

REGION 8 – HUDSON-MOHAWK

LINDA ARMSTRONG

For those of us who enjoy looking about while on skis or snow shoes it was the perfect season for birding. This winter afforded us exercise as well as birds to look at. According to the newsletter of the American Meteorological Society the total precipitation in December varied from two inches in some parts of the region to more than seven inches in other parts. The two major storms produced heavy, wet snow. January was an event to live through and enjoy with record snowfall totals. February was the opposite with no precipitation until the last week, but ground conditions remained basically the same with January's snow still covering the ground.

Aside from the usual fun of birding in the winter we had an exciting season. While enjoying a leisurely breakfast on 7 Feb, Alan Mapes noticed a Say's Phoebe feeding from a nearby roof. This is a first for this species in our Region. (We all should see such things over scrambled eggs!) The bird was cooperative for the next two days and was photographed and observed by many.

It was a wonderful owl season with just about every species likely to be found in our Region in evidence. Short-eared Owls were reported from Delmar, Sharon and Marshville and twelve Long-eared Owls were reported from Castleton. Most area Christmas Bird Counts tallied Great Horned and Screech-Owl. Barred Owl were reported, one at Sabbath Day Point, one in Brainard, and another near Saratoga. The greatest enthusiasm seemed to be generated by the look of the arctic that several Snowy Owls afforded our Region. One had state workers peering out their office windows, another was rescued by a kind man after being hit by a truck. This owl repaid the debt by taking up winter residence on the man's barn in Fort Edwards. Six other Snowy Owls were reported. Finally, one of our most elusive, the Northern Saw-whet, was reported in Taghkonik State Park, and another found and photographed near Hague.

People who traveled to the more northern section of our Region were able to see eagles. Birding the Hague area produced a Golden Eagle on 9 Jan. and two Bald Eagles on 15 Dec. These two were reported for three additional days. Seven other eagle sightings were noted. Although many of us traveled to a nearby Region for the most exciting raptor of the winter season, we did have a tremendous supply of our own. Accipiters were well represented with Sharp-shinned and Cooper's reported either frequenting feeders or maneuvering impressively through the woods. Sightings of N. Goshawks came from Niskayuna, Embough Bay, and Clarksville. Most interesting were the numbers of dark morph Rough-legged Hawks reported. While observing the Snowy Owl in Fort Edwards, birders could watch numerous Rough-legged Hawks. Two dark morphs often sat in the same tree and clearly exhibited the size difference between sexes. Another ten individuals were sighted in other parts of the Region. Falcons observed included nine American Kestrels, two Merlins and one Peregrine Falcon in Catskill.

Thistle feeders were extremely popular this year as well as winter seed crops. Impressive numbers of Common Redpolls and Pine Siskins were reported, many in locales where they had not been seen previously. Not enjoying thistle but

finding the rodent population satisfying were Northern Shrikes. One individual spent most of the season at Five Rivers in Delmar, others were observed in Berne, Knox, Jenny Lake, Chestertown, Saratoga Spa State Park and Hudson Falls.

In direct opposition to this northern influx were the reports of Tufted Titmice. This more southern species was reported from locales and elevations where it has either been uncommon or in one case never before observed.

One of the prettiest sights in the Hudson-Mohawk Region this winter was not the brilliant red of male Cardinals but that of Eastern Bluebirds, with flocks silhouetted against snow, gray sky, or feeding near icy streams. Ninety percent of all reports submitted listed Eastern Bluebirds. Does this suggest the need for even more Bluebird boxes?

Contributors: Ken Able, Elliot Adams, Harriette Armstrong, Linda Armstrong, Robert Budliger, Malinda Chapman, Paul Conner, Bill Cook, Edward Crabbs, Bruce Craig, Nancy Curtis, Donald Davis, Rena Dykstra, William Foster, Dolly Kennedy, Jane Lape, William Lee, Alan Mapes, David and Mark Martucci, Laura Meade, James Merrit, Joyce Miller, Raymond Perry, Barbara Putnam, Elton Rising, Joan Robertson, Alice Ross, Paul Rubin, Leamon Snow, Jim Sotis, Henry Watts, Linda White, Robert Yunick.

Abbreviations: CCCBC–Catskill Cossackie 18 Dec; CHCBC–Chatham 20 Dec; HFCBC–Hudson Falls 20 Dec; HR–Hudson River; MR/C–MohawkRiver/Crescent; Nisk–Niskayuna; SSCBC–Saratoga Spa State Park 18 Dec; SCBC–Schenectady 20 Dec; SL–Saratoga Lake; TRCBC–Troy 4 Jan.

LOONS-DUCKS: Com. Loon: two SL 13 Dec only report. Horned Grebe: two Hague Bay 2 Dec, one HR on CCCBC, late. Red-necked Grebe: one SL 13 Dec, one Embough Bay, CCCBC, late. Great Blue Heron: two reports, one Glens Falls 19 Dec, two SCBC. Mute Swan: ten HR 13 Dec. Snow Goose: last two Claverack 16 Dec. N. Pintail: two CCCBC, only report. Am. Wigeon: four CCCBC, only report. Canvasback: max 1500 Embough Bay Dec. Lesser Scaup: 5 SSCBC, 12 SL, late. Oldsquaw: male, Rens 11 Dec only report. Com. Goldeneye: numerous, CBC max 195 SSCBC, four SL 13 Dec, 20 MR/CRES 25 Jan, eight Embough Bay Dec. Bufflehead: male CHCBC only report. Hooded Merganser: scarce, 1 SSCBC, female Colu 3 Dec, two pair TRCBC, 8 Hague Brook 13 Dec. Com. Merganser: ten reports totalling 202 individuals.

HAWKS-ALCIDS: N. Harrier: numerous reports of small numbers throughout the season. Red-tailed Hawk: max 20 Ghent 25 Jan; feeding on garbage at the Nisk. Landfill and one took a live starling (RY). Wild Turkey: throughout the Region, max 15 CCCBC. Killdeer: one CCCBC, one Kinderhook 14 Jan, late. Ring-billed Gull: max 135 CCCBC. Herring Gull: max 130 TRCBC. Iceland Gull: scarce, three Saratoga Co Landfill 30 Dec. Glaucous Gull: scarce, two Saratoga Co Landfill 30 Dec. Great Black-backed Gull: max 35 TRCBC.

PIGEONS-WOODPECKERS: Belted Kingfisher: eleven reported wintering throughout the Region. Red-bellied Woodpecker: one Charlestown early Jan, one Sharon Feb, frequenting feeders, only reports. Yellow-bellied Sapsucker: seen more regularly than in previous years, one CHCBC, two TRCBC, and singles Delmar 8 Feb, W. Taghkonie 10 Feb, Clarksville 14 Feb, and Slingerlands 28 Jan.

FLYCATCHERS-STARLINGS: **SAY'S PHOEBE:** *intro.* Horned Lark: high max 112 CHCBC. Fish Crow: numerous reports, one Nisk Landfill SCBC, first sighting of species there, one MR/Cres 21 Feb, two Castleton 22 Feb-early date at this breeding locale. Com. Raven: four North Mtn, one Bolton Landing 17 Jan, one Clarksville 18 Dec, four Hague landfill Jan-Feb, one Taborton 2 Feb; additional numbers and sightings south of where the species has been reported other years. Brown Creeper: many reports all

winter. Carolina Wren: scarce, one Delmar 25 Dec. Winter Wren: one in emaciated condition, entered a building but did not survive, Delmar 26 Dec, only report. Golden-crowned Kinglet: regularly reported, often seen with Brown Creepers. Gray Catbird: one Castleton 4 Jan, one SCBC, late. N. Mockingbird: reported from Embough Bay north to Cambridge and Hudson Falls. Cedar Waxwing: max 47 Hague 24 Dec feeding on crab apples.

VIREOS-WARBLED: Yellow-Rumped Warbler: max four CCCBC. Com. Yellowthroat: one Five Rivers 22 Dec only report.

TANAGERS-WEAVERS: Am. Tree Sparrow: max 403 HFCBC. Song Sparrow: CBC max 13 SCBC and present on all others, one MR/Cres 21 Feb, one Altamont 20 Dec, one Five Rivers 2 Jan, one N. Troy 9 Jan, more than usual. Swamp Sparrow: two CCCBC, three SCBC, 3 Five Rivers 22 Dec, scarce. White-throated Sparrow: widespread, max 137 SCBC. Lapland Longspur: Marshville 7 Dec only report. Snow Bunting: max 45 Schoharie Jan-Feb and 50 Johnstown 1 Dec. Red-winged Blackbird: 15 CCCBC, two Altamont 9 Dec. scarce. Eastern Meadowlark: one Kinderhook 21 Dec unusual winter sighting. Com. Grackle: male W. Taghkonik 24 Feb, early. Evening Grosbeak: numerous reports, numbers described as "lots", "droves", 20, 30. Purple Finch: scarce, 6 SCBC, two TRCBC, three HFCBC, five SSCBC. White-winged Crossbill: only reports from northern section of the Region, ten HFCBC, RY reports a lack of crossbills in a Fult/Hami area where he has found them in other years and noted a total lack of spruce cones there. **HOARY REDPOLL**: single report, one Berne 8 Feb.

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REGION 9 – DELAWARE-HUDSON

[The new Editor for Region 9 effective the spring migration period is: **Ms. Helen Manson, Moores Mills, RD 4, Pleasant Valley, New York 12569.**]

REGION 10 – MARINE

TONY LEUKERING AND JOHN WALSH

PART A: WINTER 1986-87

This winter's report is slim due to the small number of reports received from contributors. The Region was without an editor for four seasons and all but a few contributors had stopped submitting reports. We heartily thank those that continued to submit field notes to the previous Regional Editor and/or to Paul DeBenedictis during the time when there was no editor for Region 10.