

REGION 2—GENESEE

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It was a winter of contrasts. The National Weather Service called December 2009 a “dismal” month. This came from the fact that there was only 20% of possible sunshine vs. 27% normal. There was only a single day during the month that was called “mostly sunny”. The average temperature of 27.9° was about 1.5° below normal, with no real extremes anytime during the month. The first half of the month was mild followed by a typically cold second half. The 2.95" of precipitation were a mere 0.22" above normal, with the heaviest falling on the 9th and late on the 25th. Snow totaled 25.4", with 22.0" being the norm. The heaviest falls were lake effect blasts on the 10th, 16th and 28th. All in all, January turned out to be a typical month. The average temperature of 24.2° was 0.3° above normal, while precipitation was 0.1" below normal at 2.24". Snowfall amounted totaled 33.8", 8" above normal. January experienced plenty of cold and snow, but also had a long mild, but overcast period. There were 17 days of below normal temperatures, including three days that started out below 0°. There were 14 days that averaged 9° above normal. While the rainfall was about average, about half of it fell on the 24th and 25th. The bulk of the snowfall came during two periods of lake effect snows, with 18" falling from 2-8 January and 9" from 27-29 January. The mild period returned us to bare ground. Possible sunshine was 26% compared to the usual 31%. February was a fairly consistent month. The average temperature of 25.5° was only 0.2° above normal. The highest temperature for the month was 37°. That was the third lowest max in the last 137 years. The daily temperature range of about 10° was unusually low. Precipitation was 2.4", 0.36" above normal. Snowfall totaled 30.4", 8.4" below average. We were spared the record storms that hit the states south and east of us, but we had 20 days with measurable snowfall. The heaviest snow fell on the 25th and 26th, with an area wide snow that ranged from 12–18". It was the heaviest single snow in three years. There was 26% of available sunshine compared to the usual 38%.

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It was a relatively quiet winter season. Birds were difficult to find at times and the usual concentrations never materialized. It was a weak season for waterfowl. Snow Goose and Cackling Goose continue to be reported in good numbers. Trumpeter Swans continue to build in number. The rest of the waterfowl picture wasn't good; there were few reports of wintering puddle ducks, and divers were in short supply. This was particularly true of Canvasback, Greater Scaup, and Bufflehead. Other divers were okay, but didn't approach totals of recent winters past. The Barrow's Goldeneye at Point Breeze returned for another winter. Hybrid Barrow's x Common Goldeneyes were found at Chimney Bluffs and Point Breeze. Red-throated and Common Loons were reported, but again Red-throated outnumbered Common. Horned Grebes were not plentiful, except at very local spots. A few more than typical Red-necked Grebes wintered in the Region. A late Northern Gannet was seen by Dave Tetlow on 5 December. Irondequoit Bay hosted now annual Double-crested Cormorants through the season. Great Blue Herons wintered, but numbers were down slightly. A major surprise was a Black Vulture discovered by Dave Tetlow on 7 January and seen by many until found dead on 27 January in an old shed near the original sighting location. The specimen was sent to the NYS Wildlife Pathology Lab. Turkey Vultures seemed to be scattered throughout the southern portions of the Region, with a concentration of 30+ reported by Martha Zettel in Rush.

Bald Eagles continued their winter presence in the Region with a record high count of four on the Rochester CBC, and Cooper's Hawk also reached a record high total of 14 on that count. There were very few N. Goshawk reports. Rough-legged Hawks were scarce this season. Merlin and Peregrine Falcon were well reported again this winter. American Kestrel numbers continued low. Virginia Rail wintered again in Mendon Ponds Park. Sandhill Cranes lingered on into December, with a maximum of 17 in Savannah from 5 to 8 December. December saw some late shorebird sightings, with Killdeer, Ruddy Turnstone, Dunlin, and Purple Sandpiper all present into the month, and the Ruddy Turnstone dates state record late inland.

There were few gull highlights, with the Thayer's Gull found by Andy Guthrie in January at Hamlin Beach the most noteworthy. White-winged Gulls were found with some regularity, and Lesser Black-backed Gull was reported each month. Gull numbers fluctuated throughout the season in correlation with the ice conditions on the ponds and lakes.

One to three Eurasian Collared-Doves were seen sporadically through the season. There were only two Snowy Owl reports. However, a Long-eared Owl roost was located in Mendon Ponds Park and monitored through the season. The maximum of 13 Short-eared Owls in Lima was good compared with peaks in some recent years. Red-headed Woodpeckers were found away from the traditional haunts. Record highs of 47, 170, and 80 Red-bellied Woodpeckers were found on the Letchworth-Silver Lake, Rochester, and Conesus-Hemlock CBCs, respectively. There were scattered sightings of Yellow-bellied Sapsucker. Northern Shrike sightings fluctuated throughout the season. A record high 24,784 Am. Crows were counted on the Rochester CBC, most going to the

downtown roost in the evening. Common Ravens continued to be found throughout the Region, with a pair apparently taking up residence in Mendon Ponds Park.

Hermit Thrush went unreported this winter. Gray Catbirds were discovered in Durand-Eastman Park, Savannah, and Hamlin. Am. Pipit reports came from Mt. Morris, Conesus, Letchworth SP, and Byron for an unusual number of winter sightings. There were few reports of Cedar Waxwings. A female Black-throated Blue Warbler visiting the Leubner's feeder in Irondequoit was last seen on 18 December. Wintering Yellow-rumped Warblers were found in Caledonia and at Hogan Point, and Common Yellowthroat was reported into January. A Chipping Sparrow in Fairport stayed through the season. Two Field Sparrows were located on the Letchworth-Silver Lake CBC, and one in Parma was reported off and on throughout the season. Savannah Sparrows were seen in Cuylerville. White-throated and White-crowned Sparrow numbers seemed down. The 80+ Lapland Longspurs in Kendall in February was a good total. Snow Buntings were scattered throughout the Region, but few really large concentrations were reported.

A female Summer Tanager visiting a feeder in Ogden was a real highlight. It was seen and photographed by a many observers but was last seen on 29 December, much to the disappointment of the 2010 year listers. Red-winged Blackbirds were seen throughout the season, as were Rusty Blackbirds. There was only a single Eastern Meadowlark sighting. Grackles were scarce, but Brown-headed Cowbirds were reported with some regularity. It certainly wasn't a finch winter. There were a few Purple Finch reports, one report of Common Redpoll, and small flocks of Pine Siskins reported from only a few locations. Evening Grosbeak went unreported.

December's species total was slightly below the 10-year average at 123. That brought the 2009 total to 292 compared to the 10-year average of 293.8. January started 2010 with a species total of 122, down from the 10-year average largely due to a lack of any major Big January list attempts. February's total of 107 species was about at the 10-year average of 109.4, but the year's total of 123 was 10+ species below the 10-year average of 133.8.

CONTRIBUTORS

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ABBREVIATIONS

BB – Braddock Bay, T Greece, MONR; BC – Bear Creek, WAYN; CA – T Caledonia, LIVI; CL – Conesus Lake, LIVI; T Cuylerville, LIVI; DE – Durand-Eastman Park, MONR; G – T Greece, MONR; H – T Hamlin, MONR; HB – Hamlin Beach State Park, MONR; IB – Irondequoit Bay, T Irondequoit, MONR; K – T Kendall, ORLE; LCBC – Letchworth-Silver Lake Christmas Bird Count; LLCBC – Little Lakes Christmas Bird Count; LW – Letchworth State Park; LIVI, WYOM; MP – endon Ponds Park, MONR; NR – Nations Road, LIVI; OB – Ontario Beach, Charlotte, MONR; OG – T Ogden, MONR; P – T Parma, MONR; PB – Point Breeze, T Carlton, ORLE; PE – Town Perinton, MONR; R – T Rush, MONR; RCBC – Rochester Christmas Bird Count; S – T Savannah, WAYN; SL – Silver Lake, WYOM; TC – Twin Cedars Environmental Area, T Lima, LIVI; W – T Webster, MONR.

WHISTLING-DUCKS – VULTURES

Snow Goose: max 50,000+ S 27 Dec.
Ross's Goose: 1 S 25 Jan (DT).
Cackling Goose: 1 HB 2 Dec (RS); 3 TC 1 Dec (MW); 1 SL (KF); 2 BB 20 Dec (DT); 1 H 30 Dec (AGu); 2 HB 1 Jan (JeB, KF, DT, CW); 1 K 1 Jan (JBe, KF, DT, CW); 1 BB 17 Jan (GL, KG); 1 G 21 Jan (GL); 2 S 25 JAN (DT); 1 PB 31 Jan (PY); 1 PB 2 Feb (RS); 1 Honeoye Falls, MONR 9 Feb (BC); 1 G 19 Feb (KG).
Canada Goose: max 28,000 S 19 Dec.
Brant: last 1 IB 8 Dec (DS, RS, MT).
Mute Swan: max 471 RCBC 20 Dec.
Trumpeter Swan: max 57 S 19 Dec (RS, WG), record high.
Tundra Swan: max 265 S 25 Jan (DT).
Gadwall: 2 Honeoye Lake, LIVI 2 Jan.
Am. Wigeon: 1 T Victor 4 Jan.
Am. Black Duck: max 600+ NR 15 Feb (JK).
Mallard: max 3000+ NR 15 Feb (JK).
N. Shoveler: 4 G 8 Dec (RS); 1 T Brockport 7 Jan.
Green-winged Teal: 1 CL 2 Jan.
Canvasback: max 26 G 24 Feb.
Redhead: max 3700 CL 2 Jan.
Ring-necked Duck: max 872 Hemlock Lake, LIVI 17 Jan.
Greater Scaup: max 470 OB 13 Feb.
Long-tailed Duck: max 846 RCBC 20 Dec.
Com. Goldeneye: max 971 RCBC 20 Dec.
Barrow's Goldeneye: 1 PB thru (mob), same individual as reported in nearby Region 1.

Barrow's x Com. Goldeneye: 1 PB 14 Jan (DT); 1 Chimney Bluffs, WAYN 18 Jan (DS, MT); 1 PB 8 Feb (DT).
Hooded Merganser: max 41 RCBC 20 Dec.
Com. Merganser: max 300+ IB 23 Dec.
Ruddy Duck: max 5 CL 13 Dec, 2 Jan.
Red-throated Loon: max 48 HB 5 Dec.
Pied-billed Grebe: 1 IB 1-16 Jan.
Horned Grebe: max 120 IB to BC 17 Jan.
Red-necked Grebe: max 4 IB to BC 17 Jan.
N. Gannet: 1 PB 5 Dec (DT).
Double-crested Cormorant: max 15 IB 1 Dec.
Great Blue Heron: max 13 RCBC 20 Dec.
BLACK VULTURE: 1 BB 7-27 Jan (DT, mob), found dead on the 27th.
Turkey Vulture: max 34 R 16 Jan (MZ).

HAWKS – ALCIDS

Bald Eagle: max 4 RCBC 20 Dec, record high; max 4 LCBC 19 Dec.
Cooper's Hawk: max 14 RCBC 20 Dec, record high.
N. Goshawk: 1 W 19 Dec (D&DT).
Merlin: total 6 all Feb.
Peregrine Falcon: total 5 all Feb.
Virginia Rail: 1 MP 28-31 Jan, 1-14 Feb (PM).
Sandhill Crane: max 16-17 S 1-8 Dec (mob).
Killdeer: max 4 IB 3 Dec (DT), south end; last 1 CL 12 Dec (JK).
Ruddy Turnstone: last 1 BB 2-5 Dec (DT, mob), State inland record late.
Purple Sandpiper: last 1 IB 4 Dec (RM).
Dunlin: last 2 IB 20 Dec (mob).

Wilson's Snipe: 2 Springwater, LIVI, 2 Jan (JG).
Thayer's Gull: 1 HB 1 Jan (AGu).
Iceland Gull: max 4 OG 1 Jan.
Lesser Black-backed Gull: max 3 OG 1 Jan.
Glaucous Gull: max 2 OG 1 Jan.

PIGEONS – WOODPECKERS

Eurasian Collared-Dove: 1-3 P, H 1-31 Dec (mob); 1-2 P 5,7 Jan (AGu, KG); 2 P 3 Feb (AG); 1 P 25,27 Feb (DT).
E. Screech-Owl: max 67 RCBC 20 Dec; 1 HP 20-25 Jan, red morph.
Snowy Owl: arr 1 K 1-6 Dec (TM, mob); 1 H 28 Dec (DT).
Barred Owl: 2 Rattlesnake Hill WMA, LIVI 4 Feb.
Long-eared Owl: 3-4 MP 12 Jan thru (KH, SD, DT).
Short-eared Owl: max 13 Lima, LIVI 8 Feb.
Red-headed Woodpecker: 1 LW 1 Jan (CM); 1 Troutburg, ORLE 5 Feb (DT).
Red-bellied Woodpecker: 47 LCBC 19 Dec; 170 RCBC 20 Dec; 80 LLCBC 2 Jan, all record highs for the respective CBC's.
Yellow-bellied Sapsucker: 1 S 19 Dec (CS-C, CB); 1 LCBC 19 Dec (mob), 1 R 10 Jan CM); 1 CL 21 Feb (KC).

FLYCATCHERS – WAXWINGS

N. Shrike: total 16 all Feb (DT).
Am. Crow: max 24,784 RCBC 20 Dec, record high.
Com. Raven: 1 Honeoye Falls, MONR 1 Dec (BC); 2 MP 14-31 Jan (BC, mob).
Horned Lark: max 335 H 28 Dec.

Marsh Wren: 1 SL 19 Dec (KF).
Gray Catbird: 1 S 19 Dec (RS, WG); 1 DE 1-13 Jan (mob); 1 H 1 Jan JeB, KF, DT, CW).
Am. Pipit: 4 Mount Morris, LIVI 18 Dec (DS); 1 Conesus, LIVI 24 Dec (JaP); 1 LW 28 Jan (DB, CS); 1 Byron, GENE 20 Feb (GL).

WARBLERS

Black-throated Blue Warbler: 1 fem T Irondequoit, MONR 1-18 Dec (GL, mob), record late.
Yellow-rumped Warbler: 4 S 19 Dec (WG, RS); 9 CA 2 Jan (DT); max 12 CA 13 Feb (GL).
Com. Yellowthroat: 1 S 7 Dec (TL, JMc); 1 CA 8 Jan (DT).

TOWHEES – WEAVERS

E. Towhee: 1 HB 11 Jan (D & KT).
Chipping Sparrow: 1 PE 1-6 Jan (B& MAC).
Field Sparrow: 2 LCBC 19 Dec (mob); 1 P 20-31 Dec, 1-31 Jan, 1 Feb (mob).
Savannah Sparrow: 3 CU 12-31 Jan, 1-16 Feb (DT, JK).
Lapland Longspur: max 80+ K 2 Feb (RS).
Snow Bunting: max 1500 H 30 Jan (AGu).
SUMMER TANAGER: 1 fem T Ogden, MONR 1-29 Dec (F&DC, mob), 2nd Regional fall and 1st winter record.
Red-winged Blackbird: max 120 CU 27 Feb.
E. Meadowlark: 1 Livonia, LIVI 3 Jan (DT, KF).
Rusty Blackbird: 1 PE 4 Jan R & GG); 3 MP 1-3 Jan (BC); max 12 LIVI 2 Feb (R&C Mc, RO).
Com. Redpoll: max 20 G 13 Jan (BC).

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