

increasing toward end of period. Purple Finch: three Stony Point Jan. 12; very few and very scattered. House Finch: seven WCC. Pine Grosbeak: five Stony Point Dec. 7; 37 WCC; 40 MCC; ten to 20 per day Massena; frequent in Pierrepont groups of three-101; 30 Stony Point feeding on red cedar berries with Evening Grosbeaks. Com. Redpoll: 200 in Massena Dec. 13; 40 WCC; 35 MCC; unusually abundant in Canton and vicinity; 45 overhead at Henderson Jan. 25; 50 Massena Feb. 22. Pine Siskin: 20 MCC; a few at feeders in Massena area through the period; very few in Henderson and vicinity. Am. Goldfinch: 34 WCC; 31 MCC; abundant throughout area of Canton and Pierrepont. Common at feeders in Henderson and vicinity. Rufous-sided Towhee: one WCC, a male at feeder near Watertown (L. Grant). Dark-eyed Junco: 20 WCC; two MCC. Tree Sparrow: 186 WCC; 35 MCC; two to four per day in Jan. decreasing in Feb. White-throated Sparrow: 18 WCC; one all winter at Dry Hill. Song Sparrow: three WCC. Lapland Longspur: one WCC (R. & J. Walker); one MCC. Snow Bunting: 679 WCC; 100 MCC; 50 to 60 per day through Jan. and none in Feb. in Massena area.

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REGION 7 — ADIRONDACK-CHAMPLAIN

THEODORE MACK

We had two periods of extreme weather conditions this winter. January was bitterly cold, while February was ridiculously warm. Lake Champlain was completely frozen over on January 14 which is the earliest date for this since the winter of 1900. December was cold also, with -33° F. Dec. 20; -33° F. Dec. 25; and -35° F. Dec. 26. A Taylor minimum-maximum thermometer registered 12 January days at -20° F. or colder at Paul Smiths.

February was unusually warm, or at least about ten days of it were. Temperatures at Paul Smiths were well into the forties and bare ground was to be found in areas outside the mountains. The sudden runoff caused considerable flooding at lower elevations where temperatures were in the fifties.

The chief effect of the prolonged extreme cold was to keep waterfowl out of the interior of the Region because even the rivers were heavily iced over. (Pickup trucks were driving on the Saranac River near Redford.) One Christmas count was sabotaged by the extreme condensation from relatively warm Lake Champlain water in contact with frigid air. The Plattsburgh count missed some common species because of this heavy fog.

The chief effect of the warm period in February was to open up water for waterfowl. Most land birds seem to be more oriented to migrate in relation to the length of daylight in 24 hours or to some other factor than warmth. This is fortunate because February and March did become more normal. Some species such as Red-winged Blackbirds did make earlier than usual appearances, however.

Contributors: Dirck Benson; Mary Benson; John Bruce; Rex Brugul; Francine Buckley; Paul Buckley; Geoffrey Carleton; Bernard Carmon; Karl Cerasoli; Greenleaf T. Chase; Linda Curtin; Chris Davis; Charlie Delehanty; George Dremeaux; Myra Dremeaux; Mark Gretch; Robert Hagar; Arnold James; Elspeth Johnson; Paul Koehler; Harold Klein; Bruce Landon; Connie Landon; Gary Lee; Margaret McKinney; Robert McKinney; Norman Mason; Brad

Paye; Ray Payson; John Peterson; Don Timmons; Jan Timmons; Jan Tryziak; Armand Vaillancourt; Maurice Villeneuve; Julia Woodard.

LOONS-DUCKS: A Great Blue Heron was at Horseshoe Lake Dec. 7 (MV) and another was seen thru the first week of Dec. at Paul Smiths (CL). 75 Canada Geese were on Lake Champlain Dec. 6 near Rouses Point and 15 were flying past. 72 were on the Plattsburgh Christmas count. One was headed south over Tupper Lake Dec. 23. About 23 Mallards were on the Little Chazy River Dec. 14. The Essex Co. survey of L. Champlain on Jan. 11 yielded 110 Canvasbacks while about 12 of this species were at Rouses Point Feb. 15 with groups of two to three scattered south to Ausable Pt. Feb. 28. The only Greater Scaup reported were two Jan. 11 on the Essex Co. waterfowl count. Fair numbers of Com. Goldeneye were on L. Champlain, the high being 82. Two stayed on a bit of open water in the Raquette R. at Tupper L. until Dec. 25. Four returned to the same reopened spot Feb. 19. M. & R. Mc had a good find with two Hooded Mergansers at L. Abanake near Indian L. Feb. 27 along with 12 Com. Mergansers. They were also fortunate to see an otter on the ice at the same lake. Four Com. Mergansers were at Tupper Feb. 22 and Champlain had good numbers with 149 at Plattsburgh Dec. 20.

HAWKS-ALCIDS: EJ & JP had three species of migrating hawks Feb. 22 at Discovery Mountain including two Red-tails doing display flights. Goshawks were reported from Paul Smiths, Gabriels, Moose River Plains, Tupper Lake, and about everywhere else. Mrs. Delehanty had her usual Sharp-shinned Hawk chasing feeder birds in Jan. and Feb. A few were in the Champlain Valley. A Cooper's Hawk was at Chapel Pond Jan. 25 (BC). There was a Red-tailed Hawk at Moose River Plains and three were tallied at E'town on the count. This was a flight year for Rough-legged Hawks but their numbers thinned suddenly as winter became more severe. One Dec. 3 at Tupper Marsh and another there Dec. 22 were unusual because of the inland location (CD). Twelve were seen on the Plattsburgh Christmas count while E'town only had one on theirs. An adult Bald Eagle was at Whallon's Bay of L. Champlain Jan. 7-9 (BP, EJ, JP, AJ). CD had one at Tupper Dec. 11 and one returned Feb. 27, the earliest she has had. Mark Gretch had a possible Gyrfalcon in Champlain Township Dec. 21. He reports it with some reservation because, as he states, 1) "I have never seen one before," 2) raptor coloration varies extremely, 3) "I do not consider myself an expert in raptor identification." His bird was robust, being the size of the Rough-legged Hawks in the area at the time. Tail was shorter and chunkier than that of a Goshawk. Color was uniformly gray above with light mottling in breast as opposed to barring. There was no blackish crown and underparts of tail lacked conspicuous bars. It stayed about some silos and tried unsuccessfully three times to take pigeons. It had a slow wing beat but traveled fast. There were three and possibly four Gyrfalcons at Ottawa this winter. Perhaps it was a flight year and this bird was part of it. Two Am. Kestrels were at Plattsburgh Dec. 20. Clinton Co. has them all winter. Gray Partridge were seen in groups of two to ten from Cooperville to Pt. au Roche (MG). Six seen at Westport Jan. 23 added a new species to the Essex Co. species list. A few Great Black-backed Gulls were along Lake Champlain as long as there was open water. 14 were at Plattsburgh Dec. 20. A single Herring Gull spent Feb. 19 at Tupper Lake.

PIGEONS-WOODPECKERS: MG reports good numbers of Mourning Doves in Clinton Co. with 20 in one flock feeding in corn Dec. 6. RP had one Screech and five Great Horned Owls Dec. 20 at Plattsburgh. A gray phase Screech Owl died at Willsboro Jan. 6. One of this species was at Wadhams (LC). A Snowy Owl was seen at Lake Placid near the Heart Lake Road Jan. 13 (RB). A Short-eared Owl at Essex on Jan. 7 was seen by several people. A Saw-whet Owl was calling at Paul Smiths Feb. 17 and another was calling at Chasm Falls in Feb. (JT). A few of both Black-backed Three-toed Woodpeckers were seen. C. Davis found a No. Three-toed Woodpecker off the Averyville Road at Lake Placid Jan. 3 and RH found a female at Chubb R. Jan. 24. A male was at the Chubb Feb. 1 (DB, MB, GTC).

FLYCATCHERS-STARLINGS: John Bruce found an early E. Phoebe Feb. 22 at Crown Point. Horned Larks were abundant in Champlain Townships of Clinton Co. all winter. They

appeared in Gabriels in late Feb. which is early. Gray Jays were at Moose R. Plains. Blue Jay: max 35 screaming in alarm over a dead jay at the foot of a tree Jan. 10 (CD). Com. Ravens were widespread and really an every day bird from Moose R. Plains and Indian L. to the Union Falls Flow. There was a very strong influx of Black-capped Chickadees that stayed all winter. Boreal Chickadees were easy to find. White-breasted and Red-breasted Nuthatches were about equal in numbers even in the deep forest. This is unusual. Two Mockingbirds were seen on the Dec. 20 Plattsburgh count. They are to be expected there. Am. Robin: two Dec. 20 at Plattsburgh; one Dec. 27 at E'town; three Macomb Park in Clinton Co. Jan. 17 with the first migrants there the third week of Feb., along with Red-wings and Grackles. Bohemian Waxwings were reported at least ten times. CD had a single bird at Tupper L. Dec. 16. Clinton Co. had a few. The last was a flock of 44 at Westport Jan. 24 (FB, PB). This species is expected in winter at Ottawa. They have been at Essex three winters so this may be indicative of an extension of the winter range. 24 Cedar Waxwings were seen on Dec. 20 at Plattsburgh. Five No. Shrikes were reported including one at Tupper and one at Saranac L. JP banded two.

VIREOS-WARBLES: no reports.

WEAVERS-SPARROWS: Red-winged Blackbirds were found on the Christmas counts. The first migrants were early. Ten arrived at Bay Pond near Paul Smiths Feb. 19. Within two days the species was seen in many areas as a migrant. Two Rusty Blackbirds were at Plattsburgh Dec. 20 (HK, PK); one at Lake Placid Dec. 25 (BC); and two were at Wadhams Feb. 19 (LC). There were a lot of Clinton Co. Brown-headed Cowbirds all winter. Purple Finches were elsewhere for the season. Plattsburgh had 85 House Finches Dec. 20, indicating a successful range expansion. Pine Grosbeaks were still around at the end of Feb. A Hoary Redpoll was at a Westport feeder with about 30 Com. Redpolls Feb. 8 (MD, GD). Another was at E'town Jan. 18-19 (JT, DT); one at Moriah Jan. 19; four at another feeder in E'town Feb. 4 (GC, EJ). Thousands of Com. Redpolls reported from Whallonsburgh Feb. 12 by the Hudson-Mohawk Bird Club. Pine Siskin numbers increased rapidly toward the end of Feb. Both crossbills were at the Chubb R. but very scarce elsewhere. CD had ten White-winged Crossbills at Saranac L. Feb. 4. A few Field, White-throated, and Song Sparrows wintered at feeders, as did a Fox Sparrow at Tupper L. MG reports lots of Lapland Longspurs Dec. 21 to Jan. 10 in Clinton Co. It was a good Snow Bunting season.

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REGION 8 – HUDSON-MOHAWK

BILL COOK

It was the coldest Christmas on record in Albany, -17° F. followed by a mid-winter heat wave in February. Residents of Fulton County near Johnstown greeted Christmas day with December's minimum temperature of -31° F. The coldest day of the period was still to come as the mercury hit -40° (that's the point where fahrenheit and centigrade are equivalent) on January 13 in Cambridge, Washington County. But February changed all that. Warmth arrived early in the month, (53° F. at Albany on February 2) and lasted until nearly March. The maximum temperature for the period was 70° F., set at higher elevations in Columbia and Schoharie Counties around February 19. A 66° F. reading at Albany on that date beat the old record by eleven degrees.