

REGION 8 – HUDSON-MOHAWK

JANE DENKER GRAVES

133 York Avenue, Saratoga Springs NY 12866

As reported from Albany International Airport, December's mean temperature was 22.2°F, 4.3° below normal. Sunshine averaged 43%, 4% above normal. There were 4.38" of precipitation, 1.45" above normal, with 20" of snow, most falling on the 31st. January was warm, averaging 24.6°, 4° above normal, with only 35% sunshine, 12% below normal. Precipitation was 1", 1.36" below normal, with only 7.6" of snow. February was also a warm month, averaging 26.9°, 3.1° above

normal, with 44% sunshine. Precipitation measured 1.85", 0.42" below normal, with 16" of snow.

The early onset of cold weather caused water bodies to freeze up by mid-December, resulting in low numbers of waterfowl on CBCs. Weekend CBCs were further effected by an intense rain event, nearly 3", on 16-17 December and a major snowstorm on the 30th-31st. Although January and February were not exceptionally cold, with no below-zero days, there was no January thaw so the snow pack remained deep through the end of the period. Even with the snow cover, there were sufficient wild food crops to keep birds away from feeders.

Lingering landbirds were well represented on CBCs and overwintering. Eastern Phoebe, Carolina, Winter and Marsh wrens, Hermit Thrush, Gray Catbird, Yellow-rumped Warbler, Northern Waterthrush, Chipping, Field, Fox and White-crowned sparrows were reported. For the third winter in a row, Osprey was found on a Region 8 CBC, this time on the Chatham count.

I received an interesting Bald Eagle report from Pete Nye. An adult eagle, which was caught on the Upper Hudson this winter and outfitted with a satellite radio, left the area in late March and spent two weeks just below Spier Falls, Saratoga County, in April before heading north. Rough-legged Hawk numbers were up substantially from last year, with 25 individuals present at the Ft. Edward grasslands through the period. With the deep snow cover, Short-eared Owls were out and about in the daytime, sitting on hay wagons and utility poles. Large numbers of American Robins overwintered, with a flock of 2250 noted at Nott Road Park on 13 January. Other large flocks were reported during January and February. Dark-eyed Juncos were present during early winter in high numbers, with 1057 on the Saratoga CBC. Red-winged Blackbirds also overwintered and were observed in small flocks, feeding on white pine cones, by two different reporters during January and February. The White-winged Crossbill invasion spread to Region 8, with good numbers reported from higher elevation habitats, including the southern Adirondacks, the Rensselaer Plateau and the hill towns of southern Albany County. Atlasers were able to describe probable breeding behavior in all of these areas, but could not confirm breeding.

The 116 species reported included 23 species of waterfowl, 13 species of hawks, six species of gulls, six species of owls, nine species of sparrows and seven species of finches.

CONTRIBUTORS

Kenneth P. Able, Sue Adair, Elliott Adams, Alan Devoe Bird Club monthly sighting reports (ADBC), Kate Beale, Bob Boehm (Bbo), Robert Budliger, Bernie Carr, Jocelyn Cole-Calkins, Paul Connor, Bill Cook, Walter Ellison, Jane Graves, Richard Guthrie, Hudson Mohawk Bird Club's Birdline of Eastern New York (BEN), William Lee, Rich MacDonald, Nancy Martin, Andy Mason, Peter Nye, Tom Palmer, Barbara Putnam, Paul Saffold, Alison Van Keuren, Carol Whitby, Owen Whitby, Robert Yunick.

ABBREVIATIONS

ACCBC – Albany County CBC 17 Dec; AR – Alcove Reservoir ALBA; CBL – Cocksackie Boat Launch GREE; ChCBC – Chatham CBC 16 Dec; CL – Collins Lake SCHE; FPCBC – Fort Plain CBC 30 Dec; FR – Five Rivers Environmental Education Center, Delmar, ALBA; FtE – Fort Edward area WASH; FtM – Fort Miller WASH; GI – Green Island ALBA; HFCBC – Hudson Falls CBC 29 Dec; HR – Hudson River; JGCBC – Johnstown-Gloversville CBC 23 Dec; L7 – Vischer Ferry Power Station/Lock 7 SCHE; MR – Mohawk River; NB – New Baltimore GREE; NL – Nassau Lake RENS; NR – Niskayuna RR Station SCHE; NRP – Nott Rd Park, Guilderland, ALBA; NWW – Niskayuna Wide Waters SCHE; RL – Round Lake SARA; SCBC – Salem CBC 27 Dec; ScCBC – Schenectady CBC 16 Dec; SI – Simmons Island, Cohoes, SARA; SL – Saratoga Lake SARA; SNHP – Saratoga National Historical Park SARA; SRCBC – Southern Rensselaer CBC 23 Dec; SSCBC – Saratoga Spa CBC 16 Dec; TCBC – Troy CBC 30 Dec; TR – Tomhannock Reservoir RENS; WR – Watervliet Reservoir ALBA.

LOONS – DUCKS

Com. Loon: 4 ACCBC; ChCBC; ScCBC; only reports.
Pied-billed Grebe: ACCBC, only report.
Great Blue Heron: 12 on 5 CBCs; 7 reports in Jan, 2 in Feb.
Turkey Vulture: Troy 26 Feb (AV); 3 Guilderland 26 Feb (NM); 2 Guilderland 28 Feb (AV).
Snow Goose: 4000+ TR 11 Dec (AV); 28 on 4 CBCs; 1 CBL Jan-Feb.
Canada Goose: high counts 6416 ChCBC; 4039 SRCBC.
Mute Swan: NL 6 Dec; 31 ChCBC; ScCBC; 4 CBL 19 Feb; Schoharie Creek SCHE/SCHO 21 Jan, 27 Feb.
Wood Duck: 3 CL 3 Dec; TCBC; Rt 90 RENS 4 Feb; only reports.
Gadwall: 11 on 2 CBCs; MR Cohoes 14 Jan; SI 16 Jan.
Am. Wigeon: AR 3 Dec; 2 ACCBC; only reports.
Am. Black Duck: 1225 on 11 CBCs; max 334 FPCBC.
Mallard: 4652 on 11 CBCs; max 1197 SSCBC.
Blue-winged Teal: 3 ChCBC.
N. Shoveler: GREE 3 Dec, only report.

N. Pintail: 6 reports of singles.
Green-winged Teal: 2 ACCBC; ChCBC; FPCBC; only reports.
Canvasback: max 235 ChCBC; 2 AR 3 Dec; 4 CBL 24 Feb.
Redhead: TCBC; HR Stillwater 1 Feb.
Ring-necked Duck: 50 AR 3 Dec; 33 ACCBC; 9 TCBC; 6 HR Mechanicville 14 Jan; 9 HR Stillwater 18 Feb.
Greater Scaup: TCBC, only report.
Lesser Scaup: Copake 2 Dec; AR 3 Dec; 2 Stillwater 18 Feb; only reports.
Long-tailed Duck: TCBC, only report.
Bufflehead: 24 on 3 CBCs, only reports.
Com. Goldeneye: 679 on 6 CBCs; max 392 HFCBC; 75 FtM 14 Jan; 40 Stillwater 18 Feb.
Hooded Merganser: 50 Copake 2 Dec; 31 on 6 CBCs; 90 HR Stillwater 1 Feb.
Com. Merganser: 66 TR 11 Dec; 501 on 10 CBCs; 20 FtM 28 Jan.
Ruddy Duck: 2 Copake 2 Dec; NL 6 Dec; 2 TR 11 Dec; 32 ACCBC.

HAWKS – ALCIDS

OSPREY: ChCBC.
Bald Eagle: 26 on 8 CBCs; mid-winter survey; 23 ad, 2 imm, Upper Hudson

above Albany, including Hoosic River; 3 ad, 3 imm between Troy Dam and Inbocht Bay; 1 ad, 2 imm Stewarts Bridge/Conklingville.
N. Harrier: 35 on 7 CBCs; 10 FtE thru; 6 T Northumberland 15 Feb; 24 reports of singles.
Sharp-shinned Hawk: 19 on 7 CBCs; 31 reports of singles.
Cooper's Hawk: 18 on 8 CBCs; 35 reports of singles.
N. Goshawk: AR 3 Dec (RG); S RENS 19 Dec (ADBC); SCBC; Partridge Run 4 Jan (Greg Recer).
Red-shouldered Hawk: 2 SSCBC; Griffin Lab Guilderland 16 Jan; Ballston Spa 19, 22 Jan; ad Rotterdam 16 Feb; 2 Grapeville GREE 22 Feb.
Red-tailed Hawk: 553 on 10 CBCs; max 102 FPCBC, 72 ScCBC.
Rough-legged Hawk: 57 on 9 CBCs; 25 FtE 11 Feb; 33 reports of singles.
Am. Kestrel: 10 on 7 CBCs; 19 reports of singles.
Merlin: TCBC; Greenport 7 Jan; VF 28 Jan; only reports.
Peregrine Falcon: ad male FtE 10 Dec; ScCBC; 2 SRCBC; Albany 26 Dec; imm FtE 21 Jan; ad Cohoes 29 Jan; ad T Moreau 17 Feb.
Ring-necked Pheasant: 5 reports of singles.
Ruffed Grouse: 23 on 9 CBCs; no other reports.
Wild Turkey: high counts 641 on 9 CBCs; max 190 FPCBC; 110 SRCBC.
Am. Coot: ChCBC, only report.
Ring-billed Gull: 327 on 7 CBCs; max 400 Inbocht Bay GREE 19 Dec.
Herring Gull: 483 on 8 CBCs; 800 lower MR Cohoes/Colonie 15 Jan.
Iceland Gull: ChCBC; Cohoes 1 Jan; 1st winter Colonie 2 Jan; 1st winter MR Scotia 2 Jan; 2 lower MR Cohoes/Colonie 15 Jan; New St. Cohoes 28 Jan; 2 GI 28 Jan.
Lesser Black-backed Gull: ad MR Crescent 1 Jan; 1st winter lower MR

Cohoes/Colonie 15 Jan; only reports.
Glaucous Gull: ad MR Colonie 1 Jan; Cohoes 1 Jan; 3 CBL 3 Jan; New St. Cohoes 14 Jan; GI 28 Jan; 1st year CBL 19 Feb.
Great Black-backed Gull: 115 on 6 CBCs; max 260 lower MR Cohoes/Colonie 28 Jan.

DOVES – WOODPECKERS

Rock Dove: high counts 1038 FPCBC; 1927 HFCBC.
Mourning Dove: high counts 600 FPCBC; 524 ChCBC.
E. Screech-Owl: 22 on 8 CBCs; 7 reports of singles.
Great Horned Owl: 28 on 8 CBCs; max 9 TCBC; 14 other reports.
Barred Owl: 5 on 4 CBCs; 4 reports Jan, 2 in Feb.
Long-eared Owl: FPCBC, only report.
Short-eared Owl: FPCBC; 2 HFCBC; Cocksackie 11 Feb; 17 FtE 14 Feb (WE).
N. Saw-Whet Owl: 2 FPCBC; HFCBC; 2 JGCBC; T Berne 30 Dec; NB 14 Jan; Schodack Ctr 16 Feb.
Belted Kingfisher: 11 on 7 CBCs; 5 Jan reports, 2 in Feb.
Red-bellied Woodpecker: 88 on 10 CBCs, high count 53 ChCBC; 19 reports of singles.
Yellow-bellied Sapsucker: HFCBC, only report.
Downy Woodpecker: 444 on 11 CBCs; max 95 ChCBC.
Hairy Woodpecker: 120 on 11 CBCs; max 31 ScCBC.
N. Flicker: 104 on 10 CBCs; max 32 ChCBC; 4 Jan reports, 4 in Feb.
Pileated Woodpecker: 38 on 10 CBCs; max 10 ChCBC; 24 reports of singles.

FLYCATCHERS – WAXWINGS

E. Phoebe: NRP 31 Jan (WE).
N. Shrike: 12 on 5 CBCs; 14 reports of singles.
Blue Jay: 2387 on 11 CBCs; numbers up significantly from last year.

Am. Crow: max 6499 TCBC; 8000+ GI 28 Jan (WE).

Fish Crow: 35 TCBC; 2 ChCBC; 7 Jan reports, 4 in Feb.

Com. Raven: 15 on 7 CBCs; continues to be widely reported throughout Region.

Horned Lark: 998 on 8 CBCs; max 435 SCBC; numbers up from last year.

Black-capped Chickadee: max 629 JGCBC, 559 SSCBC; 502 ChCBC.

Tufted Titmouse: max 97 ScCBC; 80 SSCBC.

Red-breasted Nuthatch: 62 on 8 CBCs; max 23 JGCBC.

White-breasted Nuthatch: 372 on 11 CBCs; max 66 ChCBC.

Brown Creeper: 44 on 9 CBCs.

Carolina Wren: 12 on 5 CBCs; 12 reports, including 2 overwintering Delmar (RB).

Winter Wren: 5 ScCBC; SRCBC; 2 SSCBC; Inbocht Bay 19 Dec; FR 1 Jan; Wolf Hollow SCHE 21 Jan.

Marsh Wren: ACCBC, only report.

Golden-crowned Kinglet: 63 on 10 CBCs; scarce Jan-Feb.

Ruby-crowned Kinglet: ChCBC; ScCBC; 7 Jan reports, 3 in Feb.

E. Bluebird: 256 on 9 CBCs; max 80 ChCBC; in good numbers thru.

Hermit Thrush: ScCBC; TCBC; FR 1, 13 Jan; New Salem 19 Feb.

Am. Robin: 7381 on 9 CBCs; max 3880 ScCBC; 2085 ChCBC; 2250 NRP 13 Jan.

Gray Catbird: S RENS 3 Dec; ScCBC; Ghent 6 Jan.

N. Mockingbird: 72 on 9 CBCs; 9 Jan reports, 4 in Feb.

European Starling: high count 7907 HFCBC.

Cedar Waxwing: high counts 509 JGCBC; 579 SSCBC.

WARBLERS

Yellow-rumped Warbler: 2 ChCBC; 3 SSCBC; 8 TCBC; Claverack 8 Jan; Gallupville 16, 18, 20 Feb.

NORTHERN WATERTHRUSH: WR 16 Dec (WE).

TANAGERS – WEAVERS

Am. Tree Sparrow: high counts 565 FPCBC; 328 SCBC; 280 SSCBC; good numbers.

Chipping Sparrow: ScCBC.

Field Sparrow: ChCBC; HFCBC; SRCBC; Ghent 31 Dec-28 Jan.

Savannah Sparrow: 2 SRCBC; Cocksackie 8 Jan (RG); 3 Cocksackie Flats 25 Jan (RB).

Fox Sparrow: Bridge Rd T Berne ALBA 20 Jan (AV).

Song Sparrow: 140 on 9 CBCs; high count 36 ChCBC.

Swamp Sparrow: ACCBC; 5 ScCBC; TCBC; 2 Embough Bay 19 Dec.

White-throated Sparrow: max 178 ScCBC; 90 ChCBC; 88 SRCBC; 80 ACCBC.

White-crowned Sparrow: 2 FPCBC, only report.

Dark-eyed Junco: 3967 on 11 CBCs; max 1057 SSCBC; 566 ChCBC; excellent numbers.

Lapland Longspur: 2 SSCBC; 15 FtE 21 Jan; 2-3 near Nassau 23 Jan; 10-12 Stone Bridge Rd T Northumberland SARA 28 Jan.

Snow Bunting: high counts 200 FPCBC; 100 TCBC; ~300 Duaneburg 21 Jan; 100 T Northumberland 28 Jan; 400 Stone Bridge Rd 10 Feb.

N. Cardinal: high counts 145 ScCBC; 68 ChCBC; 17 at feeder Guilderland 10 Feb.

Red-winged Blackbird: 82 on 5 CBCs; 506 Embough Bay 19 Dec; arr 700+ Schodack 26 Feb.

E. Meadowlark: 1-2 FtE 10 Dec, 11 Jan, 14 Feb.

Rusty Blackbird: 11 ScCBC; 1+ singing Schodack 28 Feb (PC).

Com. Grackle: JGCBC; SRCBC; NB 8 Jan; Livingston 14 Jan; arr 500+ Schodack 26 Feb.

Brown-headed Cowbird: 315 on 8 CBCs; arr 300+ Schodack 28 Feb.

Purple Finch: 122 on 7 CBCs; 24 Harrisburg Rd WARR 24 Jan; 25 at feeder Berne late Feb; good numbers.

House Finch: 1168 on 11 CBCs; max 208 ScCBC; scarce at feeders.

Red Crossbill: 11 Jenny L 11 Dec, only report.

White-winged Crossbill: 38 Rensselaer Plateau 4 Feb; 10 Partridge Run WMA 20 Jan; 2 Cole Hill 20 Jan; pr Harrisburg Rd WARR 24 Jan; 15 Fox Hill Rd SARA 4 Feb; pr T Hague 13 Feb; pr Cole Hill

18 Feb.

Pine Siskin: none on CBCs; 19 Partridge Run 20 Jan; 60+ Taborton 27 Jan; widespread at higher elevations Jan-Feb.

Am. Goldfinch: max 554 JGCBC; 275 ScCBC; large numbers at feeders beginning late Feb.

Evening Grosbeak: 2 JGCBC; Ghent 2 Jan; Gallupville 14 Jan; 6 Taborton area RENS 4 Feb; only reports.

House Sparrow: max 461 SCBC; 393 FPCBC.

jgraves@skidmore.edu