

FLYCATCHERS-STARLINGS: Horned Lark: 200 Ridgeway Twn 21 Jan. Com. Raven: one Carrollton Twn 8 Dec. Tufted Titmouse: four Amity L ALLE through most of period, four Carrollton Jan-Feb, three other reports Jan and one other Feb (BOS), two BCBC, two D-FCBC, two SBCBC, 14 SCBC., most in about 20 years, a good year for this bird in S. Tier; seem to increase on a good beechnut year; Allen Benton reported them at 13% of his feeders (7% in 1988), *intro*. Red-breasted Nuthatch: nine BCBC, five SBCBC, max 11 Ward Twn ALLE 21 Jan. Carolina Wren: three BCBC, one Pt Gratiot, L Erie, 1,28 Jan, one CCNS 1, 28 Jan, only reports. Winter Wren: one TFNP 21 Jan, only report. Golden-crowned Kinglet: 15 BCBC, ten D-FCBC; 11 SCBC, 13 SBCBC., good numbers following slump in 1976-77. E. Bluebird: one Eden Twn 31 Dec, three Kennedy 28 Jan, one Amity L 21 Jan, 2, 7 Feb, three Lewiston 11, 20 Feb, *intro*. Hermit Thrush: one Pt Gratiot, L Erie, 4 Dec, one Sheridan Twn 31 Dec, one LESP 31 Dec, none after, *intro*. Am. Robin: 140 BCBC, five D-FCBC, eight SCBC, one SBCBC, max 165 Porter Twn NIAG 25 Feb, *intro*. Gray Catbird: one TFNP 12 Jan. N. Mockingbird: one Alfred Twn 1 Dec-15 Feb, one Amity Twn ALLE 17 Dec, four other reports NR and lake plain Dec, 12 reports lake plains Jan, five reports Feb (BOS), rebounding well. Brown Thrasher: one TFNP 24 Dec, 1 Jan, 22 Feb, one Tonawanda Twn 7-21 Jan, 3-28 Feb. Bohemian Waxwing: one INWR 28 Jan.(DE). Cedar Waxwing: max 160 Amity L 13 Feb. N. Shrike: three reports Dec, six reports Jan, one Feb (BOS).

VIREOS-WARBLED: Yellow-rumped Warbler: one LESP 30 Dec, max five LESP 16, 22 Jan; one Portland Twn 22 Jan. Pine Warbler: *intro*.

TANAGERS-WEAVERS: N. Cardinal: 279 BCBC, highest in 60 years; 69 D-FCBC; 77 SCBC; 32 SBCBC, second highest since 1976, recovering well from slump 1976-77. Rose-breasted Grosbeak: *intro*. Rufous-sided Towhee: one Sheridan Twn 31 Dec, one Darien 31 Dec-28 Feb. Am. Tree Sparrow: 451 BCBC, 183 D-FCBC, 114 SCBC, 21 SBCBC. Chipping Sparrow: one Darien Twn 4 Dec. Field Sparrow: three TBB 24 Dec. Swamp Sparrow: singles Pomfret Twn CHAU 26, 31 Dec, INWR 10 Jan, TFNP 21, 22 Jan, Lewiston Twn 11 Feb, inconspicuous winterer. White-crowned Sparrow: one Pomfret Twn CHAU 22 Jan, one Ridgeway Twn 28 Jan. Lapland Longspur: max five Shelby Twn, three other reports Ontario Lake Plain, usually with Snow Buntings. Brown-headed Cowbird: max 1000 Tonawanda Twn, an unfortunate number. Purple Finch: one Darien 15-31 Dec, one Scio 31 Dec, five reports from BOS region Jan, three in Feb. Com. Redpoll: *intro*. Pine Siskin: *intro*. Evening Grosbeak: *intro*.

Ten Mile Road, Allegany, NY 14706

REGION 2 - GENESEE

KEVIN C. GRIFFITH

If winter weather is not one of your favorite things, this winter was for you! The highlight for me was the fact that I didn't have to shovel my driveway very often. The bulk of the season was mild and lacking in snow. December's temperatures averaged 0.4° above normal but the real story was the snowfall, which was nearly 15 inches below normal. Total precipitation was less than half of the normal amount at 1.11". January continued the trend. The average temperature of 30.3° was a whopping 6.7° above normal, while the precipitation reading of 1.18 inches was 1.12 inches below normal. Snowfall remained below average with only 15 inches compared to the norm of 23. In February winter returned. The average temperature of 22.5° was 1.9° below normal, while

the precipitation of 1.55 inches was 0.77 inches below normal. Snowfall, though, was 8.3 inches above average at 30.6 inches.

How did this effect birding? This wasn't a great season. There were two major highlights, but the consensus for the season was not terribly positive. Normal wintering species were in short supply. Many comments were made about the lack of activity at feeders. Certainly the availability of wild food had something to do with that, yet some species just plain weren't here or weren't here in large enough numbers to become noticeable. You would have thought that the mild winter would have produced more non-wintering individuals, but this seemed not to be the case. There were few on the three Regional Christmas Bird Counts.

The seasonal highlights consisted of two birds. The first was a **Yellow-throated Warbler** found by Bob Ambrose and Ilene Montan along the shores of Conesus Lake on the Little Lakes Christmas Count on 26 Dec. The bird was seen frequenting a suet feeder. It stayed around for a couple of days and was seen and photographed by other observers. The second highlight was a juvenile gray morph **Gyr Falcon** found in the Lima area by Jeff Dodge, Jeff Bouton, Bob Oswald and some other observers on 31 Dec. The bird was first spotted in a field and was observed there for a while before it flew off. It was relocated on a utility pole, where it was photographed and studied again. After one more period of observation in a tree, the bird flew off and was not relocated again. This seems to be typical of past Regional observations of this species.

The Christmas Bird Counts turned up no major surprises besides the Yellow-throated Warbler. The Letchworth-Silver Lakes count tallied 54 species and no real rarities. The Rochester Count totaled 84 species, which was about average for recent years. The most unusual bird was a Chipping Sparrow, which has been reported in only three previous years. Red-tailed Hawks and House Finches reached new high count totals. The Little Lakes Count ended with 77 species which is about the ten year average. An encouraging result was its 548 Am. Black Ducks, over 200 birds above the ten year average. Maybe this dwindling species is going to hang on.

There were a few pluses for the season. It was safe to say that waterfowl totals were generally good. Wintering Wood Ducks were once again a highlight. The lake ducks like Oldsquaw and scoters also seemed to be on the up side. The usual totals of Common Goldeneye worked the lakeshore. Some observers commented that Red-breasted Mergansers seemed to overwinter in larger numbers than in recent years. Canada Geese continued to increase, and a fair number of wintering flocks were on Lake Ontario. King Eider once again put in an appearance. Little Gulls tarried in the Region longer than usual. The mild conditions may have had something to do with this. Short-eared Owls once again had a good winter. The traditional sites were well populated and some new locations were found, providing us with a good winter total. The Genesee River near the lake served as a wintering spot for up to 18 Great Blue Herons 21-28 Jan. We always seem to have a few, but this many is a very good number. The reports of Turkey Vulture during the season continues a recent trend. There weren't as many this year, but Turkey Vultures have only recently begun to

winter in the Region. Rounding out the plus column was Eastern Bluebird. Good winter totals were recorded south of Rochester along the Genesee River Plain. The increase in bluebird trails seems to be helping.

Unfortunately the negative side was well represented this season. It seemed to be much easier to point out the birds that weren't seen than it was to comment on those that were reported. Other than Red-tailed Hawks and Am. Kestrels, hawk totals were fair at best. Rough-legged Hawks were scarce and unpredictable. Gulls were poor in variety for a good portion of the season. Both white-winged gulls had arrived by the end of the season. We usually have some late tarrying shorebirds, but this year was a washout. Snowy Owl numbers were poor. Quite possibly we have become spoiled by lots of individuals in recent years. This year we only had an unpredictable bird at the Rochester airport all season and a single sighting at Irondequoit Bay on 20 Feb. A number of passerines were reported in reduced numbers. Yellow-rumped Warblers apparently decided not to winter in the Region in expected numbers. The sparrows, notably Am. Tree and White-throated, were difficult to find in any numbers. Snow Buntings and Lapland Longspurs were scarce until late in the season. Winter finches - where were they? Evening Grosbeak and Pine Siskin were virtually nonexistent in the Region. The crossbills were represented by only a couple of individuals, and Pine Grosbeak went unreported. The winter 1988-89 was mediocre!

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Abbreviations: CL - Conesus Lake; DE - Durand-Eastman Park and adjacent offshore waters; EL - East Lakeshore; IB - Irondequoit Bay; LSLCBC - Letchworth-Silver Lake Christmas Bird Count 17 Dec; LLCBC - Little Lakes Christmas Bird Count 26 Dec; RCBC - Rochester Christmas Bird Count 18 Dec; SB - Sodus Bay.

LOONS-DUCKS: Red-throated Loon: one Webster 1 Jan, only report. Com. Loon: max four LLCBC. Red-necked Grebe: one SB 14-15 Jan, late. Double-crested Cormorant: one SB 9 Dec, only report. Great Blue Heron: *intro*. Tundra Swan: max 30 CL 2 Jan. Canada Goose: max 1200 CL 1 Feb. Wood Duck: max 42 Penfield 15 Jan. N. Pintail: max three RCBC. N. Shoveler: max two CL 26 Dec. Gadwall: max 15 IB 28 Jan. Am. Wigeon: one Penfield 19 Jan. Ring-necked Duck: one CL 1-15 Jan, only report. King Eider: imm male IB 27-31 Dec (BC,JC). Oldsquaw: max 1592 EL 15 Jan. Black Scoter: one-four Greece 9-10 Jan, late. Hooded Merganser: max 17 LLCBC.

HAWKS-ALCIDS: Turkey Vulture: singles Webster 4 Dec (JCz), Turning Point Park 7 Jan (JS,JC1), Parma 23 Jan (B&JK); max 20 Letchworth SP during Feb. Bald Eagle: ad CL 22-24 Dec; 4th yr bird Webster 31 Dec. Red-shouldered Hawk: one Hunt all Feb (M & AR). Merlin: one Caledonia 24 Jan (FD, B&JK). Peregrine Falcon: one Mumford 1 Dec (GC). **Gyr Falcon**: *intro*. Virginia Rail: one Brighton 31 Dec (MC,CC); one Mendon Ponds 31 Dec

(MD,CC); two locations in the same day. Killdeer: one Greece 5 Jan, only report. Com. Snipe: one Brockport 5 Feb, one Chili 19-27 Feb. Little Gull: max 15 DE 31 Dec. Iceland Gull: 2nd yr bird 22-28 Feb; ad Charlotte 25 Feb. Glaucous Gull: 2nd winter bird Greece 8-14 Jan, imm Charlotte 18 Feb, one IB 26 Feb.

PIGEONS-WOODPECKERS: **Com. Barn-Owl:** one Richmond 23 Feb (WC), scarce in the Region at any time. **Snowy Owl:** *intro*. **Long-eared Owl:** max five LLCBC. **Red-bellied Woodpecker:** max 91 RCBC. **Yellow-bellied Sapsucker:** one LLCBC, only report. **Downy Woodpecker:** max 195 RCBC. **Hairy Woodpecker:** max 55 RCBC. **Northern Flicker:** max 21 RCBC.

FLYCATCHERS-STARLINGS: **Horned Lark:** max 236 LSLCBC. **Red-breasted Nuthatch:** max 26 LLCBC. **Carolina Wren:** three reports. **Winter Wren:** one Greece 18 Dec, one DE 5 Jan. **Golden-crowned Kinglet:** max 26 LLCBC 26 Dec. **Hermit Thrush:** two Parma 18 Dec. **Gray Catbird:** one Greece 18 Dec, two Hemlock 26 Dec. **Brown Thrasher:** one Webster 7 Dec, one Greece 18 Dec, unusual in winter. **N. Shrike:** max four RCBC 18 Dec.

WARBLERS-VIREOS: **Yellow-rumped Warbler:** max two RCBC. **Yellow-throated Warbler:** *intro*.

TANAGERS-WEAVERS: **Rufous-sided Towhee:** one Webster 1 Jan, only report. **Chipping Sparrow:** one Greece 18 Dec, see *intro*. **Field Sparrow:** max three Greece 18 Dec. **Swamp Sparrow:** max 30 RCBC. **White-throated Sparrow:** max 101 RCBC. **White-crowned Sparrow:** one RCBC, imm Hamlin 12 Feb. **Snow Bunting:** max 700 Kendall 1-28 Feb. **Rusty Blackbird:** max nine Warsaw 17 Dec. **Brewer's Blackbird:** male Manitou 8 Feb (RO'H), first winter record? **Com. Redpoll:** two CL 26 Dec, scarce. **Pine Siskin:** max seven Webster 27 Feb.

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REGION 3 — FINGER LAKES

C. K. MELIN

The winter of 1989 was warmer and drier than normal. During December, Ithaca received only one inch of precipitation, the fifth least in 80 years of weather data. After a light snow on 2-3 Dec, winter really settled in with colder temperatures from 8-14 Dec. The period from 11 to 13 Dec became really cold as arctic air lowered temperatures to below zero. Ithaca set a new record low of -19°F on 12 Dec, the coldest December day since 1917 and the coldest temperature ever so early in the season. Temperatures were more seasonal for the remainder of December, including a warm, moist front on 23 Dec which caused a mix of sleet, freezing rain, and rain. By mid January, the winter "thaw" was underway and continued into February. It turned out to be the warmest January since 1967 on a statewide basis. The only time during the month when temperatures dipped below seasonal levels was the period from 3 to 7 Jan, when a cold air mass settled over the state. Precipitation in the Region for January occurred in scattered amounts with no significant accumulations.

At Montezuma National Wildlife Refuge, waterfowl numbers for the season peaked in December, and the mild winter resulted in many lingering through the remainder of the winter. Refuge staff report maximum waterfowl numbers on 6 Dec, with 20 Snow Goose, 36,000 Canada Goose, 69,000 Mallard, 7,000