

REGION 3—FINGER LAKES

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At Ithaca, December 2018 was warmer and drier than normal. Daily low temperatures averaged 24.4°F, 2.9° above normal. Daily high temperatures averaged 36.6°, 0.8° above normal. Total precipitation was 2.19", 0.11" less than normal. Total snowfall was 6.4", 6.1" less than normal. Snow depth never exceeded 2". January was colder and wetter than normal. Daily lows averaged 12.1°, 3.3° below normal. Daily highs averaged 29.9°, 1.4° below normal. Total precipitation was 3.22", 1.14" more than normal. Snowfall was 18.0", 0.4" more than normal. Maximum snow depth was 12" on 21 January. February was slightly warmer and was drier than normal. Daily lows averaged 17.4°, 0.9° above normal and daily highs averaged 34.4°, 0.4° above normal. Total precipitation was 1.28", 0.7" less than normal. Total snowfall was 7.3", 6.9" less than normal. Maximum snow depth was 5" on 1 February. By 5 February, the snow was gone and did not exceed 2" until 28 February when it reached 4".

Greater White-fronted Geese were the big news makers with flocks appearing on Seneca, Canandaigua, Keuka, and Cayuga Lakes. Reuben Stoltzfus found the largest flock of 43 birds on Keuka Lake at Champlin Park in Hammondsport. Also notable were the two Ross's Geese at Seneca Lake State Park that Kyle Gage found. A **Tufted Duck** was on Cayuga Lake at Ithaca in mid-January. An Eared Grebe was reported just once at its usual location in Cayuga Lake's Aurora Bay. Several waterfowl hybrids were reported: Snow X Canada Goose, Canvasback X Redhead, Redhead X Ring-necked Duck, and Redhead X scaup sp. High counts were reported for Trumpeter Swan, Redhead, and Common Merganser.

There was little exciting to report in the Rails to Tropicbirds portion of this report. Observers found high counts of Sandhill Cranes and Glaucous Gulls. Hybrid gulls included Herring X Lesser Black-backed, Herring X Glaucous, and Herring X Great Black-backed.

In the Loons to Parrots section of the report, there were no unusual species for the Region. Fifty Turkey Vultures over Trumansburg was a winter high count for the Region.

In the Flycatchers to Snow Buntings section, a **Blue-gray Gnatcatcher** on 8 December at East Shore Park in Ithaca was the bird of the season for the Region. Chris Wood found the only Bohemian Waxwing reported from the Region. This one was in Groton. It was a decent season for winter finches with many reports of Evening Grosbeak, Common Redpoll (with a couple Hoary Redpolls mixed in), and Pine Siskin. There was just one report each of Red and White-winged Crossbill. In addition to the Blue-gray Gnatcatcher, half-hardy species included Eastern Phoebe, Hermit Thrush, and Gray Catbird. High counts

were reported for Tufted Titmouse, Carolina Wren, American Robin, European Starling, House Sparrow, and Pine Siskin.

In the New World Sparrows to Cardinalids section of the report, a **Vesper Sparrow** lingering into early December was the most unusual report. Ken Rosenberg found the bird at the Bluegrass Lane Natural Area near Ithaca. Other half-hardies were Chipping Sparrow, Field Sparrow, Fox Sparrow, Savannah Sparrow, Eastern Towhee, Eastern Meadowlark, Rusty Blackbird, Common Grackle, Common Yellowthroat, and Yellow-rumped Warbler. High counts were reported for Chipping Sparrow, Field Sparrow, White-throated Sparrow, Savannah Sparrow, and Swamp Sparrow.

It seemed like there was an unusually high number of low counts, which is to say that the maximum count reported for many species was unusually low. These species may deserve special attention to see if their low numbers continue in future years. The species were Ruffed Grouse, American Coot, Northern Harrier, Rough-legged Hawk, Northern Flicker, Blue Jay, Horned Lark, Brown Creeper, Golden-crowned Kinglet, Cedar Waxwing, and House Finch.

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ABBREVIATIONS

BLNA – Bluegrass Lane Natural Area, TOMP; **CanL** – Canandaigua L, ONTA; **CygL** – Cayuga L; **ESP** – East Shore P, TOMP; **HH** – Hog Hole, TOMP; **Ith** –

Ithaca; **LfP** – Lakefront P, ONTA; **MSPd** – Mill St Pd, CHEM; **MNWR** – Montezuma NWR; **MtP** – Mt Pleasant, TOMP; **NE Itha** – Northeast Ithaca; **SLSP** – Seneca L SP; **StP** – Stewart P, TOMP; **TCov** – T Covert, SENE; **TDry** – T Dryden; **TFay** – T Fayette, SENE; **TL** – T Lansing, TOMP; **TSF** – T Seneca Falls, SENE.

WATERFOWL--PIGEON

Snow x Canada Goose: CygL, T Varick SENE 16 Dec (TL); CygL, T Varick SENE 9 Feb (JMc, LSA).

Ross's Goose: 2 SLSP 22-23 Feb (KG, ph).

Greater White-Fronted Goose: 1-35 SLSP 24 Jan-11 Feb (mob, ph); 10 Finger Lakes Regional Airport SENE 8 Feb (Donna Carter, ph); 1-32 City Pier ONTA 11-23 Feb (mob, ph); max 43 Champlin Beach P STEU 13 Feb (Reuben Stoltzfus, ph), high; 6 Mud Lock CAYU 16 Feb (SBI, JMc, ph); CygL SENE 25 Feb (TL, ph).

Trumpeter Swan: max 20 MNWR 8 Dec (WBI), high.

Wood Duck: last HH 8 Dec; MSPd 4 Jan-9 Feb; arr 2 Ith Reservoir TOMP 15 Feb (JGK), early.

Northern Shoveler: CygL, TSF 9-12 Dec; Mark Twain SP 27 Dec; Myers Pt TOMP 12-16 Jan; 2 CygL, TL 14 Jan; MSPd 27 Jan-3 Feb.

Green-winged Teal: Champlin Beach P STEU 6-15 Dec; max 3-5 N Mill Pd CAYU 8 Dec-13 Jan; MSPd 19-21 Jan; Dresden Overlook YATE 6 Feb; Deep Run P ONTA 16-17 Feb; Ith 25 Feb; Frontenac P CAYU 16 Feb.

Redhead: max 100,000 SLSP 7 Feb (DK), high.

Canvasback x Redhead: HH 27 Jan (JMc!, LSA); Geneva 16 Feb (TH, LK!, ph, TL); SLSP 20 Feb (DDo, DWh!).

Redhead x Ring-Necked Duck: Geneva 16 Feb (TH, LK!, ph, TL).

TUFTED DUCK: CygL, Ith 13-22 Jan (mob).

Redhead x scaup (sp.): LfP 9 Feb (JMc, LSA).

Black Scoter: 2 CanL 14 Dec (BH!), late.

Long-tailed Duck: max 25 Warren W Clute Memorial P SCHU 2 Dec; 25 LfP 14 Dec.

Common Merganser: max 2000 Seneca L SENE 24-25 Jan (KG, TL), high.

Ruffed Grouse: max 2 Boggy Bottom TOMP 14 Dec; 2 Monkey Run TOMP 28 Feb, low.

Red-necked Grebe: Salt Pt Nature Preserve TOMP 10 Dec; 2 CygL SP 23 Dec; Varick Winery SENE 12 Jan; 2 Skaneateles L CAYU 26 Jan.

Eared Grebe: Aurora Bay, CygL CAYU 26 Jan (ADO, KR!, TSc).

Rock Pigeon: max 500 T Ith TOMP 3 Jan (AM), high.

RAILS--LARIDS

American Coot: max 200 CanL 30 Jan-16 Feb, low.

Sandhill Crane: max 100 MNWR 1 Dec (SBI, JMc, BW), high; last MNWR 30 Dec; arr 2 T Chemung CHEM 6 Feb (BH!), early.

Killdeer: arr Watkins Glen High School SCHU 16 Feb; Queen Catharine Marsh SCHU 16 Feb.

Bonaparte's Gull: 2 Frontenac Harbor Marina CAYU 1 Dec; max 17 CygL SP 2 Dec; Wayne's Pt CAYU 3 Dec; Allen H Treman Marina SP 16 Dec; SLSP 10-11 Feb.

Iceland Gull: max 9 ESP 19 Feb.

Herring x Lesser Black-Backed Gull: StP 20 Feb (TL, ph); ESP 21 Feb (TL, JMc, ph).

Glaucous Gull: max 6 StP 26 Feb (TL), high.

Herring x Glaucous Gull: 2 SLSP 2 Feb (JMc, LSA).

Herring x Great Black-Backed Gull: StP 11 Dec (JMc, LSA); ESP 10-27 Feb (mob, TL, ph).

LOONS--WOODPECKERS

Red-throated Loon: CygL, Ith TOMP 2-8 Dec; Owasco L Inlet 14 Dec; 2 Seneca L SCHU 2 Feb; City Pier, CanL 22 Feb.

Black Vulture: 3 Taughannock Falls SP 4-31 Jan; Stevenson Rd Compost Piles 4-7 Jan; NE Ith 9 Jan.

Turkey Vulture: 50 Trumansburg 27 Dec (SKr), high.

Golden Eagle: MtP TOMP 23 Feb.

Northern Harrier: max 3 T Lodi SENE 20 Dec; 3 TFay 3 Feb; 3 Finger Lakes Regional Airport SENE 9 Feb, low.

Northern Goshawk: Ith Farmers Market TOMP 1 Jan.

Red-shouldered Hawk: NE Ith 2 Dec.

Rough-legged Hawk: max 2 MtP TOMP 7 Dec; 2 MNWR 17 Dec; 2 Boyer Creek Farm 22 Dec & 23 Feb; 2 T Fremont STEU 23 Dec; 2 T Howard STEU 23 Dec; 2 TL 8 Feb, low.

Long-eared Owl: TFay 24 Dec.

Northern Flicker: max 5 LfP 27 Jan; 5 TCov 14 Dec, low.

FLYCATCHERS—FINCHES

Eastern Phoebe: lth 2 Dec-19 Jan; MNWR 5 Jan.

Blue Jay: max 27 Hammond Hill TOMP 14 Feb, low.

Horned Lark: max 90 TFay 10 Jan, low.

Tufted Titmouse: max 22 NE lth 1 Jan (JI), high.

Brown Creeper: max 4 HH 21 Dec, low.

Carolina Wren: max 6 lth 8 Jan (DN), high.

BLUE-GRAY GNATCATCHER (R3): ESP 8 Dec (mob!).

Golden-crowned Kinglet: max 5 Cornell University 4 Dec; 5 Wyers Pt SENE 16 Dec, low.

Hermit Thrush: TL 1 Dec; TDry 1 Dec; Cornell Botanic Gardens TOMP 2 Dec; TDry 5 Dec; Ontario Pathways ONTA 21 Feb.

American Robin: max 885 T Manchester ONTA 4 Jan (Dave Spier), high.

Gray Catbird: lth 2 Dec; TSF 9 Dec; TCov 9 Dec; Palmer Woods TOMP 1 Jan; MNWR 12 Jan; TDry 12 Jan; Cornell Botanic Gardens TOMP 13 Jan.

European Starling: max 5000 lth 12 Jan (LMcGo), high.

Bohemian Waxwing: Groton 24 Jan (CWo!).

Cedar Waxwing: max 75 T Enfield 24 Feb, low.

House Sparrow: max 200 TDry 27 Dec (LMcGo), high.

Evening Grosbeak: max 79 Summerhill State Forest CAYU 15 Dec.

House Finch: max 60 T Waterloo SENE 9 Dec, low.

Common Redpoll: max 300 MtP TOMP 12 Dec-7 Jan.

Hoary Redpoll: MtP TOMP 7 Dec-13 Jan (mob); T Sempronius CAYU 15 Dec (mob).

Red Crossbill: TDry 23 Dec.

White-winged Crossbill: TDry 30 Jan.

Pine Siskin: max 115 TDry 4 Jan (JMc), high.

NEW WORLD SPARROWS-- CARDINALIDS

Eastern Towhee: lth 11 Dec; T Erwin STEU 5 Jan; South Bristol ONTA 2 Feb.

Chipping Sparrow: 1-2 NE lth 31 Dec-27 Jan (JI, KR), high; T Manchester ONTA 10-22 Jan; TCov 12 Jan; TFay 14 Jan.

Field Sparrow: Seneca Meadows Wetland Preserve SENE 9 Dec; TFay 15-23 Dec; TSF 22 Dec; max 2 Finger Lakes National Forest SENE 30 Dec (MF); 1-2 TFay 9-28 Feb (JMc, LSa); 2 T Ovid SENE 20 Feb (JA, KG, LM), high.

VESPER SPARROW (R3): BLNA 1-2 Dec (KR!).

Savannah Sparrow: max 6 Seneca Iron Works SENE 15 Jan (DK), high.

Fox Sparrow: TDry 2 Dec; BLNA 4 Dec; Sapsucker Woods TOMP 4 Dec; TDry 4 Dec-21 Jan; Robert Trent Jones Golf Course TOMP 5 Dec.

Swamp Sparrow: max 7 BLNA 15 Dec (KR), high.

White-throated Sparrow: max 32 T Starkey YATE 20 Feb (TSh), high.

Eastern Meadowlark: T Ulysses TOMP 21 Feb; T Middlesex YATE 22 Feb.

Rusty Blackbird: BLNA 1-2 Dec; MNWR 21 Dec.

Common Grackle: T Aurelius CAYU 1 Dec; TDry 4 Dec; T lth TOMP 9 Dec; Horseheads 24 Jan; 2-4 Corning 16-18 Feb; 2 T Corning STEU 18 Feb.

Common Yellowthroat: T lth 1 Jan; 2 MNWR 5 Jan.

Yellow-rumped Warbler: max 2 lth 27 Jan.