

REGION 9 - HUDSON-DELAWARE

Michael L. Usai

70 Virginia Road Apartment 18A, North White Plains NY 10603

The winter of 1995-96 was the snowiest on record across the Region and one of the coldest and windiest. This winter was marked by heavy snowfalls followed by rapid melting such as produced the devastating flooding in the northern and western parts of the Region from the snow melt of the "Blizzard of '96". Several deep freezes in January and February froze most of the freshwater and some saltwater lagoons driving waterfowl out of the Region.

Despite, and possibly because of, the harsh winter several rarities appeared in the Region. An invasion of **Great Gray Owl** to the far north and west of the area produced one for our Region. This was first seen on private property in Port Jervis on 20 Jan. The owl remained in the area for approximately two weeks. An immature gray morph **Gyr Falcon** was briefly seen in Peekskill and may have been the large falcon reported in the vicinity a couple of weeks later. Rye produced an **Eared Grebe** and three Eurasian Wigeon with one wigeon at Rockland Lake State Park for another winter. A late February **Long-billed Dowitcher** is a nice find for the time of year. **Lesser Black-backed Gull** was again at the usual spots in Rye, and a few were reported from the Hudson River. A couple of **Iceland Gull** were found; one each at Newburgh along the Hudson River and the New Paltz landfill. The invasion of **Northern Shrike** continued strongly this winter with the total number of reports exceeding 80 for the Region. Bald Eagle numbers were high along the Hudson River and the Mongaup-Rio Reservoirs, SULL, and the Delaware River.

Other species of special note included: Northern Gannet, Black Scoter, White-winged Scoter, Black Vulture, Virginia Rail, Rough-legged Hawk, Yellow-breasted Chat, Common Redpoll, and Sharp-tailed Sparrow (sp.?)

Contributors: John Askildsen, Thomas Burke, Jeff Daley, Andrew Farnsworth, Valerie Freer, Helen Manson, Heinz Meng, Christopher Nadareski, Frank Nicoletti, Shelden Spencer, Ed Treacy, Mike Usai, Hans Weber

Abbreviations: EGR-Edith G. Read Wildlife Sanctuary, PCBC-Peekskill Christmas Bird Count (16 Dec), GSCBC-Greenwich-Stamford CBC (17 Dec), EOCBC-East Orange CBC (16 Dec), DCCBC- Dutchess Co CBC (17 Dec), UCCBC-Ulster Co CBC (17 Dec), RCCBC-Rockland Co CBC, BWCBC- Bronx-Westchester CBC (23 Dec), PCCBC-Putnam Co CBC (30

Dec), PCBC-Pawling CBC (1 Jan), LHVBL-Lower Hudson Valley Bird Line, JBNHS- John Burroughs Natural History Society, RTWBC-Ralph T. Waterman Bird Club, MP-Milton Point, Rye, MC-Marshlands Conservancy, RLSP-Rockland Lake State Park, KRes-Kensico Reservoir, WBranch-West Branch Reservoir, Ash-Ashokan Reservoir

LOONS-DUCKS: **Red-necked Grebe:** one L. Gleneida 24-30 Dec. **EARED GREBE:** one Kirby Mill Pond, Rye 13-15 Jan (TB). **N. Gannet:** one EGR 1 Dec. **Great Cormorant:** 13 Peekskill Bay 4 Dec - thru, good number. **Double-crested Cormorant:** two EGR 2 Dec. **Snow Goose:** one Buttermilk Pd DUTC 23 Feb (JD); one MP 7 Jan. **Canada Goose:** 8000 EOCBC. **Eurasian Wigeon:** three Rye BWCBC; one RLSP 5 Dec, sporadic. **Redhead:** up to 13 EGR; ten New Croton Res WEST 4 Jan (FN); up to six KRes 10-20 Jan. **Greater Scaup:** up to 4000 EGR thru. **Oldsquaw:** 45 Peekskill Bay 14 Dec, good number for location. **White-winged Scoter:** one EGR 28 Dec (TB); one Hudson R. BWCBC. **Com. Merganser:** 2000+ WBranch Res 6 Dec.

HAWKS-ALCIDS: **Black Vulture:** 11 Galeville Airport 4 Jan; one Bedford Hills WEST 4 Jan; up to nine Haverstraw Dump 4 Jan; four Bear Mt 18 Feb. **Osprey:** one Kres 6 Dec, late. **Rough-legged Hawk:** four Galeville 12 Dec. **Golden Eagle:** one Armonk 26 Dec (JA); Stissing Mt thru; one adult Mine Rd ORAN 29 Dec (ET). **GYREALCON:** one imm gray morph Peekskill 5 Jan (JA, MU). **Virginia Rail:** one MC 5 Dec (TB). **Purple Sandpiper:** up to 80 EGR thru. **Long-billed Dowitcher:** one MC 23-24 Feb (TB). **Bonaparte's Gull:** 18 PL 7 Dec. **Iceland Gull:** one Hudson R, Newburgh 7 Feb; one New Paltz Landfill UCCBC (HW). **Lesser Black-backed Gull:** one PL thru, sporadic; one Hudson R, Haverstraw 23 Feb.

PIGEONS-WOODPECKERS: **Barred Owl:** three MC BWCBC thru; movement early Mar. **GREAT GRAY OWL;** one Pt Jervis 20 Jan. **Long-eared Owl:** two BWCBC. **Short-eared Owl:** 13 Galeville Airport 13 Dec. **N. Saw-whet Owl:** two BWCBC. **Yellow-bellied Sapsucker:** one 2, 16 Feb DUTC (RTWBC):

FLYCATCHERS-STARLINGS: **Fish Crow:** one MC 10, 15 Feb; one PCBC.

VIREOS-WARBLEDERS: **Palm Warbler:** one EGR 8 Dec (MC). **Yellow-breasted Chat:** one EGR 8 Dec:

TANAGERS-WEAVERS: Sharp-tailed Sparrow (sp.): one MC BWCBC.
White-crowned Sparrow: three Greigs Farm DUTC 4 Jan and four there
30 Jan. **Common Redpoll:** scattered reports; migrating in late Feb.