

Twn, CHAU, 14 Jan, unusual in winter. Fox Sparrow: one Jamestown 1-4 Dec. Swamp Sparrow: max three INWR 14 Dec; one Tonawanda Twn, ERIE, 3 Jan, one TFNP 17 Jan, unusual in winter. White-crowned Sparrow: one at feeder Kennedy 3-24 Dec; two Lewiston Twn, NIAG, 17 Jan; one Yates Twn, ORLE, 29 Feb. Lapland Longspur: max three Cambria Twn, NIAG, 27 Feb. Snow Bunting: max 350 Barre Twn, ORLE, several other large flocks lake plain and open areas Allegheny Plateau. Red-winged Blackbird: up to 30 Weatfield Twn, NIAG, 7-31 Jan. E. Meadowlark: four Porter, NIAG, 12 Dec; one Hamburg 30 Jan, unusual in winter. Rusty Blackbird: ten Burgeson NS 22 Dec and two on 23 Jan; seven Fentonville, CHAU, 31 Dec., 1-31 Jan; unusual in winter. Com. Redpoll: two Ellicott, CHAU, 2 Jan, one Beaver Meadow Wildlife Refuge, WYOM, 28 Jan, only reports. Pine Siskin: max 75 Amity L, ALLE, Dec, 65 Jan, 75 Feb; many other reports wooded Allegheny Plateau. Evening Grosbeak: max 200 Beaver Meadow Wildlife Refuge 16 Jan and Wales, ERIE, Dec; many other reports throughout Region.

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REGION 2 – GENESEE

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Overall, the winter proved to be a rather mild one. Temperatures on the whole were above average, precipitation was down and there was a scarcity of major storms. This provided us with a diverse set of reports. December was very mild with an average of 32.6°, eclipsing the average by a rather healthy 3.6°. Precipitation came mostly as rain and was totaled at 1.98", 0.61" below average. January's average temperature was 1.4° above normal at an even 25°. Precipitation was 1.58" below normal with a total of 0.72. Although the warm and dry trend had continued, January was characterized by cold spells and intermittent thaws. The month's end even brought some near record high temperatures. February broke the trend only slightly. The average temperature was 23.7°, which was a paltry 0.7° below normal. Snowfall was above average, but the total precipitation was just barely below normal at 2.18".

This weather was favorable for some birds. There was much open water in the Region. This helped during the Christmas Bird counts. Total snow cover was down. Thus, there were good feeding opportunities for field hunting raptors as well as the ground feeding birds. The lack of major storms made life easier all around. With such conditions you might expect the highlights of the season to be very good. Yet, as is usually the case, there were some very definite minuses to go along with the pluses.

Loons and grebes seemed to be pretty plentiful. Red-throated Loon in January is notable for the Region. Pied-billed Grebes were found in good numbers. While waterfowl were in general more notable for their variety, some species were found in noticeably above normal numbers. These included Oldsquaw, White-winged Scoter and Common Merganser. A real highlight was a record number of Wood Ducks with a high count of 51 in Perinton on 24 Jan. Turkey Vultures also appeared in record numbers with a record maximum of 15 individuals sighted 24 Feb in Letchworth State Park and other observations that month.

Vultures only recently have begun to winter in the area, so this is a trend we'll need to watch. Rough-legged Hawks were found in good numbers along the lakeshore and in other areas within the region. Ring-necked Pheasant seemed to show a very slight increase. The mildness of the season should have helped. Of special interest was a record late Semipalmated Plover reported from Braddock Bay in December. Owls were very evident this year. Snowy Owls were found in numerous locations. Some spots had two or three individuals. Short-eared Owls were quite numerous. Both species benefited from the high vole populations that also were evident.

There were some positives from wintering passerines also. Red-breasted Nuthatch and Brown Creeper showed above average numbers. Most spots with suitable habitat had these species in residence. The traditional wintering Yellow-rumped Warblers were located at Mendon Ponds and in Spencerport. There were a fair number of crossbill reports, but only a few individuals were involved. The only winter finch present in numbers was Pine Siskin.

Negatives for the Region this season included some waterfowl, such as Common Goldeneye and Bufflehead, which appeared in below average numbers. The only raptor that seemed to be down in numbers was Northern Goshawk; sightings were few and far between. Gull totals were noticeably down. Glaucous and Iceland Gulls were difficult to find, at best. Numbers of gulls seemed to pick up towards the end of the season and could be found in larger concentrations at Braddock Bay and Irondequoit Bay.

Winter passerines exhibited some negative trends during the season. Wintering thrushes were few in number. Eastern Bluebird and American Robin were more scarce than in recent winters. Hermit Thrushes were very low in number. Gray Catbird, a frequent half-hardy species, went unreported for the season. Bohemian Waxwing was reported in December but not afterwards. Northern Shrikes, except for one brief rush, were more difficult to find than usual. Regular wintering sparrows also were down in numbers. Most notable was the lack of White-throated Sparrows. Some winters Lapland Longspurs and Snow buntings border on plentiful, but this was not the case this year. It was generally an off winter for blackbirds. Winter finches generally were few in number. The best example was Pine Grosbeak. The only report was from December.

The hint of an early migration occurred during February. The late month warm spell brought in a few blackbirds, waterfowl, crows and Horned Larks, and hawks began to trickle through as well. This certainly was just a hint of things to come.

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Abbreviations: BB-Braddock Bay; CL-Conesus Lake; DE-Durand-Eastman Park and adjacent Lake Ontario waters; HB-Hamlin Beach State Park; IB-Irondequoit Bay; LSP-Letchworth State Park; MP-Mendon Ponds; SB-Sodus Bay; SeP-Seneca Park; WL-West Lakeshore.

LOONS-DUCKS: Red-throated Loon: one WL 12 Dec, one IB 17-31 Jan, unusual in winter. Pied-billed Grebe: one Charlotte 12 Jan. Red-necked Grebe: last IB 20 Dec. Double-crested Cormorant: one Parma 17 Jan, only report. Great Blue Heron: 18 SeP 16 Jan, excellent winter total. Tundra Swan: imm Greece 4 Jan, unusual. Mute Swan: one Henrietta 15-20 Dec, new location; two IB 1-28 Feb, now year round residents. Wood Duck: record max 51 Penfield 24 Jan, where 29-51 seen at various times during the winter. Am. Black Duck: max 300 CL 3 Jan, good winter total. Mallard: max 1400 Genesee Co Wildlife Preserve 10 Jan, very high count for single location. Blue-winged Teal: one Greece 20 Dec, very unusual. Redhead: max 2000 Canandaigua L 25 Feb, good total. King Eider: one Pt Breeze 1 Jan (R & SS); imm male Forest Lawn 17 Jan; this species has been regular in recent years. Black Scoter: max three SB 17 Jan, good in winter. Ruddy Duck: one Charlotte 23 Jan.

HAWKS-ALCIDS: **Turkey Vulture:** *intro.* Osprey: singles Crusoe L 6 Dec, Genesee 28 Dec, very late. N. Harrier: max 30 WL ? Jan, 20-30 seen throughout the month. N. Goshawk: one WL 17 Feb, one Retsof 29 Feb, only reports, both possible migrants. Rough-legged Hawk: max 15 Retsof 14 Feb. Peregrine Falcon: one Rochester 20 Dec (F & RD), one Rochester 8 Jan (RS). **Gyr Falcon:** white morph Parma 14 Jan (B&JK, NYSARC). Virginia Rail: two-four MP 1-31 Jan; one Brighton 11 Jan, 29 Feb is a new wintering location. Com. Moorhen: one BB 1-19 Dec, very late. Semipalmated Plover: one BB 1-9 Dec (SC, MD & DT), very late. Killdeer: one Brockport 9 Jan, usual wintering location. Little Gull: max two DE 12 Jan, scarce. **Lesser Black-backed Gull:** ad Rochester 16 Dec (RS). Iceland Gull: one BB 4 Dec, one SB 27 Dec, one IB 3 Jan, poor showing. Glaucous Gull: one WL 1-31 Dec, one Greece 9 Jan, two IB 31 Jan, paltry season total.

PIGEONS-WOODPECKERS: Snowy Owl: at least 14 birds reported. Long-eared Owl: two Hemlock Lake 27 Dec, unusual in winter. Short-eared Owl: max 82 T Hamlin 3 Jan (RD), excellent total; widespread throughout the Region. Yellow-bellied Sapsucker: one CL 27 Dec; one SeP 12,17 Jan; one Greece 14 Feb, more reports than usual.

FLYCATCHER-STARLINGS: Red-breasted Nuthatch: max 30 DE 9 Jan, excellent winter total. Carolina Wren: one Penfield 1-31 Dec, new location. Ruby-crowned Kinglet: one Warsaw 19 Dec, one CL 27 Dec and 1 Jan. E. Bluebird: max 11 Mendon 27 Feb, scarce. Hermit Thrush: one SeP 12 Jan, poor showing this season. Bohemian Waxwing: one Greece 20 Dec (KG,ROs), only report. N. Shrike: max six WL 16 Jan, only good day, much more scattered throughout the rest of the season.

VIREOS-WARBLED: Yellow-rumped Warbler: two Gates 20 Dec, one Brockport 9 Jan, both new winter locations. Com. Yellowthroat: two CL 27 Dec, traditional wintering location.

TANAGERS-WEAVERS: Field Sparrow: three Palmyra 1-28 Feb, good winter total. Vesper Sparrow: one Scottsville 14 Feb, very unusual winter report, report on file with Genesee Ornithological Society. White-crowned Sparrow: max two HB 17 Jan. E. Meadowlark: max five Savannah 3 Jan, very good total. Rusty Blackbird: max seven Rochester 12 Jan. Red Crossbill: one HB 9 Jan. White-winged Crossbill: one HB 9 Jan. Am. Goldfinch: max 125 LSP 24 Feb.

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