

was no way of knowing if it was one of the previous visitors. In Norwich, at one station on 4 Feb "a very light (white) colored" bird was observed. On 20 Feb a "very light and frosty colored male (pink on breast, crown and rump) bird" was reported and on 28 Feb "seen at 50 ft. with 8x binoculars, preening with back towards me, turned to side also, very light streaking on the sides down near undertail coverts, sides almost totally white, no streaking on undertail coverts or rump . . . totally light pink" (JL). Another Hoary Redpoll was reported banded in Endicott. No details. Pine Siskin: three TCC; no other Christmas Counts reported them; there were scattered reports of small groups at feeding stations from Broome and Tioga Cos. and one report from Oneonta. Am. Goldfinch: 178 BCC; 30 CCC; 64 DOCC; 237 TCC; large flocks (up to 150) reported frequently both in the wild and at feeders and from all areas. Red Crossbill: one DOCC the only report. White-winged Crossbill: none reported on a Christmas Count. There were six reports at other times during the period: 23 Dec and 16 Jan from Oneonta (MD, MD & KW), 22 Feb Binghamton (CJ), 24 Feb and 27 Feb Delhi at same feeding station by same observer (MC) and two other Broome Co. reports with no details. Rufous-sided Towhee: one DOCC only report for season. Savannah Sparrow: one TCC only report for season. Dark-eyed Junco: 135 BCC, 50 CCC, 21 DOCC, 92 TCC; the usual number of feeding station reports from all areas through the period. "Oregon" Junco: one daily in Port Dickinson (KP). Tree Sparrow: 219 BCC, 202 CCC, 98 DOCC, 227 TCC; as usual reports from all sections throughout period. Chipping Sparrow: three CCC, only report. Field Sparrow: one TCC, only report. White-crowned Sparrow: one DOCC, one TCC, White-throated Sparrow: 36 BCC, one CCC, four DOCC, one TCC; many reports from Broome Co. feeding stations of anywhere from one to 12 birds staying all winter; otherwise one report from Norwich, one from Newark Valley and one from Oneonta. Swamp Sparrow: one BCC, one TCC. Song Sparrow: two BCC, 15 CCC, none DOCC, three TCC; only three other reports all winter, these from Broome and Tioga Cos. This seems to be a low count for this species. Snow Bunting: 77 CCC, no others on Christmas Counts; 11 other reports all during the season, a few from each area. One flock between Oneonta and Davenport was estimated to be between 200 or 300 birds (MD). Another in Otselic (DM) and one in Johnson City to be over 100 (CW).

Friendsville Stage, Binghamton, New York 13903

REGION 5 — ONEIDA LAKE BASIN

PAUL DeBENEDICTIS

The winter 1981-82 was, in general, mild and ornithologically dull. The cold weather that set in just prior to the Christmas Bird Counts was not relieved until mid-February. Precipitation for the winter was just about normal, even though this February was the seventh driest on record at Syracuse; total snowfall had just surpassed the annual average of 110 inches at the end of the season. January was very cold, averaging nearly 9° below normal and was the second coldest recorded at Syracuse. December and February were more nearly normal. The first, all too brief warm spell, came 15 February, but lasted only about 30 hours. The cold weather and persistent northerly winds left most waters frozen by late December. Oswego Harbor was full of ice for much of January. When the ice cleared, only a moderate number of waterfowl appeared, although this number included both Barrow's Goldeneye and King Eider. Dabbling ducks were very scarce this winter. The closing of many landfills, especially in Oswego, forces us to adopt a new base line for winter gull populations, especially of the "white-

winged" gulls. It is now very difficult to compare numbers versus those prior to the mid-1970's.

Landbird numbers were unimpressive given the size of the fall winter finch flight. This is probably due to a general paucity of cones, seeds and berries. Raptors were widespread but not very numerous. Short-eared Owls were reported from many more localities than normal but not in very large numbers. Snowy Owls were scarce. Most half-hardy species were few in number this winter and several, such as Winter Wren and Rusty Blackbird, went unreported. Others, notably Killdeer, were noted only at the start and very end of the season. With two exceptions, winter finches showed a steady decline through the winter. One of these exceptions, White-winged Crossbill, departed in mid-December and returned in February. The other, Common Redpoll, though present in the fall, did not become numerous at feeders until late January, when their numbers became most impressive. Equally impressive were the many Hoary Redpolls which accompanied them.

House Finch has become so widespread in the region that winter reports of Purple Finch no longer can be accepted without raised eyebrows, especially in a season when none of the local expert birders could find the latter. One local House Finch mystery was partially solved this winter. Dorothy Crumb has a summer resident House Finch population which deserts northern Pompey township in December. On 15 January your editor found, in his urban Syracuse driveway, a dead House Finch wearing a band attached by Mrs. Crumb in November 1981. Now we know where at least some of her birds go!

Some notable rarities were found this season: Lesser Black-backed and Thayer's Gulls, Barn Owl, Say's Phoebe and Hoary Redpoll. Several goodies like Bald Eagle, Boreal Chickadee and Bohemian Waxwing added more spice to an otherwise bland season. A total of 108 species were reported this season.

Abbreviations: arr--arrival; CBC--Christmas Bird Count; max--maximum(a); NPT--Northern Pompey Township; Onon--Onondaga; Syr--Syracuse.

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LOONS--DUCKS: Com. Loon: last two Skaneateles Lake, 9 Jan. Red-necked Grebe: last two Onon Lake 17 Dec. Horned Grebe: scattered singles all winter, none persistent. Pied-billed Grebe: one near Old Forge 28 Dec (EVD), one irregularly at Baldwinsville through. Great Blue Heron: last Howland's Island 1 Jan. Canada Goose: max 111 Skaneateles Lake mid-Jan, very few in Feb. Gadwall: only one or two/day Oswego. Pintail: arr Baldwinsville 27 Feb. Green-winged Teal: three singles, none persistent, in Jan, arr about 25 Feb Clay. Blue-winged Teal: last 19 Dec Clinton CBC. Am. Wigeon: last Oswego 13 Dec. Redhead: one to 12/day Oswego. Canvasback: max 65 mid-Feb Oswego. Greater Scaup: max 1074 on 4 Feb Oswego. Lesser Scaup: one to seven/day Oswego. Com. Goldeneye: max 250 early Feb Oswego. Barrow's Goldeneye: female 14 Jan, male 7-14 Feb, both Oswego. Bufflehead: max 81 mid-Jan Oswego. Oldsquaw: max 54 Oswego 30 Jan. King Eider: female Derby Hill 13 Dec (JH), imm male 7-14 Feb Oswego joined by female on 13 Feb. White-winged Scoter: one Oswego 20 Dec, then 16 there in mid-Feb. Ruddy Duck: last Onon Lake 17 Dec. Com. Merganser: max 1743 Oswego 30 Jan.

HAWKS--ALCIDS: Goshawk: about six reported. Rough-legged Hawk: one or two/day all winter. Bald Eagle: unmarked imm Cazenovia Lake 25 Dec (GH), Onon Lake 16-24 Jan

(mob), probably only one bird involved. Marsh Hawk: reported without details Dec and Feb Holland Patent, evidently the best area for overwintering raptors this winter. Ruffed Grouse: very scarce. Turkey: second-hand reports Holland Patent most of winter and single Clinton CBC 19 Dec. Am. Coot: single Baldwinsville 7-8 Feb only report. Killdeer: two sightings only, none persistent. Com. Snipe: two reports to mid-Jan. Glaucous Gull: max three Oswego River 15 Feb. Iceland Gull: max four there 19 Dec. Great Black-backed Gull: max 175 Oswego much of winter. **LESSER BLACK-BACKED GULL**: very dark adult Fulton 14-28 Jan (FGS, DWC, JH, mob), fifth regional record. **THAYER'S GULL**: imm Fulton 4-14 Feb (FGS, photographed DWC and PDeB, mob), is about the fourth substantiated regional record of a species nearly annual along Lake Ontario and the Oswego River. Herring Gull: mid-winter population about 1200 at Oswego. Ring-billed Gull: mid-winter population about 2000 at Oswego, but numbers regularly reduced for short periods.

PIGEONS-WOODPECKERS: Mourning Dove: several counts of 100-120 per day. **BARN OWL**: a belated report of nesting near Oriskany, adults last seen early Dec (*vide* DWC), first confirmed nest in region since 1968. Snowy Owl: one Wampsville 22 Dec (JL), three females Oswego most of winter (mob). Long-eared Owl: single NPT 2 Jan only (DWC). Short-eared Owl: about ten reported from five localities, best numbers and most persistent near Rome/Holland Patent. Saw-whet Owl: one Biddlecome 14 Feb (MSR), another Holland Patent 27 Feb (EVD). Red-bellied Woodpecker: one from Tug Hill Plateau on 7 Feb (MSR) unusually far north. Red-headed Woodpecker: only report on Clinton CBC 19 Dec.

FLYCATCHERS-STARLINGS: **SAY'S PHOEBE**: the one in Marcellus died night of 20/21 Dec, specimen to American Museum of Natural History. Horned Lark: last Onon Co. 20 Dec, arr there mid-Feb. Com. Raven: two on Old Forge CBC. Boreal Chickadee: one Forestport 3 Jan (MSR) and another NPT 8-22 Jan (DWC) are far from nesting areas. Tufted Titmouse: more numerous at feeders than usual, and one at Old Forge was unusually far north. Red-breasted Nuthatch: one or two/day through the winter. Carolina Wren: three reported Jan, two, all different, in Feb. Am. Robin: very scarce this winter, mid-winter counts only in teens away from our known winter roost. E. Bluebird: two males, one female Carpenter's Brook 31 Jan (FGS). Bohemian Waxwing: eight at Oswego on 6 Dec with large group of Cedar Waxwings (DWC), two at Clinton on 9 Jan (BDiS). No. Shrike: about ten reported, widespread but not very persistent.

VIREOS-WARBLEDERS: Yellow-rumped Warbler: two reports, last Clinton CBC 19 Dec, at feeder.

WEAVERS-SPARROWS: Red-winged Blackbird: disappeared in late Dec, a few arr in late Feb. Com. Grackle: one at feeder NPT through Jan; arr Syr about 15 Feb. Brown-headed Cowbird: last 19 Jan. Evening Grosbeak: very few all winter, especially unusual because highest numbers were in Dec. Pine Grosbeak: max 50 Holland Patent in Dec, very few reported after early Feb. Com. Redpoll: numbers low until late Jan, when widespread at feeders; DWC banded about 650 at her feeder. **HOARY REDPOLL**: unprecedented invasion—DWC banded five and saw three others NPT plus three Onon Hill in Feb (JH), one Oswego 13 Feb (GM), one Beaver Lake early Feb (Roy Slack). Pine Siskin: except from Clinton, only reports 25 Oswego on 13 Dec (GM), one NPT on 20 Feb (DWC); this pattern also evident from feeder surveys. Am. Goldfinch: one to ten/day after Dec. White-winged Crossbill: 20 DH on 13 Dec (JH), then none until early Feb when up to 20/day central Oswego Co. Dark-eyed Junco: max about ten/day. Tree Sparrow: max about 30/day. White-crowned Sparrow: last Clinton CBC 19 Dec. White-throated Sparrow: widespread and successful in ones and twos at feeders. Swamp Sparrow: last two South Onon on 21 Jan. Song Sparrow: one to four/day, very few reported in Feb. Lapland Longspur: three Clinton CBC, then two Fulton 4 Feb and two NPT on 9 Feb, all with Snow Buntings. Snow Bunting: max 1500 NPT on 9 Feb and 3500 + 500 Eaton on 28 Feb.

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