

The Winter Season

December 1, 1971-March 31, 1972

NORTHEASTERN MARITIME REGION / Davis W. Finch

The mildness of the fall continued well into the winter, at least in the southern part of the Region, where throughout December and January the ground was virtually bare and temperatures unusually high, but February brought normal winter weather. Farther north the winter was colder but still relatively snowless until February and March in e. Maine, s. New Brunswick, and Nova Scotia.



FLIGHTS, POPULATION TRENDS — Among the species whose numbers during early winter could probably be attributed to its mildness were certain tubenoses, Double-crested Cormorant, Brant (Bay of Fundy), several species of shorebirds, Tree Swallows (Rhode Island), Robins (New Brunswick and Maine) and certain Fringillids. Fulmars remained numerous in the Gulf of Maine, and Barrow's Goldeneyes reappeared as last year in large flocks along the s. shore of the Gulf of St. Lawrence, where perhaps they have hitherto been undetected. The species staging more or less pronounced flights were Gyrfalcon, Thick-billed Murre (Maine, New Hampshire, Massachusetts), Snowy Owl, Bohemian Waxwing (the Maritimes and n. New England), Com. Redpoll (for the third winter out of the last four) and Pine Siskin.

CHRISTMAS BIRD COUNTS — These totaled 117 in the Region, of which 69 were published in AMERICAN BIRDS. The composite list of 208 species (plus 1 hybrid and 3 other species in count period) was 25 above last year and, reflecting the late fall, included a number of lingering migrant species not normally found in winter.

LOON, GREBES, TUBENOSES — On the CBC at S. Kingstown, R.I., a bird carefully studied was identified as Arctic Loon by several experienced observers (DLE, DLK *et al.*). For the first time in many years the season passed with no reports of Eared Grebe. In the n. part of the Region, single Pied-billed Grebes were observed on the CBCs at Halifax (West) and Thomaston-Rockland, Me., and in the same state a bird remained at Blue Hill Dec. 28-Jan. 23 (Marjorie Leach, *vide* WCT) and another wintered as last year on the Baskahegan R. in Danforth, present Dec. 17-Mar. 10 (Muriel L. Gillis). Further evidence of the recent increase of Fulmars came from Ed Thompson's Bay of Fundy CBC aboard the "Bluenose" between Bar Harbor, Me. and Yarmouth, N.S., where one-way counts of 56 and 89 were made Dec. 21 & 22. Of the latter total, only 2 were dark-phase birds. Fulmar totals for the 4 previous years of this CBC have been 5, 1, 0, 0. On transits of the "Prince of Fundy" from Yarmouth, N.S. to Portland, Me., 108 Fulmars were counted in three hours Feb. 20 (TL, RFP *et al.*), and, possibly indicating a decline in numbers in late winter, 24 (2 dark-phase) Mar. 31 (Clifford L. Jones). On both of the just-mentioned "Bluenose" crossings, a Greater Shearwater was seen over the Lucher Shoal, off Yarmouth (EVT). Also surprisingly late were a Sooty Shearwater reliably reported in Northumberland Strait off Pictou, N.S., Dec. 2 (Captain Eric Holdway, *vide* PRD), and a small black-and-white shearwater, almost certainly a Manx, off North Point, Brier I., N.S., Dec. 22 (DWF).

CORMORANTS, HERONS, IBIS — The 21 or so widely distributed Double-crested Cormorants reported in December and January were considerably more than in the past 3 winters, perhaps as a result of mild weather and unfrozen bays. An imm. was seen at Yarmouth, N.S., Jan. 13 (MWH, Alan Ryff, *vide* PRD), and in Queens Co., P.E.I., an imm. at Covehead, Dec. 27, was seen again nearby Jan. 9, while on the latter date an ad. was present at West R. (RRH, AAMaCl *et al.*), and single birds were seen at Little Dipper Harbour, Saint John Co., N.B. Dec. 21 (KHD, *vide* DSC) and on the CBC at Thomaston-Rockland, Me., Dec. 26; in Massachusetts, there was an ad. at Wareham, Dec. 12 (CAG, WRP), ad. and imm. at Wollaston, Dec. 13, one remaining to Jan 1 (DTB, RPE *et al.*), one each on the CBCs at Newburyport and Quincy, Dec. 26, and at the Vineyard, Dec. 30, 1 at Nauset, Jan. 29-30 (MLG, CAG, WRP), and finally 9 on the CBC at Block I., R.I., Dec. 26. The Cape Cod CBC total of 87 Great Blue Herons far exceeded any other Regional count, and a Little Blue Heron at Cross Mills in Charlestown, R.I. remained as late as Jan. 23 (DLK, KBK, EAS, CW *et al.*). A Glossy Ibis was seen at Pochet I. in Orleans, Cape Cod, Feb. 15 (Loring Conant, *vide* RPE), a record probably best considered as simply "unscheduled".

WATERFOWL — The only Whistling Swans of the season were 2 over Plum I., Mass., Dec. 9 (PKD, RAF *et al.*, *vide* RPE). In the Bay of Fundy area there were several unusually late records of Brant in midwinter, most notably a flock which increased after about Nov. 25 to a maximum of 100+ on Jan. 1 and wintered at White Head, Grand Manan, N.B. (Nancy Small, *vide* DSC), a flock of 7 which wintered at Brier I., N.S.

(DWL.), and two other reports of 7 at Maces Bay, Charlotte Co., N.B., Jan. 9 (DJA, HCA) and 3 at Lubec, Washington Co., Me., Jan. 15 (v.o., *vide* WCT). A flock of 4-6 Snow Geese at Sakonnet Point, R.I. was accompanied by a Snow x Blue hybrid, present from Nov. 21 through January (SSD *et al.*). The season's only Com. Teal was a ♂ plainly observed at Green Cove, North Brooksville, Hancock Co., Me., Dec. 28 (EVT); the species is best known in the Region as a spring migrant, being rare in winter and infrequently recorded at any time in Maine. As last year, the Nantucket CBC total of Green-winged Teal (430) was far higher than any other in the Region, as were the Nantucket counts of Am. Widgeon (150) and Redhead (280). Five ♂♂ Eur. Widgeons occurred during the period, as follows: a wintering bird again at Little Harbor, Cohasset, Mass., from Nov. 28 to at least Mar. 12 (Jeannette Howland *et mult. al.*, *vide* RPE), 1 at Nantucket during count period, 1 at Crystal L. in Orleans, Mass., Jan. 1-2 (WB, WRP *et al.*), 1 at S. Dartmouth, Mass., Mar. 11-26 (DTB, CAG, WRP *et al.*), and at the w. limit of the Region, 1 at Old Lyme, Conn., Mar. 5-26 (PJD). A ♂ Wood Duck which again wintered at Laconia, N.H., was unique on Regional CBCs (HCA, WSL *et al.*) but considerably farther south, 2 wintered on Sider's Pond in Falmouth, Mass., (RPE *et al.*) and another at Alewife Cove in Waterford, Conn. (GB, *vide* RCD). Two Redheads at Second Peninsula, Lunenburg Co., N.S., Dec. 18 (Curtis Chipman, *vide* PRD) were unusual strays to the province, and 15 seen the same day in Maine on the Mount Desert I. CBC were also remarkable. The Tufted Duck of Sider's Pond put in its usual appearance Jan. 13, and remained until Feb. 10 (DTB, JB *et al.*, *vide* RPE). Again as last winter, a large concentration of Barrow's Goldeneyes occurred in n. New Brunswick at Dalhousie, where 60 were seen at Bon Ami Rocks, Dec. 6 (AGM, *vide* DSC) and 147 were recorded on the CBC, Dec. 30 (and only 5 on the province's 26 other CBC's!). Although no later counts from Dalhousie were available, some closely comparable ones came from Prince Edward I., where 150 Barrow's Goldeneyes (80% ♂♂) were found with 2000-3000 Com. Goldeneyes at West R., Queens Co., Jan. 9 & 31. This concentration had diminished to 40 birds on Mar. 12, while at Oyster Bed Bridge a flock of 50 appeared at this time, and comprised 57 birds Apr. 6 (AAMaCL). Whether these flocks along the s. shore of the Gulf of St. Lawrence reflect an increase or range extension, or recently filled gaps in our knowledge is uncertain, but the latter seems more likely. Elsewhere in the Region, the only Barrow's Goldeneyes reported in Nova Scotia were a pair at S. Harbour Pond, Victoria Co., Mar. 31 (AAMaCL); 17 were reported on CBCs in Maine, 2 in N.H., and the season's total in e. Massachusetts was about 29 individuals at 10 localities, with a high of 13 at Newburyport, Jan. 29 (DJA, DWF). In the s. part of the Region Harlequin Ducks were a little less numerous than usual, with a season's total of no more than 18 at 3 localities in Massachusetts, 11 of these constituting the highest count made (Feb. 4) of the traditional flock at Magnolia (Osborne Earle, *vide* RPE). The birds were said to be absent this winter from their usual haunts at Squibnocket on Martha's Vineyard (GGD), but 5-6 wintered at Narragansett, R.I., Jan. 1-Mar. 19 (K BK,

DLK, CW *et al.*, *vide* SSD). The season's highest count was that of 27 along the coast of York County, Me., Feb. 27 (DJA, DWF). King Eiders, though not occurring in flocks as last winter, were nonetheless widespread as individuals, 44 of them occurring at 31 localities from Nova Scotia to Rhode Island, all coastal save for the inland record of a ♀ which reappeared Nov. 13 at Laconia, N.H., to spend a second consecutive winter there! (HCA, WSL *et mult. al.*) A ♀ Ruddy Duck in the Northwest Arm in Halifax, N.S., Jan. 8 was a late record of a species uncommon in the province (IAMcL, *vide* PRD). The two highest CBC totals of Com. Mergansers were 370 at Orono-Old Town, Me., and 310 at Hillsborough, P.E.I., but in the latter area as many as 800 were present at W. River, Jan. 9 (AAMaCL), a remarkable count for the Region.

HAWKS, EAGLES — Table 1 summarizes the season's CBC observations of these birds and allows comparison with results of the 3 previous years. Goshawks seemed to continue their general increase, while Sharp-shinned Hawks, noted as "fairly common" in Nova Scotia, "very common" in e. Maine and "quite numerous" in New Hampshire were nonetheless below the CBC level of last year, as were Cooper's Hawks, only 9 of which were reported in the Region besides those of the Table, as compared with 30 last year. A Broad-winged Hawk was seen at Portsmouth, N.H. Dec. 7 (PWG), and an imm. hit a window and died in York Harbor, Me., Jan. 2 (Raymond W. Stanley, *U.N.H., determined by ACB). This is apparently the first winter Broad-winged specimen for the Region. Rough-legged Hawks this season were infrequent in Nova Scotia, where meadow voles were said to be "almost absent" (John S. Erskine, *vide* PRD), while in New Brunswick, particularly the s.e. part where the vole populations were high, the birds abounded. Of the 135 seen on New Brunswick CBCs, 52 were at Sackville alone, a record (DSC). Seven Golden Eagles were reported, some of them sedentary: a subadult at Brier I., N.S., Dec. 19 through the winter (DWF, DWL) and an ad. there Mar. 6-8 feeding on a drowned sheep at Western Light (DWL *et al.*), 1 in e. Massachusetts at Quabbin Reservoir, Dec. 31, and 2 there through March accompanied by 3-8 Bald Eagles (PKD *et al.*), an imm. at Truston Pond in the Moonstone Wildlife Refuge, R.I., Dec. 23 to at least Jan. 23 (DLK, GGD *et al.*), and 2 ad. at Castalia, Grand Manan, N.B., Mar. 18 (Vernon Bagley, *vide* DSC). The raptor of the season, however, was Gyrfalcon, the ten records of which seem to merit enumeration here: 1 on the CBC at Bonne Bay, Nfld., Jan. 2; at Brier I., N.S. on several dates in January (DWL); a dark-phase bird at Brackley, Queens Co., P.E.I., Jan. 6 (AAMaCL, Cheryl Olson) and in the same part of the province 3 other sightings of 5 large dark falcons in the period Dec. 27-Feb. 20 (v.o., *vide* AAMaCL); in Maine, 1 on the Brunswick CBC, Jan. 1, and the Region's only white bird at Clark I. Ledge, Knox Co., Jan. 29 (IAB *et al.*); in Massachusetts, a dark-phase bird at Plum I., Dec. 12 (Martha McClellan *et al.*, *vide* RPE) and a light gray bird there Dec. 21 (Donald Alexander, *vide* RPE), a gray bird, possibly the same, on the n. side of the Merrimack R. above Newburyport Dec. 26 (Peter Alden *et al.*), a dark bird at Eastham, Cape Cod, Feb. 10 (*vide* WB, RPE) and a gray

bird nearby at Fort Hill, Nauset, Feb. 21-Mar. 6 (PSM *et mult. al.*) Five Peregrines were seen during the period, 1 in New Hampshire, 3 in e. Massachusetts, and 1 in Rhode Island, and Pigeon Hawks reports, besides those in the Table, numbered 13 in Nova Scotia and 17 in e. Massachusetts.

RAILS, GALLINULES, COOT, SHOREBIRDS

— The only King Rail reported this season was seen at Plymouth, Mass., Dec. 14 (PKD). A Clapper Rail at Grand Desert, Halifax Co., N.S., Dec. 5, was about the seventh provincial record, and one of relatively few for Canada (photographed, DWF, IAMCL, ELM, WPN). In Massachusetts, 2 Sora's lingering at Ipswich were new to the Newburyport CBC Dec. 26, and 1 remained to Jan. 22 (PKD, CAG, WRP); another Sora was present in Plymouth, Feb. 18-26 (PKD). Also at Ipswich at the time of the Newburyport CBC was a Coo. Gallinule, it too being new to the 33-year history of the count (PKD), and another unseasonable individual was present at Brickyard Pond in Barrington, R.I., Jan. 23-27 (LB, *vide* SSD). The winter's northernmost Am. Coot was a late bird captured alive at St. Joseph, Westmorland Co., N.B., Jan. 20, later released (Reid McManus, *vide* DSC). Eighteen species of shorebirds were recorded in the period, with a number of late occurrences such as the CBC records in Massachusetts of a Semipalmated Plover at Cape Ann, Dec. 26 & Jan. 2, 2 Piping Plovers at North Beach in Chatham, where 2 were seen Jan. 12, 1971. Piping Plovers are said to have overwintered on Cape Cod for the last 4 years (CAG, WRP). Black-bellied Plovers attempting to winter rather far north in the Region were singles at Cape Sable I., N.S., Feb. 15 to at least Mar. 11 (SS) and at Tenants Harbor, Knox Co., Me., Dec. 26-Feb. 26 (Sherwood & Gwen Cook, *vide* LAB) and a third that wintered successfully on the New Hampshire coast (*vide* *vide* RWS).

Ruddy Turnstones are known to winter with curious regularity on offshore rocks at certain favored localities, such as Louisbourg, Cape Breton Co., N.S., and Biddeford Pool, Me., where CBC totals were 7 and 28, respectively, these being the only turnstones reported n. of Mass. this winter. A flock that recently has been wintering at Cohasset, Mass., numbered 80 on Jan. 8 (Michael Moore, *vide* RPE) and 58 on Feb. 27 (DTB, *vide* RPE). The 3 Greater Yellowlegs of the CBCs (single birds at Blue Hill, Me., Newport-Westport, R.I.-Mass., and S. Kingstown, R.I.) were outnumbered by the 5 Lesser Yellowlegs (4 at New Bedford, Mass., 1 at Block I., R.I.). A Knot on the CBC at Halifax (East), Dec. 18 (ELM *et al.*) was the first to occur on CBCs in the province, and another appeared at Cape Sable I., Feb. 21 (SS, *vide* PRD). The CBC at Marshfield, Mass. produced a fine list of 7 shorebird species and for the third straight year the Region's highest Dunlin count, the total of 1181 far exceeding any other recent ones. Also present were 4 late Semipalmated Sandpipers and a White-rumped, the latter editorially stigmatized as "incredible", which it wasn't, there being a number of December records of this late migrant in Massachusetts. A single Dunlin at the mouth of the Upper Salmon R. in Fundy Nat'l Park, N.B., Feb. 6-7 (John M. MacFarlane, Bruce Bradbury, *vide* DSC) was thought to be the province's first winter record. The

3 Long-billed Dowitchers remaining into December in the Region were single birds on Cape Cod at Wellfleet, Dec. 5 (RHJS *et al.*, *vide* RPE) and in Rhode I., at Galilee, Dec. 12 (DLK, *vide* SSD) and, even later, at Quonochontaug, Dec. 26-27 (DLK, EAS, FP *et al.*, *vide* SSD). In Massachusetts, 2 Marbled Godwits were still present as late as Dec. 5 on N. Beach, Chatham (RHJS *et al.*, *vide* RPE), where 1 was seen on the same date last year, and a late N. Phalarope was found wounded by gunshot at Plum I., Mass., Dec. 4, *preserved (PSM).

SKUA, GULLS, TERN — A Skua was closely observed harassing Herring Gulls around a fishing boat anchored 6 mi. s. of Block I., R.I., Jan. 23 (GR, WK). This appears to be a first sight record for R.I. Glaucous and Iceland Gulls numbered 125 and 1066 respectively on CBCs in the Maritimes, this 1:8.5 ratio diminishing to 16 and 42 in New England, or about 1:2.5. The highest CBC totals were 30 Glaucous Gulls at Bonne Bay, Nfld. and 214 Iceland's at the Sydneys, Cape Breton. The usual concentration of Iceland's occurred at the end of Plum I., Mass., increasing to 55-60 birds present during March (MLG, CAG, WRP), including many *kumlieni* of varying intensities. A bird that was almost certainly an adult Glaucous X Herring hybrid was studied as it closely trailed a boat in the Piscataqua R. at Portsmouth, N.H., Dec. 26 (ACB, DWF, EWP, LGP *et al.*). Feeding with Herring Gulls, it was fully the size of a Glaucous, and like that species the mantle was markedly pale, the head lightly streaked, the bill long and heavy, the irides pale yellow, but the four outermost primaries were narrowly marked with black, clearly visible above and below. A Lesser Black-backed Gull (race *graellsii*) discovered at Dighy, N.S., Dec. 22 (DWF) was probably the individual seen there Mar. 25, 1970 (AFN 24:483-4). It remained through at least Apr. 19, and was photographed by many observers. Interestingly, the bird in 1970 had dull grayish-flesh legs (as in some winter adults and near adults in Europe) but in 1971-72 the legs were brilliant orange-yellow. At Eastern Point in Gloucester, Mass., a bird identified as an ad. Thayer's Gull was observed at close range Jan. 15 (MLG, CAG). This was followed by several reports from elsewhere on Cape Ann which almost certainly involved misidentified Kumlien's Gulls (irides in *kumlieni* being dark in proportion to wingtip pigmentation, and thus not affording a separation from *thayeri*). However, the details of the original sighting are convincing, the observers noting the dark eye, reduced black in primary tips, and most important, the mantle, said to be no less dark than that of Herring Gull. Although 5 birds determined as Thayer's Gulls have been collected from points as close as Buffalo, N.Y., there is no specimen for the Region, and aside from the present sighting, little or nothing in the way of acceptable sight records. For the third successive winter a New Gull was recorded on the CBC at St. John's, Nfld., the bird having been present since Nov. 11, and another was found associating with Ring-billed Gulls at Newburyport, Mass., Mar. 16 (BAS), Mar. 31 (MLG) and Apr. 17 (CAG, WRP). A total of 72 Black-headed Gulls were observed in the Maritimes, where similar totals for the last 3 years have been 88, 282, and 72. The higher counts were 27 at St. John's and 24 at Halifax (West), and a total of 9 individuals were seen on CBCs in New

TABLE I
 Numbers of Hawks and Eagles Reported on 117 Christmas Bird Counts
 Made in the Northeastern Maritime Region, 1971-72.*

	Newfoundland	Nova Scotia	Prince Edward Island	New Brunswick	Maine	New Hampshire	Eastern Massachusetts	Rhode Island	Eastern Connecticut	Total, 69th CBC	Total, 70th CBC	Total, 71st CBC	Total, 72nd CBC
Goshawk	—	4	—	9	5	5	9	—	—	5	17	23	32
Sharp-shinned Hawk	1	7	—	4	5	—	14	2	1	23	26	74	34
Cooper's Hawk	—	—	—	1	1	—	3	2	1	5	6	18	8
Accipiter sp.	—	—	—	2	—	1	—	—	—	1	0	3	3
Red-tailed Hawk	—	26	—	27	8	2	85	16	14	94	135	223	178
Red-shouldered Hawk	—	—	—	—	1	—	6	1	—	4	10	14	8
Rough-legged Hawk	—	18	—	135	2	1	33	3	—	51	82	104	192
Buteo sp.	—	—	1	—	—	—	1	—	—	0	3	0	2
Golden Eagle	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	1	—	0	1	1	1
Bald Eagle	1	36	—	7	35	—	—	—	—	51	82	73	79
Marsh Hawk	—	1	—	3	—	—	41	28	1	47	59	113	74
Gyr Falcon	1	—	—	—	1	—	1	—	—	0	0	1	3
Peregrine Falcon	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	1	—	2	2	2	1
large falcon sp.	—	—	1	—	—	—	—	—	—	0	0	0	1
Pigeon Hawk	—	2	—	—	1	—	3	1	—	10	8	17	7
Sparrow Hawk	—	15	—	2	10	9	170	68	10	168	202	234	284
hawk sp.	—	—	—	1	1	—	—	—	—	3	0	3	2
Number of CBCs:	3	29	2	27	30	6	15	3	2	84	104	107	117

* As the similar tables of the last three years, excludes birds seen count period but not on count day.

England. Eight birds of this species were present at 7 localities in Massachusetts during the winter, not counting the now regular group which frequents the Wollaston Beach-Squantum area and the Neponset R. upstream to Milton, and which reached a peak of 16 birds, Mar. 18 (DTB, RPE, *et al.*). In R.I., 4 were seen at 3 localities, an approximately normal season. A Laughing Gull at Duxbury Beach, Mass., Jan. 29 (DWB) was unusual. Little Gulls appeared only in Mass., 4 being seen at Wareham, Dec. 5 and 1 there Dec. 18 (CAG, WRP), and another at Nobska Point in Woods Hole, Feb. 6 (RP, *vide* RPE). A count of 3000 Black-legged Kittiwakes off Brier I., N.S., Dec. 21 was the season's CBC high, and 979 the following day between Yarmouth and Bar Harbor were a record for the Bay of Fundy CBC (EVT). Further south, an estimated 1000 kittiwakes at Jeffreys Ledge off the New Hampshire coast Jan. 30 (DWF, PSM, RWS, A.S.N.H.) were a new state high. A Com. Tern on the New Bedford, Mass. CBC Dec. 26, was unique in the Region.

ALCIDS — A well-defined flight of Thick-billed Murres occurred along the New England coast in January, starting with a marked influx Jan. 1, when birds suddenly appeared close to shore at a number of places. Although a few appeared along the N.H. coast, most were in Mass., where Ruth Emery compiled an admittedly incomplete list of 55 birds for 17 localities, almost all in the first 10 days of the month. In diminishing numbers the birds remained for several weeks, accompanied by a few Razorbills and Dovekies, and 1 Thick-billed Murre showed up in R.I. at Charlestown Pond, Jan. 23 (KBK, DLK, FP, EAS, *vide* SSD). The CBC at Eastport, Me., recorded 2725 Dovekies on Dec. 23, the birds passing between Eastport and Campobello I. at the rate of 600 per hour (WCT), for the second highest CBC total on record. The CBC at Penobscot Bay, Me., recorded 153 Black Guillemots Dec. 27, 1 below last year's record high (EVT). Off the New Hampshire coast, last year's Feb. 7 pelagic trip to Jeffreys Ledge was repeated Jan. 30, with comparable results: 11 Razorbills, 3 Thick-billed Murres, 250 Dovekies, 49 Black Guillemots, 7 Com. Puffins, and 25 unidentified large alcids. The Com. Puffins were a record high for the state, and indeed for New England s. of Maine, and were the southernmost reported this year (DJA, HCA, DWF, RWS, A.S.N.H., *et mult. al.*).

PIGEONS, OWLS — One of the more perplexing records of the season was that of an ad. ♂ **Band-tailed Pigeon** feeding in *Rosa multiflora* at Keene, N.H., Jan. 3-15, discovered and identified by Mr. & Mrs. Jesse H. Ward and Mrs. Daniel Cook, and confirmed by many observers (WWK, KCE, RWS, photographed by HCA). Although the species is unknown in the east, Bob Smart pointed out the record in Alabama of Oct. 23, 1971 and an unconfirmed report last fall from Pt. Pelee, Ont., and granted the bird at least a temporary place on the New Hampshire state list. Other observers pointed out the bird's unusual tameness, and reserved judgment. The higher CBC totals of Great Horned Owls were 22 at Newport-Westport and at Buzzards Bay, Mass., an identical count, obtained in the course of an hour and a half of pre-dawn owling in Plymouth State Forest (CAG, WRP). As closely as can be figured,

Snowy Owl reports this winter were as follows: 1 in Newfoundland, 16 in Nova Scotia, 1 on P.E.I., about 21 in New Brunswick, 23 in Maine (reports incomplete), 6 in N.H., 36 in e. Mass., 3 in R.I., and 1 in e. Conn. This totals 108, as compared with 58 last year and 15 the year before. Three Great Gray Owls occurred in the n. part of the Region, the first two in New Brunswick where there had been previously but a single specific record of the species. At Sisson Ridge near Plaster Rock, Victoria Co., 1 remained around a dump from about mid-December to Jan. 6 (Laverne Rabatich, *vide* DSC), and at Browns Flat, Kings Co., 1 was present Dec. 22-26 (Irene Gorham, *vide* DSC). In Maine, 1 was seen on several occasions, and photographed near the Winter Harbor town dump in the period Jan. 16-22 (WCT). Great Gray Owls in the past three winters have numbered 1, 0, 2 in the Region. In New Brunswick, David Christie noted "a rash of reports" of Saw-whet Owls, many of them weakened or dead, around Saint John and Fredericton in early March, corresponding to what Bill Townsend termed "a considerable influx" of the birds in Hancock Co., Me., Mar. 9-15, involving 10 reports from Mount Desert I. and reports of single birds at 9 other localities.

WOODPECKERS, FLYCATCHERS, SWALLOWS — A Red-bellied Woodpecker was recorded on the CBC at New Bedford, Mass., and in Connecticut 1 was present during count period at New London, and another wintered, Nov.-Feb., in Storrs (JZ). The increase of these birds in the Region seems to have been slowed, at least temporarily. The only Red-headed Woodpeckers were in Massachusetts, 2 imm. on Cape Ann at Lanessville, Dec. 11 (v.o., *vide* RPE) and wintering adults in Worcester (1) and Spencer (2) (DHC *et al.*). Of the 8 Yellow-bellied Sapsuckers reported, the northernmost were single birds on the CBC at St. John's, Nfld., Dec. 26, and at White Head, Grand Manan, N.B., Jan. 1 (Nancy Small, *vide* DSC), while another overwintered in Mount Auburn Cemetery in Cambridge, Mass. (RHJS, *vide* RPE). The rare Northern Three-toed Woodpecker was reported only from New Brunswick, where single birds were seen on the CBCs at Saint John and Sackville, there being only a single previous CBC occurrence in the province. Six W. Kingbirds were present in the Region in December, 5 of them in Mass. and 1 remaining through the first week of the month at a feeder in Alma, N.B. (Mrs. Jean Beaumont, *vide* John M. MacFarlane, DSC). As last year an E. Phoebe wintered in Middleboro, Mass., surviving until at least Jan. 24 (Reginald Maxim, *vide* DWB). There were a number of December records of Tree Swallow, the most surprising among them on the CBC at St. John's, Nfld. Along Rhode Island's w. shore, 63 were found on the S. Kingstown CBC Jan. 1, and small flocks remained throughout the month at Moonstone Wildlife Refuge and at Charlestown, where 2 were seen on Feb. 6 and 12 on Mar. 4, these known to have overwintered, an unusual occurrence (DLK *et al.*, *vide* SSD).

JAYS, CROWS, TITMICE, WRENS — New national highs, breaking their own records, were set by Concord, Mass with CBC totals of Blue Jays (2837) and Black-capped Chickadees (2271). The 1259 Com. Crows on the CBC at Hillsborough, P.E.I., exceeded

any other Regional count this year by more than 500. On Feb. 14 the customary flock of Fish Crows at the dump at W. Roxbury, Mass. numbered at least 97, the highest count made there this season (Fred Atwood, *vide* RPE). While it was not an incursion year for Boreal Chickadees, there were 11 of them wintering at 8 localities in e. Mass., mostly at feeders (v.o., *vide* RPE). In Maine, single Tufted Titmice well beyond the species' slowly advancing frontier in the southernmost part of the state, were seen at Dover-Foxcroft, Piscataquis Co., on the CBC, and at Sullivan, Hancock Co., Feb. 17 (WCT). Despite these birds' obvious reluctance to colonize islands, during December two or more crossed the waters of Narragansett Bay to Conanicut (Jamestown) I., R.I., being new to its avifauna (MD). Two House Wrens were seen on the Newport-Westport CBC, another at New London was and even later was 1 at Sider's Pond in Falmouth, Mass., Jan. 13-29 (DTB, MLG, CAG, WRP *et al.*). Carolina Wrens north of their normal limits were 1 bird at Rockland, Me., Dec. 4 (Robert M. Allen, *vide* LAB) and 3 in New Hampshire during the period (v.o., *vide* RWS).

MIMIDS. THRUSHES — Four Brown Thrashers were known to have overwintered successfully at feeders in Maine, at Robbinston, Washington Co., at Otter Creek, Mount Desert I., at Castine, Hancock Co., (all v.o., *vide* WCT) and at York Harbor (Parker Smith, *vide* BG, PWG). Large numbers of Robins were present in s. New Brunswick and Maine during December and January, the respective CBC totals of 94 and 680 being well above average (cf. the figures for 1971: 14 and 64). Particularly impressive were such counts as 34 at St. Andrews, N.B., and in Maine, 91 at Deer Isle, 80 at Mount Desert I., 74 at Orono-Old Town, 72 at Blue Hill and 66 at Bangor. Varied Thrushes numbered 5 in the Region (cf. 4, 6 and 3 in the past three winters), singles occurring on the CBC at Brunswick, Me., Jan. 1 (no further details), at Center Tuftonboro, Carroll Co., N.H., from late December to about April 17 (HCA, RWS *et mult. al.*), at Plymouth, Grafton Co., N.H., Feb. 19-Mar. 4 (Ken I. Sutherland, *vide* RWS), at Holbrook, Mass., Jan. 1 through March (Ruth Lane *et al.*, *vide* RPE), and at Attleboro, Mass., Jan. 17-Mar. 18 (Lucy Goddard, *vide* RPE).

An unseasonable Wood Thrush lingered at a feeder in Concord, Mass., Dec. 5-Jan. 6 (F. Gregg Bemis *et al.*, *vide* RPE), and in Maine 2 Hermit Thrushes survived the winter at feeders on Mount Desert I. (v.o., *vide* WCT). Three Swainson's Thrushes were reported during January, singles at Littleton, Mass., Jan. 1 (JB, *vide* RPE), at Falmouth, Mass., Jan. 14 (Mr. & Mrs. Carl H. Holdridge, *vide* RPE), and at Spruce Head, Knox Co., Me., Jan. 7 (LAB). Ed Thompson, investigating the CBC report of a Blue Grosbeak at Castine, Me., determined that the bird had been in fact an E. Bluebird, less unusual but still unique on CBCs north of Mass.

WAXWINGS, SHRIKES — After being entirely absent last year, Bohemian Waxwings staged a respectable flight, arriving from early to mid-November, reaching peak numbers in December and January and for the most part remaining through the period. About 1505 individuals were reported from 66 localities, as follows,

numbers of localities in parentheses: 31 (1) in Newfoundland, 536 (20) in Nova Scotia, 134 (8) on P.E.I., 260 (14) in New Brunswick, 463 (11) in Maine, 78 (9) in N.H., and 3 (3) in Mass. Comparison of these figures with those tabularized (AFN 23:454) for Bohemian Waxwing flights of the last decade shows that this year's flight was very similar in volume and distribution to the one of 1968-69, differing mainly in the fact that hardly any birds appeared as far south as Mass. The larger flocks were 150 at Pictou, N.S., 70 at Moncton, N.B., and 185 on the U. of Maine campus at Orono. The chief foods mentioned by observers were apple, (especially crabapple,) hawthorn, cranberry viburnum, deciduous holly, roses, red maple buds, and, at a feeder, canned cherries. N. Shrikes were present throughout the Region in about average numbers, the CBC total being 43 (cf. 36, 34, 76 in the last three years). A Loggerhead Shrike which remained at Fredericton, N.B., Dec. 19-Jan. 2 (Mr. & Mrs. J. B. Griffiths, *vide* DSC) made probably a first winter record for the province.

WARBLERS, BLACKBIRD, Tanager — A Black-and-white Warbler appeared at a feeder in Amherst, N.S. on the surprising date of Jan. 13 (Desplanque, *vide* PRD) and in Maine 2 late Orange-crowned Warblers were found at Mount Desert I., Dec. 19 (v.o., *vide* WCT) and nearby at Sullivan, Dec. 31-Jan. 9 (EVT, WCT *et al.*). One or 2 Pine Warblers wintered on Cape Cod at Chatham, being noted there periodically from January through Mar. 11 (RPE, CAG, WRP, *et al.*). The species probably winters regularly on the Cape. Also in Mass., 2 unusually late Ovenbirds were seen at Littleton, Dec. 16 (JB *et al.*, *vide* RPE) and at Wellesley on the same day (RAF, *vide* RPE), and even later in Storrs, Conn., Dec. 29-Jan. 13 (Lynn and Evelyn Glazier, *et mult. al.*, banded and photographed, *vide* SD). A Wilson's Warbler collected at Portsmouth, R.I., Dec. 19 (RLF, *vide* SSD) was nearly three weeks later than the previous record in the state. A Brewer's Blackbird was reported on the Newport-Westport CBC (where 3 were reported on the CBC 4 years ago) and on Cape Cod a W. Tanager was seen at the Wellfleet Bay Wildlife Sanctuary Dec. 11-15 (RP, *vide* RPE).

WINTER FINCHES — Much as last winter, Evening Grosbeaks were widespread and numerous, occurring on 95 of the Region's CBCs from Newfoundland to Connecticut, while Purple Finches were scarce, and by midwinter virtually absent except in s. New England, and there abundant only at Nantucket, where Edith Andrews spoke of large numbers. Pine Grosbeaks seemed also of uneven distribution, being widespread in small numbers but abundant only in N.H. and the Connecticut R. Valley of Mass. Although Com. Redpolls were generally distributed in early winter (reported on 78 CBCs), as usual the birds became really plentiful only later in the season, about mid-February, when they were commonly reported at feeders, the counts peaking in early March throughout almost all the Region except Nova Scotia, where only a few were seen. Accompanying these large flocks were the usual small numbers of Hoary Redpolls, about 10 being reported in Massachusetts, 8 in New Hampshire, 3+ in Maine, and in New Brunswick, 6 or 7 individuals at 4 localities,

Jan. 30-Mar. 26 (DSC, AJE, PAP, WAS, CET *et al.*). There had previously been no wholly satisfactory record of Hoary Redpoll in the province. While scarce in the Maritimes, following a sudden increase about mid-January Pine Siskins were the most notably abundant finch of the winter everywhere else in the Region, and hardly a feeder was without them. On the other hand, the crosshills were represented by no more than a few widely scattered small flocks.

OTHER FRINGILIDS — A surprising total of 5 Rose-breasted Grosbeaks lingered into early winter in the Region, single birds occurring as follows: 1 on the CBC at St. John's, Nfld., Dec. 26, an imm. ♂ (a feeder in Pembroke, Washington Co., Me., Dec. 26-Jan. 8 (Nellie Ross, WCT *et al.*), 1 on the CBC at Brunswick, Me., Jan. 1, an imm. ♂ at West Chop, Martha's Vineyard, Dec. 13 (MBH, *vide* RPE), and an imm. ♂ at Storrs, Conn., Jan. 11-14 (JPMcD *et al.*). An unseasonable Blue Grosbeak was closely observed at Cape Sable I., N.S., Dec. 2 (SS, *vide* PRD), and even more unusual was a ♂ Painted Bunting which remained at a feeder in Barre, Mass. from Dec. 31 until it was trapped in early January, to be flown to Florida for release (!) (Dorsey, BGB, *et mult. al.*, *vide* RPE, PSM). Although the status of the bird remains in doubt, it showed no signs of being an escape. Despite the mild early winter, only 7 Dickcissels were recorded on Regional CBCs (cf. CBC totals for the last 3 years: 9, 54, 10), and no more than 11 other individuals were reported during the winter. Two good counts of Ipswich Sparrow in Mass. were 8 at Wareham, Dec. 18 (CAG, WRP) and 12 at Humarock in Scituate, Feb. 6 (Sibley Higginbotham, *vide* RPE). Only a single Grasshopper Sparrow has occurred in the Region in the last 3 winters, but this season 5 were seen, on CBCs in Nova Scotia at Cape Breton Highlands National Park, Jan. 2 (photographed, WPN), and at Broad Cove on the same date (EHC, SJF *et al.*), there being only a single previous provincial CBC record: 1 on the Coastal New Hampshire CBC, Dec. 18, 1 on Cape Cod at Corn Hill in Truro, Jan. 29-Feb. 6 (WB, MLG, CAG, WRP *et al.*), and 1 at a feeder in Stonington, Conn., Mar. 2-23 (GB, HG *et al.*, *vide* RCD). A Sharp-tailed Sparrow was unusually late on the CBC at Deer Isle, Me., Dec. 20 (David Galinat, *et al.*, *vide* EVT) and an even later bird of this species which was roadkilled at Wolfville, N.S., Jan. 5, was apparently of the James Bay race (John Kearney *et al.*, *vide* PRD, IAMcL). Single Lark Sparrows occurred during count period at Schoodic Point, Me., and on the CBC at Taunton, Mass., Dec. 18, and 6 Oregon Juncos were reported, 2 each in N.H., Mass. and R.I. A Clay-colored Sparrow was found at a feeder in Sudbury, Mass., Jan. 1-3 and probably later (RAF *et al.*, *vide* RPE). Three White-crowned Sparrows successfully wintered at feeders in the n. part of the Region, singles at Digby, N.S., from mid-December to about mid-March (LDD), at St. Andrews, N.B. (HWMacC, *vide* DSC), and at Camden, Me., December to at least Apr. 24 (Thomas Hibbard, *vide* LAB), and a count of 12 of these birds on the CBC at Block I., R.I., Dec. 26, was unusually high, but after last fall's heavy flight similar flocks were found wintering on Long Island.

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HUDSON-ST. LAWRENCE REGION / Ned R. Boyajian

Most of the winter was quite mild. Through mid-February, temperatures averaged slightly above normal in most localities, and there was relatively little snow, even in the north. Although considerable harsh weather followed, it came too late to influence the most notable aspect of the season: the remarkable number and variety of late-lingering and over-wintering half-hardies. It is difficult in this limited space to detail this phenomenon completely. But its general tenor may be surmised from the three following summaries, all restricted to non-Christmas Bird Count sightings. First, a listing of the more outstanding records by sub-regions. *Long Island, N.Y.* Double-crested Cormorant, 5-6 scattered wintering birds (TD; ES *et al.*). Snowy Egret 2, Queens Co., Jan. 12 (TD) and Freeport, Feb. 14 (TD). Louisiana Heron, Jones Beach, Mar. 21 (PL). Little Blue Heron, Lawrence, Jan. 10 (TD). Least Bittern, Brook-