

A very tardy Bobolink was discovered in Greenland, NH Dec. 31 (†PH, SM *et al.*). Blackbirds were unusually numerous in s. New England throughout the period, flocks of ≤210 Red-winged Blackbirds and ≤350 Brown-headed Cowbirds being widely reported, while 2000 Com. Grackles were in S. Dartmouth, MA Jan. 1 (MB) and 1000 in Hampden, MA Dec. 27 (*vide* SK). A ♂ Yellow-headed Blackbird was in Westport, MA Dec. 17 (R. Bowen), and a female in Wallingford, CT Dec. 18–21 (GH).

It was very definitely not a boreal finch year. Pine Grosbeaks were very few and only in extreme n. New England, except for a couple of unconfirmed reports in w. Massachusetts. Purple Finches were fairly numerous in n. New England, but scarce to absent elsewhere. White-winged Crossbills were abundant across n. New England, with breeding noted in Vermont by mid-season. However, the only reports from s. New England were of three–eight birds from 3 sites in w. Massachusetts during the latter half of the period. Red Crossbills were similarly distributed, though in lesser numbers, and no breeding was noted. Common Redpolls were nearly absent, with only a handful in Maine and New Hampshire, two singles reported from w. Massachusetts, and an anomalous individual in Richmond, RI Jan. 29 (CR). Pine Siskins were common across n. New England, but very few were found farther south. The finch of the season was Am. Goldfinch, which was abundant almost everywhere; 225 migrants were in Salisbury, MA Dec. 3 (RF). Evening Grosbeaks followed the general finch trend; they were fairly numerous across extreme n. New England, but scarce to absent elsewhere.

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# Hudson-Delaware Region

**ROBERT O. PAXTON, WILLIAM J. BOYLE, JR., AND DAVID A. CUTLER**

Winter 1994–1995 contrasted sharply with the previous one. Mild weather and abundant fruit made the Adirondacks “half-hardy heaven,” according to Mike Peterson, and the term applied all over. Witness the 5000–10,000 Robins that lingered at Mendon Ponds Park, near Rochester (C. Cass, A. Claridge), diminishing to 4000 in mid-February; or the Forster's Terns that remained through the season at the Indian River Inlet, Delaware. Loons and ducks remained to the limit of open water on Lake Ontario, but Osprey, herons, shorebirds, and Belted Kingfisher set few northern records. Unable to risk a freeze, they leave when days shorten, regardless of temperature. Irruptive raptors were only fair, and winter finches remained localized in the Adirondacks.

The winter's one major general snowfall February 4 ushered in two frigid weeks, setting off cold-weather migration (see scap, below) and killing many half-hardy birds.

The seawatch at Avalon, Cape May, New Jersey, tallied 80,781 birds for the season, with a grand total from August through February of 648,291 (DWA, CS, F. Mears). Loons, Horned Grebes, alcids, and Snow Geese continued to move through January and after February's cold snap. Frostbite pelagic birding was richly rewarded this winter with tubenoses, skuas, and, above all, alcids. Three groups went to sea Dec. 3: from Captree, Long Island to Hudson Canyon (JAsk, TWB, PAB, AJL, RJK); 80 miles off Brielle (S. Kerr, LLa); and a “mini” from Cape May out to Five Fathom Bank (DG, CS). The “Miss Chris” (Capt. Ascoli) went southeast from Cape May Feb. 19 about 40

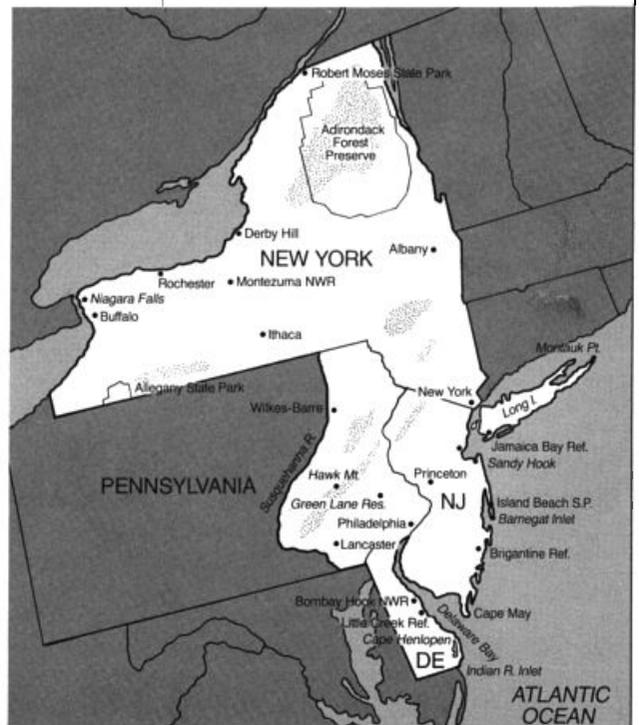
miles into Delaware waters (P. Guris, P. Lehman, DSI). In addition, Kerr rode party fishing boats out of Brielle 80 miles January 14 and 90 miles February 18.

Northern Lapwing was the stellar rarity of the season. Other highlights included Franklin's Gull, two reports of Ross' Gull, Rufous Hummingbird, Fork-tailed Flycatcher, possible Townsend's Solitaire, Varied Thrush, Black-headed Grosbeaks, Green-tailed Towhee, and Harris' Sparrows.

Abbreviations: Bombay Hook (*Bombay Hook N.W.R., near Smyrna, DE*); Brig (*Brigantine Unit, Edward P. Forsythe N.W.R., Atlantic, NJ*); Green Lane (*Green Lane Res., Montgomery, PA*); Cape Henlopen (*Cape Henlopen S. P., Sussex, DE*); Indian R. (*Indian River Inlet, Sussex, DE*); Jamaica Bay (*Jamaica Bay Wildlife Ref., New York City*); LI (*Long Island, NY*); Manasquan Inlet (*Manasquan Inlet, Monmouth-Ocean, NJ*); Montauk (*Montauk Pt. S.P., e. tip of Long Island*); N.Y.S.A.R.C. (*New York State Avian Rarities Committee*); Sandy Hook (*Sandy Hook Unit, Gateway Nat'l Recreation Area, Monmouth, NJ*).

## Loons to Cormorants

Three Red-throated Loons inland were slightly above the norm on L. Cayuga, Tompkins, NY (an unusually long sojourn, Dec. 20–Jan 16); Octoraro L., Lancaster, PA Dec. 18; and L. Nockamixon, Lehigh, PA Dec. 7 & 16 (SFA, GAF). Last year's Red-necked Grebe invasion was not repeated. That made one on the Susquehanna R., Dec. 18, the 2nd ever recorded on a S. Lan-



caster, PA CBC, and two in Delaware (M. Little, B&NM, SHD) even more notable. Three Eared Grebes were reported: Barnegat Bay, NJ Dec. 17; Pt. Lookout, *Nassau*, LI, Jan. 22–23 (A. Wilson); and Cape Henlopen Jan. 11 (SHD).

Northern Fulmars have become harder to find since the factory trawlers departed, thus singles were welcome off Cape May Dec. 3 and 46 mi due east of Indian R., Feb. 19. Two were remarkable on the St. Lawrence R. at the Robert Moses Power Dam Dec. 15, recalling a handful of recent L. Ontario records; one died the next day (BDiL). Late shearwaters were found Dec. 3, mostly Greater Shearwaters (e.g. at least 14 off Fire Island, and 100 off Brielle). Two Manx Shearwaters were off Fire I. and seven off Cape May. One record-late Sooty Shearwater was found off Fire I.

One–two Leach's Storm-Petrels Dec. 3 off Brielle provided a first Regional winter record. Two N. Gannets, rare anywhere away from open ocean, were on the St. Lawrence R. at the Robert Moses Power Dam Dec. 15 (BDiL) and one was off Hamlin Beach S. P., *Monroe*, NY Dec. 11 (WS). An Am. White Pelican visited the mouth of the Patchogue R., *Suffolk*, LI Dec. 10 (P. Vaccar), and another—possibly the same—passed through s. New Jersey a few days later: Leeds Pt., *Atlantic*, Dec. 13 (JL) and Cape May Dec. 19–20, departing toward Delaware (VE, RC, JDo). Three late Brown Pelicans passed the Avalon seawatch in December, and leftovers were at Cape May Jan. 22 (RC) and at Indian R. in January (S. Lipschitz); one was rescued at Atlantic City Feb. 1 (fide E. Stiles).

The recently established wintering population of Great Cormorants in the lower Delaware R. continued to increase. The Philadelphia mid-winter count Jan. 21 found 59, a record high, and an amazing 227 were at Sandy Hook Dec. 17.

### Hérons to Waterfowl

An unprecedented seven Least Bitterns made the Cape May CBC. A Green Heron provided only the 2nd record for the Boonton, *Morris*, NJ, CBC.

Whooper Swans, probably escapes, continued to turn up. One was on L. Octoraro, *Lancaster*, PA in early January (RMi); another was on Irondequoit Bay, *Monroe*, NY in February. Tundra Swans spread unusually wide. Forty-six remained to early January at Conesus L., *Livingston*, NY; there were 80 on L. Cayuga, increasing to 280 Feb. 28 as spring movement began, and a few wintered yet again on Hook Pond on e. Long Island. Increasing numbers (30–50 this season) are wintering on the coast of *Sussex*, DE (WWF). In Pennsylvania, 14 were at Green

Lane Jan. 14 (GAF), while 1000 at Middle Creek W.M.A., *Lebanon-Lancaster*, PA Feb. 22 may have been starting north. With them was a Trumpeter Swan (RMi), found again the next day at Marsh Creek S.P., *Chester*. Like other recent reports, this bird, though unbanded, probably came from the Ontario reintroduction project.

Eight Greater White-fronted Geese were above par. Four were in New York: L. Cayuga, *Tompkins*, Dec. 14–Jan. 5; Pine Island, *Orange*, into January (SA); Staten I. in late December (H. Flamm, T. Brown); Mecox Bay, LI, in February. Two were in Pennsylvania: Peace Valley Dec. 20–Jan. 2 (AMi, SFa) and Struble L., *Chester*, Feb. 7 (RMS, LLe, E.B.N.T.); and two in New Jersey: Brig and Franklin Twp., *Somerset*. Snow Geese are spreading into new winter quarters as their population increases. Formerly hard to find on the Susquehanna R. in *Lancaster*, PA, the 70,000 there this winter outnumbered Canada Geese. Some overwintered for the first time this year at ponds in c. New Jersey, where brief stopovers had been increasing (LLa). A few Ross' Geese were picked out among the Snows, not only in the now-regular coastal sites but inland. One at various *Lancaster*, PA lakes through the winter (RMS, JH, RMi, H. Morrin) was the 2nd on the s. *Lancaster* CBC. Two at Featherbed Lane, near Sharptown, *Salem*, provided the long-expected first in s.w. New Jersey (E. Lesser, B. Othhoff, R. Steelman). The rare blue-phase Ross' Goose was reported at Octoraro L., *Lancaster*, Jan 31 (†JH), and Bombay Hook Dec. 4 (CDC, T. McGrath). Four Barnacle Geese, of unknown origin, were at Hook Pond, LI, Jan. 29 (RJK), and one was at Struble L., *Chester*, PA.

Ducks were near recent highs. The January waterfowl count in Delaware totaled 15% above the 10-year average. Diving ducks seemed a bit low in the south because so many remained on the Great Lakes, but many puddle ducks were above the 10-year average. In New York state, 18,559 Mallards was 49% above the 10-year average, and 14,100 Green-winged Teal 745% above. Black Ducks, at 17,513, were better than 1994, but still 21% below the 10-year average (B. Swift, N.Y.D.E.C.). "Eurasian" Green-winged Teal were found in 5 locations: Massapequa, LI, Feb. 18 (P. Jones), Peace Valley Feb. 12–17 (SFa), and 3 sites in New Jersey—Hackensack Marshes (RKa, S. Byland), Cape May (A. Robinson), and Mannington Marsh, *Salem* (E. Fingerhood). Eurasian Wigeon were found along the coast as usual (about eight on Long Island, about eight in coastal New Jersey, and two in Delaware) and also inland at Octorara L., *Lancaster*, PA into late January (RMS, LLe, E.B.N.T., JH).

Tufted Ducks were up all over the north-east. Three were on Long Island (J. Clinton, A. Gilbert, WJB), an ad. female on Kensico Res., *Westchester*, NY Feb. 16 (MU), and at least three in *Monmouth*, NJ, after Feb. 11 (PBa, L. Mack *et al.*). A great raft of 10,000–25,000 Greater Scaup remained in L. Ontario off *Monroe* into January, possibly retained by abundant Zebra Mussels; the arrival of cold must have sent them south, for the Avalon seawatch's seasonal peak of Greater Scaup was >1000 Feb. 19 (DWa). Common Eider built to a healthy 3000 at Montauk Feb. 18 (PDeB). About a dozen were scattered along the Jersey shore from Barnegat Light (RMS, LLe, E.B.N.T.) to Cape May Pt. (B. Glaser) in December. One on L. Ontario Dec. 18 at Webster, *Monroe*, NY (C. Gumina, D&D Traver) continued a good year for the species there. A few King Eiders ranged a little farther south, as is often the case, to Cape May and Cape Henlopen. The maximum this winter at Montauk Pt. was only four Feb. 4 (RMS, LLe, E.B.N.T.). Though Harlequin Ducks have become hard to find at Montauk, they were up at other points and inlets: three at 3 locations on L. Ontario (WD'A, WS, D&D Traver, JHa); one at Onondaga L., NY (JHa); about ten at 3 locations on Long Island; about 20 in 3 locations in New Jersey, and about eight in Delaware (WWF, T. Fowler, B. Keene, P. Vanderhorst). The region's maximum was 19 at Barnegat Light, NJ Feb. 20 (TBa *et al.*).

A few scoters remained into January on the Great Lakes, and all 3 species turned up in Pennsylvania. A Surf Scoter at Minis L., Dec. 30–31 was the first *Northampton* record (RWi). A ♂ White-winged Scoter on the Susquehanna R. furnished the 2nd record on a s. *Lancaster* CBC (RMS). Seven–eight Barrow's Goldeneye were just below last winter's influx. They ranged from L. Champlain (a male at Westport Dec. 13, J&P Thaxton; and a pair at Port Kent Jan. 29, JMCP, D. Spaulding) to Read Sanctuary in Rye, *Westchester*, NY in early January (TWB), to Sandy Hook and Monmouth Beach, NJ, where a drake wintered, joined for a time in January by a female (WJB, RKa, B&NM). A drake seen variously at Cinnaminson and Palmyra through the season (F. Windfelder, m.ob.) provided probably the first Delaware R. record.

Hooded Mergansers are increasing. Christmas Bird Counts found a record 44 in s. *Lancaster*, PA and >100 at Bombay Hook, and a remarkable total of 1494 on 9 coastal New Jersey CBCs. Common Mergansers wintered in prodigious numbers on larger interior waters. The largest concentrations were 1200 on Long Pond, near Rochester, Dec. 10 (RGS); 3650 on the s. *Lancaster*

CBC, where hundreds used to be normal (RMS); 1250 on Oradell Res., *Bergen*, NJ, increasing to 5100 by Feb. 28 (RKA). Schutsky attributes the increase on the Susquehanna R. to the gizzard shad population.

### Raptors

Raptor migration was still in evidence Dec. 1, when three Black and 55 Turkey Vultures, >40 Red-tailed Hawks, and a Bald Eagle passed Cape May (JL).

Black Vultures increase steadily. A traditional roost at Mt. Gretna, *Lebanon*, PA contained 204, along with about 1000 Turkey Vultures, Feb. 18 (RMi), and 120 were at Lambertville, *Hunterdon*, NJ (B. Jones). In s. New Jersey, where they were very rare not long ago, the Belleplaine CBC, *Cumberland-Cape May*, doubled the previous year's count to 99. A Turkey Vulture in *Onondaga*, NY Jan. 22 provided a 2nd winter record, while another in *Genesee* Feb. 19 may have been an early spring arrival (G&D Seamans).

The Bald Eagle census found slightly fewer than last winter's record counts, perhaps because more eagles wintered farther north. New York had 119 Jan. 10 on Delaware R. drainage, plus eight were on the still-unfrozen Saint Lawrence R. (P. Nye, N.Y.-D.E.C.). New Jersey had 84 on Jan. 7-8 (C. Clark, N.J.D.F.G.W.), and Delaware had 17. The crew of the Amtrak "Adirondack" counted ten Bald Eagles Jan. 25 between Ticonderoga and Westport, a modern record for L. Champlain (JMCP). A few wintered even in the central Adirondacks. Five hung around the warm-water effluent of the *Salem*, NJ, nuclear plant. The list of raptors preying on bird feeders included N. Goshawk in the Adirondacks (JMCP), Red-shouldered Hawk in Delaware (S&E Speck), and Golden Eagle in the Adirondacks (R. Fadden). Otherwise, Red-shouldered Hawks were in discouragingly low numbers, while Red-tailed Hawks continued to increase. Rough-legged Hawks were uneven: scarce inland to the south, but numerous in the Oneida basin and Finger Lakes, NY, and down the coast as far as Barnegat, NJ (the biggest counts were 28 at Seneca Falls, *Seneca*, NY Feb. 28, and 24 on the Barnegat CBC). Golden Eagles were a bit below last winter: four in New Jersey on the Jan. 10 eagle survey (C. Clark), and one around Bombay Hook from November into January, one of that state's longest visits (APE).

Christmas Bird Count totals showed Am. Kestrel still dropping, by 30% in 3 years, for example, in n.c. New Jersey (LLa). Perhaps a nest-box campaign is in order. Merlins wintered well north. Three were around Rochester, where they were virtually unknown in winter before 1970. Only two Gyrfalcons were confirmed: a gray-morph

adult that wintered at the S. Buffalo waterfront after Dec. 23 (M. Morgante, m.ob.) and another gray-morph at the mouth of the Saranac R., *Plattsburgh*, NY, Feb. 7-23, for the 3rd consecutive winter (JMCP).

### Turkey to Shorebirds

More evidence of Wild Turkeys' success came from a mammoth flock of 194 in *Madison*, NY (G. Huggins), where there were none 10 years ago. Northern Bobwhite, by contrast, has become a rare bird in most of this Region. Most CBCs missed it entirely (*Cumberland*, NJ for the 3rd time in 45 years), and our few reports were in single digits. This species may survive only as game released for hunting.

American Coots were far above normal throughout the Region. There were 799 around Rochester (34 last year), and a record 1900 at Mannington Marsh, *Salem*, NJ, while 100 on Harvey's L., *Luzerne*, were about 3 times normal (WR). There may have been as many as nine Sandhill Cranes in the Region, though some duplication is possible. First winter records were tallied at Braddock Bay, *Monroe*, NY Dec. 10 (K. Griffith) and Feb. 1 at the Onondaga L. outflow (S. Rulison, the 16th record there). Others were at Mecox, LI after Jan. 1 (L. Penny *et al.*); Washington Boro, *Lancaster*, PA (RMS, LLe, E.B.N.T.); *Monmouth*, NJ Feb. 12; Cape May (one-two all winter); and Leesburg, *Cumberland*, NJ to late January. Last fall's bird near Woodstown, *Salem*, remained through the winter (WDa).

**SA** The Northern Lapwing discovered in a pasture near Mecox Bay, *Suffolk*, LI Jan. 28 by Buhl and Ednie visiting from Delaware (ph. APE, BL) remained until Mar. 25 (J.DiCostanzo) and gratified hundreds of visitors. Three of the four previous New York [and Regional] records occurred on Long Island in December [1883, 1905, 1966]; the 4th was at New Scotland, *Albany*, Mar. 22, 1991. Unlike many Old World vagrants, this one must have crossed the Atlantic. Numerous e. Canadian and Greenland records suggests a n. passage, but records from Bermuda, the Bahamas, Barbados, and Puerto Rico indicate that some arrive via n.w. Africa and the trade winds.

Since 24 species of shorebirds lingered into December, we have space mainly for overwinterers. American Oystercatchers continued to increase; they were numerous as far north as Brig (260, Dec. 17), and ten were at Long Beach, *Suffolk*, LI Jan. 10 (N.Y.R.-B.A.). Thirty Am. Avocets Jan. 1 furnished a



This Northern Lapwing, photographed January 31, 1995, remained for two months near Mecox Bay, Long Island, New York, delighting many birders. It provided a fifth state record. Photograph/Bob Lewis.

record mid-winter count at Bombay Hook. Two Willets managed to overwinter in s. New Jersey. Three Marbled Godwits remained at Jamaica Bay to Dec. 17, and ten overwintered in New Jersey from Brig south. Western Sandpipers were "all over" Long Island in small numbers to early January (SS). A Dowitcher sp., probably Long-billed, was record late Dec. 27 at Round Pond near Rochester (F&R Dobson). On Dec. 3, one Red-necked and >20 Red phalaropes were counted off Brielle, and 108 Red Phalaropes were off Fire Island.

### Jaegers to Alcids

Two or more Pomarine Jaegers were found out toward Hudson Canyon Dec. 3, and more than three off Brielle the same day. A Great Skua was off Brielle Jan. 15 (Philadelphia Birdline), and another 35 mi e. of Bethany Beach Feb. 19 (DSi *et al.*, ph. APE) provided the first Delaware photograph.

**SA** Ring-billed Gulls have become ubiquitous at dumpsters and fast-food stands. Among them at a MacDonald's near Atlantic City Jan. 27-Feb. 12 was a very tame first-winter Franklin's Gull, (JDo, m.ob., ph. KS, SFi, LLa), the 3rd in New Jersey in 2 years; there are fewer than 10 state records. Last winter's Franklin's Gull on Long Island also chose a MacDonald's.



Franklin's Gull (better known locally as McDonald's Gull) in first-winter plumage, in a fast-food parking lot near Atlantic City, New Jersey, January 28, 1995. Photograph/Laurie Larson.

Little Gulls were unevenly distributed. Maximum for the season around Buffalo was an impressive 11 at Niagara-on-the-Lake Jan. 29 (G. Bellerby), but only one appeared at Rochester and only two–three on Long Island. They were found at 8 coastal localities from Long Island south, the biggest groups being five at the Cape May ferry terminal Feb. 24 (K&M Weems), and up to five around Indian R., Jan. 2–14 (APE, WWF, SHD, J. Swertinski). Common Black-headed Gulls were entirely coastal, as is normal. About six were around New York City and Long Island, but four on the Jersey coast was low. The farthest from the sea was one that wintered in the warm effluent of the *Salem*, NJ, nuclear plant, occasionally crossing to the Delaware side of Delaware Bay. Delaware had three others, one immature at Indian R. and an adult and an immature at Cape Henlopen (SHD, J. Russell, MVB).

An imm. Thayer's Gull at Irondequoit Bay, *Monroe*, NY Jan. 14 (S. Skelly, B. Mongi) has been accepted by the Rochester Birding Association Statistics Committee. Up to five of both white-winged gulls were at Niagara Falls. About a dozen Iceland Gulls were found on the coast from Long Island to Cape May; about ten Glaucous Gulls reached farther south, including three in Delaware: Wilmington landfill Dec. 31, Bombay Hook Feb. 26 (CDC), and Indian R., Feb. 4 (WWF, D. Gardner). While white-winged gulls used to be primarily coastal, they may now be found at any inland river, lake, or garbage dump. When major dumps are closed, numbers drop, as on L. Cayuga, where wintering Iceland and Glaucous gulls were down to four–five (SK). We learned of about eight Iceland Gulls and about six Glaucous Gulls inland this season, below the last 2 years; some probably go unreported now. Notable was the first *Luzerne*, PA, Iceland Gull at W. Pittston, far up the Susquehanna, Jan. 14–15 (RKO, J. Shoemaker, WR).

At least two Lesser Black-backed Gulls were at Niagara Falls and the usual 20 or so were down the coast from Long Island to Delaware. Always less maritime than white-winged gulls, they were widespread in interior New Jersey and at 6 localities in Pennsylvania: L. Nockamixon (B&NM); L. Struble, *Chester* (RMS, LLe, E.B.N.T.); Middle Creek W.M.A. (RMi); two at Philadelphia (A. Guarente *et al.*); two at *Lancaster* (RMS, LLe, E.B.N.T.); and Marsh Creek S. P., *Chester*. Four were on the *Sussex*, NJ, CBC and a good ten were counted in Trenton Marsh and adjacent areas along the Delaware R., January 7–8 (LLa). Three Pennsylvania lakes had this species, along with both white-winged gulls: Struble,



Dovekie on the water near Cape May Point, New Jersey, December 16, 1994. Later in the winter, more than 700 were seen on a boat trip off Cape May. Photograph/Shawneen Finnegan.

Conowingo, *Lancaster*, and Marsh Cr. For the 2nd year Great Black-backed Gulls were regular at Peace Valley Park, *Bucks*, PA, with an amazing 25 Jan. 8 (AMi). Two wintered at Green Lane (K. Crilley, GLF, G. Franchois), and two were on the Lehigh R. in Northampton Twp. (SFa).

Two Ross' Gull reports are under study by N.Y.S.A.R.C.: one near Cape Vincent, on L. Ontario, *Jefferson*, NY Jan. 4 (†T. Dudones), and another on L. Cayuga Jan. 13 (†C. Hynes), continuing the recent rush of records.

Three Forster's Terns made it to Jan. 30 at Cape May (B. Glaser, KS), and a record >300 were in the Cape Henlopen/Prime Hook N.W.R. area Dec. 18; some remained at Indian R. through the season. A Black Skimmer at Long Beach, *Suffolk*, LI Jan. 14 was remarkably late.

Atlantic Puffin was the only Atlantic alcid *not* found in Hudson-Delaware waters this winter (but see our next report). Dovekies built up with the season: 11 off Brielle Jan. 14, >80 there Feb. 18, and an amazing 733 out of Cape May Feb. 19, mostly in Delaware waters. Montauk had a few all winter, with a maximum of 15 Dec. 24. Two murre (sp.) were at Montauk Jan. 1, and a Thick-billed Murre was at Barnegat Light Dec. 2 (JBa). Three Com. Murres were in Delaware waters Feb. 19, and one was at Manasquan Inlet Feb. 23–26 (J. Herder, LLa). As usual, Razorbills were the most widespread alcid from shore. They peaked at 100 at Montauk Dec. 18, diminishing to 25 by Feb. 4 (RMS, LLe, E.B.N.T.). Singles were seen off other Long Island Points, Manasquan Inlet Dec. 26 (B&NM), Cape May, and a record ten were far off Delaware Feb. 19. The seawatch at Avalon counted 105 alcids flying S Jan. 11, all identifiable birds being Razorbills. Only one Black Guillemot was reported, at Montauk Feb. 3 (RMS, LLe, E.B.N.T.).

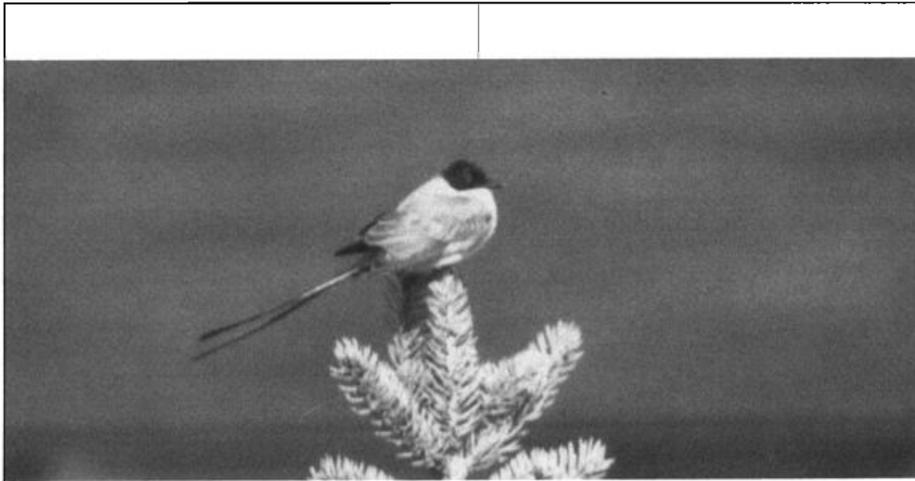
### Owls to Shrikes

Snowy Owls were few and late, though six were in the Finger Lakes area of New York. They were scarce on Long Island, but one hunted on Queens rooftops much of January. Only four–five were found in New Jersey, all on the coast (possibly involving some duplication). Remarkably, for a poor year, two reached Delaware (Bombay Hook and Cape Henlopen). In the right spots, Short-eared Owl numbers were encouraging. The biggest counts were 50 roosting at King Ferry, *Cayuga*, NY; 30 in the Cape Vincent area, *Jefferson*, NY Feb. 16 (RMS, LLe, E.B.N.T.); 30 around Walkill, *Ulster*, NY (SA); ≤15 around Rochester; and 18 in coastal New Jersey from Manahawkin south on the raptor survey Jan. 7–8.

**SA** The ad. ♂ Rufous Hummingbird mentioned in the fall column, captured in good condition at Cambridge, *Washington*, NY Dec. 3, died unexpectedly (RPY, \* Columbia-Greene Community College, Hudson, NY). Although many fall records of *Selasphorus* sp. exist and there are one or two undubitable Rufous Hummingbird photographs, this is the first New York Rufous Hummingbird specimen.

A Black-backed Woodpecker strayed S to Mt. Kisco, *Westchester*, NY Jan. 10 (K. Kriegeskotte). Pileated Woodpeckers are adapting well to outer suburbia and fragmented rural woodlots in this Region's south. For example, six were the most in 9 years of the Philadelphia mid-winter count Jan. 21, while 15 was 3 times the previous high on the s. *Lancaster* CBC (RMS).

A W. Kingbird at Muddy Run Dec. 18 furnished only the 2nd record for *Lancaster*, PA (RMS). A cooperative imm. Fork-tailed Flycatcher at Cape May Dec. 12–16 (RC,



**A first for winter in New Jersey, and lingering longer than most of these tropical strays (5 days), was this Fork-tailed Flycatcher at Cape May December 12, 1994.**

**Photograph/Shawneen Finnegan.**

m.ob., ph. SFi, RWi) provided New Jersey's first winter record; previous state records total 8 in fall and 3 in spring.

Some very high counts of Fish Crows were obtained on several New Jersey CBCs, the biggest being 3521 at Trenton Marsh Dec. 31. At the Port of Wilmington, where they were formerly rare, 350 were counted Jan. 6 moving to the landfill (F. Rohrbacher). It was not an invasion year for Black-capped Chickadees, and the only Boreal Chickadee reported s. of the Adirondacks was a returnee at a Patterson, Putnam, NY feeder (H. Pollock). Red-breasted Nuthatches were abundant in the Adirondacks, where the cone crop was heavy, but almost entirely absent elsewhere.

Christmas Bird Count figures confirm last winter's decimation of Carolina Wrens. They were down 102% from 2 years ago on the Delaware, PA CBC and from 43 to seven on the Hunterdon, NJ CBC. Surprisingly, s. coastal counts such as Bombay Hook showed no change, while Cape May's 284 was a record. Eight at Conesus-Hemlock-Honeoye Lakes CBC, Livingston-Ontario, NY was the most in 43 years—go figure! In the last 2 cases, count day weather was ideal. In any event, rapid recovery is certain. Sedge Wrens were a welcome find on CBCs at Bombay Hook (the first since 1981, though they were regular up to the 1960s) and Cape May. Some actually overwintered at Salem, NJ Feb. 18 (K. Tischner), and at Cape May Feb. 11 (VE).

A Townsend's Solitaire was described at Pawling, Dutchess, NY Jan. 2 (S. Gilbert). A Wood Thrush spent Jan. 13–23 in a vest-pocket garden on Park Avenue, NYC, drinking water and taking crumbs with House Sparrows (SW). A Varied Thrush spent the winter in Flatbush, Brooklyn, Dec. 21–Feb. 24 (R. Clark, D. Honicker, m.ob., ph. BL), fed by local residents in a driveway.

Northern Shrikes remained mostly north;

eight in the Finger Lakes (SK) and six in the Adirondacks surpassed last winter (JMCP). The only s. records were in n.w. New Jersey—Sussex after Jan. 27 (JBa) and Hunterdon after Jan. 18 (B. Doerr, D. Freiday), and south at Higbee Beach, Cape May, NJ, Jan. 11–14 (H. Tomlinson). Only one Loggerhead Shrike was reported from the entire Region: at Medford, Burlington, NJ, after Dec. 13 (K. Tischner).

#### **Vireos to Finches**

A White-eyed Vireo was a Cape May CBC first; it persisted into January. The warbler haul on CBCs was not as outlandish as mild weather might have suggested. As usual, Orange-crowned Warblers, Pine Warblers, Com. Yellowthroats, and Yellow-breasted Chats made up most of the list (not to mention the ubiquitous Yellow-rumpeds). An Orange-crowned Warbler at Rochester up to Jan. 15 (ph. G. Chapin, S. Skelly) provided only a 2nd winter record there, and one on the Hamburg, PA, CBC was a first. Nashville Warblers were found on 3 CBCs: Queens, Bronx-Westchester, and Hackensack-Ridgewood (2nd time). An "Audubon's" Yellow-rumped Warbler at Indian R., Feb. 11 (SHD) furnished a first Delaware record. Good finds were an imm. ♀ Black-throated Green Warbler on the Delaware, PA, CBC Dec. 17 (+C. Walters, E. Brendel, E. Fingerhood); a Yellow-throated Warbler, white-lored race, at Ithaca, NY Dec. 8–10 (D. Haskill); and Prairie Warblers on 2 CBCs: Bronx-Westchester (SW, C. Jaslowitz) and Tunkhannock, Wyoming, PA (RKO). A Pine Warbler overwintered far north at Freeville, Tompkins, NY (B. Bilger). An Am. Redstart was at Jamaica Bay in early December, and a N. Waterthrush made the Bronx-Westchester CBC (J. Moyle). A waterthrush sp. at a Delaware R. boat ramp in Lower Mt. Bethel Twp., Northampton, PA Feb 20 (+D. Miller) is under study. Wilson's

Warblers were on the Brooklyn and Bronx-Westchester CBCs. Chats were found on 3 LI-NYC counts, two in s. New Jersey, and one in Delaware. One seems to have overwintered at Montauk, while another survived at least into January at Cape May.

↪ A ♀ Black-headed Grosbeak frequented the feeder at Ocean Co. Park, Cattus Island, NJ from Jan. 22 (B. Vernachio, ph. LLa) into early February (RKa, B&NM); a male hit a window and was released at Owl Haven Sanctuary, Freehold, Monmouth, NJ Feb. 9.

↪ Dickcissels were found on 5 CBCs from Pawling, Dutchess, NY south, and remained into January at White Plains, Westchester (M. Lolya), near Willingboro, Burlington, NJ, and Peach Bottom, s. Lancaster, PA (RMS, LLe, E.B.N.T.). A Green-tailed Towhee wintered at a feeder near Green Lane (RMi *et al.*, ph. RWi). A ♀ "spotted" Rufous-sided Towhee was at Cape May from Dec. 7 into April (DSi *et al.*). The only Clay-colored Sparrow reported was on the c. Bucks, PA CBC. An "Ipswich" Savannah Sparrow was found far inland from the usual outer dunes habitat at Fortescue, NJ Jan. 1 for a first Cumberland record (B. Barber, VE, J. Usewicz). A Harris' Sparrow wintered at Perry, Wyoming, NY (D. Bassett), and another was at Bashakill, Sullivan, NY Dec 28.

↪ Yellow-headed Blackbirds were scarce: one was at Manahawkin, Ocean, NJ Dec. 2 (JBa), about five were in s.w. New Jersey in February (D. Merkh, WDa, K. Tischner), and one at Prime Hook N.W.R., DE Dec 9 (APE). More unusual was one near Quarryville, Lancaster, PA Jan. 21 (JH, RMi). Brewer's Blackbirds were in good numbers at their coastal Delaware wintering areas (109 on the Bombay Hook CBC); less expected were six among a flock of 250,000 blackbirds near Cochraneville, Lancaster, PA Dec. 7 (RMS, LLe, E.B.N.T.), and one at Plymouth, Luzerne, PA Jan 23 (RKO).

↪ Northern Orioles turned up on 9 CBCs from Brooklyn south, and one identified as a "Bullock's" was at a feeder in Chester, PA, until the Feb. 4 snowstorm (JH).

**SA** Winter finches were virtually absent except for a good population of Red Crossbills and some White-winged Crossbills in the Adirondacks, where the cone crop was excellent. Yunick, competing with Com. Ravens for road-killed Red Crossbills in Hamilton, NY, measured 16 to be *L. c. minor*, from the Pacific Northwest.

Observers: (Subregional compilers in bold-face): Robert Andrie (Niagara frontier area), Scott Angus, John Askildsen, Pete Bacinski, Tom Bailey (TBa) (coastal NJ); 87 Wynd-

ham Pl., Robbinsville, NJ 08691), Jim Bangma, **Irving Black** (n.e. NJ: Eagle Rock Village, Bldg. 26, Apt. 8B, Budd Lake, NJ 07828), Daniel Brauning (Pa. Game Commission), Elizabeth Brooks, P.A. Buckley, T. W. **Burke** (NY Rare Bird Alert), C.D. Campbell, Richard Crossley, K. L. **Crowell** (St. Lawrence, NY: RD 4, Box 97, Canton, NY 13617), **Dorothy Crumb** (Oneida L. Basin, NY: 3983 Gates Rd., Jamesville, NY 13078), **Willie D'Anna** (Niagara Frontier, NY: 2257 Cayuga Dr. Ext., Niagara Falls, NY 14304); **Ward Dasey** (s.w. NJ: 29 Ark Road, Medford, NJ 08055), Paul DeBenedictis, Jim Dowdell, Bruce DiLabbio, John Dunn (PA Game Commission), S.H. Dyke, Early Bird Nature Tours (E.B.N.T.), A. P. **Ednie** (*New Castle and Kent*, DE: 59 Lawson Ave., Claymont, DE 19703), Vince Elia, Steve Farbotnik, Shawneen Finnegan, G. A. Franchois, **W. W. Frech** (*Sussex*, DE: Carr. Rt. 3, Box 1144, Lewes, DE 19958), Lisa Gelvin-Innvaer (DE Div'n. of Fish and Wildlife), Dave Githens, **Jane Graves** (Hudson-Mohawk, NY: Skidmore College, Saratoga Springs, NY 12866), **K. C. Griffith** (Genesee, NY: 61 Grandview Lane, Rochester, NY 14612), John Hanyak, **David Harrison** (n.w. NJ: 126 Westchester Terrace, Annandale, NJ 08801), Jonathan Heller, Armas Hill (Philadelphia Birdline), Rich Kane (RKA), **Steve Kelling** (Finger Lakes Region, NY: 732 Old 76 Rd., Berkshire, NY 13736), **Arlene Koch** (Lehigh Valley, PA: 1375 Raubsville Rd., Easton, PA 18042), Rick Koval (RKO), R.J. Kurtz, **Laurie Larson** (n.c. NJ: 69 Alexander St., Princeton NJ 08540), A.J. Lauro, Bob Lewis, Larry Lewis, J. Liguori, Randy Miller, August Mirabella, Bill and Naomi Murphy, Ted Nichols (N.J.D.F.G.W.), J. M. C. **Peterson** (Adirondack-Champlain Region, NY: Discovery Farm, RD 1, Elizabethtown, NY 12932), Vivian Pitzrick, **William Reid** (n.e. PA: 73 W. Ross St., Wilkes-Barre, PA 18702), **Sy Schiff** (Long Island: 603 Mead Terrace, S. Hempstead, NY 11550), R. M. Schutsky, Keith Seager, Claire Seymour (Pocono Environmental Education Center), Dave Sibley, **R. G. Spahn** (Genesee Ornithological Society), Clay and Pat Sutton (Cape May Bird Observatory), William Symonds, **Michael Usai** (Lower Hudson Valley, NY: 70 Virginia Rd., Apt. 18A, N. White Plains, NY 10603), Guy Tudor, C. Viverette (Hawk Mt. Sanctuary), Steve Walter, David Ward, **Al Wollin** (Long Island: 4 Meadow Lane, Rockville Center, NY 11570), Rick Wiltraut, R. P. Yunick.

—Robert O. Paxton, 460 Riverside Drive, Apt. 72, New York, NY 10027, William J. Boyle, Jr., 12 Glenwood Road, Denville, Nj 07834, And David A. Cutler, 1110 Rock Creek Dr., Wyncote, Pa 19095.

# Southern Atlantic Coast Region

## RICKY DAVIS

This winter season will be remembered for a long time. Temperatures were above average throughout the Region and precipitation was almost completely rain, with only a couple of snow/ice events. This meant that birds lingered in good numbers and winter birds from the north and west were in short supply. Add to this some unforgettably confusing birds and exciting rarities, and you can see why this season was very interesting.

Abbreviations: C. Hatt. (*Cape Hatteras*); H.B.S.P. (*Huntington Beach State Park*); N.C.B.R.C. (*North Carolina Bird Records Committee*); W.M.A. (*Wildlife Management Area*).

## Loons to Wood Stork

A Red-throated Loon found on the Jordan L., NC, CBC Jan. 1 (H&ELi) provided a very rare inland winter record. Pacific Loons were again reported from several locations. South Carolina hosted one at Myrtle Beach Jan. 15 (RC, CE) and another one was at

nearby H.B.S.P., Jan. 29–Feb. 9 (PW, VA, P&BM, v.o.). These furnished only the 2nd or 3rd records for the state, depending on whether it was one or two individuals involved. In North Carolina the usual Figure Eight I. area had two Feb. 5 (DC). Also one was at nearby Wrightsville Beach Feb. 14 (SD) and photos were taken, providing the first documentation of a winter report for this species (complex?) in the state! Red-necked Grebes were in normally low numbers this winter (after last year's record invasion), with singles in Pamlico Sound, NC Dec. 11 (LG, *et al.*) and Jan. 29 (WC), and at Wrightsville Beach, NC Feb. 12 (SC). In South Carolina one was at H.B.S.P., Jan. 1 and at Beaufort Feb. 25 (RC, CE). Up to five Eared Grebes spent the winter at their usual haunt in Goldsboro, NC (ED) and singles were found at C. Hatt., NC Jan. 28 (SC, KM) and inland at L. Townsend near Greensboro, NC Jan. 17–Feb. 11 (HLi, HH). In South Carolina, one was in the surf at H.B.S.P., Jan. 22 (RC, CE). In Georgia, one was in *Monroe* Dec. 29 (JP, *fide* TM) and Feb. 18 (O.A.S., *fide* TM). Up to 12 Audubon's and one Manx shearwater were seen on a pelagic trip off Hatteras, NC Feb. 11 (BP *et al.*), once again proving that both species can be found off North Carolina during winter.

The Am. White Pelican was found in North Carolina at Pea I., Dec. 29 & 31 (HL); C. Hatt., Feb. 10 (SD) and Feb. 26–27 (*fide* PM); and at L. Mattamuskeet Jan. 26 (NM). In Georgia, one was at Jekyll I., Dec. 2 (JS, PH) and the large flock continued in the Cumberland I. area with a peak of 43 Dec. 18 (MH). Much rarer was the Brown Pelican found at L. Lanier, GA

