



Records of Vermont Birds

WINTER SEASON 1979-80

1 DECEMBER 1979 - 29 FEBRUARY 1980
DONALD B. CLARK, SEASONAL EDITOR

The mild fall weather continued well into a Winter Season which was characterized by little snowfall and the driest January on record (the majority of the snow fell on the state in mid-February).

Taking advantage of this bonus, large numbers of birds lingered for Christmas Counts (63,387 individuals - 16,000 more than last year) with many remaining to winter-over. Among these were a few accidentals, including RED-BELLIED WOODPECKER and VARIED THRUSH.

Six December Christmas Counts were able to beat their previous high counts while the thirteen counts set new high records for 20 species (ten by the Island Pond and Craftsbury-Greensboro counts alone).

Generally, birds were well dispersed by the open winter, leaving fewer individuals at feeders. As can be seen by looking at the Christmas Counts, "Winter Finches" invaded the Northeast Kingdom and all but abandoned the remainder of the state. This void was filled somewhat by the numerous lingering species and by southern invaders.

LOONS THROUGH HERON

Small numbers of Common Loon were found on Champlain during December with one at Converse Bay, Charlotte, December 8 (JJA), a high of seven on the Ferrisburg CC December 15 and one on the Burlington CC December 16. Four observed by the Ellisons on Lake Morey, December 9, were the only others reported. A Red-throated Loon, only the second reported in the "Winter Records," was found on Shelburne Bay December 8-13 (BDF, CR et al.). An individual on the Ferrisburg CC December 15 may well have been the same bird.

A Red-necked Grebe, which is considered a rare migrant in Vermont, was tallied by the Ferrisburg CC for the second year in a row. Average numbers of Horned Grebe were on Lake Champlain in December with highs of 80 on the Ferrisburg CC December 15 and 8 at Burlington the following day. On a January 2 trip along the Champlain shoreline 50+ were recorded, 20 of which were at Shelburne Town Beach (WGE). An injured Grebe, probably a Horned, was found on Silver Lake, Barnard, December 16 (CHH). A single Pied-billed Grebe on the Connecticut River in Westminster December 15 (HSP, EE et al.) was a first for the Saxtons River CC and the only bird reported for the season.

A Great Blue Heron was at West Woodstock December 13 (RoJ) and one was in the Ferrisburg area during "count period." As late as December 22 a bird was still patrolling the waters in West Arlington (via NS), an area where they have wintered for the last few years.

GEESE AND DUCKS

A late group of 30 Canada Geese passed over Winhill on December 11 (WJN). Excellent numbers wintered on Champlain with 2200 on the Ferrisburg and Burlington CC's December 15-16. A high of 2000+ was gathered at Rock Island, Panton January 27-February 10 with splinter groups at Button Bay, Dead Creek, Charlotte, and Grosse Pt., Ferrisburg. Also reported were fifteen

in a Brattleboro field, December 19 (seven of which remained on the Retreat Meadows well into January - fide WDN), two on the Craftsbury CC December 31, and one on the Ottauquechee River, Quechee, at the very late date of January 6 (KT). A lone Snow Goose wintered with Canadas at Addison (JSA).

Two Mallards were lingering at Lake Morey December 9 (WGE, GFE). Seven CC's recorded 263 with highs of 172 at Burlington December 16 and 42 at Rutland December 30. At least 26 were on Converse Bay, Charlotte, January 23, with a final sighting of 10-12 the following day (JJA). Black Ducks, although more numerous, followed much the same pattern as Mallard with nine at Lake Morey December 9 (WGE, GFE) and 512 on six CC's (highs of 201 at Ferrisburg and 197 at Burlington). A bird first observed in a flooded field in South Pomfret December 25 remained through the 20th of February (CRP). An exceptionally late drake Pin-tail was found with a mixed flock of Canadas, Blacks and Mallards at Button Bay January 20 (JSA). A hardy male Green-winged Teal on the Ferrisburg CC was observed with Mallards and Blacks at Converse Bay, Charlotte, as late as January 20 (JJA). Single Wood Ducks were recorded on the Burlington and Rutland CC's and a pair remained at Poor Farm Bay, Charlotte, into January (WCH).

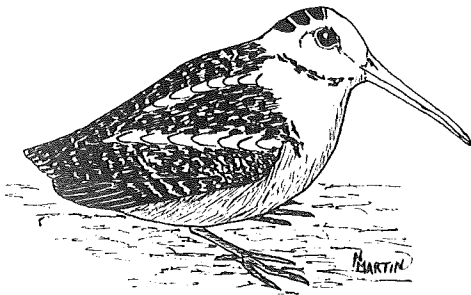
The three Ring-necked Ducks on the Saxtons River CC, December 15, were the only ones reported for the season. The two male Canvasbacks on Converse Bay December 1 had increased to eight by January 13 and then fell back to three by January 23 (JJA). The seasonal high was recorded on December 30 at Sand Bar where approximately 2,000 birds had collected (WRB, MJM). The only Greater Scaup of the season was on the Ferrisburg CC while single Lesser Scaup were found on the Connecticut River December 15 and at Burlington during the same period. Five unidentified Scaup sp. on CC's were the only others reported.

Common Goldeneye were in average numbers on Champlain with 524 on December CC's, 250 along the Lake on January 2 (WGE) and 180+ recorded at Converse Bay, Charlotte, February 4 (JJA). Three were still at Lake Morey December 9 (WGE, GFE) while the Saxtons River, Hanover-Norwich and Springfield CC's reported 15, 15 and 5 respectively. Three males and two females remained on Lake Willoughby through January 5 (PFZ). A male BARROW'S GOLDENEYE at Shelburne (Ferrisburg CC) was only the second recorded in these "Winter Records" (JID, MCD). Above average numbers of Bufflehead were on Champlain in December. Eleven were recorded on the Ferrisburg CC, December 15, while a record high of 54 was set at Burlington the following day. By December 25 only 20 were seen between Burlington and Shelburne (WRB) and by January 10 the number had dwindled to 6 male and 4 female at the "ferry dock" in Burlington (MJM).

Ten Oldsquaw on the Ferrisburg CC set a new high record. After an absence last year, single Black Scoters showed up on the Ferrisburg and Burlington CC's. Hooded Mergansers were present on 4 CC's with Saxtons River and Ferrisburg reporting two apiece and Norwich and Burlington one each. As usual, Common Mergansers took advantage of any open water with 554 throughout the state on CC's. On December 8 fifty were found on Marshfield Reservoir (MFM). Two females were on Lake Willoughby (PFZ) as late as January 5

CHRISTMAS COUNTS 1979-80

WINTER, 1979-1980	SAXTONS RIVER DEC. 15	FERRISBURG DEC. 15	BURLINGTON DEC. 16	WINHALL DEC. 16	BENNINGTON DEC. 22	HANOVER- NORWICH DEC. 22	ISLAND FOND DEC. 23	WOODSTOCK DEC. 27	BRATTLEBORO DEC. 29	PLAINFIELD DEC. 29	RUTLAND DEC. 30	SPRINGFIELD DEC. 30	GRAFTSBURY- GREENSBORO DEC. 31	
COMMON LOON		7	1											8
RED-THROATED LOON		1	CP											1
RED-NECKED GREBE		1												1
HORNED GREBE		80	9											89
PIED-BILLED GREBE	1													1
GREAT-BLUE HERON		CP												CP
CANADA GOOSE	CP	1867	333						7				2	2209
SNOW GOOSE		CP												CP
GOOSE Sp.								CP						CP
MALLARD	10	25	172		9	4				42	1			263
BLACK DUCK	11	201	197		14	6		CP						512
GREEN-WINGED TEAL		1												1
AMERICAN WIGEON		1												1
WOOD DUCK			1							1				2
RING-NECKED DUCK	3													3
CANVASBACK		1							1					2
GREATER SCAUP		1												1
LESSER SCAUP	1		CP											1
SCAUP Sp.	3	2												5
COMMON GOLDENEYE	15	256	268			15						5		559
BARROWS GOLDENEYE			1											1
RUFFLEHEAD		11	54*											65
OLDSQUAW		10*												10
BLACK SCOTER		1	1											2
HOODED MERGANSER	2	2	1			1								6
COMMON MERGANSER	9	437	17			48		8	17			18		554
RED-BREASTED MERG.			1											1
GOSHAWK		1							CP			1	5*	7
SHARP-SHINNED HAWK	2	1	1	1	1			CP			1	2		9
COOPER'S HAWK	1			1		1								3
RED-TAILED HAWK	11	33*	9	2	33*	3		4	5		5	5	1	111
BROAD-WINGED HAWK*		1*												1
RED-LEGGED HAWK		18	4		1					1	1			25
BLITEO Sp.		3											1	4
AMERICAN KESTREL		2	1		6				2					11
HAWK Sp.			1											1
SPRUCE GROUSE							3*							3
RUFFED GROUSE	3	20	17	5	3	2	84*	33	10	23	13	13	35	261
TURKEY	3	5			24				CP		17			49
BOBWHITE													1	1
AMERICAN WOODCOCK*		1*												1
COMMON SNIFE		1												1
ST-BLACK-BILLED GULL		11	9											20
HERRING GULL	2	69	253			2	1		11			1		339
RING-BILLED GULL	1	682	469							4			4	1160
BONAPARTE'S GULL		298*	1											299
GULL Sp.		269	84					2	2					357
ROCK DOVE	949	948	668	17	1012	138	133	324	223	291	340	273	133	6449
MOURNING DOVE	196	241	75	3	178	12		109	144	60	35	97	44	1194
SCREECH OWL		4												4
GT. HORNED OWL	2	4	1		2					1	1	CP		11
BARRED OWL	1						1	2	2		2	1	1	10
BELTED KINGFISHER	4	1	3	2	2		1	2	1	CP	2	2	1	21
COMMON FLICKER					3			1			1			5
PILEATED WOODPECKER	3	7	3		4	5	9	2			2	2	4	41
RED-BELLIED WOODP.		1												1
HAIRY WOODPECKER	23	39	26	22	26	18	16	31	20	36	16	37	23	333
DOWNY WOODPECKER	30	71	29	16	25	18	25	44	24	43	29	43	22	419
B.-B.-3 BRED WOODP.							10*							10
HORNED LARK	14	118				15			4					151



AMERICAN WOODCOCK

50
516
106

while two females were seen on the Connecticut River in Lemington January 30 (NLM, ALG). The seasonal high of c. 2,000 was tallied at Shelburne on February 17 (ABS). A Red-breasted Merganser was present at Burlington throughout the winter. In addition four were on Lake Willoughby January 2 (WGE), and four were at Converse Bay, Charlotte, January 13 (JJA).

VULTURE THROUGH EAGLE

A report of three Turkey Vultures soaring over Bridport January 6 (HB) lacked the details necessary for such an exceptionally late sighting (only the second winter record). Goshawks were in record numbers at Craftsbury where they reported five of the seven CC birds. One bird hung around a Cornwall feeder throughout the winter (BBP) while singles were ob-

served at Mt. Holly, December 15 (AEB), Warren December 27 (MFM), Bear Swamp, Wolcott, December 30 (MFM), Marlboro January 1 (WDN), South Burlington February 6 (WRB) and Bridport February 16 (JSA). Nine Sharp-shinned Hawks were recorded on CC's with ten additional sightings at feeders in North Ferrisburg (MCD, JID), Bethel (MCP), Saxtons River (SP), Stockbridge (EH), White River Junction (PFZ), West Woodstock (SHH), Charlotte (JJA), Westford (WRB, MJM), Woodstock (ES, WRC) and Union Village (TP). Cooper's Hawks were found on the Saxtons River, Winhall and Hanover-Norwich CC's, as well as at feeders in Bridport February 7-16 (JSA), North Ferrisburg February 28 (MCE, JID) and Cornwall (all winter - BBP).

Red-tailed Hawks took advantage of the mild weather and lingered in numbers with a few remaining

WINTER, 1979-1980	SAXTONS, RIVER DEC. 15	FERRISBURG DEC. 15	BURLINGTON DEC. 16	WINHALL DEC. 16	BENNINGTON DEC. 22	HANOVER- NEWFIDELITY DEC. 22	ISLAND POND DEC. 23	WOODSTOCK DEC. 27	BRATTLEBORO DEC. 29	PLAINFIELD DEC. 29	RUTLAND DEC. 30	SPRINGFIELD DEC. 30	CRAFTSBURY- GREENSBORO DEC. 31	
RAV JAY							7							7
BLUE JAY	343	144	44	138	178	177	107	112	158	150	147	252	168	2118
COMMON RAVEN		5		2		2	28	4	1	18	6	8	54	128
COMMON CROW	212	427	455	38	336	91	20	173	56	251	303	282	54	2698
BLK CAPPED CHICKADEE	578	533	545	418	240	462	726	937	699	921	408	936	1412*	6815
BOREAL CHICKADEE							80						93*	173
TUFTED TITMOUSE	15	14	2	2	8			2	11	8		9		71
WHITE-BR NUTHATCH	51	102	50	20	30	46	7	97	58	42	63	78	27	671
RED-BR NUTHATCH	4	2	2	46	2	15	251	11	14	86	4	8	329*	774
BROWN CREEPER	1	13	12	3	1	16	9	10	13	8	3	13	7	109
WINTER WREN		1												1
CAROLINA WREN	CP													CP
MOCKING BIRD	4	5	3		4	1			1		2	1		21
GRAY CATBIRD														1
AMERICAN ROBIN	8	9	34	3	6				1	2	CP	2		65
EASTERN BLUEBIRD					3									3
GOLDEN-OR KINGSLET	7			42	10	13	34	31	27	26		21	72	283
BOHEMIAN WAXWING													2	2
CEDAR WAXWING	15	68	248		92	17		2						442
NORTHERN SHRIKE		1				2	2		2	1		CP	5	13
STARLING	645	836	1488	76	1267	438	23	289	562	637	559	349	96	7265
YELLOW-RUMPED WARBLER	2	2						1	2	1				8
OVENBIRD			CP											CP
HOUSE SPARROW	537	1326	1309	69	412	262	166	211	235	433	583	564	451	6588
RED-WINGED BLACKBIRD	49	15		1	15	4		6		2	CP			92
COMMON GRACKLE	4	4	CP		10			1		1	1	26	1	48
BRN-HEADED COWBIRD	1	81	3	30		37		CP	35	38	15	63	11	314
CARDINAL	24	53	25		11	8		4	29	9	17	9	4	193
EVENING GROSBEAK	291	261	29	206	293	672	877	899	276	1688*	385	529	1143	7549
PURPLE FINCH	5	CP	8	18	28	61	1264*	32		323	12	8	1081	2860
PINE GROSBEAK						549*		10		24	1		354	938
HOUSE FINCH	18*		CP		3	4			1			1		27
COMMON REDPOLL								CP					1	1
PINE SISKIN	2					195	86	160	1	233		7	389	1073
AM. GOLDFINCH	62	92	44	2	14	448	13	128	267	219	84	427	165	1965
RED CROSSBILL				1					CP					1
WINGED CROSSBILL							245*	19		13			27	304
US-S TOWHEE								CP				CP		CP
MINNIAH SPARROW												2*		2
SPRING SPARROW		1												1
DARK-EYED JUNCO	205	5	7	32	12	54	1	27	318	3	41	267	10	982
TREE SPARROW	113	252	136	2	82	87	13	8	53	44	51	72	43	956
CHIPPING SPARROW											9*	1		10
FIELD SPARROW			1											1
WH-THR. SPARROW	1	1	6		2	3			3		1	9		26
FOX SPARROW						1								1
SWAMP SPARROW												1		1
SONG SPARROW	14	36	10		5	2		1	6			5		79
LAPLAND LONGSPUR													1	1
SNOW BUNTING		100					145		CP	30			852*	1127
TOTAL INDIVIDUALS	4511	10141	7173	1218	4408	3406	4956	3737	3302	5670	3286	4456	7123	63381
TOTAL SPECIES	51	69	52	29	42	41	32	37	39	35	38	45	38	106
# OF OBSERVERS (WHEN AVAILABLE)	19		38		8	15		30	28	50			24	100
CP BIRDS SEEN DURING COUNT PERIOD														
* RECORD HIGHS FOR VERMONT CHRISTMAS COUNTS														
51 NEW COUNT HIGHS (SPECIES)														
† FIRST TIME RECORDED ON A VERMONT COUNT														



MARTIN
WHITE-WINGED CROSSBILL

100 6 CP
total

throughout the winter. There were 111 on December CC's with Ferrisburg and Bennington tying for a new record with 33 apiece. In addition, 37 other records were received. A Broad-winged Hawk on the Ferrisburg CC December 15 was the first to be recorded on a Vermont count. Unfortunately the bird was in the Essex, New York portion of the circle (fide HPAS). Rough-legged Hawk numbers were down for the season. Only 25 were tallied on CC's with a high of 18 at Ferrisburg. Eight to twelve were reported regularly on a day's birding in the Champlain Valley with the only other reports coming from Bennington December 22, Sharon December 29 (JLW) and Ira, December 30 (LHP).

A Bald Eagle found shot at the Shelburne access in January (BDF) was the only one recorded. Unfortunately, a reported adult Golden Eagle north of Walling-

ford January 20 (KU, PDU) lacked the detailed description or photo necessary for this species, considered only accidental for the state. Seven Marsh Hawk reports came from the Champlain region during the period.

Bruce Peterson observed an adult Peregrine Falcon hovering over the Champlain Bridge in Addison January 5. The only other report was a possible near an Orwell feeder in Early February (JeB). Eleven American Kestrels were tallied on four CC's with the high of 6 at Bennington. There were nine winter reports from the Champlain Valley as well as singles at West Windsor February 19 (JEH, BMH) and Castleton February 21 (EH).

GROUSE THROUGH SNIPE

Three Spruce Grouse on the Island Pond CC set a new record as did the 84 Ruffed Grouse tallied on the

same count. Numbers for the species were above average this season with 261 on the thirteen CC's alone. A Bobwhite was found under a Springfield feeder on count day, while a covey of 35 spent the winter near a Charlotte feeder. Forty-nine Turkeys were recorded on 4 CC's with the high of 24 at Bennington on December 22. Numerous other reports came from areas where it is well established.

The Ellisons found four American Coots on Lake Morey on December 9. An early Killdeer circling and calling at South Burlington February 25 (WRB) was the only bird reported, while an American Woodcock on the Ferrisburg CC December 15 became a first for a Vermont count. It is also the latest date the species has been recorded in the "Winter Records." A late Common Snipe was also located on the Ferrisburg count.

GULLS

Single Glaucous Gulls were found at Thompson's Point, Charlotte, January 3 (WGE) and Blodgett's, Burlington on January 5 (WRB, MJM). There was one report of an Iceland Gull at Town Farm Bay, Charlotte, January 3 (WGE). Twenty Great Black-backed Gulls were located on the Ferrisburg and Burlington CC's. A number remained on Converse Bay, Charlotte, throughout most of the season (WCH) with a high of 10 immature and 5 adults on February 4 (JJA). Singles were also reported from Pantou during January (JJA). There were 339 Herring Gulls on seven CC's. Good numbers wintered on Champlain. Two were on the Ottauquechee in Woodstock December 7 (HLM); two were on the White River at West Hartford December 12 (possibly the same birds) (RHA); and four were on the Connecticut River at Bellows Falls December 22 (DC). Ring-billed Gulls were in average numbers on Champlain. Three were on Marshfield Reservoir December 8 (MFM), one was tallied on the Saxtons River CC for the first time as were four at Springfield December 30. On December 28, four were at Montpelier (MFM), while 70+ were at Charlotte on February 4 (JJA). A record 298 Bonaparte's Gulls were counted on the Ferrisburg CC while Burlington could only find one. Eight were found at Addison on January 3 (WGE, FO, WS). For the second year in a row LITTLE GULLS have shown up on Champlain. This year two were near DAR State Park, Addison on January 3 (WGE, WS, FO). This European straggler makes regular visits to the Atlantic coast from Maine to Virginia and occasionally to the eastern Great Lakes. It is usually in the company of Bonaparte's.

DOVES

Rock Doves continue to increase on CC's with 5,449 tallied this year. A total 1,194 Mourning Doves were on CC's. Seventy-eight were perched in trees at Charlotte December 25 (WRB). Twenty-two wintered at a Moretown feeder (BW via ADH), 37 were at a Plainfield feeder February 3 (MFM) and 15 were at Pittsford February 19 (BMZ). Two birds which overwintered at a Peru feeder was a first for the area (fide WJN).

OWLS

A red phase Screech Owl was found dead on the Interstate in North Hartland December 13 (GH). Four were located on the Ferrisburg CC December 15 with a final bird at Thompson's Point, Charlotte, February 29 (JJA). There were eleven Great Horned Owls on Christmas Counts in December. A pair were heard calling at Thompson's Point (JJA) throughout the period and up to two were observed in the Bridport area during January and February. During February birds were observed at Grafton (MB) and Florence (VH). Snowy Owls went unrecorded for the season. Ten Barred Owls showed up on seven CC's while an additional eight were found at Grafton, Hartland, Saxtons River, Winhall, Woodstock, Marlboro and Clarendon during the period. Long-eared, Short-eared and Saw-whet Owls went unrecorded for the season.

KINGFISHER THROUGH WOODPECKERS

A total of 21 Belted Kingfishers were on eleven CC's with a high of four at Saxtons River. Twelve additional reports were received as birds lingered on waterways left open by the mild weather.

Common Flickers also took advantage of the weather to winter throughout the state. The Bennington CC tallied three while Woodstock and Rutland each had one. In addition birds were found at North Pomfret (MCH), South Strafford (HR) and Cornwall (BBP). Including CC's, fifty Pileated Woodpeckers were reported for the season. A high of nine was located at Island Pond on December 23. A RED-BELLIED WOODPECKER turned up in Vermont for the second year in a row. An adult male was present at a feeder in Vergennes from November 18 through January 27 (WGE). This is only the third state and winter record for the species. Hairy and Downy Woodpeckers were in good numbers for the season as evidenced by the 333 and 419 respectively which were totaled on CC's. The Island Pond CC set a new high record with ten Black-backed Three-toed Woodpeckers, a considerable climb over the three recorded in 1976.

HORNED LARK THROUGH CREEPER

Only four Audubon CC's were able to locate Horned Larks. Of the 151 total, Ferrisburg racked up 118 of them. On February 24, thirty were found at Bridport with twenty remaining through the end of the month (JSA). The only other report was a 100+ in a South Burlington field on February 27 (WRB). Seven Gray Jays were counted on the Island Pond CC while four to six shared lunch with a party at Ferdinand on January 13 (WGE, NLM, AL). The 2,118 Blue Jays on CC's was down considerably from the 5,295 recorded last year when a semi-explosion occurred. Bill Norse noted the drop in the Winhall area. Common Raven numbers continue to increase yearly. This year 128 were found on ten CC's. The thirteen additional reports received tallied 58 birds. A group of 40 were seen in Bear Swamp, Wolcott on December 30 (DS). By late February courtship was taking place on the Winhall breeding sites (WJN). Above average numbers of Common Crow showed up on CC's with 2,698 birds and some observers reported wintering birds in areas where they are not usually found. A bird found dead in Shelburne December 24 by Will Beecher "seemed small in size for (a) crow (and) underwing linings showed much white."

The woods were alive with Black-capped Chickadees this winter with 8,815 on CC's with a record high of 1,412 at Craftsbury's count December 31. Courtship songs were heard in Woodstock by January 6, with four males competing on January 16 (JMN). Record numbers of Boreal Chickadees were also found in the Northeast Kingdom with 80 on the Island Pond CC and the record high of 93 at Craftsbury. Tufted Titmice continue their push northward showing up in all but the north-eastern and north central sections of the state. Nine Christmas counts tallied 72 in late December while the February 9-10 census reported 144. Birds at Plainfield and Stowe were worthy of note.

White-breasted Nuthatches were present in average numbers with 671 on CC's and 2-4 at feeders. Although reports showed Red-breasted Nuthatches scarce at most feeders, above average numbers were found in the woods, particularly at higher elevations. Of the total 774 on thirteen CC's, Craftsbury set a record high with 329 while Island Pond tallied 251. The Brown Creeper made an excellent showing with 109 on the thirteen CC's. Hanover-Norwich had the high of 16. Only three reports were received for the remainder of the season with singles at Randolph and Charlotte off and on (EWC, JJA) and two at Grafton (DC).

WRENS AND MIMICS

A Winter Wren was found in the New York section

of the Ferrisburg CC circle. There were two reports of Carolina Wren, one at a Saxtons River feeder in early December (FB fide DC) and a male which arrived at a West Woodstock feeder November 23 and remained through the period eating peanut butter and millet (EHW). At least two Long-billed Marsh Wrens lingered at Dead Creek, Addison, through December 24 where a close study left no doubt as to the identification (JSA, KA). This is the third winter record in the last five years.

The Mockingbird is becoming a regular winter resident in the southern Connecticut River Valley and along Lake Champlain while still expanding its range into new areas. Twenty-one were found on CC's and notable sightings were singles at Rochester (HB), South Royalton (AG), and Montpelier (MFM). The Mockingbird Survey in February turned up only 17 in six counties. This seems very low and I am sure field work would have produced many more. A Gray Catbird was found on the Bennington CC December 22 while one was a regular visitor at a Saxtons River feeder beginning December 28 (SP).

THRUSHES

Christmas counts in December found sixty-five American Robins lingering in the state. Of these an unusually high number remained throughout the season. Noteworthy were birds at Stowe, Plainfield, and Winhall (CSZ, MFM, WJN) and a flock of 60 at Cornwall January 3 with twenty-one still present February 21 (BBP). A male VARIED THRUSH which showed up at an Athens feeder February 19 (MW, m. ob) remained through the end of the season to become the fifth state and winter record for the species. Previous sightings were at Pomfret (1967), Jeffersonville (1970), Northfield (1977), and Brattleboro (1978). Three Eastern Bluebirds lingered for the Bennington CC, December 16. A male observed on a sumac in West Arlington, February 10 (fide NS) was an exceptionally early arrival.

KINGLET THROUGH WARBLER

Golden-crowned Kinglets were in excellent numbers in December with 283 on ten CC's (high of 72 at Craftsbury and 42 at Winhall). A few at Grafton off and on throughout the winter (DC) and six at Tinmouth on February 4 (PB) were the only other birds reported. Where did they go??

There were only two reports of the Bohemian Waxwing; two on the Craftsbury CC, December 31 and one in Cabot February 24 (BBC). Cedar Waxwings made a fair showing in December with 442 on six CC's (high of 248 at Burlington). Other records of note were eight at Woodstock January 8 (EH), ten at Brattleboro January 10 (WDN), eleven at Westminster West January 15 (WDN), 100+ at Shelburne Point February 9 (WRB, MJM), twelve at Saxtons River February 27 (CDK) and 52 at North Ferrisburg February 27 (JID, MCD).

Christmas counts tallied thirteen Northern Shrikes in December with a high of 5 at Craftsbury. In addition, eleven other birds were reported during the season. Starling numbers continue to spiral with 7,265 on CC's alone. The mild weather was certainly inviting to Yellow-rumped Warblers. Eight were at Shelburne Beach December 8 (CR) and eight were recorded on the CC's. In addition one was at Burlington December 25 (WRB), seven were at Charlotte January 3 (WGE), a pair at Westminster January 20-February eating suet (CDK, DJK), another was at a second Westminster location February 17 (CDK, DJK), and one was at Plainfield February 20 (MFM). An Ovenbird was recorded during the Burlington CC period (no other details available).

As far as I can ascertain, this is the first winter record for the species.

HOUSE SPARROW THROUGH ICTERIDS

House Sparrow numbers climb with 6,558 on CC's. An Eastern Meadowlark heard singing and flushed from a Shelburne Point hayfield February 22 (MJM) was the

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lone bird of the season. Exceptionally high numbers of Red-winged Blackbirds lingered into December when seven CC's reported ninety-two. Birds were also reported from Mt. Holly (AEB), Woodstock (GC), South Pomfret (JJI), Addison and Bridport (JSA), Waterbury (HBD) and Berlin (MFM). Although a number of birds were banded and color-marked, we were not able to trace their origin. The first "spring" arrivals were reported from Fairlee February 16 (SHB) and Tinmouth (GTL) February 26. A Rusty Blackbird lingered at Mt. Holly through December 26 (AEB). Forty-eight Common Grackles were compiled on eight CC's with highs of 26 at Springfield and ten at Bennington. In addition single birds were reported from Shrewsbury December 1 and 21 (via AFS), Mt. Holly December 4-20 (AEB), and Thompson Point, Charlotte November-February (WCH). Brown-headed Cowbird numbers were up somewhat over last year. The species is slowly climbing back after a crash in southern Vermont, and perhaps statewide, in 1976. This year's tally by ten CC's was 314. Small flocks in Bethel December 4-5 disappeared until February 23 (MCP). Two were at Mt. Holly December 14 (AEB), ten in South Londonderry December 6 (WJN), 200 on Westminster Flats January 12 (CDK, DJK), a large flock of females in Saxtons River January 28 (SP) and finally 25 in Saxtons River February 20 (CDK, DJK).

FINCHES AND SPARROWS

Cardinal numbers continue to climb yearly with 193 on December CC's (all but Winhall and Island Pond) and 734 plus on the February census. Where at one time single birds at Vermont feeders were unusual, "flocks" of 5 to 9 birds are now being reported regularly. A bird was singing in Woodstock by February 24 (JMN). A female Rose-breasted Grosbeak at South Barre, December 2 (MFM), was the second winter report in two years. Large numbers (7,549) of Evening Grosbeaks were present for CC's especially in the Northeast Kingdom where 1,688 at Island Pond set a new state record and 1,143 brought Craftsbury in second. Numerous feeders throughout the state were visited regularly by flocks of 50-200 birds (a somewhat depressing scene to seed buyers). While only small numbers of Purple Finch visited feeders sporadically in the southern half to 2/3 of the state, record numbers were invading the north woods. A record 1,284 were at Island Pond December 23 and 1,081 were at Craftsbury on the 31st. Plainfield had 323 on the 29th. Record numbers of Pine Grosbeak were in the Northeast Kingdom with 549 at Island Pond and 354 at Craftsbury for CC's. Plainfield had 24, Woodstock 10, and Rutland 1 for a total 938 birds. A handful of sightings of small flocks of 2-12 birds came from Grafton, Norwich, and Clarendon. Twenty-seven House Finches were tallied on CC's with a record 18 at Bellows Falls (Saxtons River CC), a number of which remained in the area throughout the season. Hanover had 4, Bennington 3, and Brattleboro and Springfield one apiece. This species which only began its northward march a few years ago is already a breeder and full time resident here. A single Common Redpoll on the Craftsbury CC December 31 and a report during the Woodstock "Count Period" was all that was recorded for the species this season. There were 1,073 Pine Siskins reported on 8 CC's in December with highs of 389 at Craftsbury and 233 at Plainfield. Flocks of up to 200 birds were observed in Grafton (DC) throughout the season. Three were in Marlboro December 7 (WDN), 30 were at Woodstock December 27 and 37 on January 1 (JMN), 20-25 were at Stockbridge January 13 (EH), 6 were at North Ferrisburg December 29-January 5 (MCE, JID), one was at North Pomfret February 15 (MCH) and a few were at Randolph throughout the season (EWC).

Average numbers of American Goldfinch were present throughout the winter season. Due to the mild weather birds were more dispersed than usual and were

not found in exceptionally high numbers at feeders. Good numbers were found in the field, however, as seen by the 1,965 recorded on CC's. Many noted the first yellow appearing on males by March 10-12. Only small numbers of Red Crossbills visited the state this winter. A lone bird on the Winhall CC December 16 was still present January 1 (WJN). Nine were found in Marlboro December 30 (WDN), twelve were feeding on pine in Londonderry January 16 (SDA) and a pair were in Barnard February 26 (EH). The only other birds reported were seventeen just over the border at Mink Brook in Hanover, N.H. February 28 (WGE). A record high of 245 White-winged Crossbills were at Island Pond for count day while 27 were at Craftsbury, 19 at Woodstock and thirteen at Plainfield. On January 3, 13 and 30 many males were singing, doing flight displays and acting territorial in Ferdinand (WGE, FO, ALG et al.). On January 29 territorial and singing birds were recorded at Hartwellville (3 males, 1 female), Victory (1 male) and Kirby (pr.) (all ALG, NLM). On January 30 there were two singing males at Underpass Pond, Morgan Township, and a territorial male at Shadow Lake, Glover (both ALG, NLM). On January 31 a territorial male was found in Bear Swamp, Hardwick (ALG, NLM). Rufous-sided Towhees were recorded as "count period" birds at Woodstock and Springfield. One was at a Wallingford feeder from December 5 on (RW fide GTL) and Sally Laughlin observed one on the VINS Preserve December 31.

A pair of tardy Savannah Sparrows on the Springfield CC (WGE) was a new high for the species. A Vesper Sparrow tallied on the Ferrisburg CC was found in the New York portion of the circle. The 982 Dark-eyed Juncos on CC's was quite an increase over the 58 reported last year. Very few were found at feeders reflecting the mild winter. Small flocks were beginning to build by February with highs of 23 at Stockbridge February 17 (EH), 20 at Fayston (ADH) and 15+ at Clarendon February 29 (LHP). Once again Tree Swallow numbers were down. Only 956 were counted on CC's and out of twenty-two reports the twenty at Plainfield February 25 was high (MFM). A record number of nine Chipping Sparrows was found on the Rutland CC, beating the three set in Saxtons River in 1969. A single bird was found on the Springfield CC the same day. A tardy Field Sparrow was in the Burlington count area December 16. One, in company with a flock of Tree Sparrows arrived at a Westford feeder January 2 and lingered through the end of the season (MJM). Coincidentally, twenty-six White-throated Sparrows were recorded on CC's for the second year in a row. January found single birds at feeders in Rochester (HB), Tinmouth (GTL) and South Barre (MFM). Two reports of one and three birds came from Woodstock on the 19th and 20th of February (JMN and EH). A Fox Sparrow at a feeder in Union Village throughout most of the winter could well have been the same bird reported on the Hanover-Norwich CC. Of the seventy-nine Song Sparrows on CC's, highs were 36 at Ferrisburg and 14 at Saxtons River. An overwintering bird was reported from Woodstock (HJS) while a banded bird was observed in Plainfield February 15 (MFM).

A lone Lapland Longspur on the Craftsbury CC was the only bird reported. Record numbers of Snow Buntings moved into the northern tier of the state as Craftsbury recorded 852, Island Pond 145, Ferrisburg 100 and Plainfield 30. One was at Marlboro December 30 (WDN), two at North Pomfret January 9 (LPr, MCH), and a final record of 30 in a Westminster field on January 13 (DJK).



MANAGING EDITOR: Sarah B. Laughlin
 EDITORIAL ASSISTANT: Julia M. Nicholson
 LAYOUT & ILLUSTRATION: Nancy L. Martin

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RHA	Richard Adelson	RCJ	Rita Johnson
SDA	Stan Allaben	CDK	Chris Kibbe
FSA	Betty Allen	DJK	Debra Kibbe
JJA	Jeffrey Allen	DPK	Doug Kibbe
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RoJ	Robert Jackson	BHZ	Blanche Zauchinger
BLJ	Lauren Jarvi	PFZ	Peter Zika
JJI	Jim Jillson		

Special thanks to all who contributed to the Cardinal-Tufted Titmouse Count.

Contributors are reminded to send in rare and unusual bird sightings at once (or to call the Vermont Bird Alert) and to submit seasonal summaries promptly at the end of each season. This publication is only as complete as you make it. If you need sighting cards, write VINS, Woodstock, Vt. Or, call us at 457-2779.

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