

REGION 10-MARINE

Patricia J. Lindsay

28 Mystic Circle, Bay Shore, NY 11706

S. S. Mitra

Biology Department, College Staten Island,
2800 Victory Blvd., Staten Island, NY 10314
mitra@mail.csi.cuny.edu

December was slightly cool and very dry, with a mean temperature of 33.5° F, 2.2° below average, and 2.95" of precipitation, about 2" below average. In contrast, average January temperatures of 37.5° (Islip) and 40.9° (Central Park) were astonishingly warm, 6.6° and 8.8°, respectively, above normal. Precipitation for January was absolutely average at about 4.5". February's temperatures were just about average, 32.3° (-0.1), but precipitation totals of 2.43" were about an inch below average. A major storm 11-12 February dropped 12-24" of snow across the Region, but the snow cover did not persist for long.

The cold weather in the first half of December seemed to concentrate large numbers of half hardies in our Region. Several species, notably Winter Wren and Gray Catbird, were found in record-breaking numbers on the CBCs. Catbird counts of 79 and 74, tallied this year at Montauk and Southern Nassau County, would have defied the comprehension of birders just fifty years ago. During the period 1941-1960, the average totals for this species on these two venerable CBCs were just 1.5 and 2.2 catbirds per year. Similarly, Montauk's 2005 total of 27 Winter Wrens could not have been imagined by the dedicated birders who gleaned just 0.5 birds per year from Montauk's thickets from 1941-60. Nor could Southern Nassau's tally of 21 have been predicted by the mid-20th Century observers who found only 1.2 birds per year there over that same historical period. To put these shifts in perspective, consider the case of American Robin. From historical (1941-1960) averages of just 11 per year at Montauk and 21 per year at Southern Nassau, far below our contemporary tallies of Gray Catbirds, this species has now emerged as one of our most abundant winter landbirds, with individual CBC totals reaching the thousands. Thus, one of yesterday's scarce winter residents has come to dominate our winter landbird community;

several of yesterday's half-hardies have emerged as regular winter residents; and many of today's half hardies could scarcely have been imagined in winter even a few decades ago, e.g., Blue-gray Gnatcatcher, Nashville Warbler, Ovenbird, and Clay-colored Sparrow.

Whereas the early December cold snap seemed to concentrate scarce landbirds in our area, the exceptionally mild January undoubtedly allowed many of them to remain and survive here longer than usual. This winter witnessed an Ovenbird as late as 31 December; House Wren, Marsh Wren, Orange-crowned Warbler, Clay-colored Sparrow, Lincoln's Sparrow, and Baltimore Oriole from mid-late January; and February records of Eastern Phoebes, Ruby-crowned Kinglets, Palm Warblers, Yellow-breasted Chats, and Dickcissel.

Landbirds were not the only birds to make news this season. A pelagic trip out of Freeport on 11 February found a very narrow window of ideal weather nestled within the relentless cycle of fair weather winds and northeast storms typical of mid winter. It also found some amazing birds. It is difficult to comprehend now, but for almost a century, **Thick-billed Murre** was considered the most numerous large alcid south of New England. A single bird of this species six miles southeast of Jones Inlet on 11 February was, in fact, the least expected individual alcid seen that day. The explosive expansion of wintering Razorbills south of Cape Cod since ca. 1990 deserves more detailed analysis than space here allows, but suffice it to say, a real generation gap has developed among contemporary observers, between blasé neophytes accustomed to scores or hundreds of Razorbills per season and frost-bitten veterans who recall how difficult it was to find this species locally even twenty years ago. The 11 February trip's tally of 20 Razorbills was considered, by the current standard, very disappointing even though it exceeded the sum total of definite Long Island records known to Griscom in 1923! At least **20 Common Murres** were carefully identified on 11 February, an all-time single-day maximum for New York State. Furthermore most of the nine unidentified murres and some of the 53 unidentified large alcids seen that day were probably referable to this species. As surprising as these numbers seem, they are consistent with recent observations from the shelf waters immediately to our east, i.e. waters south and east of Block Island and the southwest edge of Cox's Ledge, where Common Murres have been carefully documented on many occasions and in comparable numbers over the last ten years or so (*Field Notes of Rhode Island Birds* 357: 5, 383: 7, 395: 10, 408: 8, 417: 26). The lesson emerging from these data is that Common Murres should be sought during February in Long Island shelf waters ca. 10-30 miles offshore over ca. 10-25 fathoms. The total of **1,675** Dovekies recorded that day is by a large margin the all-time offshore single-day maximum for New York State. Historically, it is exceeded only by the spectacular, storm-related wreck of 19 November 1932. The day's fifth species of alcid was perhaps the only one whose tally was more or less in line with expectations; a single **Atlantic Puffin** about 65 miles southeast of Jones Inlet was a fair expectation for birders lucky enough to get themselves there at this time of year.

The total of 2,000 Northern Gannets, almost all adults, was impressive, especially in contrast to the general scarcity of this species in inshore waters

during mid winter. In contrast, just 12 Black-legged Kittiwakes and zero Northern Fulmars were disappointing numbers. Although the foregoing account of this trip is probably too long already, a few more words must be devoted to the most remarkable bird of the day, a gull that by appearance and all analysis to date seems likely to be accepted as the first documented **Western Gull** for the Atlantic Ocean! Frank Gallo called attention to this dark-mantled gull as the ship's captain inspected a wreck about 70 miles southeast of Jones Inlet. The bird was slightly paler than a Great Black-backed Gull and roughly the size of a Herring Gull, ingredients that New York birders are familiar with cooking up into Lesser Black-backed Gulls. But this bird had a white head, a heavy bill, and a darkish iris. Views of the bird in flight revealed broad wings with relatively broad white trailing edges and bright pink feet! As the almost incomprehensible prospect of a Western Gull assembled itself before our eyes, Paul Guris and his crew of leaders spared no effort in outlining the identification puzzle, studying the bird closely, and photographing it extensively. Beautiful photos by Angus Wilson (see Figs. 1 & 2), Andy Guthrie, and Martin Lofgren documented the features described above and revealed details of the wingtip pattern and orbital ring color that were difficult to discern in the field. With the help of Paul Guris and the other leaders (Frank Gallo, Andy Guthrie, Rich Guthrie, and Angus Wilson), I drafted an analysis of the various identification candidates, including several hybrid combinations. Photos and preliminary analysis were posted on Angus Wilson's website (<http://oceanwanderers.com/unidBBGull.html>), and comments were solicited from gull experts from the west coast and elsewhere. As of this time, most opinions support the identification as Western Gull as astonishing as this sounds. Obviously, a record of this rarity will require full review, not only by NYSARC (Four of seven members of which saw the bird!), but by a broader pool of experts before it can be considered acceptable.

Arctic-breeding geese make news every winter nowadays, and this year featured multiple Greater White-fronted Geese, "**Black**" **Brant**, and **Cackling Geese**; two **Barnacle Geese**; and a "**Grey-bellied/Intermediate**" Brant. The latter two forms remain very controversial in New York State, the former owing to concerns over provenance and the latter owing to concerns over taxonomy and potential hybridization.

Another controversy surrounds a series of reports of a young gray-morph **Gyrfalcon** from various South Shore locales through 5 January. Although first gaining widespread attention when seen independently by several parties on the Captree CBC on 18 December, photos and accounts emerged suggesting that this bird was present in the Jones Beach area from at least mid November. It was last reported from Wantagh Park on 5 January. Rumors that a falconer's Gyrfalcon or Gyrfalcon x Peregrine Falcon hybrid had escaped in the vicinity surfaced only after the bird's presence along the Jones Strip had been well publicized. It is our understanding that falconers are required to report lost birds within days of their escape, and falconers would seem to have every personal motivation to adhere to this policy anyway. Thus, the absence to date of any evidence that such a report was made during a period consistent with this bird's appearance in the wild renders the rumors of a captive origin problematic. Anyone who saw and or photographed this bird, or who has

knowledge concerning its origins, is encouraged to send the documentation to NYSARC to aid in the evaluation of this potentially important record.

Besides those mentioned above, various noteworthy trends were evident this winter. Common Eiders moved into Long Island waters in big numbers, recalling counts from a decade ago. But this year's flocks included unprecedented numbers west of Shinnecock Inlet and many flocks inside bays and inlets, historically unusual settings for this species in our Region. On 18 March, Beth Milke posted a message to the Massachusetts Bird List (<http://birdingonthe.net/maillinglists/MASS.html>) describing a late-winter die-off of Common Eiders just to our north and east. She noted that emaciated corpses found on Martha's Vineyard were afflicted with "extremely high acanthocephalan parasite loads (thorny-headed worms)." Her statement that the "larval form of this parasite is often found in lower quality prey items (including non-native species), and may indicate a larger ecological problem" could provide a sobering explanation for the unusual explorations of Common Eiders in our Region this winter. On a more positive note, Redheads were found in exceptional numbers during February, Red-shouldered Hawks were unusually numerous and widespread in Region 10, and Tree Swallows over-wintered in small numbers along the immediate coast. Myrtle Warblers did not share the fortunes of their fellow bayberry aficionados and were reported as scarce by nearly all observers.

In addition to those mentioned above, this winter's rarities included an apparent **scaup x Tufted Duck hybrid**, **Black Rail**, **White-winged Dove**, **Sedge Wren**, and **Bohemian Waxwings**.

CONTRIBUTORS

Bob Adamo, Jim Ash, Seth Ausubel, Andy Baldelli, Catherine Barron, Willie Becker, Gail Benson, Steve & Thomas Biasetti (S&TBi), Shawn Billerman (ShB), Orhan Birol, Juliet Bloss, Jean & Ron Bourque, George Bouquoio (GBo), Thomas W. Burke (TWB), Vicki Bustamante, Martin & Frances Butterfield (M&FBu), Charleen Conway, Stacey Delligatti, Peter Dorosh, Mike Farina, Ken & Sue Feustel, Tom Fiore, Howard Fischer, John and Gerta Fritz, Doug Futuyma, Peregrina Garcia (PeG), Arie Gilbert (AGi), Paul Gillen, John Gluth, Isaac Grant, Robert Grover, Paul Guris (PGu), Andy Guthrie, Dan Heglund, Nick Hamblet, Mike Higgiston, Sam Jannazzo, Rob Jett, Ed & Zach Johnson, David Jordett, Brian Kane, Dave Klauber, Robert Kurtz, Max & Nellie Larsen, Anthony J. Lauro, Ted Levinus, Robert Levy, Avi Lewis, Patricia Lindsay, Martin Lofgren (MLo), Harry Maas (HaM), Annie MacIntyre (AMac), Jim Madden (JMa), Bob May, Hugh McGuinness, Jack Meyer, Karlo & Alison Mirth (K&AMi), Shai Mitra, Carolyn Mostello, Andy Murphy, Sean Murphy (SMu), Lauren Nuzzi, J. Phillip O'Brien, Jim Osterlund, Al & Karin Ott, Joan Quinlan, Peter Quennell, William Reeves, Ian Resnick, Karen & Barbara Rubinstein, Sy Schiff, Peter Scully, Michael Shanley (MSH), John Shemitt, Pete Shen (PSH), Sean Sime (SSi), Lloyd and Sandy Spitalnik (L&SaS), Jeff Stetson (JSt), Paul Stoutenburgh (PSt), MaryJane Syvertsen, Dianne Taggert, Pat & John Thaxton, Tony Tierno, Peter Tripodi, Richard Veit, Wada Kazuhito, Kristine Wallstrom, Chris Walters, Mike Wasilco (MWa), Rich Willott (RWi),

Alex Wilson (AxW), Angus Wilson (AWi), Robert Wilson, Seth Ian Wollney (SIW), Harris Yulin.

ABBREVIATIONS

APP – Alley Pond P; BBG – Brooklyn Botanical Garden; BNL – Brookhaven National Laboratory; BP – Breezy Pt; CBM – Cedar Beach Marina; CCP – Cupsogue County P; CHP – Conference House P, Staten I; CLP – Clove Lakes P, Staten I; CP – Central P; CSP – Caumsett SP; DP – Democrat Pt; EEB – East End Birds email summary; EH – E Hampton; EP – Eisenhower P; FBF – Floyd Bennett Field; FP – Forest Park; GA – Gabreski Airport; GE – Grace Estate, Easthampton; HLSP Hempstead L SP; HSP – Hecksher SP; JBSP – Jones Beach SP; JBWE – Jones Beach SP West End; JBWR – Jamaica Bay Wildlife Refuge; LI – Long Island; Mass – Massapequa Pres; MB – Mecox Bay; mi – miles; MI – Moriches Inlet; MLP – Mt Loretto P, Staten I; MP – Montauk Pt; MS – Maple Swamp; NYBG – NY Botanical Gardens, OMNSA – Oceanside Marine Nature Study Area; OP – Orient Pt; PB – Pike's Beach, PBP – Pelham Bay P, PL – Pt Lookout; PP – Prospect Park; RMSP – Robert Moses SP; Shinn – Shinnecock Inlet; SI – Staten I, SIN – Staten I Naturalist; SOFO – South Fork Natural History Society; SPCP – Smith Pt County P; VCP – Van Cortland P; WNWR – Wertheim NWR; WSP – Wildwood SP.

WHISTLING-DUCKS - VULTURES

Greater White-fronted Goose: South Beach, SI 6 Dec (SBo); 3 (ad, 2 imm) Hook Pd and vicinity, four dates 15-31 Dec (mob); Captree CBC 18 Dec; ad Bridgehampton 31 Dec (K&BR) thru at least 11 Jan (mob); EP mid Dec to 5 Feb at least; Mattituck In 29 Dec (MWa); Schonian's Ice Pd, SI 9 Jan (CB); *intro*. **Snow Goose:** max 200+ flying over SI 3 Dec (HF); wintering flocks incl 67; one "blue" morph, Bridgehampton 11 Jan; 60 JBWR 17 Jan; 18 Cutchogue 18 Feb. **"BLACK" BRANT:** Wantagh P 8 Jan (AG, AWi!), ph; WPP 7 Jan (via SIN); Seguin Beach, SI 18 Feb (MSh). **"GREY-BELLIED/INTERMEDIATE" BRANT:** Wantagh P 4 Feb (PL, SM!), ph, *intro*. **BARNACLE GOOSE:** EP early Dec thru (CC, mob!); Calverton 27 Jan (AB). **CAACKLING GOOSE:** Further Lane, EH 31 Dec (PL, SM!), ph, and 21 Jan (HM); Old Town Pd, Southampton 24 Jan (HM); PP 28 Jan (PD); Calverton area 28 Jan (TWB, GB, AJL) and 13 Feb (DH, BM); Bridgehampton 23 Feb (SSI).

The Kingbird 2006 June; 56 (2)

Mute Swan: 394 Sagaponack CBC 18 Dec, high count.

Tundra Swan: 6 MP 10 Dec (A&KO); 3 Georgica Pd 21 Jan (HM, KR) and 4 Feb, probably same inds as 3 Bridgehampton 5 Feb; JBWR 28 Jan (P&JT, K&AMi).

Wood Duck: 3 overwintered CP (mob); 9 Sag Harbor 2 Jan (HM).

Eurasian Wigeon: 3 m FBF 11 Dec (AWi), at least one continued thru; m JBWR 11 Dec (NYRBA); SI 14 Dec (J&RB); 1-2 m Eastport 1-22 Feb (MWa et al.).

Blue-winged Teal: m,f Saw Mill Creek P, SI 9 Jan (DJ); f Lily Pd EH 21 Jan (K&BR).

Redhead: m, 2f GKP thru 11 Dec (SIW), unusual location; max 115 Capri Pd West Islip 4 Feb (PL, SM); 104 Eastport Pd 25 Feb (PL, SM), high counts.

Lesser Scaup: 2500 Swan L, Patchogue 25 Feb (PL, SM), high count.

TUFTED DUCK X SCAUP SP: Capri Pd, West Islip 4 Feb (RK et al.).

King Eider: sub ad MP 16 Dec (HM et al.); ad m Montauk CBC 17 Dec; pr Sore Thumb, Babylon Captree CBC 18 Dec,

from fall; m Culloden Pt 28 Jan (TWB, GB, KF).

Com. Eider: max 2967 Montauk CBC 17 Dec; up to 250 Shinn Bay, unusual location, with many more on ocean side of inlet; 115 S Nassau CBC 1 Jan, all time max; ca. 20 BP 24 Dec-22 Jan (TF, PSh); *intro* relative to losses in neighboring areas and potential longer term implications for NY.

Harlequin Duck: 1 or more near Montauk Pt thru; 2 Bayville from fall (BR) to 13 Jan at least (JMa); Quogue-Watermill CBC 17 Dec; f Captree CBC 18 Dec (K&SF); 2 Riis P 1 Jan thru 7 Feb at least, (mob); m Mattituck 2 Jan (PG); pr Jones In 20 Feb (K&SF).

Surf Scoter: max 5000 MP 31 Dec.

White-winged Scoter: max 1727 Montauk CBC 17 Dec, lowest maximum count since 1995.

Black Scoter: max 6404 Montauk CBC 17 Dec, high count for this CBC.

Com. Goldeneye: f CP 12 Dec (TF), unusual location.

Barrow's Goldeneye: m Mattituck 2 Jan (PG); f Orient Harbor 16 Jan - 5 Feb (SM, mob).

Hooded Merganser: 64 Sagaponack CBC 18 Dec, high count.

Wild Turkey: NYBG 8 Dec; PBP 26 Dec; 35 former Grumman property 20 Jan thru (DH); 23 Southampton farm 18 Feb (JS).

N. Bobwhite: 24 Quogue-Watermill CBC 17 Dec; 12 Orient CBC 31 Dec; only reports.

Red-throated Loon: 229 Montauk CBC 17 Dec.

Com. Loon: 660 Montauk CBC 17 Dec.

Red-necked Grebe: about a dozen reports 11 Dec-21 Jan.

N. Gannet: 2000+ 50 mi se of LI 11 Feb.

AMERICAN WHITE PELICAN: Hook Pd, EH 14-15 Dec (HM).

Am. Bittern: Dune Rd and JBWR thru; Mass 3 Dec; Cutchogue 4 Jan.

Great Egret: 2-4 Sag Harbor 13-16 Dec (RW); Dune Rd 20 Jan (PS); 2 Noyac 22 Jan (WB); Dune Rd 19 Feb (JO).

Tricolored Heron: OMNSA 17 Dec (MF).

Turkey Vulture: CP 16 Dec, 28 Jan, & 6 Feb (TF); Brooklyn, count week for 17 Dec CBC; former Grumman property 22 Feb (AB).

HAWKS - ALCIDS

Osprey: Captree CBC 18 Dec.

Bald Eagle: ad CP 17 Jan; imm CP 13 Feb; a half dozen reports of imm from e LI.

N. Goshawk: imm SI 2 Dec (HF); Wading R 12 Dec (NYRBA); MP 16 Dec (HM, *et al*); Brooklyn CBC 17 Dec; ad Montauk CBC 17 Dec; Sagaponack CBC 18 Dec.

Red-shouldered Hawk: Montauk CBC 17 Dec; 4 Staten I CBC 17 Dec; 7 Brooklyn CBC 17 Dec; MP 10 Jan (SBi); ad Montauk 15 Jan (CW *et al.*); ad f SI 30 Jan (HF); imm and ad GKP 4 Feb (PQ *et al.*); unusually numerous and widespread.

Broad-winged Hawk: Brooklyn CBC 17 Dec, extremely rare in winter.

Red-tailed Hawk: 50 Sagaponack CBC 18 Dec, high count.

Rough-legged Hawk: 12 Montauk CBC 17 Dec, 10 of these on Gardiner I; Staten I CBC 17 Dec; PBP 31 Dec; Im former Grumman property 4 Jan (AB); dm SI 6 Jan (HF); dm Montauk 19 Jan (HMa, LS); Peconic 20 Jan (RWi); GKP 11 Feb (RJ); dm SI 18 Feb (MSh); Im Napeague 27 Feb (K&SF).

Am. Kestrel: 1 Montauk CBC 17 Dec, low; pr copulating Manhattan 5 Feb (JPO).

GYRFALCON: imm at various locations along barrier beach 18 Dec-1 Jan, relocated at Wantagh P 3 and 5 Jan (TL, TT), possibly seen JBSP as early as mid Nov (AMac!); natural status uncertain, *intro*.

BLACK RAIL: Dune Rd 14 Feb (PSt), during a flood tide.

Clapper Rail: present Dune Rd thru, as usual.

Virginia Rail: 7 Montauk CBC 17 Dec; 2 Sagaponack CBC 18 Dec; 2 Mass 1 Jan.

Sora: Calverton 21 Jan (MWa).

Semipalmated Plover: 2 Jones In 1 Jan (WR); Dune Rd 28 Jan (J&GF) and 30 Jan, rare in winter.

Killdeer: 1 Montauk CBC 17 Dec, low; first migrants e LI 8 Georgica Pd 4 Feb (G&JF, HM).

Am. Oystercatcher: wintered sw LI shore, e.g., 12 Jones In; Montauk CBC 17 Dec, unusual winter location.

Greater Yellowlegs: 10 Mass 4 Dec; small numbers reported from Dune Rd, Gilgo thru.

Willet: 2 Pt Lookout 5 Dec, returned for the third winter, thru 4 Jan at least (SS).

Marbled Godwit: JBSP 3 Dec - 7 Jan at least (mob).

Ruddy Turnstone: 40 Shelter I 10 Jan (NH).

Red Knot: 10 JBSP 4 Jan (AG).

Western Sandpiper: 2 S Nassau CBC 1 Jan.

Long-billed Dowitcher: 8 Mass 4 Dec - 7 Jan at least, then smaller numbers reported thru (mob); JBSP 4 Jan (AG).

Wilson's Snipe: typical sites in small numbers: Mass, Forge R, Eastport creek outfall, Mecox.

Am. Woodcock: small numbers at many sites thru; 2 MLP 22 Jan (RV, CM), "peenting".

Parasitic Jaeger: ad MP 16 Dec (HM et al.).

Laughing Gull: ad Maidstone P EH 15 Jan (AWi), rare in Jan.

Little Gull: ad Montauk CBC 17 Dec; Fort Pd, Montauk 17 Jan (AB et al.).

Black-headed Gull: MP 3 Dec (IR, et al); 2W Georgica Pd 21-22 Jan (HM, BK, VB), also 4 Feb; 1W MP 4 - 23 Feb (TWB, GB).

Bonaparte's Gull: virtually absent from PL again this year and scarce elsewhere; 400 Georgica Pd 21 Jan (HM, VB, BK), about 100 continued thru.

Iceland Gull: ad Shinn 1 Jan, same ind has returned to winter here for many years; 3 ads, 1 2W, pelagic se Jones In 11 Feb; a handful of other reports e and w 16 Dec- 18 Feb.

Lesser Black-backed Gull: about 30 reports from 13 locations, involving probably 20 inds throughout; Shinn

faithful seems to have disappeared after being found in October.

WESTERN GULL: ad ca. 70 mi se Jones Inlet 11 Feb (PGu!, mob!), well documented, *intro.* - -

Glaucous Gull: Hook Pd EH 15 Dec (AJL); Georgica In 16 Dec (HM, et al); Montauk CBC 17 Dec; 1W Sagaponack CBC 18 Dec; Shinn 23 Dec (PG); Agawam L, Southampton 25 Dec (JS); 2W Shinn 16 Jan (JS); 1W BP 17 Jan (TF); imm Shinn 29 Jan thru (JG, SA); PBP 31 Jan (M&NL); 1W Riis P 20 Feb (TF) .

Black-legged Kittiwake: 100 MP 16 Dec (HM, et al); 12 offshore Jones In 11 Feb; small numbers reported from MP and other offshore vantage as usual thru.

Caspian Tern: Staten I CBC 17 Dec, very late.

Dovekie: 1675 30-70 mi se of Jones In 11 Feb, exceptional count, offshore max by a large margin, *intro.*

COMMON MURRE: 20 8-35 mi se of Jones In 11 Feb (PGu!, mob), *intro.*

THICK-BILLED MURRE: three reports from MP - 17 Dec (CBC), 27 Dec (SA, MSh, SIW), and 2 Jan (AB); Sagaponack CBC 18 Dec; 6 mi se of Jones In 11 Feb (PGu!, mob).

Razorbill: max 100 MP 16 Dec (HM, et al); 20 MP 20 Dec (DF); numerous reports of smaller numbers from South Shore inlets, e.g. 5 S Nassau CBC 1 Jan; 20 10-50 mi se of Jones In 11 Feb; MLP 20 Jan (TF), unusual on Staten I.

Black Guillemot: MP 25 Dec (VB); JBSP 4 Jan (AG, SS); Culloden Pt, Montauk 11 Jan (PL, SM, mob) thru 29 Jan when hunters disturbed it.

ATLANTIC PUFFIN: 1W 65 mi se of Jones In 11 Feb (PGu!, MLo!, mob).

PIGEONS - WOODPECKERS

Rock Pigeon: 276 Sagaponack CBC 18 Dec, high count.

WHITE-WINGED DOVE: JBWE 5 Dec (JF).

Monk Parakeet: reported from Brooklyn as usual thru.

E. Screech-Owl: max 21 Sagaponack CBC 18 Dec, high count; S Nassau CBC 1 Jan, first in nine years.

Great Horned Owl: JBWE 4 Dec (SJ), very rare on barrier beach; 11 Sagaponack CBC 18 Dec, high count; 2 PBP 1 Jan (PeG).

Snowy Owl: many reports from Napeague and Cartwright Shoal 17 Dec-27 Feb, probably involved 2 birds; Brooklyn CBC 17 Dec; JBWE 23 Jan; Cupsogue CP 29 Jan (S&TBi); Lake Grove, ph on a rooftop 30 Jan (SD), unusual location; Dune Rd 14 Feb (G&JF).

Long-eared Owl: Sagaponack CBC 18 Dec; Peconic 28 Dec.

Short-eared Owl: max 3 Dune Rd 3 Dec.

N. Saw-whet Owl: CP 18 Dec-22 Jan (mob); 2 Sagaponack CBC 18 Dec; PBP 1 Jan (PeG).

Yellow-bellied Sapsucker: widespread in small numbers; max 6 Montauk CBC 17 Dec.

FLYCATCHERS - WAXWINGS

E. Phoebe: MLP mid Dec-5 Feb; 2 Montauk CBC 17 Dec; Staten I CBC 17 Dec; Sagaponack CBC 18 Dec; SOFO property Bridgehampton 9, 16 Jan (JA), very late; Calverton 10 Feb (PS), exceptional date.

N. Shrike: CP 18 Dec (fide L&SaS), only report.

Blue-headed Vireo: BBG 10 Dec (AxW).

Fish Crow: max 100 Brooklyn CBC 17 Dec, in one location.

Horned Lark: small flocks and inds reported from parks and beaches throughout Region; 85 St.Charles Cemetery, Suff Co 26 Feb (PL).

Tree Swallow: widespread reports of wintering birds - FBF 14 Dec; 18 Montauk CBC 17 Dec (17 on Gardiner I); 6 Brooklyn CBC 17 Dec; 2 BP 17 Jan (TF); 14 GKP 22, 28 Jan (via SIN); JBWE 28 Jan (SS); 2 JBWE 4 Feb (DK,

BM); 21 SI Feb 3 (SA, et al); 3 BP 20 Feb (TF).

Brown Creeper: wintered in small numbers throughout; 9 Sagaponack CBC 18 Dec, high count; 7 S Nassau CBC 1 Jan.

House Wren: Montauk CBC 17 Dec; Sagaponack CBC 18 Dec; Shelter I 28 & 31 Dec (NH); South Hampton 10 Jan (G&JF), late.

Winter Wren: unprecedented numbers on CBCs, e.g. 27 Montauk CBC 17 Dec; *intro*.

SEDGE WREN (R10): Sagaponack CBC 18 Dec.

Marsh Wren: 7 Montauk CBC 17 Dec; Sagaponack CBC 18 Dec; BP 2 Jan-4 Feb (TF, PSh).

Ruby-crowned Kinglet: latest Shelter I 2, 12 Feb (OB).

E. Bluebird: max 18 former Grumman property 8 Jan.

Am. Robin: 1448 Sagaponack CBC 18 Dec, high count.

Gray Catbird: unprecedented numbers on CBCs, e.g. 79 Montauk CBC 17 Dec; *intro*.

Brown Thrasher: max 9 Sagaponack CBC 18 Dec.

Am. Pipit: widely reported on CBCs 17-18 Dec; max 40 Sagaponack CBC 18 Dec; latest Montauk 20 Jan.

BOHEMIAN WAXWING (R10): 2 Montauk CBC 17 Dec (TWB).

WARBLERS

Orange-crowned Warbler: about 10 reports 17 Dec-11 Jan; max 4 Sagaponack CBC 18 Dec.

Nashville Warbler: Sagaponack CBC 18 Dec.

Yellow-rumped Warbler: lower than usual numbers reported from barrier beach and CBCs.

Pine Warbler: CP 14 Dec (NYRBA); Montauk CBC 17 Dec.

Palm Warbler: later reports incl Watermill 1 Jan (JS); Mecox 8 Jan (AB); Montauk 7 Feb (VB), rare in Feb.

Ovenbird: Sagaponack CBC 18 Dec; Orient CBC 31 Dec.

N. Waterthrush: CP thru 13 Dec (NYRBA).

Com. Yellowthroat: Manhattan 13 Dec; Montauk CBC 17 Dec; 2 Sagaponack CBC 18 Dec.

Yellow-breasted Chat: CP 16 Dec (NYRBA); Staten I CBC 17 Dec; Montauk CBC 17 Dec; CLP 10 Jan (SIW, MSh) to 11 Feb.

TANAGERS - WEAVERS

Chipping Sparrow: 12 Poxabogue Pd 11 Jan (JA, HY); 11 Calverton 4 Feb (TWB, GB); CP 18 Dec-12 Feb (TF, mob), still unusual in winter away from central and e LI.

Clay-colored Sparrow: Sagaponack CBC 18 Dec; Orient 28 Jan (AJL); rare in winter.

Vesper Sparrow: JBWE 28 Dec (G&JF).

Savannah Sparrow: a half dozen reports of "Ipswich" as usual, from Montauk, Sagaponack, Shinn, the Jones Beach strip, and BP.

Seaside Sparrow: Staten I CBC 17 Dec; 6 Dune Rd 13 Jan (RG); 15 Dune Rd 4 Feb (TWB, GB), unusually high counts for season.

Fox Sparrow: max 62 Sagaponack CBC 18 Dec.

Lincoln's Sparrow: JBSP 16 Jan (G&JF), very rare in Jan.

White-crowned Sparrow: max 8 Sagaponack CBC 18 Dec; noted as scarce

this year after a decade of large winter numbers.

Lapland Longspur: GKP 17 Dec (SIW, MSh); Calverton 15 Jan (AB); max 7 JBWE 1 Jan.

Snow Bunting: 20 Miller Field, SI 17 Dec (SIW, MSh); 24 Brooklyn CBC 17 Dec; 23 Crooke's Pt, SI 28 Jan; 40 JBWE 28 Jan; noted by many observers as low this season.

Dickcissel: drab f Poxabogue Pd 11 Jan (JA, HY); imm m SI feeder 12 Feb (E&ZJ).

Red-winged Blackbird: arr Sag Harbor 4 Feb (HM).

E. Meadowlark: max 20 former Grumman property 19 Feb (JG).

Rusty Blackbird: wintered in small numbers throughout; max 20+ Shu Swamp 18 Feb (DK).

Com. Grackle: 10,855 Sagaponack CBC 18 Dec, high count.

Boat-tailed Grackle: 12 Dune Rd 28 Dec (AM), up to 15 seen thru; 3 Gilgo 4 Jan (AG).

Baltimore Oriole: Staten I CBC 17 Dec; Brooklyn feeder 19 Dec - 1 Jan at least (MJS); Manorville feeder 1 Jan (BM); PL 7 Jan (IR); CHP 10 Jan (SIW, MSh).

Purple Finch: widespread reports of small numbers.

Pine Siskin: Shelter I feeder 19 Dec (NH); CP 12 Jan, 13 Feb (KW, TF)





Fig. 1. Probable Western Gull (*Larus occidentalis*)
Hudson Valley Shelf, NY, 11 February 2006.
© Angus Wilson



Fig. 2. Probable Western Gull (*Larus occidentalis*)
Hudson Valley Shelf, NY, 11 February 2006.
© Angus Wilson