

bird: almost none except for 62 GCC. E. Meadowlark: one CCCC; one Ithaca 24 Jan. Com. Grackle: very few; 24 WGCC. N. Oriole: one at a Penn Yan feeder Dec and Jan; one at a Phelps feeder 3-27 Jan. Purple Finch: moderate numbers widely distributed; max 100 Long Pt State Pk, Aurora 15 Jan. House Finch: still exploding; 2,448 CCs. Crossbills: none of either species. Com. Redpoll: one Waterloo Dec 10 ICC. Pine Siskin: at Penn Yan in Dec; eight ICC. Am. Goldfinch: 802 CCs. Evening Grosbeak: 456 ICC: 91 ECC; 25 WGCC; otherwise very scarce in the Region. House Sparrow: 3,707 CCs with 1,075 at Ithaca.

Erratum: Vol. XXXII No. 2, p. 118, Region 3 report: Blue Jay: 936 (not 1936).

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REGION 4 – SUSQUEHANNA

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The winter of 1982-83 was probably one of the mildest ever recorded in Region Four. According to the National Weather Service, Link Field, Broome Co., an upper air pattern, flowing from west to east across northern US, blocked off the usual winter flow of frigid Canadian air, bringing instead a flow of modified air from the Pacific Northwest across the entire northern USA. Consequently, in December the average temperature was 34.4^o, a record-breaking nine degrees above normal. Average January temperatures, usually in the teens and low twenties, were closer to the high twenties and low thirties, except, of course, during the Waterfowl Count week. 15 January, target date, brought the only major winter snowstorm, with a whopping 18" recorded officially in Binghamton. A week of overnight lows in the teens, and even below zero on 18 Jan. followed. Lakes and rivers, open until then, either froze solid or ran with slush ice, each segment of which resembled a small duck sailing down river. At week's end, however, temperatures were back into the thirties, accompanied by freezing rain 23 Jan.

On 2 Feb, Punxsutawney Phil, renowned rodent meteorologist, enjoyed a cloudy, drizzly day, preclusive of all shadow, thereupon predicting an early spring. The following week, nevertheless, for the second time all winter, mean temperatures hit single digit figures or low teens, 10, 11 and 12 Feb. were cold. Gradually, however, the warming trend was reestablished and a 32^o mean temperature was recorded on the 15th. For the rest of Feb. mean temperatures were well above that mark. Punxsutawney Phil scores again! The period was also notable for the lack of accumulated snow. Most precipitation was light and snow melted quickly. Only the 15 Jan. storm deposited enough snow to cover the wild seed crop. That snow, however, had such low moisture content that it quickly settled, becoming thinner and thinner until it was finally eliminated by light rains the first week in Feb.

How did the bird life react to this mild, open winter? Obviously the open waters affected some species. Reports of Great Blue Herons, Belted Kingfishers, Herring and Ring-billed Gulls were up. A Great Black-backed Gull was a first for the Region. A Pied-billed and a Red-necked Grebe were counted—nice but not really rare for this area. Geese in fair-sized flocks lingered long 15 Jan and returned early 27 Feb. As for ducks, aside from the usual numbers of Mallards and

Am. Blacks, disappointingly few dabblers lingered into Dec—one Wood Duck, one Northern Pintail and one American Wigeon as late as 4 Jan. Why more surface-feeders did not remain in the open sidewaters is anyone's guess. The diving ducks also averaged low counts. A small number of Common Goldeneyes, one large flock of Common Mergansers, a few Hooded Mergansers, two Bufflehead and that was it. Since these birds winter only as far south as frozen waters force them, one can speculate that north of us rivers and lakes were also ice-free. Brown fields and swamps apparently afforded predators good hunting, Northern Goshawks and Red-tailed Hawks were particularly numerous. Two Red-tails with white tails were of special interest. One Snowy Owl found plenty to eat around a feed store in Norwich. A higher than average Northern Harrier report on the Christmas counts was welcome. Cooper's, Sharp-shinned and Rough-legged counts were good. Wild Turkeys and Ruffed Grouse evidently found the brown background good camouflage. Counts for both these species were good.

One might have expected a significant number of "half-hardies" to have overwintered in the area, influenced by the warm temperatures. Surprisingly, reports of these were low. Possibly the birds were present but spread out and were therefore overlooked. Also the very poor berry crop, especially gray dogwood and multiflora rose, may have contributed. A Yellow-rumped Warbler did show up at an Endicott feeder as did a House Wren at a backyard in Norwich. Eight Swamp Sparrows and ten Field Sparrows on the Christmas Counts were high numbers. Winter finches, except for small flocks of Evening Grosbeaks, were poorly represented. Northern food supplies must have been abundant. Unfortunately only one Carolina Wren was reported and Northern Mockingbird counts were lower than usual (poor multiflora crop?). We recorded no Snow Buntings and very low numbers of Horned Larks.

Rarities: 50 Brewer's Blackbirds at a feeder in Binghamton; a Great Black-backed Gull on the Cortland Christmas Count.

Abbreviations: BCC—Binghamton Christmas Count 26 Dec; CCC—Cortland Christmas Count 18 Dec; DOCC—Delaware-Otsego Christmas Count 18 Dec; OPM—Oneonta, Portland, Milford; SCC—Sherburne Christmas Count; TCC—Tioga Christmas Count 31 Dec; WFC—Waterfowl Census.

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LOONS—DUCKS: Pied-billed Grebe: one Pepacton Reservoir 22 Jan (JL, DM), uncommon at this date. Red-necked Grebe: one Chenango River, Pt. Crane 9 Jan (A&MD), not common. Great Blue Heron: 17 reports spread through area, seven Dec, six Jan, three Feb, one 23 Dec thru, open winter probably accounts for unusually high number of Jan and Feb reports, although one reported from Otselec questions this assumption, "They have stayed here most severe winters, fishing through holes of running water in the river and warmer spring runs" (DM). Canada Goose: 23 SCC; four TCC; one other Dec count of 50 Otsego Lake (DM); Jan reports of 30 at Unadilla, one Otsego Lake and 30 all period Rogers Center; all other Jan reports came from Cannonsville Reservoir where up to 150 were reported 18 Jan at a patch of open water in ice; a few days later the reservoir was almost completely iced

over; no geese the remainder of the period until 28 Feb when two small wedges were seen in Vestal (GK, RM); Wood Duck: one DOCC (DK, CB), very late date. Am. Black Duck: 27 BCC, three DOCC, 24 SCC, a few reports of small numbers thru area, but large flock of approx. 300 reported by many at Cannonsville Reservoir Jan. Mallard: 188 BCC; 12 DOCC; 91 SCC; 32 TCC; 270 WFC; several other reports of from nine to 30 birds and a large flock of approx. 200 at Cannonsville Reservoir reported by many in Jan. N. Pintail: one Owego 26 Dec (JD, RM); "some" Cannonsville Reservoir 9 Jan Tioga Bird Club. Am. Wigeon: one Cannonsville Reservoir 4 Jan (SD). Com. Goldeneye: seven WFC 17 Jan; one Cannonsville Reservoir 22 Jan (DM); one Tioga Co. Dec. and one Tioga Co. Jan (C&JB, LB); Bufflehead: two TCC. Hooded Merganser: four Otsego Lake 8 Jan (MD, KW); two Cannonsville Reservoir 9 Jan (Tioga Bird Club). Com. Merganser: five TCC; one other Dec report of two Otsego Lake 20 Dec (MD). 11 WFC 18 Jan; several Jan and Feb reports of from one to nine; one large flock 300 Cannonsville Reservoir 13 Jan (SD).

HAWKS—ALCIDS: Bald Eagle: many reports all in Jan, all from Cannonsville Pepacton Reservoir area, of from two to nine birds, the ratio of ad to imm seems to run about 50-50 weighted slightly in favor of imm; a good year, too bad so many reporters fail to mention age. N. Harrier: two SCC; four TCC; one other report Norwich 12 Dec "flying along West Hill Ridge near my house, chased by 50 House Finches" (JL), a slight increase over past years. Sharp-shinned Hawk: one BCC; one SCC; four Dec reports Delhi same station (same bird?) (M&RC); one Dec report Tioga Co (C&JB); two Jan reports Broome Co (SP, B&TW); one Jan report Tioga Co; three Jan reports from Delhi same station (same bird possibly as in Dec?) (M&RC). One Otselic 5 Feb (DM), average numbers but on high side. Cooper's Hawk: one BCC; one DOCC; three SCC; one TCC; two other Dec reports, Broome Co (JS) and Cortland Co (WB); three Jan reports, Broome Co (JS), Otselic Township (DM), Tioga Co (C&JB, AW, LD); one report Jan and Feb "off and on around feeders" (LD); one Feb report Cortland Co (WB); N. Goshawk: one DOCC; four SCC; six others, one Cortland Co. 26 Dec (WB); one Tioga Co Dec (AW); one Broome Co 14, 15 Jan (MS); one McGraw 29 Jan (WB); one Plymouth Reservoir Jan (WL); one "off and on all period" Rogers Center (LC), extremely high count, especially concentrated in Chenango Co. Red-tailed Hawk: three BCC; nine DOCC; 12 SCC; 18 TCC; many other reports through area through period; of special interest two birds seen Otselic 23 Jan with white tails, "tail completely white—no red or pink—no subterminal band—positive i.d. by very distinct belly band, seen at less than 200 feet with 7x35 binocs and 15x60 scope—rainy, damp overcast day—I had seen a pair of normal red-tails a few minutes earlier several miles away. Those birds were sitting very low (hunting? or grounded by rain?). At a distance of hundreds of yards these normal red-tails flew at the opening of my truck door. The white-tailed birds allowed me to approach to within 150 ft. and then flew only about 50 to 75 ft. I was able to see front and rear views. All other aspects except tail seemed normal. It was not light phase." An accompanying drawing showed from behind pure white tail, dark upper tail coverts; from front white tail with 2 or 3 "very faint bands (imm?)" (DM). Rough-legged Hawk: nine SCC; one TCC; two Jan reports OPM (MD, KW); one Jan report Tioga Co (RB), one Cannonsville Reservoir 13 Jan; one Feb OPM (MD) one to three daily Otselic, Dec thru 15 Jan, all dark phase; two or three Otselic 13 Feb thru, all light phase (DM); Am. Kestrel: four BCC; two DOCC; three SCC; six TCC; common thru area through period. Ring-necked Pheasant: one BCC, one DOCC; eight other reports from Broome Co.; two Tioga Co; one Norwich; Otselic "released birds (fall '82) some survived the winter" (DM). Ruffed Grouse: five BCC; 24 DOCC; 29 SCC; 5 TCC; other reports through period through area, average year. Wild Turkey: 31 DOCC; 22 SCC; an increasing number of reports from entire area, one of 150 to 200 Chenango Forks, Broome Co, 2 Feb and 13 Feb seems of interest; also of interest the comment of a rural mail carrier OPM area on seeing a dozen or so following a manure spreader, "They must have been awfully hungry to eat that stuff!" (MD). Killdeer: one SCC; one other report in Dec from Tioga Co. Ring-billed Gull: three BCC; four TCC; one other report in Jan, Tioga Co (RB, C&JB). Herring Gull: 14 BCC; four TCC; 30 Otsego Lake 20 Dec; other numerous reports of "gulls" cruising the rivers may be Herring or may be Ring-billed. **GREAT BLACK-BACKED GULL:** one CCC; first report of this species at

this season for this area; at the rate in which it is expanding its range this may be the first of many to follow.

PIGEONS-WOODPECKERS: Rock Dove: 369 BCC; 300 DOCC; 579 SCC; 885 TCC; Mourning Dove: 44 BCC; 47 DOCC; 142 SCC; 90 TCC; common thru area but slightly down. E. Screech-Owl: one SCC; one Otselic off and on up to 26 Dec (DM); one Tioga Co Dec; Great Horned Owl: four BCC; one DOCC; 11 SCC; two TCC; the usual scattered reports through area thru period; one pair "calling since Dec, after 1 Feb exclusively from nest site, calling very rare by middle of Feb, only early evening and morning one or two calls, completely silent after 18 Feb" (DM). **SNOWY OWL:** one Norwich 6 thru 18 Dec, probably same bird as reported in Nov in Sherburne, seen frequently by several, often hunting behind a feed store, perched on tanks on top of mill, air-conditioning units and telephone pole, one day "spent most of day on the warehouse roof, dozing behind a ventilator out of the wind on the south side," on 18 Dec hit by a truck, sent to Delmar for autopsy, identified as imm male (JL). This supports the theory that imm birds go farther south in winter. Barred Owl: one Plymouth, Chenango Co Jan (GS). Belted Kingfisher: six BCC; three TCC; several other reports thru period thru area. Red-headed Woodpecker: three reports; one DOCC imm; one Tioga Co Dec (C&JB); one Otego 19 Feb (DM). Red-bellied Woodpecker: two TCC; two all period Newark Valley, Tioga Co (LD), one Cortland all Dec, not after early Jan (WB); one Cortland 15 Jan may be same as previous one (RMu); one Truxton 9 Dec (FO'L); one Broome Co 6 Feb, seem to be spreading. Yellow-bellied Sapsucker: one Choconut Center, Broome Co, off and on from 22 Jan thru 13 Feb, same location as the last two years but "looks different—very mottled and brownish with the blackest crown you ever saw" (MS). Downy Woodpecker: 28 BCC; 52 DOCC; 69 SCC; 56 TCC. Hairy Woodpecker: five BCC; 25 DOCC; 28 SCC; nine TCC. N. Flicker: four SCC; one TCC; two other reports both Tioga Co one Jan, one Feb. Pileated Woodpecker: one DOCC; three SCC; two TCC; one Tioga Co Jan; three Broome Co Feb; "several sightings" Otselic thru period.

FLYCATCHERS-STARLINGS: Horned Larks: four DOCC; three OPM seen both 25 Jan and 29 Jan (MD, KW); two flocks of 20 Otselic 4 Feb (DM), very low count (open winter?). Blue Jay: 29 BCC; 235 DOCC, 247 SCC, 189 TCC; many reports but in Broome Co, especially frequently accompanied by such comments as "scarce this year" "very low population at feeder." Am. Crow: 365 BCC; 336 DOCC; 784 SCC; 437 TCC; common thru; Fish Crow: one Vestal 28 Feb (GK) same location as last year. Black-capped Chickadee: 257 BCC; 453 DOCC; 475 SCC; 324 TCC; common thru. Tufted Titmouse: seven BCC; ten DOCC; four SCC; 22 TCC; several other reports of one or two birds thru period thru area. Red-breasted Nuthatch: one BCC; seven DOCC; eight SCC; two TCC; one Broome Co Dec (JS), one Delhi off and on all Dec, Jan (MC); one Tioga Co Jan; one Middlefield 13 Jan (NB); two Milford 11 Feb (MD). White-breasted Nuthatch: 31 BCC; 50 DOCC; 81 SCC; 65 TCC; common thru. Brown Creeper: one BCC; six DOCC; seven SCC; one TCC; five other reports, one Cortland "occasionally visits" (WB); one Tioga Co Jan (D&JB); one Truxton 5, 11, 12, 20 Jan (FO'L); one Broome Co 23 Feb (A&MD); one Broome Co 27 Feb (JS), improved over last year. Carolina Wren: one TCC only report, very low. **HOUSE WREN:** one Norwich 1 Jan "giving two different types of notes, a single ticking or clicking note and a small scold note—appeared to be feeding on my compost heap (insects?)" (JL). Winter Wren: one SCC. Golden-crowned Kinglet: two BCC; one CCC; 20 DOCC; one SCC; four TCC; two Dec reports Broome Co (JS, FL); four Tioga Co 15 Feb (LD); nine Norwich Dec and Jan; "several" in two locations Otselic no date; best report in years. E. Bluebird: one Tioga Co 1 Dec (AW); one Tioga Co 3 Jan (SD); Am. Robin: one BCC; one DOCC; one TCC; no other Dec reports; two Jan reports, one Broome Co 27 Jan (MS), one Tioga Co (C&JB); two Oneonta and Otego 19 Feb (MD); three Tioga Co 24 Feb (LD). Gray Catbird: one Tioga Co Dec (no specific date) (AW). N. Mockingbird: three TCC; one Broome Co station reporting one bird 18 Dec, two 1 Jan, one 20 Jan (FL); OPM reporting one 25 Jan, one 28 Jan and one 25 Feb (MW, KW); Tioga Co reporting "common" thru period; one sighting Beaver Meadow (Chenango Co), no specific date, with comment "first in this area for me." (DM). Cedar Waxwing: 73 BCC; 8 SCC; 92 TCC; several other reports thru period from Broome and Tioga Co; only one farther north, 25 to 30 Truxton 12 and 13 Jan (FO'L). N. Shrike: one CCC; six other birds reported, one OPM 25 Jan (MD, KW); one Middlefield 26

Feb (NB); one Norwich 19 Dec "probable Northern" (JL); one Otselic 11 Dec (DM), two Otselic 14 Jan (DM). European Starling: 4,602 BCC; 387 DOCC; 882 SCC; 472 TCC; common thru.

VIREOS—WARBLERS: Yellow-rumped Warbler: one Endicott station reports one bird, probably the same one, sighted 7 Jan-9 Jan, 12 Feb-13 Feb (JS).

TANAGERS—WEAVERS: N. Cardinal: 29 BCC; 16 DOCC; 22 SCC; 96 TCC; common thru. Am. Tree Sparrow: 22 BCC; 77 DOCC; 232 SCC; 151 TCC; many other reports, feeder reports of only one or two, roadside reports larger, up to 35. Field Sparrow: nine SCC; one TCC. Song Sparrow: eight BCC; one DOCC; 10 SCC; eight TCC; seven other Jan reports, six Broome Co, one Tioga Co, low for this species (open winter?). Swamp Sparrow: three SCC; five TCC. White-throated Sparrow: ten BCC; three DOCC; three SCC; four TCC; five other reports of one or two intermittently at feeders, four Broome Co, one Tioga Co, low for this species in past few years. White-crowned Sparrow: one DOCC. Dark-eyed Junco: 57 BCC; 68 DOCC; 81 SCC; 230 TCC; many reports thru area thru period. Snow Bunting: none. Red-winged Blackbird: one DOCC; one TCC; reported CCC but no numbers. Dec. reports of six Truxton, Cortland Co, and two Delhi. Jan. reports one Broome Co, one Tioga Co, one Delhi 1-5 Feb. E. Meadowlark: one Milford 11 Feb (MD). Rusty Blackbird: one report Tioga Co Dec, no details (AW). **BREWER'S BLACKBIRD:** 50 Binghamton 15 Jan; "at feeders, driven in by snowstorm; stayed about 15 min; observed at close range but through swirling snow; same shape as Rusty Blackbirds; at least some with light eyes but didn't check entire flock so can't say there were females with dark eyes; plumage on all seemed the same—dark with a slight sheen; there was definitely no rusty; it was mainly the total lack of rusty color which determined the conclusion these birds were Brewer's Blackbirds; a small number—about five—were observed briefly same place about a week later." (CH). Com. Grackle: eight SCC; one TCC; ten Windsor 4 Dec only other report (JS). Brown-headed Cowbird: one DOCC; one TCC; three Truxton 7 Dec (FO'L); one Delhi 16 Dec (MC); 2 Middlefield 28 Dec (NB); 100 Norwich 5 Jan (JL); 40 OPM 8 Jan (MD, KW); one Tioga Co Jan (LD). Pine Grosbeak: two BCC (ML, JC, EW); one Pharsalia State Lands 30 Jan (JL). Purple Finch: 22 BCC; 102 DOCC; 78 SCC; 106 TCC; several other reports thru period from OPM region "flocks of 10-25 feeding in ash trees," one Broome Co feeding station reported intermittent appearances of a flock of eight to ten; one station in Delhi had a similar flock of up to seven showing up off and on thru Jan; one female was reported in Newark Valley in Feb; and two Dec, one Jan report of two to four from Norwich. House Finch: 320 BCC; 18 DOCC; 248 SCC; 784 TCC, increasing everywhere but still low numbers in OPM and Delhi areas. White-winged Crossbill: one report of 15 Cortland 1 Jan (CD). Com. Redpoll: one BCC, only report. Pine Siskin: three BCC; four SCC; two Truxton 19 Dec (RP), one Endwell 24 Jan (FL); no other reports, low count. Am. Goldfinch: 96 BCC; 61 DOCC; 59 SCC; 213 TCC, all period everywhere in good numbers. Evening Grosbeak: 115 BCC; 296 DOCC; 325 SCC; 108 TCC; many reports from all areas but numbers generally low, no complaints about this species costing a fortune in sunflower seed this year. House Sparrow: 255 BCC; 505 DOCC; 467 SCC; 688 TCC; reports from all areas all period but several comments such as "scarce this year."

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REGION 5 — ONEIDA LAKE BASIN

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The winter of 1982-83 proved to be much tamer than most had predicted. The only two cold spells, the first two weeks of December and mid-January to mid-February, were only slightly cooler than seasonable. Most of the winter saw