

on their Christmas counts. An E. Meadowlark was at Essex 16 Jan (AL, GR). Red-winged Blackbird: several from Bay Pond and Tupper Lake to Champlain Valley. A male No. Oriole was at Moriah 10 and 11 Dec (GC). Com. Grackle: two Plattsburgh; one Tupper 6 Jan. Brown-headed Cowbird: three at Piseco Lake, 16 at Tupper, 37 at Plattsburgh, seven at Elizabethtown. Cardinal: seven Saranac Lake; 32 Plattsburgh; two Tupper Lake; four at Piseco. There were fair numbers of Evening Grosbeaks with over 450 on two Christmas counts. The only Purple Finch report was 12 at Plattsburgh, where 102 House Finches were also reported. This was an excellent Pine Grosbeak year with 136 at Saranac Lake and 78 at Tupper Lake. A Hoary Redpoll with white rump and frosty look was at Tupper Lake 25 Jan-24 Feb (CD). Another was seen by several in Gabriel's at Dave Young's feeder. There were plenty of Com. Redpolls. High count was 216 at Plattsburgh. Both Pine Siskin and Am. Goldfinch were extremely localized. There were 43 of the former at Elizabethtown and 137 of the latter at Plattsburgh, while these species were absent in most areas. Red Crossbill: nine 6 Jan Tupper Lake and ten 20 Dec at Macomb Park in Clinton Co. White-winged Crossbill: 70 feeding on white and red pine cones 12 Dec at Ausable Point on Lake Champlain; 25 12 Dec and 3 Jan feeding on spruce cones which CD saw them remove, fly to a perch, position the cone between their feet and then feed on the seeds. Dark-eyed Juncos were hard to find. Six were seen on the Elizabethtown count and three at Plattsburgh. 87 Tree Sparrows were counted at Elizabethtown. They were generally scarce. A White-throated Sparrow spent Dec at a Tupper feeder. A Song Sparrow was seen on the Elizabethtown count. No. Clinton Co. had up to six Lapland Longspurs. The Snow Buntings seemed to have stayed near Malone where there was a flock of over 200.

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REGION 8 — HUDSON-MOHAWK

BILL COOK

Numerous exotic species in and around Region 8 this season made winter '81-'82 most interesting for the cold weather birder. Temperatures never got as low as last year, but the rainfall persisted as a snowy winter possibly signaled an end to the drought conditions of the past few years. The snow seemed to intensify feeder activity, which included a Dickcissel in Berne, a Pine Warbler in Colonie, a Red-bellied Woodpecker in Amsterdam, a Carolina Wren in Glenville, a mysterious blue-colored grosbeak in Cobleskill, an European Goldfinch in Charlton and an Ivory Gull, described as the "feeder bird of the century" in Saratoga Springs.

Outside the region, but near enough and regular enough for viewing by many local birders, were a Harris' Sparrow in Dutchess Co., a Golden-crowned Sparrow in Holyoke, Mass., and a Hawk Owl in Keene, Essex Co.

An Ivory Gull at a feeder? Yes, and not only that, but the nearest open water was estimated to be at least ten miles away! This unlikely feeder bird appeared near Saratoga Springs on 14 January. It was banded the next day and its wing cord of 342 mm indicated that it was an adult male.

A bird that would more likely be expected at your feeder, assuming that you put out your sunflower seeds in South America, is the Blue-black Grosbeak (*Cyanocompsa cyanoides*). A blue grosbeak that was not our North American

Blue Grosbeak was photographed at Cliff Collins' feeder in Cobleskill on 19 December. The photographs were circulated among local birders, compared to specimens of Blue-black Grosbeak in the State Museum at Albany, sent to the National Museum and to the American Museum of Natural History. Local lack of expertise with South American birds has left this poor waif unnamed as yet. No such problem occurred when snapshots of an European Goldfinch were examined. The bird was observed by Paul Hartman at his feeder near Charlton, Saratoga Co. in 10 January. Whereas the tropical grosbeak must be considered as escaped cagebird or stowaway from a banana boat, the goldfinch is potentially a wild bird.

An albinistic House Finch appeared for one day, 4 January, at a feeder in Ghent. Its creamy white body, lacking any streaking, was marked only by a tawny buckskin head and shoulders, somewhat reminiscent of a Snow Bunting. Albinism may also be behind some noted identification difficulties. Many reports of Hoary Redpoll, when subjected to the scrutiny of local birders, turned out to be light-colored Common Redpolls. This observer encountered an albinistic Common Redpoll (all white except for the forehead which, lacking melanin, was brilliant pink rather than deep red) in Keene, Essex Co. on 16 February.

Still, some *bona fide* Hoary Redpolls did invade our region this winter. In addition, we were host to multitudes of Pine Grosbeaks, Common Redpolls, Snow Buntings, some Pine Siskins, Red Crossbills, White-winged Crossbills, Bohemian Waxwings, Northern Shrikes, Snowy Owls, a Boreal Chickadee and an irruption of Black-capped Chickadees. Lesser Black-backed Gulls seem to be becoming commonplace these days and Scott Terrell's report of a first-year bird tantalizingly suggests the possibility of this species breeding in North America.

No less than seven Christmas Bird Counts and the New York State Waterfowl Count held in the Capitol District were submitted for this report, resulting in an abundance of data and a total of 116 species which is 19 more than last winter. One of the more interesting species encountered was the Black-hooded Parakeet from the Alan Devoe count. Was it just an escape or could it be from that wild population apparently established in Ontario?

SUMMARY OF AREA CHRISTMAS COUNTS AND WATERFOWL COUNT

Date	Count	Abbreviation	Total Species	Approx. Numbers	Observers	Party Hours
19 Dec 81	Schenectady	SNCBC	59	14,500	33	92
19 Dec 81	Alan Devoe	ADCBC	67	8,474	30	103
19 Dec 81	Cobleskill	COCBC	43	4,292	27	
23 Dec 81	Coxsackie	CXCBC	61	8,394	12	37
26 Dec 81	So. Rennselaer	SRCBC	58	24,701	41	
31 Dec 81	Fort Plains	FPCBC	43	2,739	12	64
2 Jan 82	Troy	TRCBC	51	7,891	20	52
10 Jan 82	Waterfowl	NYSWC	8	2,724	12+	28

With 67 species, Alan Devoe set a new record for themselves, Schenectady tied their record set in 1977 and Cobleskill celebrated its first count.

The influx of numerous northern species indicated reduced food supplies

through the winter, but rumors of Barred Owls literally falling out of the trees and in broad daylight is a bit disturbing. One such specimen from Glenmont now rests in the Columbia-Greene Community College collection. Disappointing also was the failure to find any Barn Owls on a 15 February search on the Cox-sackie Flats. Lower numbers of wintering kinglets was another negative noted, and no hardy Hermit Thrushes remained around this winter, although a catbird was found for a Christmas count once again.

The reduced food supplies apparently made feeder activity of interest to more than just birders. A Starling at a feeder in Niskayuna became a holiday meal for a Cooper's Hawk on Valentine's Day. A well-fed female Sharp-shinned Hawk fared less well, however, when a Cobleskill feeder tender fired and felled her. Bill Cleveland, the local Christmas count compiler, tactfully took some action concerning this inappropriate deed, and also had the resourcefulness to ship the frozen specimen to Columbia-Greene Community College.

Duck hunters from Embough Bay in Catskill noted high numbers of Pintails, the presence of unusual species including Oldsquaw and Bufflehead, but reduced numbers of Canvasbacks and teal in the 1981 season. Reports of Lincoln's Sparrow and Whistling Swan were dismissed by the records committee as probable immature Swamp Sparrow and Mute Swan based on insufficient supporting evidence.

Good Birding and may the bluebirds blissfully breeding in your backyard afford affection to your avian Atlas adventures.

Contributors: Ken Able (KA), V. & B. Able, Douglas Ayres, Roberta Bernstein, Rachael Brody, Arlene & Tom Brown (A & TB), Bob Budliger (BB), Bill Cook, Juanita Cook (JC), Bill Cleveland, Rena Dodd, Kate Dunham, Peter Feinberg, R. Frazier (RF), Barbara & Hugo Gardina (B & HG), M. & A. Giddings (M. & AG), Bob Goodrich (BG), Elisabeth Grace, Andrew & Richard Guthrie (RPG), Paul Hebert (PH), Philip Ingalls, Ron LaForce (RL), Betty Laros, William Lee (WL), Elaine Mansell, Tom Palmer (TP), Elsie Powell, Jon Powell (JP), Alice Ross (AR), Walt Sabin (WS), Shirley Shadow (SS), Linda & Scott Terrill (L & ST), L. Thomas (LT), M. & B. Ulmer, Peter Worthington (PW), Robert Yunick (RY), all of the Dial-A-Bird reporters and CBC participants.

LOONS-DUCKS: Great Blue Heron: one Collins L 9 Dec; one Fort Plains 24 Dec. Mute Swan: one CXCBC on Hudson R (BB). Canada Goose 63 SNCBC; 106 ADCBC; 200 CXCBC; 600 TRCBC; 346 NYSWC; six other reports total perhaps a thousand birds. Brant: three NYSWC. Snow Goose: one ADCBC; several Tomhannock Res 5 Dec; a blue morph sighted in Cohoes on 28 Feb may be an escape (PH). Mallard: three SNCBC; 99 ADCBC; two COCBC; 228 CXCBC; 110 SRCBC; 14 FPCBC; 369 TRCBC; 888 NYSWC. Black Duck: 11 SNCBC; 24 ADCBC; 278 CXCBC; 17 SRCBC; 46 TRCBC; 477 NYSWC. Pintail: four CXCBC; nine NYSWC; a report of 300 on Embough Bay 12-13 Dec with equal numbers of Blacks and Mallards being amazing if accurate (JP). Wood Duck: reported from Ghent and Hudson 13-14 Dec. Redhead: four Cohoes Fall, Mohawk R 19 Jan (L & ST); five there 25 Jan (SS); 12 there 11 Feb (KA, ST). Ring-necked Duck: Hudson 13 Dec (A & TB). Canvasback: 40 NYSWC; 500 Embough Bay 8 Jan; 20 there 10 Jan. Greater Scaup: one TRCBC. Lesser Scaup: one SRCBC; two Cohoes 16 Jan. Com. Goldeneye: one ADCBC; seven TRCBC; 18 NYSWC; one Cohoes 19 Jan; two New Baltimore 28 Feb. Oldsquaw: one ADCBC; one SRCBC. Com. Merganser: two ADCBC; three CXCBC; 50 SRCBC; 11 FPCBC; 40 TRCBC; 78 NYSWC; 50 Cohoes 19 Jan; eight New Baltimore 21-28 Feb displaying courting behavior. Red-breasted Merganser: Tomhannock Res 5 Dec.

HAWKS-ALCIDS: Goshawk: two SNCBC; two COCBC; one SRCBC; seven other reports

from Chatham Jan-Feb; Cossackie 15 Feb, Colonie 8 Feb, Guilderland 13 Feb and Albany 20 Feb. Sharp-shinned Hawk: one SNCBC; two ADCBC; five CXCBC; two SRCBC; three TRCBC; one taking a Starling from a Saratoga feeder; four other reports from Charlton 26 Dec, Burnt Hills 23 Jan, Ghent 3 Jan and Cobleskill feeder 30 Jan. Cooper's Hawk: one SNCBC; one ADCBC; one COCBC; one FPCBC; one TRCBC; four other reports from Albany Pine Bush 10 Feb, Niskayuna feeder 14 Feb, Cossackie 15 Feb and Guilderland picnic table 18 Feb. Red-tailed Hawk: 63 SNCBC; 52 ADCBC; 12 COCBC; 28 CXCBC; 81 SRCBC; 17 FPCBC; 42 TRCBC. Red-shouldered Hawk: one SNCBC. Rough-legged Hawk: nine SNCBC; seven ADCBC; two COCBC; 14 CXCBC; six SRCBC; three FPCBC; one TRCBC; 16 max Cossackie Flats 13 Feb; one banded there 15 Feb; seven other reports. Bald Eagle: one SRCBC; one adult near Carlisle, Schoharie Co. 15 Jan (RY). Marsh Hawk: two ADCBC; one CXCBC; one Columbia Co. near Hudson R 19 Dec; Hudson 3-7 Jan; two Cossackie Flats 28 Feb. Merlin: one Ghent 7 Dec, a late date (JC). Am. Kestrel: eight SNCBC; 14 ADCBC; eight COCBC; 21 CXCBC; 18 SRCBC; nine FPCBC; four TRCBC; down in numbers on Cossackie Flats (RPG). Ruffed Grouse: three SNCBC; 12 ADCBC; three COCBC; two CXCBC; eight SRCBC; two FPCBC; 12 TRCBC. Ring-necked Pheasant: three ADCBC; three CXCBC; 13 SRCBC. Turkey: 29 ADCBC; one CXCBC; pair feeding Duanesburg 14-17 Jan, hen with 14 young Craryville cornfield 13 Feb; pair Central Bridge 16 Jan; several other reports from Altamont, Acra and Kinderhook. Com. Snipe: one SNCBC. Glaucous Gull: a first-year bird at Colonie made the TRCBC; a second-year bird was there 10 Feb. Iceland Gull: two Colonie 10 Jan (WL). Great Black-backed Gull: one ADCBC; five CXCBC; five SRCBC; 15 SRCBC. LESSER BLACK-BACKED GULL: a third-year bird at Colonie 5 Dec (WS)-6 Dec (RL); a first-year bird at Cohoes Fall 19 Jan (ST). Herring Gull: 177 SNCBC; 35 ADCBC; 39 CXCBC; 19 SRCBC; one FPCBC; 194 TRCBC. Ring-billed Gull: 44 SNCBC; one ADCBC; 33 CXCBC; 15 SRCBC; vacated Colonie by 19 Jan (RY). IVORY GULL: adult male Coleman feeder Saratoga Springs 14 Jan, photographed and banded 15 Jan (RY).

PIGEONS-WOODPECKERS: Rock Dove: 582 SNCBC; 432 ADCBC; 380 COCBC; 264 CXCBC; 2463 SRCBC; 349 FPCBC; 1405 TRCBC. Mourning Dove: 538 SNCBC; 1025 ADCBC; 272 COCBC; 595 CXCBC; 1132 SRCBC; 161 FPCBC; 217 TRCBC. Black-hooded Parakeet: one ADCBC. Screech Owl: four SNCBC; one ADCBC; one CXCBC; five SRCBC; three TRCBC; one Colonie 28 Jan; one Bramanville, Schoharie Co. thru; one whistled mid-day in bright sunshine Coeymans 28 Feb. Great Horned Owl: three SNCBC; two ADCBC; six COCBC; five SRCBC; one TRCBC; three other reports from Niskayuna, Rotterdam and Ghent. Snowy Owl: one FPCBC; one Niskayuna 16 Dec; one perched on roof in Colonie 6 Feb; one Altamont 20 Feb. Barred Owl: one SNCBC; one ADCBC; one road kill Glenmont 21 Jan; one Rotterdam 29 Jan. Short-eared Owl: one Fort Plains 1 Jan; three Cossackie Flats 13 Feb. Saw-whet Owl: one Niskayuna 15 Jan; one road kill Athens 10 Jan. Belted Kingfisher: five SNCBC; one ADCBC; one COCBC; two CXCBC; three SRCBC; four TRCBC; one New Baltimore 4 Jan and 4 Feb. Com. Flicker: nine SNCBC; eight ADCBC; 11 CXCBC; six SRCBC; seven FPCBC; three TRCBC; four reports thru Feb. Pileated Woodpecker: five SNCBC; seven ADCBC, three COCBC; one CXCBC; two SRCBC; three TRCBC; at least 13 other reports. Red-bellied Woodpecker: one CXCBC (RPG); one Scotch Bush, Montgomery Co thru Jan and Feb (TP); one Vosberg's Marsh 15 Feb (BG); one Greendale 23 Feb (A & TB). Red-headed Woodpecker: two ADCBC (B & HG); one Rotterdam feeder 12 Jan-1 Feb. Yellow-bellied Sapsucker: one ADCBC; one SRCBC. Hairy Woodpecker: 45 SNCBC new max; 33 ADCBC; 30 COCBC; eight CXCBC; 36 SRCBC; 17 FPCBC; 14 TRCBC. Downy Woodpecker: 113 SNCBC; 102 ADCBC; 54 COCBC; 44 CXCBC; 133 SRCBC; 41 FPCBC; 68 TRCBC.

FLYCATCHERS-STARLINGS: E. Phoebe: one ADCBC New Baltimore (RPG). Horned Lark: 12 SNCBC; 833 ADCBC; 31 COCBC; 240 CXCBC; 127 SRCBC; 215 FPCBC; 101 TRCBC. Blue Jay: 512 SNCBC; 360 ADCBC; 288 COCBC; 133 CXCBC; 549 SRCBC; 87 FPCBC; 312 TRCBC. Com. Raven: Berlin, Rensselaer Co. 7 Dec (AR). Com. Crow: 1443

SNCBC; 431 ADCBC; 246 COCBC; 186 CXCBC; 1070 SRCBC; 48 FPCBC; 269 TRCBC. Black-capped Chickadee: 805 SNCBC; 309 ADCBC; 444 COCBC; 151 CXCBC; 633 SRCBC; 172 FPCBC; 379 TRCBC. **BOREAL CHICKADEE**: one came daily to a feeder in Hagadorn Mills, Saratoga Co 13 Feb (*vide* Bob Kirker). Tufted Titmouse: 64 ADCBC; 21 COCBC; 28 CXCBC; 74 SRCBC; seven FPCBC; 36 TRCBC. White-breasted Nuthatch: 87 SNCBC; 53 ADCBC; 54 COCBC; 33 CXCBC; 121 SRCBC; 21 FPCBC; 49 TRCBC. Red-breasted Nuthatch: ten SNCBC; three ADCBC; four COCBC; four CXCBC; one SRCBC; one FPCBC; five TRCBC; scarce compared to last year's invasion (RY). Brown Creeper: four SNCBC; one ADCBC; two COCBC; three CXCBC; nine SRCBC; one FPCBC; three TRCBC; becoming more common locally in the winter (RPG). Winter Wren: one CXCBC. Carolina Wren: one CXCBC; one Glenville feeder 16-21 Jan (RY). Mockingbird: 55 SNCBC; 37 ADCBC; one COCBC; 36 CXCBC; 65 SRCBC; two FPCBC; 29 TRCBC. Gray Catbird: one SNCBC. Brown Thrasher: one Amsterdam 2 Jan (TP); one Niskayuna 11 Jan (RY). Am. Robin: 33 SNCBC; 135 ADCBC; ten COCBC; 373 CXCBC; 206 SRCBC; three FPCBC; seven TRCBC. E. Bluebird: seven SNCBC; 32 ADCBC; three CXCBC; eight SRCBC; two Ravena 24 Dec-16 Jan; male investigating house Central Bridge 27 Feb; four Unionville 1-26 Feb; six Voorheesville 6-14 Feb; one male, two females Acra 25 Feb; 21 more reports include Charlton, Altamont, Earlton and Castleton. Golden-crowned Kinglet: one CXCBC; Castleton 1-3 Jan. Ruby-crowned Kinglet: one Cobleskill feeder 17 Jan; one Cohoes 15 Feb. **BOHEMIAN WAXWING**: 40 near W. Charlton 12-19 Jan (RY, mob). Cedar Waxwing: one ADCBC; 60 CXCBC; four SRCBC; only four other reports indicate lower numbers locally this winter. No. Shrike: one SNCBC; two CXCBC; one Guelderland Center thru (KA); one Amsterdam 27 Dec (TP); imm Albany 1 Jan; adult Cossackie 5 Feb; one Glenville 9 Dec (PW). Starling: 6813 SNCBC new max; 1248 ADCBC; 497 COCBC; 1341 CXCBC; 14,216 SRCBC; 356 FPCBC; 1388 TRCBC.

VIREOS—WARBLERS: Yellow-rumped Warbler: one Central Bridge feeder 1-8 Jan; one Catskill 10 Jan. Pine Warbler: one Colonie feeder 22 Dec-17 Jan (LT).

WEAVERS—SPARROWS: House Sparrow: 859 SNCBC; 838 ADCBC; 523 COCBC; 327 CXCBC; 813 SRCBC; 141 FPCBC; 845 TRCBC. E. Meadowlark: one SNCBC; 25 ADCBC; two COCBC; nine CXCBC; one FPCBC. Red-winged Blackbird: one SNCBC; eight ADCBC; four SRCBC; one TRCBC; female Rensselaer 19 Feb (RPG). Rusty Blackbird: two males and two females at Hagadorn Mills 2-12 Jan (KA). Com. Grackle: two SNCBC; one ADCBC; one SRCBC; Castleton Dec-Jan; Rensselaer feeder 23 Feb. Brown-headed Cowbird: 14 SNCBC; 19 ADCBC; six CXCBC; 160 SRCBC; ten FPCBC. Cardinal: 257 SNCBC new max; 164 ADCBC; 35 COCBC; 25 CXCBC; 157 SRCBC; 23 FPCBC; 86 TRCBC. **DICKCISSEL**: one FPCBC at Palatine Bridge feeder 24 Nov-20 Jan (RF); one Berne feeder 25 Nov-17 Jan (KA, mob). Evening Grosbeak: 261 SNCBC; 364 ADCBC; 515 COCBC; 78 CXCBC; 619 SRCBC; 323 FPCBC; 169 TRCBC; ten other reports total 400 individuals; two banded with lower numbers at Jenny L. Purple Finch: seven SNCBC; 12 ADCBC; 46 COCBC; one CXCBC; nine SRCBC; four FPCBC; six TRCBC. House Finch: 250 SNCBC; 273 ADCBC; 137 COCBC; 104 CXCBC; 274 SRCBC; 35 FPCBC; 190 TRCBC; Pine Grosbeak: 69 SNCBC; 81 ADCBC; 122 COCBC; five CXCBC; 155 SRCBC; 14 FPCBC; 127 TRCBC; nearly 30 other reports attest to widespread invasion; max 20 Fuera Bush 20 Dec. Hoary Redpoll: female Altamont 14-28 Feb (ST). Com. Redpoll: 210 SNCBC; five ADCBC; 43 COCBC; 223 SRCBC; three FPCBC; 136 TRCBC; 14+ reports with max of 60 East Greenbush 12 Feb; one banded Schenectady 13 Feb. Pine Siskin: 45 SNCBC; one ADCBC; two COCBC; 20 TRCBC; nine other reports but considered scarce with max of eight Burnt Hills 1-15 Feb. **EUROPEAN GOLDFINCH**: one Charlton feeder 10 Jan (RY). Am. Goldfinch: 192 SNCBC; 147 ADCBC; 100 COCBC; 39 CXCBC; 320 SRCBC; 36 FPCBC; 102 TRCBC; perhaps our most abundant feeder bird (RY). Red Crossbill: two SNCBC; one SRCBC; five in flight Jenny L 5 Dec; one Malta feeder mid-Jan; small flock Delmar 27 Jan; one Altamont 10 Feb. White-winged Crossbill: six Burnt Hills 21 Jan (SS); Hudson 17-28 Feb (A & TB); one unconfirmed Galway L 17 Feb (RL). Rufous-sided Towhee: one COCBC; one uncon-

firmed near Schaghticoke 1 Feb. Savannah Sparrow: one FPCBC. Dark-eyed Junco: 171 SNCBC; 445 ADCBC; 73 COCBC; 125 CXCBC; 252 SRCBC; 22 FPCBC; 166 TRCBC; one "Oregon" subspecies Schenectady 23-30 Jan (PW). Tree Sparrow: 256 SNCBC; 345 ADCBC; 165 COCBC; 123 CXCBC; 359 SRCBC; 137 FPCBC; 357 TRCBC; a male banded at New Baltimore 24 Nov '78 was recaptured 23 Jan '82. Field Sparrow: one SNCBC; one CXCBC; one SRCBC; after six years Bill Gorman's winter visitor did not return. White-crowned Sparrow: one FPCBC; Chatham Center 1-13 Feb (M & AG). White-throated Sparrow: 67 SNCBC; 102 ADCBC; 24 COCBC; 308 CXCBC; 44 SRCBC; 20 FPCBC; 35 TRCBC. Swamp Sparrow: one ADCBC; four CXCBC; one TRCBC; Ghent thru Jan (B & HG). Song Sparrow: 30 SNCBC; 17 ADCBC; nine COCBC; 14 CXCBC; 23 SRCBC; three FPCBC; 17 TRCBC. Lapland Longspur: two ADCBC; two CXCBC; one Cocksackie 17 Jan; three there 13 Feb (RPG). Snow Bunting: 100 SNCBC; 105 ADCBC; 47 COCBC; 61 CXCBC; 15 SRCBC; 479 FPCBC; 14 other reports with max of 2000 Cocksackie 28 Feb.

Remember Dial-A-Bird for Hudson-Mohawk area bird news at 518-377-9600.

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REGION 9 – DELAWARE-HUDSON

EDWARD D. TREACY

December was cold, and January was impossible. Together they produced one of the coldest winters of the century. Temperatures in January rarely went above the freezing mark, and the northern portions of the region and higher elevations remained below zero for extended periods of time. Three snowstorms during the third week of December dropped at least two feet in the Catskills, and subsequent storms almost every other day in mid-January added one or two more feet to that already on the ground. February brought a warming trend, and by late in that month the ice on the Hudson had broken. Lakes, however, were still frozen, and would probably remain so until April.

Bird populations in the areas hit by the Gypsy Moth last summer were predictably low, largely due to the paucity of fruit and seed. Birders on the Bear Mountain-Harriman Park Christmas Count hiked something like eight miles over a period of eight hours and found only 18 individuals of five species. Another count in similar circumstances found only 14 individuals of four species. Elsewhere conditions were better. The northern finch invasion, observed last fall, continued into the winter, and although all species were well-represented, they were not in numbers. Had the Federation Waterfowl Count been done in December the numbers would have been much larger. By the time of the target date January 10, most of the lakes and streams were closed by ice. The count was good, but not even close to the highs of two years ago. Mute Swans continue their phenomenal increase, and the numbers of wintering Canvasbacks are nothing short of extraordinary. The 5,103 individual ducks counted was the second highest count in more than twenty-five years, and the 20 species realized was the third highest (the usual average is sixteen).

Rarities included in this report are: White-fronted Goose, Osprey, King Rail,