

REGION 3—FINGER LAKES

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Winter 2020-21 was one to remember. In Ithaca, December was warmer and snowier than normal. The average daily high temperature was 36.8° F, 1.0° higher than normal. The average low was 24.2°, 2.7° above normal. Total precipitation was 3.79", 1.39" more than normal. Total snowfall was 18.1", 5.5" more than normal. There were 15 days with at least 1" of snow cover.

January was warmer and drier than normal. While the average high temperature was 30.9°, 0.4° below normal, the average low temperature was 20.5°, 5.1° above normal. Total rainfall was 1.84", 0.24" less than normal. Total snowfall was 14.9", 2.7" less than normal. There was at least an inch of snow cover on 19 days.

February was colder and snowier than normal. The average high temperature was 30.8", 3.2" below normal. The average low was 13.1", 3.4" below normal. Total precipitation was 2.43", 0.45" above normal. Total snowfall was 36.5", 22.3" more than normal. Snow cover was at least 7" every day of the month.

Large numbers of Snow Geese persisted in the Region until the middle of January. A high count of Trumpeter Swans was at Montezuma National Wildlife Refuge in early December. Tundra Swans maintained their numbers through the season. Scattered reports of individual Ross's Geese came from each of four lakes through late January. Small numbers of Greater White-fronted Geese were present through 2 February.

Observers reported high counts for several duck species: American Wigeon in December, Lesser Scaup in January, White-winged Scoter in February, Black Scoter in January, and Common Merganser in January. Rarities were Blue-winged Teal in Union Springs, Tufted Duck on Seneca and Cayuga Lakes and at West River Preserve, possibly the same bird at all three locations, and Surf Scoter on the Chemung River and on Cayuga Lake. Among other waterfowl was a high count of Common Loons in December on Cayuga Lake and a single report of Eared Grebe at the usual location for the species in Aurora.

Sandhill Cranes produced a high count in early December. Two lingered through the first three weeks of January to set a late record. Killdeer set a high count in Schuyler County in late February and one arrived early at Myers Point on 5 February. A high count of Dunlin was at Montezuma National Wildlife Refuge (NWR) on 1 December. The next day, in Seneca County, a Greater Yellowlegs set a late record. Bonaparte's Gull set a high count in mid-December at Ithaca. A Laughing Gull at Geneva at the end of December was a rare winter occurrence.

Two Black Vultures appeared at compost piles in Dryden in early January and continued foraging there through the end of the season. A high count of

Turkey Vultures accumulated there in mid-January. There were two reports of Golden Eagle—one in mid-December and one in mid-February. The only report of Gyrfalcon came from Ovid in mid-December.

A Red-headed Woodpecker made a brief appearance in Ithaca in December. High counts were reported for three woodpecker species: Northern Flicker in mid-December, Red-bellied Woodpecker in early January, and Yellow-bellied Sapsucker in late January.

High counts of various passerine species included Tufted Titmice in January, Winter Wrens and Marsh Wrens in December, Ruby-crowned Kinglets in January and February, Hermit Thrushes in December, American Robins in February, and European Starlings in January. Observers reported all the winter finch species including high counts of Common and Hoary Redpolls, and of Red Crossbills.

Lingering passerine species were Eastern Phoebe, Gray Catbird, Brown Thrasher, Eastern Towhee, Chipping Sparrow, Vesper Sparrow, Fox Sparrow, Palm Warbler, Pine Warbler, and Yellow-rumped Warbler. Most surprising was a Blue-winged Warbler in the Town of Tyre in early December.

CONTRIBUTORS

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ABBREVIATIONS

CygL – Cayuga L; **MNWR** – Montezuma NWR; **SLSP** – Seneca L SP; **SRCP** – Stevenson Rd Compost Piles, TOMP; **StP** – Stewart P, TOMP; **TFay** – T Fayette, SENE; **Ith** – T Ithaca, TOMP; **TLan** – T Lansing, TOMP; **TMil** – T Milo, YATE; **TPot** – T Potter, YATE; **TTyr** – T Tyre, SENE.

WATERFOWL – HUMMINGBIRDS

Ross's Goose: SLSP 5 Dec; Canandaigua L ONTA 19-23 Dec; Owasco L Inlet CAYU 3 Jan; Lake Road Bluff CAYU 14 Jan; City Pier ONTA 28 Jan.

Snow X Ross's Goose: TLan 16 Jan (Jay McGowan, ph; Livia Santana).

Greater White-fronted Goose: max 8 SLSP 31 Jan-1 Feb.

Cackling Goose: max 16 MNWR 10 Dec.

Barnacle X Cackling Goose: MNWR 3 Dec (Nick Kachala, ph!).

Trumpeter Swan: max 43 MNWR 2 Dec (Ann McMican!), high.

Blue-winged Teal: Factory Street Pd CAYU 14 Feb (Michele Neligan!).

American Wigeon: max 400 CygL SP 14 Dec (Tim Lenz, Matt Medler), high.

TUFTED DUCK (R3): Seneca L 24 Jan-23 Feb (mob, ph); CygL SENE 21 Feb (Ken Rosenberg!); W River Preserve YATE 28 Feb (Brad Carlson, ph).

Lesser Scaup: max 3200 Perry Pt YATE 27 Jan (Jay McGowan), high.

Surf Scoter: 2 StP 3 Dec; Elmira Dam CHEM 4-5 Dec; StP 8-11 Dec (Adriaan Dokter, Jay McGowan), late.

White-winged Scoter: max 64 CygL SENE 4 Feb (Jay McGowan), high.

Black Scoter: 5-6 Seneca L SENE 1-4 Dec; 13 CygL TOMP 26 Dec; 16 Ladoga P TOMP 23 Jan (Tristan Herwood!), high.

Common Merganser: max 2400 CygL SENE 30 Jan (Jay McGowan), high.

Eared Grebe: Aurora Bay Boathouse CAYU 10 Dec (Jay McGowan!).

Rock Pigeon: max 500 Reynolds State Game Farm 3 Jan (Ethan Chaffee), high.

RAILS – TROPICBIRDS

Sandhill Crane: max 275 MNWR 5 Dec (Alex Cook, Sarah Dzielski, Merjin van den Bosch); TTyr 13 Dec (Kevin Murphy), high; last 2 TTyr 21 Jan (Dave Kennedy, ph), late.

Killdeer: TFay 29 Dec; arr Myers Pt TOMP 5 Feb (Jay McGowan), early; max 7 Queen

Catharine Marsh SCHU 24 Feb (Joshua Snodgrass), high.

Dunlin: max 8 MNWR 1 Dec (Joseph Brin, Renee Kittleman), high; last MNWR 4 Dec.

Greater Yellowlegs: last Seybolt Road Bait Pds SENE 2 Dec (Dave Kennedy, ph), late.

Bonaparte's Gull: max 19 Lighthouse Pt Natural Area TOMP 14 Dec (Adrian Dokter), high; last 5 Warren W Clute Memorial P SCHU.

Laughing Gull: Geneva Lakefront P 31 Dec-1 Jan (mob, ph).

Herring X Lesser Black-backed Gull: SLSP 5 Dec (Tim Lenz, ph); SRCP 28 Feb (Jay McGowan, ph, Livia Santana)

LOONS – PARAKEET

Common Loon: max 34 StP 5 Dec (Stephanie Herrick), high.

Black Vulture: 2 SRCP 2 Jan thru.

Turkey Vulture: max 75 SRCP 17-20 Jan (Shawn Billerman, Brad Walker), high.

Golden Eagle: Ithaca Res 15 Dec (J Gary Kohlenberg); TLan 20 Feb (mob, ph).

Snowy Owl: last TFay 14 Feb.

Long-eared Owl: TMil 18 Jan (Reuben Stoltzfus).

Red-headed Woodpecker: Ithaca 20 Dec (John Kelland, Julia Wang!).

Red-bellied Woodpecker: max 12 Sapsucker Woods TOMP 1 Jan (Wesley Hochachka), high.

Yellow-bellied Sapsucker: max 3 T Ovid SENE 24 Jan (Reuben Stoltzfus), high.

Northern Flicker: 13 MNWR 14 Dec (Reuben Stoltzfus, Linda Ziembra), high.

GYRFALCON: T Ovid SENE 12 Dec (Reuben Stoltzfus).

FLYCATCHERS – SNOW BUNTING

Eastern Phoebe: TPot 27 Jan (Helen Heizyk, ph).

Tufted Titmouse: max 32 Cayuga Heights 1 Jan (Paul Herwood, Tristan Herwood), high.

Winter Wren: 8 MNWR 14 Dec MNWR (Reuben Stoltzfus, Linda Ziembra), high.

Marsh Wren: 2 MNWR 14 Dec (Reuben Stoltzfus, Linda Ziemba).

Ruby-crowned Kinglet: max 2 Black Diamond Trail TOMP 1 Jan (Reuben Stoltzfus, Linda Ziemba); 2 Salt Pt Natural Area TOMP 12 Jan (Jay McGowan); max 2 Salt Pt Natural Area TOMP 19 Feb (Jay McGowan), high.

Hermit Thrush: max 3 Sampson SP 13 Dec (Jay McGowan), high.

American Robin: max 930 Ecology House TOMP 12 Feb (Tristan Herwood), high.

Gray Catbird: max 2 MNWR 14 Dec (Reuben Stoltzfus, Linda Ziemba), high.

Brown Thrasher: Ithaca 4 Dec; Willow Creek TOMP 21 Dec; Freeville 3-27 Feb; TMil 6 Feb; T Covert SENE 20 Feb.

European Starling: max 5000 T Owasco CAYU 3 Jan (Derek Green); 5000 T Dryden TOMP 17 Jan (Shawn Billerman, Brad Walker), high.

Pine Grosbeak: Summerhill State Forest CAYU 13 Jan (Jay McGowan!).

House Finch: max 94 TFay 25 Dec.

Common Redpoll: max 1800 T Newfield TOMP 15 Feb (Jay McGowan), high.

Hoary Redpoll: max 4 T Dryden TOMP 20-23 Jan (Jay McGowan, ph; Brad Walker), high.

Red Crossbill: max 28 Hammond Hill State Forest TOMP 31 Jan (Eliot Miller!), high.

White-winged Crossbill: max 30 Bear Swamp State Forest TOMP 19 Dec.

Pine Siskin: max 40 TIth 31 Jan.

Lapland Longspur: max 20 TFay 30 Jan.

Snow Bunting: max 1000 T Torrey YATE 24 Jan.

NEW WORLD SPARROWS – CARDINALIDS

Eastern Towhee: Beulahland STEU 12-29 Dec; T Jerusalem YATE 14 Jan thru ; T Torrey YATE 27 Jan; TPot 18 Feb thru.

Chipping Sparrow: Sapsucker Woods 6 Dec; Hog Hole TOMP 11 Dec; TMil; 1-2 T Groton TOMP 12-14 Feb; T Canisteo STEU 13 Feb; T Manchester ONTA 17-21 Feb.

Vesper Sparrow: T Romulus SENE 4 Feb (Jay McGowan, ph).

Fox Sparrow: TLan 2 Dec (Brian Marino); TIth 6 Dec (Stephanie Herrick!); TIth 8 Dec (Jane Graves).

Blue-winged Warbler: TTyr 7 Dec (Donna Carter, ph),

Common Yellowthroat: MNWR 4 Dec (Robert Buckert, Jules Wagner); MNWR 14 Dec (Reuben Stoltzfus, Linda Ziemba); SLSP 28 Dec (Jay McGowan, ph; Livia Santana).

Palm Warbler: TPot 12 Feb (Reuben Stoltzfus!).

Pine Warbler: T Veteran CHEM 18 Dec (Hayden Keene, ph),

Yellow-rumped Warbler: max 7 Hanley Biological Field Preserve SENE 9 Jan.