

REGION 4 – SUSQUEHANNA

The Region 4 winter report had not arrived in time for this issue.

REGION 5 – ONEIDA LAKE BASIN

GENE HUGGINS

The winter season began on a very wet note with a record one day precipitation of 1 inch on 2 Dec surpassing .94 inches set on the same date in 1936. Snowfall on 12 and 13 Dec brought a total of 4.4 inches to the Syracuse area, with only a trace of snow falling for the rest of the month. It was not until 2-3 Jan that central New York was subjected to a northeaster that dumped 11.5 inches of snow, the largest single-day snow fall since 25 Dec 1978 when 15.6 inches fell. Persistent low temperatures dominated February's weather from 12 to 20 Jan, with a slow increase in the thermometer's readings over the last eight days. Precipitation for February was in marked contrast to early winter. Only .63 inches fell, breaking the old record minimum of .76 inches recorded in 1906. The amount of sunlight brightened many observer's hopes for an early spring with 10,554 minutes of bright sunshine for February, a rarity indeed.

The season began with expectations for a major irruption of Snowy Owl, but only a few remained in scattered locations. Several Short-eared Owls persisted in weedy fields near Peter Scott Swamp and a N. Saw-whet Owl was heard calling in the East Syracuse area on 19 Feb. Unfortunately, another N. Saw-whet Owl became a road fatality on Route 104B just west of Texas, Oswego Co.

Reduced numbers of all wintering woodpeckers were apparent. Two Red-bellied Woodpeckers near Eaton indicate a possible eastward range expansion for the Region. A Boreal Chickadee persisted at a well-provisioned feeder in Pompey Township, far from the Adirondacks, until mid-February.

Half-hardies were almost nonexistent for this period with the exception of Carolina Wren, Winter Wren, American Robin and Northern Mockingbird. The following birds were not reported: Hermit Thrush, Gray Catbird, Brown Thrasher, Yellow-rumped Warbler and White-crowned Sparrow. A surprising **PALM WARBLER** broke all previous records by becoming a Regional winter first and a record late date. The only Bohemian Waxwing was recorded by Dorothy Crumb in northern Pompey Township on 8 Jan.

The only icterids to be found in substantial numbers were Rusty Blackbirds especially in and around Hancock Air Base, Syracuse, and adjacent riparian habitats. Half-hardy sparrows such as Song and Swamp Sparrow were low in numbers. The single major finch invasions were Common Redpolls with four **HOARY REDPOLL** reports to make things interesting.