

## REGION 2 — GENESEE

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This was a winter to remember. It was cold! It was snowy! There were 14 inches of snow in December, 43 in January and 35 in February. It was one of the snowiest winters in years. The snow cover was nearly continuous from late December through the period. December's average temperature of 28.9°F was 0.7° below normal. Measurable precipitation for the month 58 percent of normal at 1.6 inches. January saw a below average temperature reading of 14.9°F, almost 9° below normal. Precipitation was 0.6 inches above normal at 2.68 inches. February's average temperature was 21.1°F, which was 3.5° below normal. The 1.63 inches of precipitation was 0.47 inches below normal.

The winter didn't seem to have a big effect on birding, and it was a good winter for some birds. This was particularly true of the species count. The continuous snow cover may have brought more birds to feeders. The only respite was a brief period during February. There was very little open water away from Lake Ontario, and ice along the lake's edge was substantial at times. The warm water flow from the Russell Station Power Plant in Greece provided a gathering spot for waterfowl and produced some interesting records. A bubbler on Irondequoit Bay also kept water open.

Coverage was good in December and January. January saw several birders pursuing big January lists, so the species total was quite good. The winter's toll began to be apparent by February. Birding activity seemed to wane a bit and reports were fewer.

Of interest were Red-throated Loon reports in January and February. Red-necked Grebe was found in the Region during February. Both species are highly unusual in winter. Once again an American Bittern was found at Mendon Ponds in January. While this seems to be a rare event, it wasn't until recently that observers began to hunt for this species in January. Great Blue Heron was scarce this season. Waterfowl in general were pretty good, but Oldsquaw and scoters were scarce near shore. The origin of an immature Trumpeter Swan at Russell Station is unknown. It was a first for the Region. On the plus side were scaup and goldeneye. A Barrow's Goldeneye in January was a highlight for the season.

Once again Virginia Rail and Sora were located in January. Both species seem to be found from year to year at Mendon Ponds. It was a poor year for wintering snipe and Killdeer, but a January Purple Sandpiper was a nice find. The bird of the winter was the second Regional record and the first WAYN record of *Ivory Gull*. Other gull observations included *Thayer's Gull*, Lesser-Black-backed Gull and a smattering of Iceland and Glaucous Gulls. Bonaparte's and Little Gull pretty much left with the first blast of winter.

Raptor reports were varied. Turkey Vulture wintered again. Accipiter reports were about average, particularly at feeding stations. There were a couple of reports without details of Red-shouldered Hawk, which is very scarce here in winter. Rough-legged Hawk numbers were down. A real highlight was the *Gyr Falcon* seen by Jerry Czech on 12 Feb in Webster and one seen by Jeanne Skelly in LIVI on Jan 1. A Barn Owl was a highlight. This species is a rare bird in the Region, and truly exceptional in winter. Snowy Owl was found regularly at some locations. Short-eared Owl numbers were off a bit. Long-eared and Northern Saw-whet Owls appeared along Manitou Beach Road late in the season. Northern Shrike was very hard to find.

Yellow-bellied Sapsucker wintered again at Gerry Leubner's feeder in Irondequoit from 25 Dec to 31 Jan. It was fond of bananas, apples and oranges, not its normal winter fare. The passerine season was quite varied. Last winter's Tree Swallow invasion was not repeated, but birds were seen until 10 Dec. The few Winter Wren reports were normal. American Robin was down from recent years, but recent winters weren't like this one. Late lingering species included Gray Catbird, Pine Warbler, a first winter *Palm Warbler* for MONR, Chipping Sparrow, Field Sparrow and a rare January record of Savannah Sparrow. The expected wintering

sparrows were down in number. White-throated Sparrow and Dark-eyed Junco were scarce, and Song and Swamp Sparrows were hard to find. Snow Bunting were scarce until late in the season, and there were only a smattering of Lapland Longspur. Eastern Meadowlark went unreported. This also doesn't happen often. Winter pluses included reports of Bohemian Waxwing, Common Redpoll and a *Brewer's Blackbird*. Except for redpolls, finch counts were mediocre at best. A few *Hoary Redpoll* were observed. Most reports were early in the season. Pine Siskin and Evening Grosbeak were down considerably, and Purple Finch was very scarce.

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**Abbreviations:** BB - Braddock Bay; CL - Conesus Lake; DEP - Durand Eastman Park, Rochester; DRd - Doran Road, Lima; HB - Hamlin Beach; IB - Irondequoit Bay; MPd - Mendon Ponds; RS - Russell Station, Greece; SB - Sodus Bay; WL - Lake Ontario littoral west of Rochester (West Lakeshore).

**Winter records:** **Red-throated Loon:** max two WL 3 Jan. **Pied-billed Grebe:** one Rochester 23 Jan, only report. **Red-necked Grebe:** max four RS 5-28 Feb, four HB 21 Feb. **Horned Grebe:** max 30 HB 4 Dec. **Double-crested Cormorant:** last RS 18-19 Jan, down from last winter. **Am. Bittern:** one MPd 15 Jan (MD), near last winter's report. **Trumpeter Swan:** *intro*. **Tundra Swan:** max 11 SB 6 Jan. **Mute Swan:** max 16 BB 14 Dec. **Snow Goose:** max six Elba all Jan. **Brant:** one IB after 16 Dec. **Green-winged Teal:** last Greece 12-13 Feb. **Blue-winged Teal:** one BB 5 Dec (MD), very late. **N. Shoveler:** max four IB 2 Jan. **Gadwall:** max two IB 9 Jan. **Am. Wigeon:** max two Elba 24 Jan. **Redhead:** max 360 Greece 19 Feb, good winter. **Ring-necked Duck:** max eight IB 1 Jan. **Black**

**Scoter:** one SB 3 Jan, late. **Surf Scoter:** one Greece 5 Feb, only report. **Barrow's Goldeneye:** female Rigney's Bluff Greece 21-22 Jan (DT, DS, GC). **Ruddy Duck:** two CL 26 Dec, one CL 1-3 Jan, uncommon during winter season.

**Turkey Vulture:** max 15 Letchworth SP 2 Jan. **Bald Eagle:** one Letchworth SP 18 Dec, one IB 24 Dec, ad CL 2 Jan. **N. Goshawk:** max three Caledonia 8 Jan (MD), high for a winter with few reports. **Red-shouldered Hawk:** one Norway Road 31 Dec (MD), very unusual in winter. **Merlin:** one Greece 14 Dec, uncommon in winter. **Virginia Rail:** one Greece 19 Dec, late (MD), one Brighton 17 Jan (MD). **Sora:** one MPd 6-9 Jan (RMc), uncommon in winter. **Com. Moorhen:** last DEP 19 Dec, Greece 19 Dec. **Killdeer:** last Greece 25 Dec, arr WL 5 Feb. **Purple Sandpiper:** one RS 17-18 Jan (GC). **Am. Woodcock:** last two DEP 19 Dec, late. **Little Gull:** max 12 DEP 17 Dec. **Thayer's Gull:** one IB 8 Jan (D&DT), carefully studied. **Iceland Gull:** max two IB 22 Feb. **Lesser Black-backed Gull:** ad IB 5 Feb (R&SS). **Ivory Gull:** imm Sodus Bay 2-3 Jan (Don & Donna Traver, mob, ph).

**Barn Owl:** one Greece 19 Dec (R&CS), one Greece 1 Jan (R,S&CS), same bird. **Long-eared Owl:** arr Manitou 20 Feb. **Short-eared Owl:** max 13 DRd 15 Jan (DH), not a good winter. **N. Saw-whet Owl:** one Bergen 25 Jan (D&DT), nests in this location; arr Manitou 19 Feb. **Yellow-bellied Sapsucker:** *intro*, return from last year.

**Horned Lark:** max 1300 WL 5 Feb. **Tree Swallow:** last two Greece 10 Dec. **Am. Crow:** max 14,000 Rochester 22 Dec (CC), high. **Winter Wren:** three IB 27 Dec (MD), one WL, DEP 8 Jan, good winter total. **Hermit Thrush:** one Shore Acres 1 Jan, two HB 16 Feb, scarce. **Gray Catbird:** one DRd 9, 15 Jan, few reports this winter. **Am. Pipit:** last two BB 7 Dec. **Bohemian Waxwing:** two DEP 1 Jan (CC), three Penfield 14 Feb (TLC), scarce after good showing in fall.

**Yellow-rumped Warbler:** two HB 21-22 Feb, overwintered? **Pine Warbler:** one IB 27 Dec (MD), unusual in winter. **Palm Warbler:** one DRd 10 Jan (D&DT). **Com. Yellowthroat:** one Webster 8 Dec (CG), one BB 19 Dec (RS), late.

**Chipping Sparrow:** last Warsaw 16 Dec (PS). **Field Sparrow:** one DRd 31 Jan (D&DT), unusual. **Savannah Sparrow:** one DRd 9 Jan (MD), very late. **White-crowned Sparrow:** max eight Kent 29 Dec. **Lapland Longspur:** max 14 Hamlin 31 Jan. **Snow Bunting:** max 3000 Hamlin 31 Jan (BS), good total. **Rusty Blackbird:** one Greece 31 Dec; one DRd 3, 10

Jan, uncommon. *Brewer's Blackbird*: one Avon 1 Jan (D&HL). **Com.**  
**Grackle**: arr two Greece 19 Feb. **Brown-headed Cowbird**: arr four  
Greece 19 Feb. **Pine Grosbeak**: max 18 HB 4 Dec. **Evening Grosbeak**:  
max 40 Springwater 1-28 Feb (HH). **Com. Redpoll**: max 3000 29 Jan,  
good total. *Hoary Redpoll*: one HB 4 Dec (BM, RS); three HB 6 Dec  
(WL), one Irondequoit 4 Jan (GL).

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