

REGION 3—FINGER LAKES

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December 2021 was warmer and slightly drier than normal. At Ithaca, the average low temperature was 27.3° F, 5.3° above normal. The average high was 41.2°, 5.0° above normal. Total precipitation was 2.26", 0.31" less than normal. Total snowfall was 3.7", 8.5" less than normal. Maximum snow depth was one inch, attained on six days. January was colder and drier than normal. The average low temperature was 6.5°, 8.1° below normal. The average high was 27.4°, 3.6° below normal. Total precipitation was 1.28", 0.96" less than normal. Total snowfall was 14.8", 1.8" less than normal. Snow depth twice peaked at eight inches and there was at least one inch of snow cover on all but seven days. February days were warmer than normal, but nights were colder than normal. The average low temperature was 13.5°, 1.6° below normal. The average high was 34.5°, 1.4° above normal. Total precipitation was 2.72", 0.74" more than normal. Total

snowfall was 17.0", 2.5" more than normal. Peak snow depth was 16", with at least one inch of snow cover on all but two days.

Two species of waterfowl were found in high numbers: Green-winged Teal in early December and Common Mergansers in mid-January. The early mild weather allowed the teal to linger into December when they are usually scarce. Conversely, the very cold January weather resulted in the freezing of shallow water bodies and portions of rivers which may have caused the concentration of Common Mergansers on the larger lakes. Unusual waterfowl included Ross's Goose at four locations and Greater White-fronted Goose at three. Unusual ducks were a Tufted Duck on Seneca Lake in late January, a Black Scoter on Cayuga Lake in early December, and a Barrow's Goldeneye on Seneca Lake the last half of February. An Eared Grebe was on Seneca Lake in mid-February and a couple of Red-throated Loons were on Cayuga Lake in early December. There was a high count of Double-crested Cormorants in mid-January on Seneca Lake.

Sandhill Cranes set another winter record with 400 at Montezuma National Wildlife Refuge in mid-December. A Red Phalarope was on Seneca Lake through the first half of December. There were high counts of Iceland Gulls in late January and of Glaucous Gulls in late February.

Among raptors, observers found high counts of Black and Turkey Vultures, Northern Harriers, and Snowy Owls. The only report of Northern Goshawk came from Chemung County.

There were high counts of Northern Flickers and American Robins in mid-December, and of Red-bellied Woodpeckers, Tufted Titmice, White-breasted Nuthatches, Winter Wrens, and Carolina Wrens in early January.

Winter finches were scarce. Nevertheless, Purple Finches, Common Redpolls, Red Crossbills, Pine Siskins, and a single Evening Grosbeak made appearances. The mild weather in December resulted in many lingerers: an Eastern Phoebe, a Blue-headed Vireo, a high count of Ruby-crowned Kinglets, a Blue-gray Gnatcatcher, a House Wren, a Marsh Wren, Gray Catbirds, a Brown Thrasher, Hermit Thrushes, American Pipits, Chipping Sparrows, a Clay-colored Sparrow, Fox Sparrows, White-crowned Sparrows, Savannah Sparrows, Eastern Towhees, a high count of Eastern Meadowlarks, a Baltimore Oriole, and Common Yellowthroats.

A Fox Sparrow arrived on the early date of 16 February. White-throated Sparrows set a high count in mid-February. Rock Pigeons, European Starlings, and House Sparrows all made their marks. European Starlings set a new high count. The season's maximum counts of Rock Pigeons and House Sparrows were new lows.

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ABBREVIATIONS

HH – Hog Hole, TOMP; **MNWR** – Montezuma NWR; **SenL** – Seneca L; **SLSP** – Seneca L SP; **SW** – Sapsucker Woods, TOMP; **TDry** – T Dryden, TOMP; **TFay** – T Fayette, SENE; **TOv** – T Ovid, SENE; **TSF** – T Seneca Falls, SENE.

Ross's Goose: TFay 13 Dec; T Scipio CAYU 31 Dec; Cayuga L TOMP 4-18 Jan; arr Savannah Mucklands SENE 23 Feb.
Greater White-fronted Goose: MNWR 17 Dec; T Varick SENE 16 Jan; Geneva Beach SENE 21-27 Jan.
Green-winged Teal: max 1000 MNWR 3 Dec (RN!), high.

Canvasback x Redhead (hybrid): SenL 16-30 Jan (TL!, ph).
Redhead x Ring-necked Duck (hybrid): SenL SENE 16 Jan (TL!, ph).
TUFTED DUCK (R3): SenL SENE 26 Jan-1 Feb (TL!, ph).
Ring-necked Duck x scaup sp. (hybrid): Geneva Beach 8-13 Feb (TL!).

Redhead x Lesser Scaup (hybrid):

Seneca Yacht Club SENE 20 Feb (TL!, ph).

Black Scoter: Stewart P TOMP 1-2 Dec (J. McGowan, ph).

Barrow's Goldeneye: SLSP 15 Feb thru (T. Lenz!, ph).

Common Merganser: 4200 Cayuga L SP 12 Jan (JM!), high.

Eared Grebe: SenL 13 Feb thru (JM, ph).

Rock Pigeon: max 213 Ithaca 1 Jan, low.

Sandhill Crane: max 400 MNWR 16 Dec (BB!), high.

Killdeer: Outlet Creek ONTA 5 Dec; Hornell Municipal Airport STEU 8 Dec; Burtis Pt CAYU 24 Dec; arr Northeast Ithaca 22 Feb.

Red Phalarope: last SenL SENE 1-16 Dec (JiC!), late.

Bonaparte's Gull: Myers Pt TOMP 3 Dec; SenL House SENE 28 Dec; City Pier ONTA 12 Jan.

Iceland Gull: max 10 Oak Island SENE 28 Jan (JM!, ph), high.

Herring x Lesser Black-backed Gull (hybrid): T Ithaca TOMP 12 Jan (PH, TH, ph).

Herring x Glaucous Gull (hybrid): SLSP 2 Dec; Van Cleef L SENE 10-12 Jan; SLSP 31 Jan.

Glaucous Gull: max 6 City Pier ONTA 23 Feb (TL!), high.

Herring x Great Black-backed Gull (hybrid): Allens Pt CAYU 16 Jan (AD, KR!).

Red-throated Loon: Stone School CAYU 2 Jan; max 3 Stewart P TOMP 7 Dec; last Allan H Treman State Marine P 13 Dec.

Double-crested Cormorant: max 34 SenL YATE 21 Jan (TL), high.

Black Vulture: max 5 Herwood Hollow TOMP 2 Feb (PH), high.

Turkey Vulture: max 120 Stevenson Road Compost Piles TOMP 11 Dec (KMcG), high.

Northern Harrier: max 22 T Phelps ONTA 5 Jan (MKe!), high.

Northern Goshawk: T Van Etten CHEM 7 Jan (JoC).

Red-shouldered Hawk: Outlet Creek ONTA 5 Dec; Lake House ONTA 16 Jan; T Danby TOMP 19 Feb; Frontenac P CAYU 27-28 Feb.

Red-tailed Hawk: max 14 T Lodi SENE 13 Dec, low.

Snowy Owl: max 5 Finger Lakes Regional Airport SENE 31 Dec-1 Jan (mob), high.

Red-headed Woodpecker: Wilderness House TOMP 29 Jan; T Ithaca TOMP 27-28 Feb.

Red-bellied Woodpecker: max 13 SW 4 Jan (JoBr), high.

Northern Flicker: max 16 TSF 20 Dec (RSt!), high.

Eastern Phoebe: HH 18 Dec-8 Jan (mob, ph).

Blue-headed Vireo: HH 2-8 Jan (mob, ph).

American Crow: max 1000 Cornell University 29 Jan; 1000 Stevenson Road Compost Piles 26 Feb, low.

Tufted Titmouse: max 32 Northeast Ithaca 1 Jan (PH, TH), high.

Ruby-crowned Kinglet: max 7 Salt Pt Natural Area TOMP 10 Dec (JM!), high.

White-breasted Nuthatch: max 30 SW 9 Jan (GG), high.

Blue-gray Gnatcatcher: SLSP 4 Dec (KG, ph).

House Wren: HH 1 Jan (SSu, AY!).

Winter Wren: max 8 TSF 1 Jan (RSt!), high.

Marsh Wren: MNWR 17 Dec (JM!).

Carolina Wren: max 14 Ithaca 1 Jan (DNu!), high.

Gray Catbird: T Corning STEU 11 Dec; TSF 20 Dec; max 2 Hi Tor WMA YATE 12 Jan (BCa!), high; TOv 6 Feb.
Brown Thrasher: T Caton STEU 20 Feb (DG, ph).

European Starling: max 50,000 T Waterloo SENE 11 Dec (JM!), high.

Hermit Thrush: max 2 Sampson SP 21 Feb; 2 T Caroline TOMP 25 Jan.
American Robin: max 5273 T Ulysses TOMP 20 Jan (AY!), high.

House Sparrow: max 90 T Summerhill CAYU 18 Dec, low.

American Pipit: max 8 TOv 23 Jan.

Evening Grosbeak: TDry 4 Dec (MiW).
Purple Finch: max 72 T Caroline TOMP 13 Jan.
Common Redpoll: max 12 Monkey Run TOMP 26 Feb.
Red Crossbill: max 11 TDry 16 Dec.
Pine Siskin: max 20 TFay 27 Feb.

Lapland Longspur: max 15 T Benton YATE 22 Jan; 15 T Romulus SENE 30 Jan.
Snow Bunting: max 1000 Belltown Dairy CAYU 26 Feb.

Chipping Sparrow: Cayuga Heights 30 Dec; T Manchester ONTA 3 Jan-25 Feb; max 3 Dryden 8 Jan (SHo!), high; T Gorham ONTA 24 Jan.

Clay-colored Sparrow: TFay 7 Dec (MKe, ph).

Fox Sparrow: last SW 3 Dec; Groton Avenue P TOMP 10 Jan; arr SW 16 Feb (KMcG!), early.

American Tree Sparrow: max 140 TFay 30 Jan.

White-crowned Sparrow: max 16 T Romulus SENE 30 Jan.

White-throated Sparrow: max 50 T Montezuma CAYU 19 Feb (DCa!), high.

Savannah Sparrow: max 6 TOv 23 Jan (SB, BW, ph),

Eastern Towhee: TDry 2 Dec (KC!); T Venice CAYU 10 Jan (AMo!).

Eastern Meadowlark: max 8 TDry 31 Jan (ABC!), high.

Baltimore Oriole: Finger Lakes Trail TOMP 3 Jan (ZC!).

Rusty Blackbird: max 20 TSF 20 Dec.

Common Yellowthroat: Townsend-Grady Wildlife Pres YATE 1 Jan (HH, ph); T Benton YATE 22 Jan (MKe!).

Yellow-rumped Warbler: max 29 TSF 20 Dec (RSt!), high.