rather free of moisture while the hardwoods have been even more exposed to search by avian insect-predators.

Chickadees are opportunists. Each fall the eaves of my house play host to a large population of rather frightening orb-weaving spiders. These creatures gain in size until they lay their egg mass at which time they shrink to non-frightening proportions, or to rephrase it, to a more chickadee bite size. On several sunny January afternoons many sluggish spider ladies were moving about and one was actually half-heartedly working at the main lines of a web-to-be. On these days bands of Black-capped Chickadees patrolled my eaves with individuals hovering as they checked all the roof overhangs as well as the front and back porches and the firewood on the porch. They were seen taking spiders.

This is a difficult season for people to generate much enthusiasm for birding but a few good finds were made. Probably several regions will report Great Gray Owls. One cross-country skier in Michigan saw three of these owls in one afternoon in his state. Our Region had at least one. Essex Center, Vermont, was blessed with a Hawk Owl that stayed several weeks so people could see that there really was such a bird. A Hawk Owl reported in our Region was not so cooperative. The Saranac Lake Christmas Count recorded a Northern Three-toed Woodpecker. Considering the weather and the loss of vacation birders there was quite a bit of activity.

Contributors: Charlcie Delehanty; John David Delehanty; Robert Gillis; Bob Hagar; B. Logan; Ted Mack; Margaret & Bob McKinney; JoAnn Marshall; Charles Mitchell; Ray Payson; Bob Rottner; Bill Rutherford; Pat Taber; Armand Vaillancourt; Maurice Villeneuve; Carl Woodard; Dave Young.

LOONS-DUCKS: Red-necked Grebe is not expected in winter at Paul Smiths. On Feb. 3 two college students cross-country skiing on Osgood Pond found a struggling ice-covered bird in the snow on the pond and brought it to their dorm to thaw out. As seen in the cardboard box, the bird had a rather large, pointed bill, a dark cap, gray neck, white wing patches, and lobed feet. It was released in spunky condition on some open water in the Saranac River. About 300 Canada Geese wintered off Essex. They fed in fields during part of the day. Normally this species does not winter in our Region. One wild Mallard was flushed from the Saranac River on the Christmas count. There usually are some domestic

ones in town. Two Common Goldeneyes were at Tupper Dec. 2 and 9. A female Barrow's Goldeneye was identified by Mike Peterson and Jerry Rosenband on Jan. 9th at Westport. The bird was with female Common Goldeneyes so direct comparison was possible. A male Black Scoter was on Lake Abanake in early Feb. (R Mc) and one was at Westport about the same time. A Hooded Merganser was at Tupper Dec. 14 (CD). Bob Rottner spotted six Common Mergansers on the St. Regis River at Paul Smiths on Feb. 18, the day it was 45 below. The birds were below a small power turbine that provided open water.

HAWKS—ALCIDS: Some people felt there should be more Rough-legged Hawks in Dec. and Jan. in the Champlain Valley. Perhaps some went further south. Quite a few Ruffed Grouse were seen and some were eaten by Goshawks and humans. No Ring-necked Pheasants were reported from inland areas. Releases are not expected to overwinter in the more severe sections. A few Great Black-backed Gulls were along Lake Champlain.

PIGEONS—WOODPECKERS: A Mourning Dove showed up at a Paul Smiths feeder Feb. 25. Perhaps it came from a Gabriel's feeder where several often winter. **HAWK OWL:** a non-birder saw a long-tailed small owl with black around the face and yellow eyes sitting on an exposed perch in daylight at Keene (Tom Gardner). This was Dec. 31. Unfortunately nobody else got to see the bird. A Barred Owl was seen on the Saranac Lake Christmas count. The unusual point is not the species but that any owl would cooperate for the count. **GREAT GRAY OWL:** Charles Mitchell had one at Plattsburgh in his yard. He watched it 20 minutes Feb. 3 at 20 yards. It was large and gray with yellow eyes and prominent facial discs. Belted Kingfisher: one was at McColloms Dec. 8 on Osgood River and JoAnn Marshall spotted one on the St. Regis River at Paul Smiths Feb. 3 and 4. This could have been the same bird. There are lots of records of Pileated Woodpeckers. Both three-toed woodpeckers have been seen. The Saranac Lake Christmas Count was fortunate to have a Northern Three-toed Woodpecker.

FLYCATCHERS—STARLINGS: 60 Blue Jays at Indian Lake Feb. 3 was a high count. Common Ravens were noted at Paul Smiths, Indian Lake, Schroon Lake, and Tupper Lake among other places. 50 Black-capped Chickadees at Indian Lake in early Feb. was a high count. There were at least six Boreal Chickadees on the Elizabethtown Christmas count. Tufted Titmouse reports came from the Keene Valley feeder of F. McMurtrie on Feb. 4, 5, and again in early Feb. from an Elizabethtown feeder (*vide* Peterson). Three Am. Robins ate mountain ash berries in Tupper until they left in mid-Feb. (AV). Bob Hagar saw one Jan. 27 in a Saranac Lake apple tree. It was subsequently seen for about two weeks. Four Cedar Waxwings at Tupper on Dec. 8 were a good find (CD). 15 Starlings at the Tupper dump Dec. 15 were soon forced to leave by winter weather.

WEAVERS—SPARROWS: Red-winged Blackbird: several wintered at Tupper. Common Grackle: two daily at feeder in Tupper Dec. 1-Feb. 28 (CD). Brown-headed Cowbird: all winter at Tupper with a high of 54 on Dec. 22 (CD). One stayed at a Paul Smiths feeder until it was found frozen Dec. 27 (JM). One was at Indian Lake Feb. 3 (M & RMc). Cardinal: DC reports three that survived the winter at Tupper. One female was at her feeder and a pair at CW's feeder. RG had a pair that stayed until the end of Jan. and then disappeared. Purple Finch: a few, five stayed at Tupper from Dec. on. Pine Grosbeak: M and RMc had 200 Feb. 3 at Indian Lake. Bob notes that for Indian Lake and Speculator about 90 percent of Evening Grosbeaks were adult male and 95+ percent of Pine Grosbeaks were not adult males. PT had 100 feedings on ash samaras Feb. 18 at Westport. Common Redpoll was absent from most of the Region. Pine Siskins were scarce in the Champlain Valley but present in good numbers inland. Two Dark-eyed Juncos were at Tupper all winter as were five Tree Sparrows. One of the latter was at Indian Lake Feb. 3 and a few were in the Champlain Valley and at Elizabethtown. White-throated Sparrow: one Dec. 30-Feb. 9 at Tupper (CD). Snow Bunting: over 200 at Westport in Dec. (PT) and two at Tupper Feb. 28 (AV).

Paul Smiths, New York 12970