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BALD EAGLE SIGHTED ON 1980 TROY CHRISTMAS COUNT

William W. Shuster

Some 12,264 individual birds were seen during the 1980 Troy Christmas Count held on Saturday, January 3, 1981. Seven field groups plus several feeding station observers reported 55 species seen during the day. Perhaps the most unusual sighting was a bald eagle seen by one field group crossing the Hudson River in the vicinity of Pleasantdale. Also seen was a gadwall in the Hudson River. This sighting was a first for the Christmas counts in this area. Other interesting observations included two great blue herons, several goshawks, several Cooper's hawks, a number of flickers, numerous robins, one grackle, and one hermit thrush.

An extended period of very cold weather resulted in very little open water except in a few fast-moving stretches of the Mohawk and Hudson Rivers. As a consequence the number of waterfowl seen was limited. The number of hawks observed was higher than last year but only one owl was reported. The numbers of chickadees, house finches, ruffed grouse, blue jays, mockingbirds, robins, cardinals, evening grosbeaks, pine grosbeaks, and juncos were high.

The report area is within a 15 mile circle centered at River and Turner Roads in Melrose (42°50'N, 73°40'W) and includes Center Brunswick, Clifton Park, Cohoes, the Hudson River from Troy to near Stillwater, Melrose, Schaghticoke, Speigletown, Tomhannock Reservoir, and most of Troy. This year's count was held from 6:30am to 6:30pm on January 3, 1981. Temperature ranged from about -5°F to +10°F, wind 0-10 mph from the west. The sky was partly cloudy with snow flurries late in the day, with snow cover ranging from 2-6 inches. The only open water was in the fast-moving sections of the rivers. There were a total of 22 observers in 7 field parties plus 2 feeder observers. The total party-hours were 62 of which 21 were on foot and 41 by car. The total party-miles were 437 of which 23 were on foot and 414 were by car.

The efforts of the field observers and the feeder station reporters were much appreciated.

Key to Groups:

Group A: Tomhannock area. William Gorman, Monte Gruett.

Troy Christmas Count (con't.)

- 6:30 am to 3:00 pm. 3 hours afoot, 5½ hours by car. 3 miles afoot, 50 miles by car. Ruffed grouse, great horned owl, robins.
- Group B: Melrose to Schaghticoke. Pat Canavan, William Shuster, Elizabeth Washburn. 7:00am to 4:00pm. 1 hour afoot, 8 hours by car. 2 miles afoot, 60 miles by car. Goshawk, Cooper's hawk, pheasant, redpolls.
- Group C: Speigletown to Melrose. Nancy Dennis, Paul Hebert, Theodore Koniowka, John Helft. 8:00 am to 4:00pm. 2 hours afoot, 6 hours by car. 2 miles afoot, 60 miles by car. Rough-legged hawk, song sparrow, flicker, Cooper's hawk.
- Group D: East and west sides of Hudson River. Samuel Madison, Peter Feinberg, Andrew Guthrie, Richard Guthrie, William Cook. 7:45 am to 6:30 pm. 6 ¾ hours afoot, 4 hours by car. 5 miles afoot, 55 miles by car. Bald eagle, gadwall, great blue heron.
- Group E: Mohawk River, Cohoes, Green Island. Richard Phillion. 7:30 am to 3:30 pm. 4 hours afoot, 4 hours by car. 3 miles afoot, 10 miles by car. Common goldeneye, common merganser, great black-backed gull, flicker, grackle.
- Group F: Lower Saratoga County. Walton Sabin, Martha Dunham, William Lee. 7:20 am to 4:50 pm. 1 hour afoot, 8½ hours by car. 3 miles afoot, 87 miles by car. Goshawk, pine siskins, song sparrow.
- Group G: Brunswick and Eagle Mills. Marilyn Fancher, Norman Fancher. 7:20am to 4:20pm. 4 hours afoot, 5 hours by car. 5 miles afoot, 72 miles by car. Flicker, robins, pine grosbeaks.
- Group X: Feeder reports: Irene Freemeyer, Nancy Shuster. Purple finch, fox sparrow.

1980 TROY CHRISTMAS BIRD COUNT - January 3, 1981

<u>Species</u>	<u>A</u>	<u>B</u>	<u>C</u>	<u>D</u>	<u>E</u>	<u>F</u>	<u>G</u>	<u>X</u>	<u>Totals</u>
Gr Blue Heron				2					2
Canada Goose				20					20
Mallard				21	500				521
Black Duck				10	163				173
Com Goldeneye				25	4				29

Troy Christmas Count (con't.)

<u>Species</u>	<u>A</u>	<u>B</u>	<u>C</u>	<u>D</u>	<u>E</u>	<u>F</u>	<u>G</u>	<u>X</u>	<u>Totals</u>
Com Merganser				11	62				73
Goshawk		1		1		1			3
Cooper's Hawk		1	1	1					3
Red-tailed Hawk	5	9	15	24	5	18	14		90
Ro-legged Hawk		2	1			4			7
Bald Eagle				1					1
American Kestrel		1	1	2	1	4	1		10
Ruffed Grouse	3	1		10			1		15
R-neck Pheasant		1							1
Gr Blk-backed Gull					2				1
Herring Gull					20				20
Mourning Dove	16	41	103	85	69	71	17	2	404
Gr Horned Owl	1								1
Common Flicker			3	8	1		1		13
Pil Woodpecker	2								2
Hairy Woodpecker	7	8	3	5	1	1	2	6	33
Downy Woodpecker	10	4	16	33	3	22	18	7	113
Horned Lark	15	89			15		1		120
Blue Jay	46	61	46	47	29	130	45	17	421
Common Crow	52	40	33	24	20	53	128		350
Blk-cap Chickadee	46	56	98	66	19	83	52	21	441
Tufted Titmouse	1	4	2	4	3	10	1	2	27
Wh-br Nuthatch	10	4	6	12	3	11	4	6	56
Red-br Nuthatch			1			2			3
Brown Creeper	2			3					5
Mockingbird	2		8	7	2	9			28
Robin	15			32			31		78
Hermit Thrush				1					1
Cedar Waxwing	8		30	1					39
Starling	39	242	441	241	2100	429	170	10	3672
House Sparrow	194	96	187	133	40	364	77	65	1156
Common Grackle					1				1
Cowbird				24					24
Cardinal	13	26	21	22	6	15	10	5	118
Eve Grosbeak	145	73	127	53	11	46	56	50	561
Purple Finch	3			2				2	7
Pine Grosbeak	14	14	4	35			58		125
Common Redpoll		9		22		43	80		154
Pine Siskin						5			5
Am Goldfinch	1	20	1	5	1	33	13	7	81
Junco	30	32	26	18		29	26		161
Tree Sparrow	16	47	51	63	12	117	15	3	324
Wh-cr Sparrow			6						6
Wh-thr Sparrow	18	5	2	19	6	4	7	6	67
Fox Sparrow								1	1
Song Sparrow	1	2	2	4	7	11		1	28
Snow Bunting		1	300		50				351

Troy Christmas Count (concluded)

<u>Species</u>	<u>A</u>	<u>B</u>	<u>C</u>	<u>D</u>	<u>E</u>	<u>F</u>	<u>G</u>	<u>X</u>	<u>Totals</u>
House Finch		68	57	86		137	63	38	449
Rock Dove	288	413	146	398	50	211	361		1867
*Gadwall				1					1
Total species									55
Total count	1003	1371	1738	1582	3206	1863	1252	249	12264

*New Listing



AUDUBON WILDLIFE FILM SERIES

Wednesday, April 1, 1981
8:00 P.M.

"Northwest Adventures" and "Adventures in Penn's Woods"

Tom Diez

Tom Diez presents two 40 minute films which are a pure invitation to backpack in the wilderness. "Northwest Adventures" takes you through the bush country of British Columbia, Alberta, and the Yukon and from southern Alaska to the islands of the Bering Sea, a remote and spectacular wilderness. Pennsylvania is the setting for "Adventures in Penn's Woods." Areas visited include Hawk Mountain Sanctuary and featured are stories on trout fishing and a remarkable tale about a man and a herd of deer in the mountains of Potter County.

SPECIAL NOTE: A wildlife film "Migration Mysteries" by Walter Breckinridge will be presented at Niskayuna High School on Wednesday April 29 at 8:00 P.M. This is a substitute for the film cancelled in November. Call Elayne Marine, 372-7804, for ticket information. Watch newspapers for further information.

WILDLIFE FILMS...April 1 and April 29...WILDLIFE FILMS.....

SEE YOU THERE!

F I E L D N O T E S

Fall 1980

Bill Cook

Although drought conditions continuing through the Fall seriously threatened urban water supplies, the banks of our dwindling reservoirs were delightfully flooded with shore birds. Low water levels left large expanses of flat muddy shores, attracting golden plovers and a white-rumped sandpiper, among other typically coastal species, to inland locations. No fewer than 22 species of ducks and 10 species of shore birds were spotted on an October 18-19 weekend field trip to Basic Creek and Alcove Reservoirs.

Well, folks, we are indeed going to have a winter in our region this year. The maximum temperature of 98°F (37°C) on September 2 provided a little comfort from those bitter November winds. For those of us who may have forgotten what snow looked like, following last winter's near absence, Old Man Winter almost bestowed upon us a white Halloween as $\frac{1}{2}$ to 1 inch fell in parts of Albany, Rensselaer and northern Columbia counties on October 28. An early heavy snowfall dropped 10 inches over the region on November 18.

As Murphy's Law would have it ("If anything can go wrong, it will."), it was last year that I packed up my James Bond to do a bit of West Indian birding and avoid the blistering northeastern winter. This year, instead of bananaquits for Christmas it will be pine grosbeaks and snowy owls. And it does look like a banner year for winter finches. Early sightings of pine grosbeaks by Juanita Cook, pine siskins and red crossbills by Robert Yunick herald hope for a heavy influx.

Although 172 species were reported for the region this Fall, rarities were scarce. The pair of snowy owls entertaining the railroad employees at Selkirk are among the few. A trip to Tomhannock Reservoir coordinated by Monte Gruett resulted in the sighting of a white-rumped sandpiper for the 17 fortunate observers, and the 3 western sandpipers reported previously were still at Embough Bay on September 1st. A late date for an indigo bunting was reported by Dick Guthrie for a bird that he banded on October 29. Robert Yunick banded a juvenile hermit thrush on September 14, a late date for a juvenile. Dick Guthrie also reported a couple of very late swallows: an October 19 barn swallow at Basic Creek and an October 23 purple martin in New Baltimore.

Field Notes - Fall 1980 (con't.)

Good Birding and may a hoary redpoll visit each and every one of your feeders.

Contributors: V. & B. Able, Roberta Bernstein, Rachel Brody, A. & T. Brown, Bill Cook, Juanita Cook, Kate Dunham, Barbara & Hugo Gardina, Elizabeth Grace, Monte Gruett, Andrew Guthrie, Richard P. Guthrie, Paul Hebert, Philip Ingalls, Nancy Kern, Ted Koniowka, Carolyn & Ron Laforce, Mr. & Mrs. Arthur Long, E. Mansell, Sherrie Orne, Tom Palmer, Sue & Jon Powell, Alice Ross, Walt Sabin, M. & W. Ulmer and Robert P. Yunick.

LOONS-DUCKS: Com Loon: 6 Tomhannock Res. Nov 8; Red-throated loon: 2 Alcove Res. Oct 18 (RG); #Horned grebe: 1 Mohawk R, Niskayuna Nov 2 (R&CL), 3 Tomhannock Res Nov 8 (MG); Pied-billed grebe: Castleton Oct 15 (JC), Ooms Pond Oct 19 (KD & EG), Col Co Oct 18 (WS); Double-crested cormorant: Col Co Oct 18; Great blue heron: Seen frequently through Oct; Green heron: A late date in Hudson Oct 29 (A&TB); Snowy egret: 10 Embough Bay Sept 1 (RG & BC); Mute swan: Col Co Oct 18 (WS); Brant: 2 seen Oct 18 in different locations, Col Co (WS) and Alcove Res (RG & AG); Snow goose: First report from Juanita Cook in Castleton Oct 30, flocks of 20 observed at Tomhannock Res Nov 8, and Embough Bay Nov 4; Mallard: Max 600 Embough Bay Nov 4; Am black duck: Max 300 Embough Bay Nov 4; Gadwall: 3 Embough Bay Nov 4 (BC); Pintail: Ooms Pond Oct 19 (KD & EG), 7 Embough Bay Nov 4 (BC); Green-winged teal: 3 Tom Res Nov 8 (MG); Am wigeon: Reported by more than 5 observers in Col and Rens Co Oct-Nov; Ring-necked duck: Bell's Pond Livingston Oct 16 (A&TB), and from Columbia Co again Oct 18 (WS); Redhead: 1 shot Embough Bay Oct 8 (JP); Canvasback: 2000 Embough Bay Nov 4 (BC), gone following first day of hunting season; Greater scaup: Several observed with Lesser scaup Alcove Res Oct 19 (RG); Lesser scaup: 8 Embough Bay Nov 4 (BC); Common goldeneye: 1 Tom Res Nov 8 (MG); Bufflehead: 6 Tom Res Nov 8 (MG), 1 Embough Bay Nov 4 (BC); Oldsquaw: 1 male on Moh R east of Amsterdam (TP), 2 Tom Res Oct 24 (RG); White-winged scoter: 1 Alcove Res Oct 19 (RG & AG); Black scoter: 3 reports on Oct 18 Castleton (JC), 10 Basic Creek (RG), and Columbia Co (WS), also on Oct 29, 30 (JC); Ruddy duck: Ooms Pond Oct 18, 29 (DD, EG, V&BA), 15 Embough Bay Nov 4 (BC); Hooded Merganser: Apparently large numbers in eastern NY and western Mass during late Oct and early Nov, max 45 Tom Res Nov 8 (MG); Common merganser: Hudson Oct 8, 13 (A&TB), 20 Tom Res Nov 8 (MG), 3 Embough Bay Nov 4 (BC).

HAWKS-ALCIDS: Turkey Vulture: Many reports Sept-Oct, none for Nov, max 13 Ghent Sept 6 (BC); Goshawk: 2 Tom Res Oct 24 (RG); Sharp-shinned hawk: Many reports for Oct, 2 reports

Field Notes - Fall 1980 (con't.)

for Nov. 1 Ghent Nov 6 (B&HG), 1 Tom Res Nov 8 (MG); Cooper's hawk: More than 6 reports for period from central and southern portion of this region. Red-shouldered hawk: 1 Pinnacle Hawk Watch Sept 20 (R&CL); Broad-winged hawk: seen intermittently through Oct (JC,V&BA); Rough-legged hawk: Several sightings for Nov, the earliest is Oct 17 from Pinnacle; Northern harrier: about 10 reports through period; Osprey: 3 reports from Oct, 2 from Nov; American coot: Ooms Pond Oct 18-27 (KD, EG, V&BA), 80 Embough Bay Nov 4 (BC), 15 Alcove Res Oct 19 (RG); Killdeer: Common through Oct, latest date is for 3 at Tom Res Nov 8 (MG); Golden plover: 1 Alcove Res Oct 19 (RG), 2 Cocksackie Flats Sept 28 (RG); Black-bellied plover: 1 Tom Res Nov 8 (MG), 3 Alcove Res Oct 19 (RG), 2 Cocksackie Flats Sept 28 (RG); American woodcock: latest date is from Spencertown Oct 29 (M&BU); Com snipe: Ghent, Oct 11, Basic Creek Res Oct 18; Spotted sandpiper: Hudson Oct 1 (A&TB); Greater yellowlegs: 4 reports through Nov 8, max 22 Basic Creek Res Oct 18 (RG); Lesser yellowlegs: 1 Basic Creek Res Oct 18 (RG); Pectoral sandpiper: Ghent Oct 1,2 (B&HG), Churchtown Oct 13 (A&TB), Max 25 Basic Creek Res Oct 18 (RG); White-rumped Sandpiper: 1 Tom Res Nov 8, very late date (MG); Dunlin 25 Basic Creek Res Oct 18 (RG); Dowitcher Sp.: 1 Basic Creek Oct 18 (RG); Western sandpiper: Same 3 reported in late August from Embough Bay Sept 1 in flock of semi-palmated sandpipers (RG & BC); Sanderling: Ghent Oct 1 (B&HG); Iceland gull: 1 New Baltimore Nov 22 (RG); Great black-backed gull: 3 reports from Castleton; Herring gull: Max 200 Mohawk R, Niskayuna Nov 2; Ring-billed gull: Several reports through period, Tom Palmer reports most noticeable between Nov 3-9 along Mohawk R; Bonaparte's gull: 1 Basic Creek Oct 23, 1 New Baltimore Sept 28 (RG).



PIGEONS-WOODPECKERS: Barn owl: 3 Cocksackie Sept 28; Screech owl: 4 reports for period in Spencertown, Ghent and Amsterdam; Great horned owl: 8 reports for period; Snowy owl: a male and an immature female appeared in Selkirk late Nov. They have been very conspicuous through end of period and have been observed feeding on pigeons; Barred owl: 2 Jenny Lake Sept (RY); Short-eared owl: 3 observed on their Cocksackie flats winter range Nov 23-an earlier than usual date; Belted kingfisher: At least 9 reports for period; Common flicker: common through period but declining in Nov; Pileated woodpecker: 11 reports through period; Yellow-bellied sapsucker: Old Chatham Oct 6 (PI), 1 Greenport Oct 3 (BC), 1 banded in New Baltimore Oct (RG).

FLYCATCHERS-STARLINGS: Great crested flycatcher: only

Field Notes - Fall 1980 (con't.)

one report Castleton Oct 1 (JC); Eastern phoebe: Fairly common through Oct. Tom Palmer reports Oct 5 as last date for Amsterdam; Yellow-bellied flycatcher: 1 banded New Baltimore Sept (RG); Traill's flycatcher: 1 banded New Baltimore Sept; Least flycatcher: 7 banded New Baltimore Sept; Eastern wood pewee: 3 banded New Baltimore Sept; Horned lark: Made their appearance on Oct 18 in Amsterdam (TP) and are growing in numbers as winter approaches; Tree swallow: Last date Oct 7 in Col Co; Barn swallow: Max 13 Ghent Sept 6 (BC), 1 very late date at Basic Creek Res Oct 19 (RG); Purple martin: 1 record late date at New Baltimore Oct 23 (RG); Black-capped chickadee: RY reports "very definitely a flight year.....by late Sept at Jenny Lake chickadees were everywhere in the woods." His banding of 59 mostly immature individuals compares with the previous flight year 78-79 which "consisted principally of previously banded birds."; Tufted titmouse: 7 banded at New Baltimore; White-breasted nuthatch: Many reports but considered "scarce at Jenny Lake, none banded!" (RY); Red-breasted nuthatch: 17 bandings at Jenny Lake indicate a declining population since summer (RY); Brown creeper: common through Oct declining in Nov, 1 banded New Baltimore Sept; House wren: Last date Oct 25 Old Chatham (PI); Winter wren 1 Amsterdam Nov 8 (TP); Carolina wren: 1 Amsterdam Oct 18 (TO), 2 thru period at New Baltimore (RG); Gray catbird: 76 banded at New Baltimore thru Sept and Oct, last report Nov 30 Old Chatham (PI); Wood thrush: last reported Oct 18 NB (RG); Hermit thrush: RY banded a late date juvenile at Jenny Lake Sept 14 which approaches John Bull's latest date of Sept 23 for fledglings; Swainson's thrush: 8 banded NB in Sept (RG), last report Oct 24 Hudson (A&TB); Gray-cheeked thrush: Castleton Oct 11 last report (JC); Eastern Bluebird: Scattered sightings thru Nov 26 Montgomery and Col Co; Ruby-crowned Kinglet: Common thru Oct, 5 banded in NB that month, Last report Old Chatham Nov 1 (PI); Water pipit: Castleton Oct 13-29 (JC), 1 Basic Creek Res Oct 18 (RG); Cedar waxwing: Common thru period, 7 banded NB Sept.

VIREOS-WARBLERS: Philadelphia vireo: 1 NB Sept 8 (RG); RG banded the following 19 species of vireos and warblers in NB this fall: 1 Solitary Vireo Oct; 20 Red-eyed vireos Sept-Oct; 1 Warbling vireo Sept; 1 black-and white warbler Sept; 19 Tennessee warblers Sept; 7 Nashville warblers Sept-Oct## Last report from Hoge Hill Oct 15 (V&BA); 19 Yellow-rumped warblers Oct; 7 Black-throated green warblers Sept; 1 Blackburnian warbler Sept; 6 Blackpoll warblers Sept-Oct; 1 Ovenbird Sept; 1 Mourning warbler Sept; 5 Com Yellowthroats Sept; 1 Wilson's warbler Sept; 3 Canada warblers Sept; 7 Am Redstarts Sept.

Only two warbler species were observed and not banded: Bay-breasted warbler: 2 NB Sept 14 (RG); Palm warbler: Lake

Field Notes - Fall 198 (concluded)

Taghkanic Oct 1 (A&TB).

WEAVERS- SPARROWS: Bobolink: last seen Oct 19 a small flock in Amsterdam (TP); Eastern meadowlark: reported common through Nov in Col Co (V&BA); Red-winged blackbird: common thru period, numbers decreasing in Nov; Northern oriole: Only report is from Amsterdam Sept 1 (TP); Rusty blackbird: reported from Ghent and elsewhere in Oct, last seen in Ghent Nov 6 (B&HG); Scarlet tanager: 9 banded NB Sept (RG); Rose-breasted grosbeak: 3 banded NB Sept (RG), last seen Oct 14 Ghent (V&BA); Indigo bunting: 1 banded in NB Oct 29 a very late date (RG), John Bull states rare after mid Oct; Evening grosbeak: appeared on Oct 22 in Castleton (JC), becoming more widespread on area thru Nov; Purple finch: Jenny Lake breeding ground provided a good banding year for RY with 633 banded May-Oct, but becoming much reduced in numbers by mid Sept; House finch: RY was banding record numbers at Jenny Lake (154 for period but numbers dropped off unexpectedly in mid Nov; Pine grosbeak: made a very early appearance in Castleton on Nov 15 (JC) Pine siskin: first heard in flight at Jenny Lake Oct 12 by RY who also reports that an Oct 29 yard bird is the earliest in 17 years; TP reports sightings Oct 8 - Nov 8 with max on Oct 18; American goldfinch: RY banded 30, a record for Jenny Lake Aug 13-Sept 6 with an abnormally high proportion, 23 adult, 7 immatures; Red crossbill-RY reports these birds "definitely on the move", 2 Jenny Lake Sept 28 and 6-8 on Nov 8; Rufous-sided towhee: reported common in Col Co in Oct (V&BA) but no other reports; Vesper Sparrow: Seen intermittently in Castleton thru Oct (JC), 1 Basic Creek Res Oct 18 (RG); Dark-eyed junco: reported scarce at Jenny Lake in Sept after Aug fledging, but becoming abundant at feeders after mid Oct, 43 banded NB Oct; Tree sparrow: first report Oct 29 Ghent (B&HG), becoming common in Nov when 8 were banded in NB (RG); Chipping sparrow: common thru Oct, last reported Nov 3 (V&BA).

RG banded the following 7 species of sparrows in NB this fall: 2 Field sparrows Sept-Oct; 3 wh-cr sparrows, Oct; 168 wh-thr sparrows Sept-Oct, RY reports scarce at Jenny Lake in Sept; but banded 38 Oct-Nov; 2 Fox sparrows Oct and another 2 banded at Jenny L (RY); 1 Lincoln sparrow Sept, also observed in Ghent Oct 1 (B&HG); 3 swamp sparrows Oct; and 20 Song sparrows Sept-Oct; Lapland longspur: 1 with snow bunting on record early date Oct 18 Basic Creek Res (RG); Snow bunting: a flock of 100 were seen migrating along the Hudson at Embough Bay Nov 4 (BC), very early date of Oct 18 Basic Creek Res. (RG).



#Red-necked grebe, 1 Germantown Oct 18 (WS), 1 Tom Res Oct 24 (RG).
##2Parula warblers Sept; 17 Magnolia warblers Sept.

WHAT VISITS A FEEDER OVER 15,000 TIMES PER DAY?

Robert P. Yunick

A flock of chickadees, of course! With that reply, the next question might be: "Well, how big a flock?" That question has not been accurately answered and can only be guessed at based on available information. But before getting into that, let's step back and set the stage for this unusual story.

For the past ten years I have been operating a year-round bird feeding station at Jenny Lake in northern Saratoga Co., N.Y. It is part of a bird-banding operation I conduct as a volunteer for the Fish and Wildlife Service of the Department of the Interior. One of my projects at this station is the study of the winter irruptions of black-capped chickadees (*Parus atricapillus*) and red-breasted nuthatches (*Sitta canadensis*).

As part of the project, I band the newly fledged young in the summer months and also the irrupting individuals that become common in November and remain through the winter. In addition to using banding data as a means of measuring bird abundance at these feeders, I also keep track of seed consumption and find that it serves as an excellent measure of the magnitude of these irruptions. I do this with specially designed feeders that allow access only to birds that can pass through a $1 \times 1\frac{1}{2}$ " wire mesh. Evening grosbeaks, blue jays, and others are excluded. Both the numbers of birds banded and the seed consumption point to a biennial rhythm of winter abundance of chickadees.

In non-invasion years, seed consumption runs typically 50 to 200 grams/day (0.1-0.4 lbs/day) during peak winter demand, depending on local abundance of chickadees and nuthatches. In invasion years, consumption rises sharply in November and December to a peak in January or February of typically 700-1000 grams/day ($1\frac{1}{2}$ -2 lbs/day). It then declines to a minimum in April as the last of these winter visitors leave to establish nesting territories.

The current invasion of 1980-81 stands out as a record for black-capped chickadees. Prior to November, seed consumption was a very unimpressive 20 grams/day (just under $\frac{3}{4}$ oz.). By year's-end it was over 1100grams/day ($2\frac{1}{2}$ lbs/day) -- the highest in the six-year period that consumption data have been kept. It is a bit staggering to think that a bunch of chickadees and nuthatches can haul off 17-18 lbs. of sunflower seed per week! One expects this from grosbeaks,

What Visits a Feeder (con't.)

but not usually from chickadees.

As of early January the banding totals already exceeded any yearly total for the prior ten years. On New Year's Day I caught an unprecedented 125 chickadees and 11 nuthatches in $3\frac{1}{2}$ hours with only two mist nets. Among these 125, 38 were unbanded birds and 87 were birds banded earlier in the fall and winter. As of New Year's the banding total for November-to-date was 174 newly banded chickadees and 58 recaptures of birds banded earlier in the year or in earlier years, for a total of 232 chickadees. In the same period a total of 20 nuthatches was captured. Based on these immediate-term capture totals and the repeated recapture of a large majority of these birds, it is safe to assume that up to about 250-275 chickadees and 25-30 nuthatches are calling these feeders home for this winter.

So, returning to the original question about the 15,000 visits, you might wonder how these tie together. Well, when the seed consumption became a record 1130 grams/day on New Year's Day, my curiosity became aroused. As I stood near the feeders admiring the bee-hive-like activity, watching chickadees lining up, coming and going at the feeders taking one seed at a time, I could not help but wonder how many trips were involved.

At home I took some samples of seed and did some weighing and counting. I found that there were 13307 seeds per kilogram (14% of which were already out of the hull), and on that basis determined that the current consumption rate required 15,037 visits per day to remove that amount of seed, one at a time. I also calculated that based on a nine-hour winter day (0730 to 1630) these seeds were disappearing at the rate of one every 2.2 seconds. No wonder the feeders appeared like a bee-hive of activity! With three feeders in operation, and with each feeder allowing two birds at a time, the birds were changing places once every six seconds, so the wait in line on nearby tree branches was not too long.

As the winter wears on to its normal feeding peak, it will be interesting to see whether the consumption rate will approach 20,000 seeds per day (1503 grams/day). With a typical mid-February day allowing 11 hours of feeding, that will increase the pulse of seed usage to one every 2.0 seconds.

Regardless of how much more the seed consumption increases, the winter of 1980-81 will be known, among other things, as the winter of the chickadee.

Post Script: Following the writing of the above, some

What Visits a Feeder (concluded)

new records were set. The feeding peaked on 18 January at a level exceeding expectation when seed consumption stood at 1683 grams/day, or 22395 visits/day, or a seed every 1.6 seconds. The capture of 174 birds in an approximately three-hour period set a new record also. Among these captures were 143 black-capped chickadees and 26 red-breasted nuthatches. Thirty-one of the chickadees were new birds not yet banded, 18 were returns from previous years' banding and 94 were repeat captures of birds banded earlier in the season. The season totals stood at 281 chickadees and 52 nuthatches.

Beside this record capture of total birds, both the individual chickadee and nuthatch counts were new records. Among the 18 chickadee returns was one bird of especial note. As soon as I saw its band number I knew it was an old bird, but it was not until I arrived home and consulted my records that I confirmed its origin.

It had been banded during the previous record flight of 1971-72. I banded the bird on 19 March 1972 when, unfamiliar as I was at the time with the extent of these invasions, I put out one 20' net and was swamped with the capture of 76 chickadees in 4½ hours. How ironic it was that a bird from the record flight of nine years ago was a part of this newer record flight. Between these captures it had also appeared in the flights of 1973-74, 1975-76, 1978-79, and 1979-80. This bird's minimum age was five months short of 10 years!

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BIRDWATCHING COURSES SCHEDULED FOR SPRING

Bob Marx will be conducting Beginner's Bird Identification Courses for adults as follows:

10 Thursday Mornings
9-11:30

starting March 26 at Five Rivers Environmental Education Center, Delmar.

8 Friday mornings
9-11:30

starting April 10 sponsored by the Schenectady Museum.

A 3-day seminar will be held July 7-9 at Adirondak Loj, Heart Lake, in the High Peaks Region. Call Mr. Marx, 377-1453, for more information regarding any of the courses.

Breeding Bird Atlas in Second Year

The second year of the New York State Breeding Bird Atlas will get under way this season. More volunteers are needed. If you can help call Dick Guthrie, 756-9094.

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 REMINDER

Many field trips will be coming up this spring. Get out your field trip list and be sure you don't miss the very one you were planning to go on. There are 8 field trips planned for May. Reservations are needed for some.

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 Checklist for Field Notes

The enclosed checklist is for your use in keeping track of the birds seen March, April, May. Besides keeping a record of birds observed for tallying in our own area, records are sent to the KINGBIRD, the quarterly journal of the Federation of New York State Bird Clubs. If more checklists are needed, please call me. 399-8337. A donation of 4¢ per checklist would be appreciated. Please send checklist to Mr. William Cook, Columbia-Greene County Community College, Box 1000, Hudson, NY 12534. Mr. Cook is the compiler and sends in the report to the Federation from Region 8. He must receive it before June 7.

--Editor

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 Call for Papers

The papers session for the annual meeting of the Federation of New York State Bird Clubs (September 25-27 in Syracuse) will be held between 2-5 pm on the 26th. A Committee is currently accepting abstracts of 150 words or less, single spaced, and any additional descriptive information which the author wishes to send. Please send to Gerald A. Smith, Onondaga Audubon Society, P.O. Box 620 Syracuse, NY 13201. All papers should pertain to some aspect of New York State ornithology.

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 DIAL-A-BIRD 377-9600...DIAL-A-BIRD 377-9600...DIAL-A-BIRD.....

NOTED AUTHOR TO BE GUEST LECTURER AT ALBANY LIBRARY

In celebration of National Library Week the Albany Public Library Association has invited Michael Harwood, noted author, to be its guest lecturer on April 7 at 8:00 p.m. at the Library located at 161 Washington Avenue (between Dove and Lark Stretts.). Mr. Harwood is co-author with Mary B. Durant of On the Road with John James Audubon.

There is no admission charge. For further information contact Dan Ruge, 449-1087.

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The drawing on page 4 was done by Lynn Dingman. Lynn, a native of Utah, is now an area resident. She is a self-taught artist and "just likes to draw."

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The deadline for material for the Spring 1981 issue of FEATHERS is May 15.

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Vol. 43, No. 1
Winter
1981



Shirley Schadow, Editor
230 Lake Hill Road
Burnt Hills, NY 12027

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F I E L D N O T E S

Winter 1981

Bill Cook

It was the coldest Christmas on record in Albany, -17°F , followed by a mid-winter heat wave in February. Residents of Fulton Co. near Johnstown greeted Christmas Day with December's minimum temperature of -31°F . The coldest day of the period was still to come as the mercury hit -40° (That's the point where Fahrenheit and centigrade are equivalent.) on January 13 in Cambridge, Washington Co. But February changed all that. Warmth arrived early in the month (53°F at Albany on February 2) and lasted nearly until March. The maximum temperature for the period was 70° set at higher elevations in Columbia and Schoharie Counties around February 19. A 66° reading at Albany on that date beat the old record by eleven degrees.

As one contributor describes it, this winter contrasted "record heat and cold; drought and flood; and a drought at feeders in the face of what earlier had the makings of a heavy winter finch invasion." (RY)

In December snowfall quickly exceeded last year's total accumulation but then it stopped. However, what had fallen remained. Persistent low temperatures prevented melting and in addition froze the river to a depth of sixteen inches according to Hudson residents. Then, in the midst of a drought year, the third wettest February ever recorded at Albany, coupled with abnormally high temperatures, released ice-laden waters in rivers and streams causing flooding throughout the area. The last few days of February began a return to winter cold and drought.

Christmas Bird Count (CBC) participants suffered inhospitably bitter low temperatures during late December and early January. Yet CBC activities did produce a few species that would otherwise not have been reported during the period. These were great blue heron, gadwall, red-bellied woodpecker, and white-crowned sparrow.

Christmas Bird Counts also emphasized the presence of several species lingering through the winter that should have vacated the area. Carolina wren, gray catbird, hermit thrush, Eastern bluebird, and rusty blackbird normally winter further south.

Field Notes (con't.)

There is speculation that hardy populations of some of these species will spread their winter range northward.

Frequently joked about, and often worried about--well, it finally happened....Two participants in the Schenectady CBC working on opposite sides of the Mohawk River with tape recordings were delighted to call up a screech owl, from the other bank, of course. It didn't occur to them that they were responding to each other's tapes, for some time, until one hapless lister set up his scope to catch the other in rewind. He kept his discovery secret until reporting time when the explanation for such cooperative owls was shared. By the way, amidst all the ruckus, a genuine (maybe) screech owl joined in the chorus and was tallied in the count.

Feeder specialties this year include Debbie Shaw's rusty blackbird in East Greenbush and the return of two field sparrows to Bill Gorman's feeder also in East Greenbush. This is the sixth year in a row that a field sparrow has wintered at his feeder.

The severe cold of December and January had several major avian consequences. Waterfowl and waders were scarce or nonexistent. Most winter finches flew over our area. There were notable local invasions of some species, however. Among the northern invaders were snowy owls, a glaucous gull or two, a common raven, large numbers of black-capped chickadees and red-breasted nuthatches. The chickadee invasion, measured by seed consumption at Jenny Lake (RY) was nearly double the previous record set in 78-79 for eleven years of study.

Bald eagles made an impressive opening for the New Year as they gathered at infrequently open waters in and around our area. Another raptor that found refuge from the cold in human company was a barred owl. Following the high winds and extreme cold of January 10-11, a janitor at Bethlehem High School in Delmar discovered the owl in a protected courtyard where it was perching in a mountain ash. On a negative note, observers mention lower numbers than normal of American kestrels.

Woodpeckers seem to be on the upswing in our area. Reports of pileated woodpecker have increased significantly. Reports of red-headed woodpecker, yellow-bellied sapsucker, and red-bellied woodpecker are also notable for the winter season. With seven of nine of New York woodpeckers and six of eight of New York owls reported, these two orders were well represented in the 97 species that were recorded regionally this winter.

A report of lesser black-backed gull is being filed with the NYS Avian Records Committee. There has been only one previous local record of this species. The bird was observed

Field Notes (con't.)

flying, standing on ice and swimming in the Hudson River at New Baltimore by Andrew Guthrie on February 17.

With the spring breeding season upon us, the Atlas Project for recording evidence of breeding birds is getting underway for the second of the five years of the effort. Help is desperately needed in the northern counties of our region. Warren, Washington, Fulton, and Montgomery counties went practically untouched last year. Even common species have yet to be atlased in these areas so birders in these counties are urged to contact Regional Coordinator, Dick Guthrie, Box 46, New Baltimore, NY 12124 - 518/756-9094.

Contributors: V. & B. Able, Dean Amadon, S. Anderson, Roberta Bernstein, George Bowman, Rachel Brody, William Brooks, Arlene & Tom Brown, Bob Budliger, Bill Cook, Juanita Cook, Will Craik, R. Dodd, R. Drowne, Kate Dunham, Peter Feinberg, Barbara & Hugo Gardina, Bill Gorman, Elizabeth Grace, Andrew Guthrie, Richard P. Guthrie, Philip Ingalls, Carol Kirk, Ron & Carolyn Laforce, B. Laros, Bill Lee, Sam Madison, E. Mansell, Charles Mason, Roger Menges, James Mesick, Sherrie Orne, Tom Palmer, Anthony Passero, Elsie Powell, Jon & Sue Powell, Walt Sabin, Debbie Shaw, Janet Silvernail, Jim Suozzo, M. & B. Ulmer, Elizabeth Walsh, Tommy Williams, Robert P. Yunick.

LOONS-DUCKS: A horned grebe was grounded by the fog on Dec 29 in the vicinity of Schenectady. It was banded by Bob Yunick and released near some open water on the Mohawk River. Three great blue herons were reported on two separate CBCs, Kinderhook Cr. Dec 20; Two Troy Jan 3. Canada geese were well represented on CBCs; not reported in January but observed returning north through Catskill Feb 28. A snow goose was spotted among a large flock of Canada geese in an open field by Peter Feinberg for the Chatham CBC Dec 20; Another was seen returning north through Catskill Feb 28. (EW). Mallards and black ducks could be found through the winter where open water and food were available. Gadwall: one found on Hudson River Troy CBC, 1st count record Jan 3 (RG). Wood duck: Col Co Feb 28. Common goldeneye: Troy CBC Jan 3; New Baltimore Feb 17-28. Common merganser: Troy CBC Jan 3; New Baltimore Feb 14-21.



HAWKS-ALCIDS: Three reports of turkey vulture this winter, one in Leeds Feb 15; two in Col Co Feb 21-22. Goshawks were reported four times through Dec and Jan 2 showing up on two CBCs. The same was true for sharp-shinned hawks except that three of the four were on CBCs, and two more reports were received for

Field Notes (con't.)

Feb from Col Co. Cooper's hawks doubled the accipiter count with ten reports. Perhaps this high number is due to repeated observations of the same birds and/or half-hardy individuals that probably left during January's numbing cold. A female was captured inside a service station in Ravena on the morning of a CBC day but unfortunately outside the count area. It was banded and released at dawn Dec 29 (RG & BC). Red-tailed hawks and rough-legged hawks have been reported in excellent numbers thru the winter. Red-shouldered hawk: Albany Co Feb 3 (PF). Bald eagle: Troy CBC Jan 3 (SM); Schodack Jan 5-17; Blenheim-Gilboa Jan 3-Feb 1; New Baltimore Jan 23. Marsh hawks were seen regularly by several contributors thru the winter. American kestrel, although always present, was noted to be less numerous or even scarce by two contributors (RY & RG). Ruffed grouse reported in average numbers thru the winter. Bobwhite: Old Chatham Jan 2 (WC). Ring-necked pheasant was recorded on two CBCs as well as numerous other reports. Turkeys were also recorded on the Greene Co and Chatham CBCs along with four other Col Co reports. The only "shore bird" reports were of a killdeer in Schuylerville Feb 18 and an American woodcock near Lake Taghkanic Feb 27. A glaucous gull was seen at Cohoes Falls Jan 12 (RG) and Jan 23 (PF). There were fifteen reports of great black-backed gull thru winter while the usually abundant herring and ring-billed gulls seemed to disappear around CBC time as ice locked up the Hudson River. Lesser black-backed gull: New Baltimore Feb 17 (AG).

PIGEONS-WOODPECKERS: Rock doves and mourning doves reported in large numbers as usual. Over 300 for each on Greene Co CBC. Mourning doves were "singing" during the midwinter "heat wave" in Schenectady Feb 17 (RY). The Coxsackie barn owl is still in residence. Screech owl reports confined to a Rexford road kill Feb 14; and several called out for CBCs in Greene and Schenectady Counties. Great horned owl: eleven reports; one on a nest in Clarksville Feb 11 (CM). The snowy owl invasion resulted in ten reports from Albany, Schenectady, Fulton and Washington counties thru Feb 11. A barred owl found shelter from extreme cold (-20°F) and high winds between wings of the Bethlehem H.S. Jan 10-12 (BB); another was recorded near Old Chatham Dec 17 (KD & EG); another from Charlton Feb 18. Short-eared owl: nine max Coxsackie Flats; two other reports from Albany Co Jan 29-Feb 1 (JS). Belted kingfisher: eight reported thru Dec 29. Com flicker reported in good numbers wintering in Col, Greene, and Montgomery Counties. Pileated woodpecker with more than fifteen reports seems to be increasing in numbers. Red-bellied woodpecker: Ghent Dec 20-22 (B&HG). Red-headed woodpecker: Lake Taghkanic Jan 28 (A&TB). Yellow-bellied sapsucker: New Baltimore Dec 24 (AG); Coeymans Feb 4 (TW). Downy woodpeckers outnumbering hairy woodpeckers by about four to one at feeders and in the field.

Field Notes (con't.)

FLYCATCHERS-STARLINGS: Horned lark; up to about 600 at the Cocksackie Flats where they gather at manure spreads thru the winter. Blue jays and common crows in usual numbers, 401 and 243, respectively, on the Greene Co CBC. Common raven: Spier Falls Feb 21 (RY). A record invasion of black-capped chickadees at Jenny Lake, 228 banded by RY Dec-Feb. There seemed to be lower numbers of tufted titmice, with only 29 on the Greene Co CBC Dec 29. White-breasted nuthatches, although common at feeders, were reported scarce at Jenny Lake where a red-breasted nuthatch invasion resulted in 57 banded by RY; ten on the Greene Co CBC is notably high. Brown creeper: appeared on a least three CBCs with 28 more reports thru the winter. Wren reports totaled three. A winter wren in Schenectady Dec 18; one Carolina wren in Colonie Dec 19; and another wintering in New Baltimore. Mockingbird: numbers staying about even (49 Green Co CBC). Gray catbird: three winter individuals; Chatham CBC Dec 20; Greene Co CBC Dec 29; Old Chatham Jan 12 (EP). Brown thrasher: two Schenectady CBC Dec 20. Am. Robin: wintering numbers in the thousands at roosts on the Cocksackie Flats and near Olana, Col Co late Dec-early Jan. Hermit thrush was amazingly common this winter with thirteen individuals on area CBCs. Eastern bluebird: high numbers on Chatham CBC; two New Baltimore Dec 25; two wintering near Cornwallville; three wintering in Clarksville. Golden-crowned kinglet: six reports thru period. Cedar waxwing: large flocks wandering through area. Northern shrike: Two of the four sightings on CBCs; three in Dec, one on Feb 1. Starlings in large flocks throughout the area as usual. *

WEAVERS-SPARROWS: House sparrow: numbers remain high thru the winter; large flock at Port of Albany; 621 on Greene Co CBC. Eastern meadowlark remained in the area thru the winter; 45 on Greene Co CBC Dec 29; Col Co Jan 6-23. Red-winged blackbirds, com grackles, and brown-headed cowbirds reported at feeders in small numbers thru the winter months; 24 max for cowbirds at Colonie Dec 13. Mild Feb weather brought back grackles and red-winged blackbirds to Schenectady at mid-month, about two weeks early (RY). Rusty blackbird: two at Selkirk Dec 27 (RG); East Greenbush Jan (DS). Winter cardinal numbers seem to have been up, a carry-over from abundant numbers in autumn (RY). Winter finch numbers never materialized as expected. The following CBC numbers may indicate relative frequency: cardinal 123, evening grosbeak 342, purple finch 7, house finch 169, pine grosbeak 40, com redpoll 12, found feeding on birch seeds more often than at feeders. Pine siskin 1, species appeared further south abundantly, but very few stayed locally (RY). Am. goldfinch 95, probably more abundant than that number indicates. Only two reports of red crossbill for the period, from Jenny Lake, 1 Dec 6; three Feb 28. Rufous-sided towhee: one from Greene Co CBC Dec 29; Savannah sparrow: two Greene Co CBC Dec 29. Dark-eyed junco: numbers were good, 243 on Greene Co CBC.

Field Notes (Concluded)

Tree sparrow: wintered in good numbers in most areas. Field sparrow: Schenectady CBC Dec 20; Greene Co CBC Dec 29; Delmar mid Jan (BB); East Greenbush thru period (BG). White-crowned sparrow: Ghent Dec 20 (SO); Greene Co CBC Dec 29 (AG). White-throated sparrow: successfully wintered in good numbers; 249 Greene Co CBC. Fox sparrow: appeared on at least three CBCs; not reported in Jan, reappearing Feb 1-8 in Old Chatham (KD & EG). Swamp sparrow: recorded on at least three CBCs in numbers as high as five; and Jan 16-Feb 21 in Ghent (B & HG). Song sparrow: wintered in usual numbers; 20 on Greene Co CBC. Lapland longspur: five min wintered with at least 500 snow buntings on the Coxsackie Flats manure spreads.

- * VIREOS-WARBLEDERS: The only warbler species reported in the region was, as might be expected, the yellow-rumped warbler with six reports thru Jan 25.

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Field Trip Reports (con't. from P. 33)

Locality: Columbia County; Species: 31; Weather: overcast, light rain; Time: 8:50 a.m.-1:00 p.m.; No. in group: 22; Participants: Bill Gorman, E. E. Gorman, D. N. Gorman, N. & M. Fancher, W. Sabin, S & A Madison, N. Kern, Alice Ross and others.

Species: Canada goose (100); mallard (6); black duck (4); wood duck (1); red-tailed hawk (4); Ring-necked pheasant (1); turkey (1); rock dove (50); mourning dove (6); common flicker (2); hairy woodpecker (2); downy woodpecker (3).

Blue jay (30); common crow (80); black-capped chickadee (15); tufted titmouse (1); white-breasted nuthatch (6); mockingbird (4); American robin (50) starling (50); house sparrow (40); red-winged blackbird (50); common grackle (40); cardinal (6); evening grosbeak (50); pine grosbeak (2); American goldfinch (1); dark-eyed junco (10); tree sparrow (6); white throated sparrow (4); song sparrow (1).

--- Bill Gorman

Mar. 7, Sat. - Chubb River Swamp: No Report.

Apr. 11, Sat. - Lower Hudson: Occasional April showers accompanied us, but except for one brief but heavy downpour, we were able to visit all accessible spots planned on without getting wet. Starting at a pond a mile south of Rensselaer, we traveled south to the Hudson River area at Stockport Station. En route we concentrated mainly on the valley wetlands, includ-

MIGRATING BIRDS OVER THE HELDERBERGS

A Report on the 1980 Fall Flights

Charles L. Royal

In the 31-day period October 3, 1980 through November 2, 1980, 1,713 migrating birds were counted at the Camp Pinnacle Lookout in the Helderberg Mountains southwest of Albany. The weather for the period was unusually cold, averaging 47.4°F, some 4 degrees below normal, according to statistics from the National Weather Service compiled at the Albany County Airport.

Included in the tally of birds were 1,285 Canada geese, 10 snow geese, 403 hawks, 3 common loons, 2 turkey vultures, and 6-10 ducks. The hawks included 209 buteos, 103 accipiters, 20 falcons, 10 Northern harriers, 1 osprey and 60 unidentified raptors. No attempt was made to count the thousands of crows, blue jays, robins, sparrows, and other species that flew by the Lookout.

Breaking the hawk figures down further: Buteos--140 red-tailed, 13 broad-winged, 7 red-shouldered, 4 rough-legged, 45 unidentified. Accipiters--58 sharp-shinned, 8 northern goshawks, 5 Cooper's, 32 unidentified. Falcons--12 American kestrel, 2 merlin, 6 unidentified.

While the observations concentrated on the October 3 - November 2 period, the preceding days were also productive. In fact, the paramount sighting occurred on September 15 at about 11:30 am when a golden eagle was observed moving in majestic flight across the valley at a very high altitude. The eagle flew by on its way south just to the west of two excited bird watchers on the Lookout below.

Also in September 52 hawks, most of them broad-winged, were counted on the 10th of the month. One turkey vulture was seen on September 18. These, however, were random sightings, recorded preliminary to the in-depth study which began October 3.

At varied times 11 bird watchers participated in this study, although many of them didn't know that an actual study was being done. Participants were Bob Marx, Arthur and Dorothy Long, Walt Sabin, Dr. and Mrs. Kenneth Able, Dr. Harry Judge, Timothy Judge, Dr. Clifford Tepper, Janet Carroll, and Charles Royal.

I stayed in one of the family cabins at Camp Pinnacle, a year-round resort for evangelical Christians operated by the Albany Bible Institute, throughout the period, returning to my home in Schenectady only at those times when wind or weather

Migrating Birds (con't.)

conditions were unfavorable. The cabin had electricity, propane gas heaters for heat and hot water, and I cooked my meals on a two-burner electric hot plate. It was a lonely but most interesting experience.

On watch days I was at the Lookout from about 8 a.m. to 4:30 pm. Other watchers came to the Lookout as their daily schedules allowed. Some were there all day, on occasion; others for only a few hours. Saturdays and Sundays were the most popular days. When the wind chill factor was pronounced, we "watched" from the protection of the front seats of our automobiles. Otherwise, we were out in the open, which was much more pleasant and productive.

It appears that the below normal weather adversely affected the October hawk flights, especially in the latter part of the month. The explanation is in a letter from Jay S. Winston, Director, Climate Analysis Center, National Weather Service, Washington, D.C., who states:



"During October the jet stream took on a more looping pattern, being north of normal over western Canada but turning southeastward across the Great Lakes to enter the Atlantic near Long Island, considerably south of its normal track in eastern North America, which is usually more or less over the St. Lawrence River.

"Temperatures averaged well below normal over the entire northeastern U.S.-southeastern Canada during October, while precipitation was near or slightly below normal. Actually much of the October rainfall came in one storm on the 25th of the month. At this time, the jet stream was even farther south than either the normal or its average position for October..."

Whether or not the cold weather curtailed hawk flights is an hypothesis I am not qualified to advance. I do know, however, from personal observation in late October and early November that the hawks were having great difficulty. The air was too heavy or devoid of buoyancy with the birds struggling to gain altitude before giving up and settling down into the trees.

And yet, our record day, the day we spotted the most hawks, 56 in number, was October 29. One week earlier, on October 22, we counted 55 hawks. I do not consider this to be a contradiction of the previous paragraph.

To check wind directions, I cut down a 25-foot-high birch

Migrating Birds (con't.)

tree, trimmed off the branches, tied yellow ribbons at the top, then raised the pole with its base at the highest spot on the Lookout. On numerous occasions, the wind atop the Lookout blew from a direction that differed markedly from that reported each hour by radio station WGY as blowing at the National Weather Service office at Albany County Airport. Temperatures also varied between the two locations, as did sky conditions.

Ground elevation at the Lookout is about 1,700' above sea level. It is 275' at Albany Airport. The Lookout faces north-northeast and enjoys an unobstructed 210-degree field of vision from 270 degrees due west to about 120 degrees east.

Here, now, is the study chronology (including birds sighted, watchers other than the writer, winds, temperatures, and sky conditions:

October 3: 9 hawks (6 accipiters, 1 kestrel, 2 unidentified); northwest (Weather Bureau, northeast); 53°; foggy, overcast, storm from east at 1:40 p.m.

October 4: 5 hawks (2 accipiters, 1 northern harrier, 2 unidentified), 110 Canada geese; southwest; 51°; sunny then overcast with showers.

October 5: 26 hawks (12 broadwinged, 6 sharp-shinned, 2 kestrel, 1 Cooper's, 1 N.harrier, 1 osprey, 1 buteo, 1 accipiter, 1 unidentified), 113 Canada geese. Dr. Judge, Tim Judge, Dr. and Mrs. Kenneth Able, Mr. and Mrs. Arthur Long, Dr. Clifford Tepper, Bob Marx. Calm, northwest (Weather Bureau, west); 39 to 60°; beautiful, clear day then heavy overcast.

October 6: 11 hawks (5 accipiters, 4 buteos, 1 kestrel, 1 unidentified); 64 Canada geese; northwest, north; 35 to 59°; crystal clear all day.

October 7: 2 accipiters; east, southeast; 43° to 59°; cloudy. Spent most of the day on the hill in front of the Lookout trimming brush and trees (especially a big oak) to improve the view.

October 8: To Schenectady for the day; wind from the south.

October 9: 44 hawks (9 sharp-shinned, 4 kestrel, 3 red-tailed, 1 goshawk, 1 red-shouldered, 1 merlin, 10 accipiters, 3 buteos, 12 unidentified), 11 Canada geese. Bob Marx. Northwest, west; 49 to 56°; clear, gusty.

October 10: To Schenectady; wind from south with heavy fog.

October 11: 1 sharp-shinned, 70 Canada geese late in after-

Migrating Birds (con't.)

noon; southeast, south; 51 to 61°; fog, drizzle. Hudson-Mohawk Bird Club field trip brought four disappointed watchers to the Lookout in swirling fog for a very short stay.

October 12: 20 hawks (9 sharp-shinned, 2 goshawks, 2 buteo, 1 accipiter, 6 unidentified), 567 Canada geese, 10 snow geese, 3 common loons.. Janet Carroll, Mr. and Mrs. Long, Walt Sabin. West (Weather Bureau south, east); 41 to 52°; cold front moved through from 2 p.m. to 4 p.m. with rain showers and blustery winds.

October 13: 28 hawks (15 sharp-shinned, 6 red-tailed, 2 Cooper's, 1 northern harrier, 1 kestrel, 3 unidentified), 125 Canada geese. Walt Sabin. West; 39 to 42°; blustery with snow squalls, like November.

October 14: 15 hawks (5 red-tailed, 2 sharp-shinned, 3 buteos, 5 unidentified). Bob Marx. West; 38 to 51°; clear, sunny but very windy.

October 15: 10 hawks (2 red-tailed, 2 sharp-shinned, 1 Cooper's, 3 buteos, 2 unidentified); mostly east (Weather Bureau south); 37 to 53°; sunny, mild, then overcast; surprisingly good day for hawks, considering winds.

October 16: To Schenectady for day; wind southeast with heavy overcast.

October 17: 2 hawks (1 sharp-shinned, 1 buteo), 6 to 10 ducks flew north across the valley; winds mostly southerly; lovely, hot day; cut birch tree for new wind direction pole.

October 18: Wind from south with fog; rained off and on all day.

October 19: 25 hawks (9 red-tailed, 5 sharp-shinned, 2 goshawks, 1 broad-winged, 1 Cooper's, 1 northern harrier, 3 buteos, 1 accipiter, 2 unidentified), 2 turkey vultures, 80 Canada geese. Harry and Tim Judge, Bob Marx. West; 46 to 60°; clear, windy, then overcast.

October 20: 7 hawks (1 sharp-shinned, 1 goshawk, 1 merlin, 4 falcons); 46 Canada geese; west; 37 to 49°; cloudy, then rain; geese flew over in single file through the rain; the goshawk nearly landed on top of my van; may have made a pass at the papier-mache owl perched atop our "flagpole."

October 21: 5 hawks (1 accipiter, 1 falcon, 3 unidentified); west, southwest (Weather Bureau, south); 41 to 48°; heavy cloud formations moved west to east all day; cold front cleared by 4:30 p.m.

Migrating Birds (con't.)

October 22: 55 hawks (41 red-tailed, 3 sharp-shinned, 3 Northern harriers, 2 rough-legged, 2 kestrel, 1 red-shouldered, 1 Buteo, 2 unidentified). Bob Marx. West; 43 to 47°; outstanding day after cold front; 35 hawks passed between 1 and 4 p.m. while Bob manned the Lookout, I having gone to Schenectady.

October 23: 20 hawks (12 red-tailed, 2 red-shouldered, 1 sharp-shinned, 1 goshawk, 4 unidentified); Bob Marx. Northwest; 39 to 42°; beautiful but cold with fall foliage ablaze with color. We took a side trip from noon to 4 p.m. to Basic Cr and Alcove Reservoirs. Bob identified 3 Bonaparte's gulls and about a dozen yellowlegs at Basic.

October 24: 1 sharp-shinned, 100 Canada geese; winds calm (Weather Bureau east); 20 to 50°; clear.

October 25: 2 unidentified hawks; wind calm (Weather Bureau east); 40 to 43°; cloudy, heavy rain all afternoon and throughout night accompanied by very high winds.

October 26: 1 Accipiter, 1 Northern harrier, 1 unidentified; extremely high winds all day and into the night from west-southwest; 38 to 50°; cloudy.

October 27: 9 hawks (5 red-tailed, 1 rough-legged, 1 sharp-shinned, 1 Northern harrier, 1 Buteo. Bob Marx. West; 41 to 50°; clear, sunny; winds appeared favorable but a disappointing day.

October 28: 2 Buteos, 2 unidentified; winds variable (Weather Bureau west); 37 to 40°; snow on ground, rainy, foggy, weather terrible.

October 29: 56 hawks (35 red-tailed, 1 red-shouldered, 1 Northern harrier, 1 kestrel, 1 goshawk, 12 Buteos, 1 Accipiter, 1 Falcon, 3 unidentified). Bob Marx and Tim Judge. West; 41 to 46°; cloudy overhead most of day but distant visibility excellent all the way to the snowcapped Adirondack Mountains.

October 30: 19 hawks (5 red-tailed, 1 rough-legged, 1 red-shouldered, 5 Buteos, 1 Accipiter, 6 unidentified). West; 38 to 44°; overcast with much haze in valleys.

October 31: 7 hawks (2 red-tailed, 1 sharp-shinned, 4 Buteos). West, southwest (Weather Bureau south); 37 to 66°; much turbulence, heavy cloud formations.

November 1: 17 hawks (15 red-tailed, 1 red-shouldered, 1 unidentified). Bob Marx, Mr. and Mrs. Long. West; 39°; snow on ground with snow flurries; poor day; hawks seemed to be having great difficulty gaining altitude; no buoyance in air?

Migrating Birds (concluded)

November 2: Partly cloudy; fluffy clouds and sun; good brisk wind from west but no hawks, except for one that dipped into the trees below and a second that was forced into the trees by a big helicopter.

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SIX ACRES MARSHLAND

Robert A. Ramonowski

Six Acres Marshland is an area of quiet solitude. During the spring it is partially filled with water from rainfall. Six Acres has tall reeds and brush and is surrounded by some first-growth deciduous trees, mainly oaks, which make for a natural habitat for all the area birds.

The Marshland also has trails that birders can utilize. It is advisable to wear old sneakers, work shoes or boots when birding in this area.



Access to Six Acres is not difficult at all. From Madison Avenue get on Delaware Avenue. Go past Lincoln Park. Still on Delaware Avenue go by Morton Avenue. A pharmacy will be on the left then the Nook Restaurant. Immediately after the restaurant is Mona Terrace. Take a left onto Mona (a very short street). At the stop sign take a right onto View Avenue and you are there.

I observed and recorded the following 20 species of birds at Six Acres during the months of February and March: Red-tailed hawk, Gull species/unidentified, rock dove, mourning dove, downy woodpecker, blue jay, American crow, black-capped chickadee, white-breasted nuthatch, American robin, starling, house sparrow, red-winged blackbird, common grackle, brown-headed cowbird, cardinal, house finch, dark-eyed junco, tree sparrow, song sparrow.

If you're in the area, take time to relax and enjoy this beautiful marsh, a sanctuary within a busy city.

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Note: Robert is a student member of HMBC and appears to be developing into an avid birder.

* * * *

1980 Southern Rensselaer County Christmas Bird Count

Record Number of Raptors Sighted

The fifteenth annual Southern Rensselaer County Christmas Bird Count was held under ideal conditions on December 27, 1980. A total of 55 species and 17,075 individuals were logged by 8 field parties and 24 feeder watchers inside a 15-mile circle with its center at the intersection of Highway 152 and Best-Luther Rd. in the hamlet of Best. Parties were afield from 5:30 a.m. to 6 p.m. in clear weather with temperatures ranging from -4 to 27°F. Winds were 0-10 mph from the west. Snow cover was 2-8 inches; the majority of water was frozen solid.

Although several highlights were noted, by far the most spectacular were the record numbers of raptors sighted and the amazing record of 13 bluebirds. The numbers of sharp-shinned, red-tailed, and rough-legged hawks were several-fold higher than in any previous year. The lone first sighting of the year, although fleeting, was by far the most exciting. Frank Kysor spotted a bald eagle off Third Avenue Ext. on the count afternoon. Three rough-legged hawks were visible in the same field of view and offered a fine size comparison. Two Cooper's hawks, 4 screech owls, and 5 great horned owls rounded out a fine day for birds of prey.

Other birds of note included rusty blackbird, a third sighting, and another record number (for the second consecutive year) of mockingbirds. For the first time in 7 years, the Gorman feeder failed to produce a field sparrow on count day although one was seen during the count period.

Starlings are declining over the entire range of the count, perhaps giving explanation for the sudden rise in bluebird population. Some common visitors were conspicuously absent, including kinglets and siskins (although 2 siskins were spotted at a feeder).

Field participants included 1) Paul Connor, Norm and Marilyn Fancher, Debbie Shaw and William Fitz (Hudson River, W. East Greenbush and Schodack); 2) James Covert and Donald Bermas (Sand Lake-Poestenkill); 3) Ed Cummings and Bill Lee (Schodack); 4) Bill Shuster and Mike Kuhrt (East Greenbush); 5) William and David Gorman (Rensselaer-North Greenbush); 6) Richard Fillion, Greg Meissner, Franklyn and Leslie Gubitza (Averill Park); 7) Bob Budliger and Alice Ross (Menands-North Greenbush); and 8) Richard and Andrew Guthrie, Robert Kornis, Bill Cook and Peter Feinberg (Glenmont-Albany).

Feeder watchers included N. Albertson, Mr. and Mrs. M. Bell, R. Bordt, Mrs. W. Buble, C. Carabateas, R. Christiansen, H. Covert, Mrs. R. Don, Mr. and Mrs. H. Drobeck, F. Dufour,

Southern Rensselaer (con't.)

Mrs. W. Gorman, M. & D. Gruett, P. Gundrum, H. Hargrave, W. Haupt, F. Kysor, Mrs. J. LaPan, G. Loz, D. Messer, A. Mohl, H. Neumann, R. Pearce, D. Shaw, and M. VanBuren.

A Thank-you to all who helped to make our 15th count a memorable and successful day.

* * * * *

1980 Southern Rensselaer County Christmas Bird Count

<u>Species</u>	<u>1</u>	<u>2</u>	<u>3</u>	<u>4</u>	<u>5</u>	<u>6</u>	<u>7</u>	<u>8</u>	<u>F</u>	<u>Totals</u>
Canada Goose			1							1
Sharp-shinned Hawk	1			1			1		1	4
Cooper's Hawk								1	1	2
R-tailed Hawk	23	6	10	10	8	5	19	24	5	110
R-legged Hawk	15	2	7	1	7	1	2	4		39
Bald Eagle									1	1
Am Kestrel	2	1	4	2	4	1	3	6		23
Hawk sp.									2	2
Ruffed Grouse	2			3	1				1	7
R-necked Pheasant			1			1			3	5
Herring Gull					1			7		8
Ringed-bill Gull					2					2
Rock Dove	305	617	131	40	100	42	30	195		1460
Mourning Dove	43	22	70	46	50	15	15	49	249	559
Screech Owl					3			1		4
Gr Horned Owl	2				2	1				5
Belted Kingfisher			1							1
Common Flicker	3				4		4	1		12
Pil Woodpecker						1			2	3
Hairy Woodpecker		6	1	9	7	6	4	3	18	54
Downy Woodpecker	24	6	7	11	16	8	24	40	36	172
Horned Lark	176		38			25	1			240
Blue Jay	40	76	52	55	35	34	70	70	176	608
Common Crow	105	66	121	46	15	142	110	20	20	645
Blk-cap Chickadee	67	86	74	112	60	50	110	93	230	882
Tufted Titmouse	6			7	15		7	11	41	81
Wh-br Nuthatch	8	3	5	10	16	4	8	15	33	102
Red-br Nuthatch			1		2	1			5	9
Brown Creeper	1	1			1			1		4
Mockingbird	8	5	3	9	6	7	9	6	11	64
Am Robin	13		5		2		25	106	2	153
Hermit Thrush				1	1			2		4
Eastern Bluebird		8	4				1			13
Cedar Waxwing	9	40		10			3	2		64
Starling	160	289	271	167	5K	73	130	1026	233	7349
House Sparrow	140	102	203	239	30	50	150	208	213	1335
East. Meadowlark						1				1
R-winged Blkbird	10								1	11

Southern Rensselaer (con't.)

<u>Species</u>	<u>1</u>	<u>2</u>	<u>3</u>	<u>4</u>	<u>5</u>	<u>6</u>	<u>7</u>	<u>8</u>	<u>F</u>	<u>Totals</u>
Rusty Blkbird								3		3
Common Grackle	1									1
Br-headed Cowbird					2	1		138	7	148
Cardinal	16	3	2	26	16	5	18	24	50	181
Eve. Grosbeak	84	125	44	92	30	63	28	33	426	925
Purple Finch		6		11					31	48
House Finch	50			5	13		60	9	193	330
Pine Grosbeak		35			2	14	6	3		60
Com Redpoll		3	3				50	2		58
Pine Siskin									2	2
Am Goldfinch	17	12	6	50	4	9	10	11	97	216
Dk.-eyed Junco	18	7	20	15	30	21	40	24	149	324
Tree Sparrow	61	18	41	134	18	34	40	27	58	431
Wh-thr Sparrow	5			9	14	1		27	22	78
Swamp Sparrow	2				1			1		4
Song Sparrow	5		1	2	5		3	13	1	30
Lapland Longspur	1									1
Snow Bunting	102		64			25				191

Total Species 55

Total Individuals 17,075

--Michael Kuhrt, Compiler

51st ANNUAL SCHENECTADY CHRISTMAS BIRD COUNT

December 20, 1980

Record Highs of Many Species Tallied

William J. Lee

The 1980 Schenectady Christmas Bird Count began its second 50 years with record high counts of individuals and of many species, with more than 50% more individual birds tallied than last year's approximately 9,100 individuals. Record high numbers of Red-tailed Hawk, Ruffed Grouse, Screech Owl, Pileated and Downy Woodpeckers, Blue Jay, Black-capped Chickadee, Mockingbird, Brown Thrasher, Hermit Thrush, Cardinal, House Finch, White-throated Sparrow, and even Rock Dove and Starling were recorded. Although the number of individuals and many species counts were at all time highs, the species count was exactly the same as in 1979, 55 species.

For the first time, more than a single Brown Thrasher was

Schenectady Bird Count (con't.)

recorded; and the seven Hermit Thrushes far exceeds the previous high of two, recorded on only two earlier counts. The single Field Sparrow was recorded for only the third time, the last recorded during the 1970 count.

The lack of open water reduced waterfowl numbers, with only a few Blacks and Mallards recorded. The single Herring Gull on the Mohawk River near the Niskayuna Landfill was the only gull to be found.

The thirty-four field observers were joined by four feeder watchers, and a CBS television network news crew who flew up from New York City to film Group G in the field. The camera crew, dressed in city clothes and footwear, were quite unprepared for -16° temperature and the ten inches of snow cover in many of the locations included in Group G's territory. Although the TV crew got away before their count fees could be collected, they remained long enough to "shoot" sufficient film for a featured segment on the CBS morning news narrated by Charles Kuralt and which was used in local news broadcasts by many television stations throughout the country.

* * * * *

Schenectady, N.Y. ($42^{\circ} 45'N$, $73^{\circ} 55'W$); (15 mile circle centered at Lydius Street and Lone Pine Road in Guilderland); December 20, 1980; 5:45 a.m. to 5:00 p.m.; A.M. clear, P.M. partly cloudy; temperature, $-16^{\circ}F$; wind WNW, 0-12 MPH; snow cover 6-10"; water, mostly frozen; wild food crop, fair.

Thirty-eight observers: 34 in 9 parties, 4 at feeders; total party hours, 83 (31.25 on foot, 51.75 by car) plus 10 hours at feeders. Total party miles, 492 (63.5 on foot; 428.5 by car).

Key to Groups:

Group A: Robert P. Yunick. South shore of Mohawk River from Rexford to Mohawk View including part of Balltown, River and Rosendale Roads, Lock 7 and Niskayuna Landfill. 6:45 a.m. to 2:00 p.m. 10 miles afoot; 35 miles by car. $5\frac{1}{4}$ hours afoot; 2 by car. Herring Gull.

Group B: Robert Marx, David Pannone, Charles Royal. North shore of Mohawk River from Rexford to Vischer's Ferry. 8:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m.. Eleven miles by car; 5 hours by car.

Group C: Paul Hebert, Betty Hicks, Theodore Koniowka, Jr., Bill Lee. Albany Airport, Ann Lee Pond, Shaker Farm, Karner Road, Route 155 area. 7:45 a.m. to 3:45 p.m. 3 miles afoot, 57 by car. 2 hours afoot, 6 by car. Northern shrike, ring-

Schenectady Bird Count (con't.)

necked pheasant.

Group D: Arthur and Dee Long. Five-Mile Waterworks, State University Campus. 9:10 a.m. to 12:10 p.m. 2 miles afoot; 8.5 by car. 1 hour afoot; 2 by car.

Group E: Robert Budliger, Fred Mapes, Barbara Mateunas, Alice Ross, James Suozzo. Reist Sanctuary, Central Park, Coltonie Golf Course, portion of Pine Bush north of Thruway and west of Route 155. 7:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m.. 3 miles afoot; 60 by car. 5 hours afoot; 4 by car. Sharp-shinned hawk.

Group F: Wynn McMullen, Alan and Lois Schroeder. Karner Road-Pine Bush, Old State Road, Watervliet Reservoir. 6:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. 10 miles afoot; 48 by car. 4½ hours afoot; 5½ by car.

Group G: William Brooks, Richard Guthrie, Samuel Madison, Walton Sabin. Black Creek Marsh, Meadowdale, Krum Hill, and points between Vorheesville and Altamont. 7:30 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. 5 miles afoot; 46 by car. 1½ hours afoot; 8 by car. Goshawk, Harrier.

Group H: William Cleveland, Charles Cobb, Thomas Cobb, Michael Crevier, Thomas Lyons. Altamont, Settles Hill, and a portion of Princetown, area west of Route 158, Gardnersville Road and Route 146. 7:55 a.m. to 2:35 p.m. 2½ miles afoot; 81 by car. 1 hour afoot; 9 1/4 by car. Purple finch, pine grosbeak.

Group I: Douglass and Judy Allen, Carol and James D'Aleo, Bernie and Chris Grossman, Tom Palmer. Parts of Scotia including Collins Lake, Mohawk River from Schenectady County Community College to count boundary west of Lock 8, Vale Cemetery, parts of Rotterdam, Princetown, and Duanesburg. 5:45 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. 28 miles afoot; 80 by car. 11 hours afoot; 10 by car--some as separate parties. Horned lark, winter wren, brown thrasher, field sparrow.

Feeder Watchers: Laura Farrer, Dawn Force, Lee Thomas, Beverly Waite, Robert Yunick. Eastern Bluebird.

* * * *

1980 SCHENECTADY CHRISTMAS BIRD COUNT

<u>Species</u>	<u>A</u>	<u>B</u>	<u>C</u>	<u>D</u>	<u>E</u>	<u>F</u>	<u>G</u>	<u>H</u>	<u>I</u>	<u>FW</u>	<u>Totals</u>
Mallard	1			9		7	11				28
Black Duck						8	3				11
Goshawk							1				1

Schenectady Count (con't.)

<u>Species</u>	<u>A</u>	<u>B</u>	<u>C</u>	<u>D</u>	<u>E</u>	<u>F</u>	<u>G</u>	<u>H</u>	<u>I</u>	<u>FW</u>	<u>Totals</u>
Sh-shin Hawk					1						1
Accipiter sp		1									1
R-tail Hawk	4	1	8		3	6	21	10	9		62
Ro-leg Hawk						1	11	3			5
N Harrier							1				1
Am Kestrel			2			1		1	5		9
Ruffed Grouse	9	3				1			7		20
R-nkd Pheasant			2								2
Herring Gull	1										1
Rock Dove	1	64	237		30	12	32	43	76	20	513
Mourning Dove	87	18	14		8	8	82	6	364	77	664
Screech Owl	2						1		3		6
Gr Horned Owl					1				1		2
Belt K'fisher						2			2		4
Com Flicker	1					2	3		2		8
Pil Woodpkr	1	1			2		2				6
Hairy Woodpkr	2	4			4		8		6	10	34
Downy Woodpkr	21	11	3	4	8	11	22	8	14	22	124
Horned Lark									2		2
Blue Jay	60	55	56	14	40	61	68	86	92	90	622
Common Crow	211	120	343	4	80	163	51	178	286	2	1,438
Blk-cap Chkdee	92	279	48	16	60	69	115	66	144	29	918
Tufted Titmouse	6	4	10	5	23	13	13	1	21	7	103
Wh-br Nuthatch	12	26	5	2	12	7	13	5	22	7	111
Red-br Nuthatch				1	2	5	1		1	2	12
Brown Creeper	1	2			12	1	1		2		19
Winter Wren									2		2
Mockingbird	8	4	2	1	3	7	14	10	5	2	56
Br Thrasher									2		2
Am Robin	31	42	1		2	4	70	1	9		160
Hermit Thrush	4						2		1		7
E. Bluebird										5	5
Cedar Waxwing	6				10	2	10	1			29
N. Shrike			1								1
Starling	396	173	1216	13	140	1899	844	340	563	30	5,614
House Sparrow	61	63	47	22	240	93	152	77	197	200	1,152
R-wing Blkbird			1						21		22
Br-head Cowbd		1		1			4				6
Cardinal	45	32	7	2	12	8	16	8	53	35	218
Eve Grosbeak		19			2	5	29	69	50	10	184
Purple Finch								10		3	13
House Finch	7	38	4	8	5	14		60	107	49	292
Pine Grosbeak								2			2
Com Redpoll	31		12	20	10	27	2		20		122
Pine Siskin				20	7				19	6	52
Am Goldfinch	7	9	6	1	70	21	38	1	62	20	235
Dk-eyed Junco	3	12	11	6	10	16	52	6	46	22	184
Tree Sparrow	33	14	21	2	20	14	57	61	126	3	351
Field Sparrow									1		1

Schenectady Count (concluded)

<u>Species</u>	<u>A</u>	<u>B</u>	<u>C</u>	<u>D</u>	<u>E</u>	<u>F</u>	<u>G</u>	<u>H</u>	<u>I</u>	<u>FW</u>	<u>Totals</u>
Wh-thr Sparrow	17	30			1	1	47	15	28	23	162
Swamp Sparrow	1						3				4
Song Sparrow	2	1	6		2	6	1	3	6		27
Snow Bunting						2		75	4		81
No. of Species	32	26	24	19	30	32	36	27	40	23	
Total Count	1164	1027	2063	151	820	2496	1791	1146	2382	674	13,714
Number of species for Count - 55											

F I E L D T R I P S

Jan. 11, Sun. - Annual State Duck Count: No Report.

Jan 24-25, Sat.-Sun. - Cape Ann-Plum Island: No Report.

Feb. 7, Sat. - Coxsackie Flats: No Report.

Feb. 14, Sat. - Bald Eagle Trip: No Report.

Feb. 28, Sat. - Columbia County: A group of 22 Hudson-Mohawk birders assembled to search part of Columbia County for wild turkeys and other birds. We picked up Nancy Kern and Adi Jacquay and headed west on Rigor Hill Road. We soon found several Canada geese and some mallards. Stopping further down the road we found wood duck, flicker, and many robins. We walked through parts of the Dyer Farm looking for wild turkeys without success. We then drove around the area, stopping periodically to check for local birds. A light drizzle began, but we continued on to a local pheasant farm, picking up mockingbird, red-tailed hawk, evening grosbeak, tree sparrows, etc. along the way. As we headed back, we stopped to watch a pair of pine grosbeaks and while we were stopped, we noticed one lone wild turkey foraging beneath some trees. Although it was still raining lightly, we all managed to get a good look at the turkey. When we brought Nancy Kern home, her folks invited us all in for cake and coffee. We ended the day with 31 species.

(Con't. on P. 20)

Field Trips (con't. from P. 20)

ing creeks and marshes.

Locality: Lower Hudson; Rensselaer to Stockport Station;
Species: 43; Time: 8:00 a.m.-1:00 p.m.; Number in group: 14;
Weather: cloudy, scattered showers, breezy; Temp.: 52^oF-
62^oF.

Species: Common loon (15); horned grebe (2); Canada goose (57); mallard (50+); black duck (70+); greenwinged teal (17); blue-winged teal (2); wood duck (2) and common merganser (60). In the Papscaene Marshes only the usual red-winged blackbirds (abundant) and about a dozen singing swamp sparrows were noted, since the date is too early for most of the marsh denizens. Kingfishers were numerous along Schodack Creek and elsewhere (8 seen). The Stockport area was active. Here pectoral sandpipers (23) were sighted, and two horned grebes near shore were in different plumages (one in breeding and one mainly in winter feathers). At the official end of the trip, some of the observers continued further south along the river.

Additional species: Sharp-shinned hawk (1 or 2); red-tailed hawk (10); American kestrel (2); killdeer (4); greater black-backed gull (8); herring gull (6); ring-billed gull (1); rock dove (10); mourning dove (25); # common flicker (8); downy woodpecker (2); tree swallow (10); common crow (20); black-capped chickadee (6); tufted titmouse (4); white-breasted nuthatch (1); mockingbird (2); American robin (abundant); ruby-crowned kinglet (1); starling (common); house sparrow, common grackle (abundant); brown-headed cowbird (10); cardinal (6); evening grosbeak (3); house finch (5); American goldfinch (4); dark-eyed junco (6); song sparrow (25).

--- Paul F. Connor

#Belted kingfisher (8)

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Apr. 18, Sat. - Saratoga and Round Lakes: A group of 18 birders gathered at Round Lake at 8 a.m. on Saturday, April 18, 1981. Our long line-up of cars attracted the curiosity of three neighborhood residents. All had been feeding birds at their feeders and were interested in learning more about the Club. Asked them to write down their name and addresses and promised to send them informational material.

Skies were overcast and the temperature was 55 degrees. We sighted a pair of shovelers, several pied-bill grebes, a common loon, Canada geese, tree swallows, and with very poor light conditions we were unable to determine whether we were seeing scaup or redheads.

Field Trips (con't.)

By the time we had arrived at Saratoga Lake the weather had changed considerably. Clearing skies with a strong westerly wind created whitecaps on the lake and the temperature started to fall. We spotted more geese, pied-billed grebes, and loons, and had a nice close look at buffleheads, male and female. Next, a red-tailed hawk was seen and a broad-winged hawk circled directly overhead, giving us a close look at its long, broadly-barred tail. We also observed some ruby-crowned kinglets. The call of a pileated woodpecker came from a patch of mature hardwoods across the highway.

Four Bonaparte's gulls were pirouetting over the surface of the water at the east end of the lake and a mourning dove was silhouetted against the sky on its nest high in a pine tree. In the same tree a chipping sparrow tipped his head back in full song. Wood ducks were sighted next and we had another look at Bonaparte's gulls. A passing motorboat sent a group of 45 Canada geese skyward where they circled and then took off in formation.

On our way to the other side of the lake, in the outlet to Lake Lonely, a blue-winged teal was sighted and a good look was had by one and all. Next, one member of our sharp-eyed group spotted a pectoral sandpiper who was perfectly camouflaged against a mound of dirt at the edge of a farm pond. Killdeer and barn swallows also were seen at this stop. The call of a meadowlark caught our ears and we were fortunate to spot him landing in a tree and were able to get good views of his golden-yellow breast with the big black "V."

At our last stop at the north side of the lake, nothing new was sighted with the exception of our one and only cardinal for the day, a glorious sight as always. A budding-birder friend recently described a cardinal as a "Royal Canadian Mounted Policeman without a hat." A very apt description, wouldn't you agree?

We tallied our species count for the day at 49 species and agreed that we all had enjoyed a fine day's outing, sharing the expertise and camaraderie of fellow birders from novice to those of vast experience and all the various stages in between! We departed for home at 1:30 p.m. after a very satisfying morning.

Locality: Saratoga and Round Lakes; Species: 49; Time: 8:00 a.m. - 1:30 p.m.; Participants: 18; Weather: overcast and 55° - turned out clear with westerly cold winds within an hour.

Species: Common Loon (5); pied-billed grebe (6); Canada goose (75); mallard (8); black duck (6); blue-winged teal (1); Northern shoveler (3); wood duck (4); lesser scaup (3); bufflehead (6); red-breasted merganser (3); red-tailed hawk (1); broad-winged hawk (2); killdeer (5); pectoral sandpiper (1);

Field Trips (con't.)

Herring gull (70); ring-billed gull (20); Bonaparte's gull (4); rock dove (6); mourning dove (6); belted kingfisher (4); common flicker (3); pileated woodpecker (2); hairy woodpecker (2); downy woodpecker (2); Eastern phoebe (3); tree swallow; barn swallow (2); blue jay (2); common crow (3); black-capped chickadee, white-breasted nuthatch (2); American robin; ruby-crowned kinglet (2); starling; house sparrow (6); Eastern meadow lark (2); red-winged blackbird; common grackle; brown-headed cowbird (6); cardinal (1); evening grosbeak (6); purple finch (1); house finch (6); American goldfinch (2); dark-eyed junco (6); chipping sparrow (1); white-throated sparrow (1); song sparrow (10).

---Alice G. Ross

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Apr. 25, Sat. - Woodcock and Owls: Although the weather was overcast and cold (45° F), 35 members turned out to witness the woodcock's "sky dance." One of our resident woodcock was very cooperative, putting on a great display of this courtship behavior. The lighting was such that we could observe the woodcock through his whole flight. Canada geese and mallards flew back and forth across the twilight sky.

Most of the group continued on to the Vlomankill trail, hoping to attract screech or great horned owls with a tape recorder. The wind made it difficult, but we got a brief response from a great horned owl. Some owl pellets were found and investigated under a hemlock tree.

Considering the weather, this trip was very successful.

Locality: Five Rivers Environmental Education Center, Delmar; Species: 8; Weather: cloudy; Wind: 15 MPH; Temperature: 45° F; Time 6:30 to 8:45 p.m.; Participants: 34.

Species: Canada goose; mallard; American woodcock; great horned owl; dark-eyed junco; chipping sparrow; white-throated sparrow; song sparrow.

---Alan A. Mapes

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May 2-3, Sat.-Sun. - Bombay Hook National Wildlife Refuge: No report.

DIAL-A-BIRD 377-9600....DIAL-A-BIRD 377-9600...DIAL-A-BIRD.....

Field Trip Reports (con't.)

May 3, Sun. - Henry G. Reist Wildlife Sanctuary: The drumming of a ruffed grouse and the staccatto hammering of a pileated woodpecker were two of the woods' sounds identified by the group of fourteen birders who participated in this trip through our sanctuary.

A total of 27 species were observed including red-breasted nuthatch, solitary vireos, warbling vireo, several yellow-rumped warblers, and a great crested flycatcher.

Locality: Henry G. Reist Wildlife Sanctuary; Species: 27; Weather: clear; Wind 10-15 mph; Temperature: 40-60^oF; Time: 8-11 a.m.; Leaders: Alfred and Shirley Schadow; Participants: 14.

Species: Sharp-shinned hawk (3); red-tailed hawk (2); broad-winged hawk (1); ruffed grouse (heard); rock dove; pileated woodpecker (heard); hairy woodpecker; downy woodpecker; great crested flycatcher (1); blue jay; common crow; black-capped chickadee; tufted titmouse; white-breasted nuthatch; red-breasted nuthatch; brown creeper; gray catbird (heard); American robin; solitary vireo (2); warbling vireo (1); yellow-rumped warbler; common grackle; brown-headed cowbird; cardinal; house finch; white-throated sparrow; song sparrow.

---A. J. Schadow

May 9, Sat. - Black Creek Marsh-Annual Pancake Breakfast:
No Report.

May 16, Sat. - Bird Banding at Vischer Ferry Historic and Nature Preserve; The annual bird banding field trip took place at Vischer Ferry with Bob Yunick and Bob Pantel of Ithaca working from the tailgates of their cars.

Due to the newspaper publicity, eighteen non-club members attended.

Although the early morning skies were grey, rain didn't arrive until 9:30 and by then the two banders had given a whole show. I have attended the spring bird banding for 17 years now and I still get a thrill from observing a bird in the hands of the gentle, accurate, dedicated bird banders.

Twenty-one species were banded with the most interesting

Field Trips (concluded)

a Northern oriole banded by Bob Yunick at least ten years before.

Species: Black-capped chickadee (1); house wren (1); gray catbird (18); American robin (3); wood thrush (6); veery (4); warbling vireo (2); black-and-white warbler (1); yellow warbler (5); Northern waterthrush (4); common yellowthroat (12); Canada warbler (1); American redstart (2); red-winged blackbird (2); Northern oriole (2); common grackle (1); brown-headed cowbird (5); rose-breasted grosbeak (3); American goldfinch (2); swamp sparrow (4); song sparrow (6).

85 individuals

---Lois Norton

- - - - -

Big Bird

Fossil evidence of the world's largest known flying bird was recently uncovered in South America by two researchers from the La Plata Museum in Argentina. The bird, which may belong to a new genus in the Teratornis family, had a wingspan of 25 feet and was 11 feet long and 6 feet high. Markings on the fossilized bones suggest that the teratorn was capable of flight. The 5-to-8-million year-old fossils were studied by Kenneth E. Campbell of the Natural History Museum of Los Angeles during a recent National Geographic Expedition to the area.

---Massachusetts Audubon Society, Field Notes

- - - - -

BREEDING BIRD ATLAS PROJECT WINGING INTO SECOND YEAR

This year's effort at atlasing the breeding species in New York State is concerned with Block B, the second of the 5x5 km sections of the 10 x 10 km square. HELP is needed to successfully complete the Atlas Project. If you can volunteer, contact Richard P. Guthrie, Coordinator for our Region (756-9094). If you are wondering just what happens when a survey is made of a section, join the BREEDING BIRD ATLAS SAFARI (See Field Trip List) planned for July 11. Dick is the coordinator and you should make reservations for the trip by June 21. Vermont and Massachusetts engaged in this effort and came up with some exciting information regarding birds not before thought to be breeding in those states.

Letter to the Editor

The following appeared in THE LINNAEAN NEWS LETTER on February 21, 1980 and is used with the permission of the Linnaean Society.

"I don't know about other bird-watchers, but I wince when I hear flagrant mispronunciations of bird names.

"I've decided to write this article using the Webster's Collegiate Dictionary, the Funk and Wagnall's College Dictionary, and in some cases, Collier's Encyclopedia to back up the correct pronunciation of bird names. I even used the Webster Unabridged Dictionary for words like pomarine.

"What follows is an alphabetical list of those bird names, sometimes mispronounced. The first list is that of birds we would expect to see in our region. The second list is that of a few birds that are rare or accidental that often come up in our reading.

gyrfalcon: the g sound is the same as in the j in jay and not the g in gull.

glaucous gull: The au sound rhymes with the au in taut and not the ow in cow.

hawk, ferruginous: The g in ferruginous is the sound of g in gin and not the g in gilt.

jaegar, pomarine: The i sound in pomarine rhymes like the i in mine or the i in bin. Strange as it seems the i sound is not that of the i in marine.

merganser: The accent is on the gan syllable and not on the mer syllable. The s sound is that of the s in sir and not the s in reason.

murre: The urre sound rhymes with purr and not with tour. (Although you need a tour to see any number of them).

scaup: The au rhymes with the au in taut.

"Now for some exotics which are not unknown to Florida or Texas. These are birds we rarely or never see in New York.

chachalaca: The chacha is pronounced like the South American dance step. The ch is pronounced like the ch in chat.

jacana: Jacana is derived from the Portuguese. In one source, jac is pronounced yass. Another authority writes that the jac rhymes with pack. In both authorities the accent is on the first syllable.

-- Charles Staloff

Ed. note: The original letter was longer but had to be condensed here because of space limitations.

HMBC went on a field trip.
 Hollis Brooks wandered off from us, down an airstrip
 He 'wakened a short-ear that started to fly
 Arousing some other owls sleeping nearby.
 One by one other owls took off from the ground.
 A total of nineteen were flying around.
 To the left, to the right, and in front of us yet!
 That sure was one bird trip I'll never forget!

-- Virginia S. Sabin

- - - - -

WELCOME TO NEW MEMBERS

A welcome to Timothy K. Judge, Myra and Ted Prown, and
 Mark Hamilton. Arise early and join the many field trips
 planned for the coming months.

- - - - -

NOTE: The deadline for material for the Summer 1981
 issue of FEATHERS is August 15.

* * * * *

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 Spring
 1981



Shirley Schadow, Editor
 230 Lake Hill Road
 Burnt Hills, N.Y. 12027

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NEW GROUP RECORD OF 134 SPECIES SET ON CENTURY RUN

by Robert P. Yunick

Despite what was considered unfavorable weather and a poor day for birding, one of the 11 groups participating in the 36th consecutive Guy Bartlett Century Run on May 16, 1981 set a new individual group record of 134 species. The old record of 129 had been set in 1965. Also, paradoxically, the total of 172 species and two hybrids was a remarkable tally and stands second only to last year's newly-established 180 and one hybrid. The previous record had been 168 in 1971.

This year's weather was a far cry from the nearly perfect conditions that contributed to last year's record. A slowly moving low-pressure system spawned over Missouri/Illinois on May 14 came northeast over Lake Erie by May 15 and followed the St. Lawrence to Montreal by the 16th. It brought showers on the 15th and 16th (0.34 in.); and its trailing cold front brought westerly winds late in the day on Saturday, the 16th, followed by a temperature drop into the low 40's that night. On count day itself, the temperature ranged 55 to 76°F. All in all, it was not favorable weather for bird migration or field work by the 47 participants.

Nevertheless, birders were afield from 0100 to 2100 combing their favorite local haunts. Six of the groups exceeded 100 species. No new species were added to the composite list of 239 and two hybrids for the first time in six years. The total of 47 observers is the highest number of participants since 1969, and perhaps having more eyes and ears afield is a definite contributor to a large list. The leader of the group with the record 134 species commented on how the group missed 23 known local breeders, and with that he forecasted that given a decent day, a list of 150+ species was attainable. Here's hoping, but for as many years as there have been Century Runs, participants have bemoaned those obvious "misses" that occur each year.

With a near-record list of 172 species, most of the usual wading birds, hawks, shorebirds, and gulls were logged. Among the waterfowl, however, some of the diving ducks that appear from time to time were conspicuously absent. Some people commented about the scarcity of Black Duck. The rarest of finds, those recorded 10 times or less in 36 years were the following:

Century Run (con't.)

The gadwall was only the second record, having been first reported in 1977; the white-rumped sandpiper was the sixth report, last in 1970; dunlin for the tenth time; barn owl for the third time and third consecutive year; willow flycatcher for the fifth time since the A.O.U. name change in 1975 (the alder flycatcher which also came into recognition at that time was missed this year and has been reported only three times since 1975); short-billed marsh wren for the eighth time; Brewster's warbler for the sixth time and Lawrence's for the fifth; cerulean warbler for the 10th time; Connecticut for the fourth time and last reported in 1966; mourning warbler for the ninth time; orchard oriole for the ninth time and third consecutive year; and fox sparrow for only the fourth time, last in 1970. Also noteworthy was a report of black-crowned night heron. While reported 15 times previously, this is the first report since 1962. Also, the tree sparrow report is extraordinarily late considering the earliness of spring this year.

Among the missing birds, there were no grebes reported, nor gray-cheeked thrush (Swainson's reported by one group only), and white-crowned sparrow. Whip-poor-will, common nighthawk, ruby-throated hummingbird, and purple martin reports were spotty. Compared to last year, when there were 33 species reported by one group only, there were only 18 such species this year. Also, whereas last year every group contributed at least one species to that list of 33, this year there were three groups that made no such contribution, even though two of them had lists of 109 and 81 species.

Congratulations go to those who set yet again new records, and thanks to all who participated.

The following is the list of groups, giving names of participants, areas visited, etc. The species listed with a group are those recorded by that group only.

Key to Groups:

Group A: Mike DiGiorgio, Sam Hoye, Dana Mather, Tom Palmer, and Betsy Potts. 0600 to 1900. Fulton County 89 species. Water pipit and mourning warbler.

Group B: Douglass Allen. 0500-0900 and 1630-2030. Miskayuna Widewaters, Rosendale Rd., Lock 8, West Hill, and Mariaville. 96 species and one hybrid. Connecticut warbler and Wilson's warbler.

Group C: C. George, W. Huntley, R. McCullough, and N. Slack. 0330-2100. Black Creek Marsh, Thacher Park, Vischer Ferry, Glenville Hills, and Saratoga Lake. 102 species. Cooper's Hawk.

Group D: Robert P. Yunick, James C. Covert III, and Nancy Dennis. 0430-1300. Banding at Vischer Ferry and Niskayuna. 35 species.

Century Run (con't.)

Group E: K. P. Able, V. Bingman, and B. Noon. 0100-2100. Berne, Black Creek Marsh, Thacher Park, Basic Creek Res., Alcove Res., Coxsackie, Vosburgh Marsh, Hudson River, Pine Bush, SUNYA, Round and Saratoga Lakes, Albany. 134 species. Sharp-shinned hawk, white-rumped sandpiper, barn owl, Swainson's thrush, and golden-crowned kinglet.



Group F: Thomas Cobb, Charles Cobb, and William Cleveland. 0300-2000. Seward, Sharon, Cobleskill, Lawyersville, Carlisle, Sloansville, and Schoharie, all within Schoharie Co. 81 species.

Group G: R. Budliger, W. Lee, A. Mapes, J. and W. Suozzo, W. Brooks, and J. Langner. 0300-2000. Delmar, Whitbeck Preserve, Black Creek and Tygert Marsh, Thacher Park, Niskayuna Widewaters, Pine Bush, Cohoes, Alcove and Basic Creek Res., Bear Swamp, Huyck Preserve, all within Albany Co. Gadwall and (Brewster's warbler.)

Group H: W. Gorman, M. Gruett, M. Kuhrt, P. Connor, N. Fancher and M. Fancher. 0300-2045. Castleton Marsh, Cherry Plain, Delmar, Black Creek Marsh, Vischer Ferry, Round and Saratoga Lakes. 109 species.

Group I: Hollis Ingraham, Robert Kornes, Samuel Madison, Carl Parker, and Walton Sabin. Black Creek Marsh, Indian Ladder, New Salem Reservoir, Delmar, Niskayuna Widewaters, Lock 7, Stony Creek Res., Crescent, Colonie Landfill, Halfmoon, Mechanicville, Round and Saratoga Lakes, Saratoga. 105 species. Bobwhite.

Group J: R. Guthrie, Andrew Guthrie, P. Feinberg, Bill Cook, Lester Thomas, Tommy Williams. Warren, Washington, Saratoga, Schenectady, Albany, and Greene Co. 120 species. Black-crowned night heron, American coot, and pectoral sandpiper.



Group K: Garry and Abby Stone, Blake and Linda White. Washington Co. 66 species. Northern harrier, tree sparrow, and fox sparrow.

GUY BARTLETT CENTURY RUN
May 16, 1981

Common Loon	a c e ghij	Blk-cr Night Heron	j
Do-cr Cormorant	b e g ij	Least Bittern	e j
Gr Blue Heron	bc ef h jk	American Bittern	e j
Green Heron	abc e ghijk	Canada Goose	c efghi

Century Run (con't.)

Mallard	abcdefghijkl	Common Nighthawk	hi k
Black Duck	a ghij	Chimney Swift	abc efghijk
Gadwall	g	R-thr Hummingbird	c ef i
Green-winged Teal	a f	Bel Kingfisher	abc efghijk
Blue-winged Teal	bc e g j	Common Flicker	abc efghijk
Wood Duck	abc efghij	Pil Woodpecker	abc g i
Common Merganser	a f j	Red-headed "	ef
Red-breasted "	e j	Yel bel Sapsucker	ab ef h
Turkey Vulture	c ef ij	Hairy Woodpecker	ab fghijk
Sh-shinned Hawk	e	Downy "	abc efghijk
Cooper's Hawk	c	Eastern Kingbird	a c efghijk
* Red-tailed Hawk	abc efghijk	Gr cr Flycatcher	abc efghijk
* Broad-winged "	a e ghij	Eastern Phoebe	abc efghijk
N. Harrier	k	Willow Flycatcher	c ij
Osprey	c e h	Least "	abcdefghijkl
Am Kestrel	abc efghijk	East Wood Pewee	ef
Ruffed Grouse	c efghi k	Horned Lark	a j
Bobwhite	i	Tree Swallow	abcdefghijkl
R-necked Pheasant	b e ghij	Bank Swallow	abcdefghijkl
Virginia Rail	c e ghij	R-winged "	abc e gh j
Sora	c e ghij	Barn "	abc efghijk
Com Gallinule	gh j	Cliff Swal"ow	a efgh j
American Coot	j	Purple Martin	a hi
Semi-pal Plover	e g j	Blue Jay	abcdefghijkl
Killdeer	abcdefghijkl	Common Crow	abcdefghijkl
Am Woodcock	b e ghijk	Blk-cap Chickadee	abcdefghijkl
Common Snipe	abc f hi	Tufted Titmouse	bcde ghij
Upland Sandpiper	a e j	Wh-br Nuthatch	abc efghijk
Spotted "	abc efghij	Red-br "	b e g
Solitary "	ab e h	Brown Creeper	e h jk
Gr Yellowlegs	c e g j	House Wren	abcdefghijkl
Lesser "	h j	Winter Wren	a c e g i k
Pectoral Sandpiper	j	Long-bill Mar Wren	c e ghij
Wh rumped "	e	Sh-bill Marsh Wren	g i
Least "	e g j	Mockingbird	bc efghijk
Dunlin	e g j	Gray Catbird	a cdefghijk
Semi-pal "	e j	Brown Thrasher	abc e hij
Gr Blk-backed Gull	e ghij	Am Robin	abcdefghijkl
Herring Gull	bc e ghij	Wood Thrush	abcdefghijkl
Ring-billed Gull	abc e ghij	Hermit Thrush	bc e gh
Bonaparte's Gull	e g j	Swainson's Thrush	e
Black Tern	b e g i	Veery	abcde ghij
Rock Dove	abcdefghijkl	E. Bluebird	a c efgh
Mourning Dove	abcdefghijkl	Bl-gr Gnatcatcher	bc efgh jk
Yel-billed Cuckoo	a c g ij	Gold-cr Kinglet	e
Blk-billed "	a bcd g i	Ruby-cr "	bc e
Barn Owl	e	Water Pipit	a
Screech Owl	efg ij	Cedar Waxwing	bc fghij
Gr Horned Owl	c efg i k	Starling	abcdefghijkl
Barred Owl	bc k	Yel-thr Vireo	bc efghijk
Whip-poor-will	e h j	Solitary "	a e gh j
*Red-shouldered Hawk	h j		

Century Run (con't.)

Red-eyed Vireo	abc e ghij	American Redstart	abcdefghijkl
Warbling Vireo	abcdefghijkl	House Sparrow	a cdefghijk
Bl/wh Warbler	abcdefghijkl	Bobolink	abc efghijk
Worm-eating "	e g	E. Meadowlark	abc efghijk
Gold-winged "	bc e g jk	R-winged Blkbird	abcdefghijkl
Bl/winged "	bc e ghijk	Orchard Oriole	e j
(Brewster's) "	g	No Oriole	abcdefghijkl
(Lawrence's) "	b g	Common Grackle	abcdefghijkl
Tennessee "	bc efghi	Br-headed Cowbird	abcdefghijkl
Nashville "	e g	Scarlet Tanager	abc efghij
No Parula	b hi	Cardinal	abcdefghijkl
Yellow Warbler	abcdefghijkl	Rose-br Grosbeak	abcdefghijkl
Magnolia "	a ef hij	Indigo Bunting	ab ef i
Cape May "	fg	Eve Grosbeak	b f
Blk-thr Bl "	abc e gh	Purple Finch	abc e ghijk
Yel-rumped "	a c efghijk	House Finch	abcdefghijkl
Blk-thr Green "	abc e gh k	Pine Siskin	ab d g
Cerulean "	f	Am Goldfinch	abcdefghijkl
Blackburnian "	a c e h j	Ruf-sided Towhee	bc efghij
Chestnutsided "	abc efghijk	Savannah Sparrow	ab efghij
Bay-breasted "	b g j	Grasshopper "	b e j
Blackpoll "	bcdef h	Henslow's "	e ghi
Pine "	e g ij	Vesper "	c j
Prairie "	c e g ij	Dark-eyed Junco	a c e ghij
Ovenbird	abc e ghijk	Tree Sparrow	k
No Waterthrush	ab defghij	Chipping "	abc efghijk
Louisiana "	c e ghij	Field "	abc efghij
Conn Warbler	b	Wh-thr "	b e hij
Mourning "	a	Fox Sparrow	k
Com Yellowthroat	abcdefghijkl	Swamp Sparrow	abcdefghijkl
Wilson's Warbler	b	Song Sparrow	abcdefghijkl
Canada "	abcde gh		

FIELD NOTES
Spring 1981

Bill Cook

A mild spring, beginning in February, tended to hasten reproductive activities among many species. Bob Yunick banded a fledgling mourning dove on April 24 and the ring-billed gulls breeding on Lake Champlain seem to be a week or two ahead of schedule according to Mike Peterson.

The return of the warblers, what there were of them, appeared about on schedule. There were just no large waves observed. This could be a frightening harbinger of "silent springs" or perhaps,

Field Notes (con't.)

hopefully, the migrants passed by unnoticed. Adequate numbers of resident species suggest the latter but the alarming loss of winter range can't be ignored. In the June issue of Natural History, Hazel R. Delcourt estimates tropical land clearance to be currently "proceeding at an estimated rate of one percent of the land area every year."

The Good-birding Fairy visited our region and arranged for the lowering of the water level for repairs at Basic Creek Reservoir one week before the Century Run. The exposed mudflats attracted at least ten species of shorebirds including dunlin, white-rumped, least and pectoral snadpipers, both yellowlegs, semi-palmated sandpiper and plover.

With spirited enthusiasm Century Run participants produced a list of 29 species plus two hybrids that otherwise would not have been reported this season, bringing the total number of species observed in this region this spring to 212 plus four variations. For a few, such as bobolink and semi-palmated sandpiper, this was certainly an oversight. For others such as least bittern and sora, one assumes that aside from the Century Run predawn birding is perhaps infrequent at best. However, the bulk of the 29, such as merlin, upland sandpiper, both marsh wrens, water pipit, worm-eating and cerulean warblers, is a result of the diligent efforts of a large number of dedicated observers.

Here the value of the Century Run as a data gathering device becomes obvious. Further, in order to make data available it has been the philosophy of this compiler, in this and last season's reports to mention every species observed in the region.

Now for the box scores. The Alan Devoe Bird Club with 22 observers counted 138 species. The Hudson-Mohawk Club with 47 observers counted 172 species plus two hybrids. Six groups tallied over 100 species but the high honors go to Ken Able's group which amassed 134 species to set a new record for a single group.

This season's rarities are black vulture and Connecticut warbler. Attempts to relocate black vultures reported in Columbia and Greene Counties failed but this species might be expected as it seems to be moving its range northward. Four reports of Connecticut warbler by competent birders is interesting since this bird is considered very rare in eastern New York in spring. These days it is also worth highlighting loggerhead shrike. Tom Palmer's sighting is the first regional report in three years. Finally, a green-winged teal of the Eurasian race was observed at Stockport Station in early April.

Good Birding and may your fall migration be warblerfully confusing.

Field Notes (con't.)

Abbreviations: CR - Century Run May 16, followed by a number indicating the number of groups from the Hudson-Mohawk Bird Club reporting that species.

Contributors: Ken Able, V. & B. Able, Doug Allen, Roberta Bernstein, Vern Bingman, Rachael Brody, William Brooks, A. & T. Brown, Bob Budliger, Jim Bush, Tom Cobb, Paul Connor, Bill Cook, Juanita Cook, R. Dodd, R. Drowne, Kate Dunham, Norman & Marilyn Fancher, Peter Feinberg, Barbara & Hugo Gardina, Caroline George, M. & A. Giddings, Bill Gorman, Elisabeth Grace, Monte Gruett, Andrew Guthrie, Richard P. Guthrie, William Huntley, Philip Ingalls, Hollis Ingraham, Robert Kornis, Mike Kuhrt, Ron & Carolyn Laforce, Jory Langner, B. Laros, Bill Lee, Gordon Link, Sam Madison, R. Main, E. Mansell, Al Mapes, Robert McCullough, M. Mickle, Barry Noon, Tom Palmer, Carl Parker, Roger Tory Peterson, Elsie Powell, Robert Ramonowski, Alice Ross, Walt Sabin, Al & Shirley Schadow, Nancy Slack, Gary & Abbie Stone, Jim Suozzo, Lester Thomas, M. & B. Ulmer, Tommy Williams, Robert P. Yunick, and all of the Century Run participants.

LOONS-DUCKS: Com Loon: CR seven; three reports from mid April in numbers as high as fifteen on the Hudson River. The only Horned Grebe for the season was seen on the Hudson at Stockport Station on Apr 11 simultaneously by a group across the river at Vosburgh's Marsh and by R. Romanowski at Stockport. Ten reports of Pied-billed grebe from Mar 28 to May 16 over a wide area. Double-crested Cormorant: CR five; Embough Bay thru period. Although seen during the winter, mid April seemed to signify the return of Great Blue Herons to most areas; CR seven. The earliest Green Heron report is Apr 23 from Ghent; CR nine. Black-crowned Night Heron: CR one; New Baltimore Apr 21; Castleton May 18. Least Bittern and Am Bittern were reported on the CR by two groups each. Three sightings of Mute Swan: Stony Creek Res.; Galway Lake in Mar; Clifton Park Apr 26. Skeins of 35-120 Canada Geese were reported by eight observers in Mar and Apr; CR six. Brant: Hudson River at Linlithgo May 14 (RM); 150 landed at Alcove Res that same evening. Snow goose: Hudson Mar 31; two Stockport Station Apr 4; Lake Taghkanic Apr 10-30 (A & TB); a blue color morph was seen among white colleagues in New Baltimore Apr 28. A pair of Mallards nesting at Jenny Lake hatched eleven young before the end of May; as might be expected all eleven CR groups found this species but only five found the probably equally common but secretive Black Duck. Gadwall: CR one. Flocks of twelve to twenty Pintails are among the four reports of this species observed from Mar 4 to Mar 28 from Columbia to Warren Co. Green-winged Teal: more than six reports in late Mar and early Apr near the Hudson but numbers dwindled as they moved north out of our region so only two groups found them on the CR; Eurasian Green-winged Teal, or Common Teal, was spotted with several American cousins at Stockport Station Apr 4 (RG). Blue-winged Teal were reported by nine

Field Notes (con't.)

observers and five groups tallied this duck on the CR. Am Wigeon: five reports on the Hudson Mar 5-28. Wood Duck: CR nine; ten other reports thru period. Redhead: Four Cocksackie Mar 15 (AG). Ring-necked Duck: six reports from Columbia and Greene Counties Mar 15-Apr 30. Canvasback: five reports along Hudson R. Mar 15-Apr 27. Greater Scaup: Cocksackie Mar 15; Hudson R Mar 28; Stockport May 16. Lesser Scaup: Cocksackie Mar 15; Saratoga Apr 18. Com Goldeneye: found on the Hudson from Mar 4 to Mar 26; Mar 21 reports from both Niskayuna and Saratoga L. Bufflehead: Basic Res. Mar 9-27 (JC); six at Saratoga L Apr 18 (AR). Six White-winged Scoters were found by Peter Feinberg on the Mohawk R at Colonie Apr 29. Hooded Merganser: pair at Stony Cr Res Mar 22; reports from Basic Res, Collins L and Hudson R Mar 4-Apr 29. Com Merganser: CR three; of the eight rafts counted Mar 4-Apr 29 Paul Connor's tally of sixty on the Hudson R Apr 11 is the highest. Red-breasted Merganser: CR two; three Saratoga Apr 18 (AR).



HAWKS-ALCIDS: Turkey vultures appeared in February but became more frequent following mid March. Three were seen on the brief (two or three hour) "Olana hawk watch" held for the Col-Greene Community College Bird Study Class Apr 18 (RG); CR five. Two reports of Black Vulture: one with a wing tag in Hillsdale Apr 29; another in Kiskatom May 5 (JB). The Bird Study class was also treated to a Goshawk sighting at CGCC on their first outing Mar 21; the following weekend one was seen in Old Chatham Mar 28; (PF & RR). The other two accipiters were sighted much more frequently with close to twenty reports of sharp-shinned and seven of Cooper's Hawk; both were tallied by one group on the CR.

Red-tailed Hawk: CR ten; sixteen Olana Apr 18. Red-shouldered Hawk returned to our area in mid Mar; Ghent Mar 15 (BC); Black Creek Marsh Apr 18 (PF); CR two. By mid-April Broadwinged hawks were besieging Col Co with eleven at Olana Apr 18; two were seen in Saratoga on that same date; CR six. The last date for Rough-legged Hawk in Old Chatham is Mar 13 as the New York winter resorts are vacated for a hopeful June rendez-vous in the Arctic. Bald Eagle: single immature Basic Creek May 30 (RG); Hudson R at Roe-Jan May 16. Marsh Hawk: at least ten from Old Chatham and along the Hudson thru period; CR one. Ospreys inundated Region 8 in April with nearly fifty birds reported that month; six on the "Olana Hawk Watch" Apr 18; but moved out of the area in May with only three CR groups able to track down a straggler; max 27 along the Hudson between Catskill and New Baltimore Apr 25. Peregrine Falcon: not reported in the region since last year's CR was seen in New Baltimore Apr 25 (AG). A Merlin was seen on the Alan Devoe CR near Stuyvesant (JC, RD & BL). Am Kestrels cooperated in banding demonstrations for the CGCC Bird Study class on both Mar 14 and Apr 4; six Olana Apr 18; CR ten. Ruffed Grouse: CR six; a dozen others. Bobwhite:

Field Notes (con't.)

CR one. Ring-necked Pheasant: CR six; six Col Co. Turkey: seven from N. Col Co. Mar 21-May 17. Virginia Rail and Sora were each tallied by six CR groups; earliest date for Virginia Rail is May 1 New Baltimore. Com Gallinule: CR three; Vosburgh's Marsh Apr 25. Am Coot: CR one Embough Bay. Semi-palmated Plover: CR three Basic Cr Res. Killdeer returned to area nesting sites in late Mar and early Apr; CR ten. Am Woodcock: CR seven; six Col Co Mar 27-May 16. Com Sniipe: CR six; Castleton May 12. Upland Sandpiper: CR three. Spotted Sandpiper: earliest date Apr 23 Scotia; CR nine. Solitary Sandpiper: earliest date Apr 27 Vischer Ferry; CR four. Greater yellowlegs: Vischer Ferry Apr 27-May 3; N. Chatham Apr 29; CR four. Lesser Yellowlegs: Vischer Ferry Apr 29-May 3; CR two. Pectoral Sandpiper was seen in flocks as large as 23 in early April over a wide area but only one CR group found it in May. White-rumped Sandpiper: CR one. Least Sandpiper: CR three; Spencertown May 15-20. Dunlin: CR three. Semi-palmated Sandpiper: CR two. The Niskayuna Widewaters played host to the white-winged gulls this spring with a report of two Glaucous Gulls Apr 4 (A & SS) and an Iceland Gull Mar 29. Great Black-backed Gull: CR five; max fifteen Niskayuna Mar 21. Herring Gull: CR seven; max seventy Saratoga Apr 18. Ring-billed Gull: CR eight; max 300 Niskayuna Mar 21. Bonaparte's Gull appeared frequently in late April; max 22 Mohawk R at Colonie Apr 29; CR three. Black Tern: not reported since last year's CR appears again on four CR tallies; Oom's Pond May 16.

PIGEONS-WOODPECKERS: Of course all eleven CR groups tallied the ever present Rock Dove and Mourning Dove. RY noted early breeding of Mourning Dove due to exceptional warmth in February and March, banding a fledgling Apr 24 (May 5-10 is the norm). Cuckoo populations seem to doing well with the widespread gypsy moth irruptions; both species on five CR returns. Barn Owl: CR one; Devil's Kitchen May 1 (PF). Screech Owl: CR five; Spencertown Mar 22-Apr 9. Great Horned Owl: CR six; Old Chatham Mar 4-Apr 19; Devil's Kitchen May 1. Barred Owl: CR three Hagel Hill Apr 7 (V & BA); Devil's Kitchen May 1-31. Whip-poor-will and Com Nighthawk reports confined to four CR groups each. Chimney Swift: CR ten; earliest report Apr 24 Schenectady and Hudson. Ruby-throated Hummingbird: CR four; four banded at Vischer Ferry in May. Belted Kingfisher: CR ten; max eight Hudson River Apr 11. Com Flicker: CR ten; two banded Vischer Ferry May. Pileated Woodpecker: CR five; thirteen other reports. Red-headed Woodpecker: CR two; and still at Lake Taghkanic Mar 31 since Jan (A & TB); S. Rensselaer Co May 11 (KD & EG). Yellow-bellied Sapsucker: CR five; Hudson Apr 4; Spencertown Apr 10; Poes-tenkill Apr 26; Ghent May 16-31. Hairy and Downy Woodpeckers tallied by eight and ten groups respectively; two each banded at Vischer Ferry May.

FLYCATCHERS-STARLINGS: Eastern Kingbird: CR nine; earliest date Apr 30 Hudson. Great crested Flycatcher: CR ten; Reist Sanctuary May 3. Eastern Phoebe: CR ten; Hudson Apr 4; arrived at Jenny L Apr 18. Willow Flycatcher: CR three; Ghent May 1-30. Alder Flycatcher:

Field Notes (con't.)

New Baltimore May 30. Least Flycatcher: CR eleven; for the first time in fourteen years none was banded at Vischer Ferry during May. Eastern Wood Pewee: CR two; Hudson May 25. Olive-sided Flycatcher was found for the Alan Devoe CR. Horned Lark: CR two; Castleton Mar 16-May 5. Tree Swallow: CR eleven; earliest date Mar 28 Stockport Station, Old Chatham and Vosburgh's Marsh. Bank Swallow: CR ten; Vosburgh's Marsh Apr 25. Rough-winged Swallow: CR seven; earliest date Apr 19 Bell's Pond. Barn Swallow: CR ten; earliest date Apr 18 Olana and Saratoga. Cliff Swallow: CR six; Ghent-Old Chatham May 5-20. Purple Martin: CR three; Saratoga L Apr 14. Blue Jay: CR eleven. Two Com Ravens were seen and heard at Jenny L on Mar 2 by Gordon Link (RY). A Com Crow, obviously anxious to get a head start in the atlas project, was observed gathering nest material during a snow squall at Saratoga L on Mar 21; CR eleven. Fish Crow: Colonie Landfill Mar 28; New Baltimore May 23-27 (RG). Nineteen Black-capped Chickadees banded in March brought the total for this record winter invasion at Jenny L Nov 80-May 81 to 288; CR eleven. Tufted Titmouse: CR eight; reports dwindling in May. A White-breasted Nuthatch with a crippled leg manages to feed at the Schadow's feeder in E. Glenville; CR ten. The Red-breasted Nuthatch record invasion at Jenny L resulted in 64 banded Nov 80-May 81 but was not noticed south of Saratoga Co; CR three. A female Brown Creeper with brood patch captured May 8 and 9 at Vischer Ferry seems to be nesting in a river valley elevation 210 feet, an interesting place for this species (RY); CR four. House Wrens returned to this region in mid April; CR eleven. Winter Wren could be found thru the spring; three banded Vischer Ferry May; CR six. The New Baltimore Carolina Wren stayed thru the end of April then vacated, perhaps across the river to Castleton for Juanita Cook to tally on the Alan Devoe CR. Long-billed Marsh Wren and Short-billed Marsh Wren were reported only on the CR by six and two groups respectively. Mockingbird: CR nine. Gray Catbird: CR ten; 41 banded Vischer Ferry May. Brown Thrasher: CR seven; Vosburgh's Marsh Apr 11. The first Am Robin fledgling banded this year was May 19 in Niskayuna; CR eleven. First Wood Thrush banded May 4 Saratoga; CR eleven. Hermit Thrush: CR five; Poestenkill Apr 26; Old Chatham May 14-16. Swainson's Thrush: CR one; three banded Vischer Ferry; one banded New Baltimore May. Gray-cheeked Thrush: Castleton May 2 (JC). Veery: CR nine; twelve banded Vischer Ferry May. Eastern Bluebird: CR six; at least eight other reports. Blue-gray Gnatcatcher: CR eight; two Olana Apr 18. Golden-crowned Kinglet: CR one. Ruby-crowned Kinglet: CR three; earliest date Apr 11 Old Chatham and Hudson River field trip. Water Pipit: CR one (TP et al). Cedar Waxwing: CR seven; West Ghent Mar 1-29; Old Chatham Apr 4-11. Loggerhead Shrike: Montgomery Co Apr 5 (TP). The adaptable Starling was frequently observed competing with woodpeckers, chickadees, and the like at



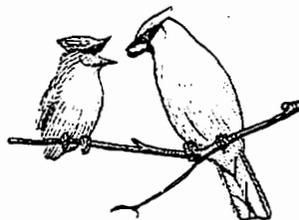
suet feeders this year; first fledgling in Schenectady May 26; CR eleven.

VIREOS-WARBLERS: Yellow-throated Vireo; CR nine. Solitary Vireo; CR four; three New Baltimore Apr 24 earliest date. Red-eyed Vireo; CR eight; returning to Columbia Co in May. Warbling Vireo; CR eleven; four banded Vischer Ferry May. Black-and-white Warbler; CR eleven; Hagel Hill Apr 28 earliest date. Worm-eating Warbler; CR two. Golden-winged Warbler; CR six; three banded New Baltimore May. Blue-winged Warbler; CR eight; Olana Apr 24 earliest date. (Brewster's Warbler); CR one. (Lawrence's Warbler); CR two (BB & DA). Tennessee Warbler; CR seven; Col Co May 14. Nashville Warbler; CR two; Devil's Kitchen May 1. Northern Parula; CR three. Yellow Warbler; CR eleven; Ghent Apr 29 earliest date; 24 banded Vischer Ferry May. Magnolia Warbler; CR six; Clifton Park Apr 26 earliest date. Cape May Warbler; CR two. Black-throated Blue Warbler; CR six; Devil's Kitchen May 1. Yellow-rumped Warbler; CR 9; 24 banded at Vischer Ferry May; Clifton Park Apr 26; six other reports. Black-throated Green Warbler; CR seven; Devil's Kitchen May 1. Cerulean Warbler; CR one (TC et al). Blackburnian Warbler; CR five; Devil's Kitchen May 1. Chestnut-sided Warbler; CR ten; one banded Vischer Ferry May. Bay-breasted Warbler; CR three. Blackpoll Warbler; CR six; first observed in Schenectady May 12. Pine Warbler; CR four; Saratoga Apr 20 (RTP); four other April reports. Prairie Warbler; CR five; Hudson Apr 29; several males singing persistantly at Kiskatom and CGCC from early May. Palm Warbler; six reports; one banded New Baltimore Apr 6; last date E. Nassau May 3. Ovenbird; CR nine; Kiskatom May 6. Northern Waterthrush; CR nine; Coeymans Apr 29 earliest date. Louisiana Waterthrush; CR six; Olana Apr 29; three Columbia Co reports in May. A "rash" of Connecticut Warbler reports include one at Great Bear Swamp Albany Co in early May (RL); one in Warren Co; one in Delmar in early May (JL); and a CR individual (DA). Bull describes this bird as rare in spring for New York with only four undoubted reports, all from the western part of the state. Mourning Warbler; CR one; one banded Vischer Ferry May. Wilson's Warbler; CR one; four Col Co reports in May. Canada Warbler; CR seven; two banded Vischer Ferry. American Redstart; CR eleven; eight banded Vischer Ferry.

WEAVERS-SPARROWS: Observers note a sharp decline in the House Sparrow population since 1974 as they seem to be replaced by the House Finch; CR ten. Bobolink; CR ten. Eastern Meadowlark; CR ten; wintered in Greene Co; CGCC Mar 27; Saratoga Apr 18. Red-winged Blackbird; CR eleven; five banded Vischer Ferry May. Orchard Oriole; CR two; Old Chatham May 5 earliest date (PI). Northern Oriole; CR eleven; three banded Vischer Ferry. Rusty Blackbird; Niskayuna Apr 11; Ghent Apr 23; Nassau Apr 27. Common Grackle; CR eleven; three banded Vischer Ferry; gradually replaced Blue Jay as feeder tyrant thru March. Brown-headed Cowbird; CR eleven; thirteen banded Vischer Ferry. Scarlet Tanager; CR nine; three reports from Col Co in May. The Cardinal population has saturated to the point that territorial disputes are being observed at such

Field Notes (con't.)

favorable locations as the Schadow's feeder and record numbers are being banded (ten at Vischer Ferry); CR eleven. Rose-breasted Grosbeak; CR eleven; thirteen banded Vischer Ferry. Indigo Bunting; CR five; Old Chatham Apr 11. Evening Grosbeak lingered in Ghent until Mar 22; traveled through Schenectady Apr 16-May 13 where 151 were banded; still at E. Glenville feeder May 29; CR two. Purple Finch CR nine; arrived at Jenny L breeding ground Apr 8 becoming abundant in May. House Finch; CR eleven; experiencing a local population explosion and is apparently ousting the House Sparrow; Bob Yunick's banding of 294 for Mar-May is about five times greater than the average for this period in the last five years. Pine Grosbeak; Old Chatham Mar 2-Apr 30; Lake Taghkanic Apr 6. Hoary Redpoll; on Mar 22 Bob Yunick banded and photographed a specimen suspected of being a Hoary X Com cross. It had the Hoary's unstreaked rump and undertail coverts but the overall dark plumage was that of a Com Redpoll. A weak flight of Common Redpolls occurred this year with 120 banded thru Apr 19 in Schenectady. Pine Siskin; CR four; 136 banded thru May 20 in Schenectady, a weak flight. Am Goldfinch; CR eleven; ten banded Vischer Ferry. Red Crossbills were seen for the first time since 1973 in Old Chatham Mar 5-7 (KD, EG & RD). Rufous-sided Towhee; CR eight; arrived in E. Glenville Apr 23. Savannah Sparrow; CR eight. Grasshopper Sparrow; CR three. Four CR groups listed Henslow's Sparrow, probably all from the Five Rivers colony, possibly even the same bird. Vesper Sparrow; CR two; max twelve Alcove Res. Apr 29 (PF). Dark-eyed Junco; CR seven; 258 banded in Schenectady is five times normal. Tree Sparrow; thru Apr 24 in Old Chatham; one reported on May 16 for the CR (G & AS). Chipping Sparrows returned to Coxsackie Apr 11; CR ten. Field Sparrows became numerous in March; CR nine. White-crowned Sparrow; Old Chatham Apr 9; E. Glenville May 5-7; Leeds May 13; Ghent May 22 but nobody found one for the Century Run. White-throated Sparrow; CR five; 39 banded during flight thru Saratoga Apr 16-May 13; twelve banded at Vischer Ferry is lowest since 1968. Fox Sparrow; CR one; Old Chatham Mar 14-Apr 28. Lincoln's Sparrow; four banded Vischer Ferry; two banded New Baltimore May 25. Swamp Sparrow; CR ten; eight banded Vischer Ferry. Song Sparrow; CR eleven; 26 banded Vischer Ferry.

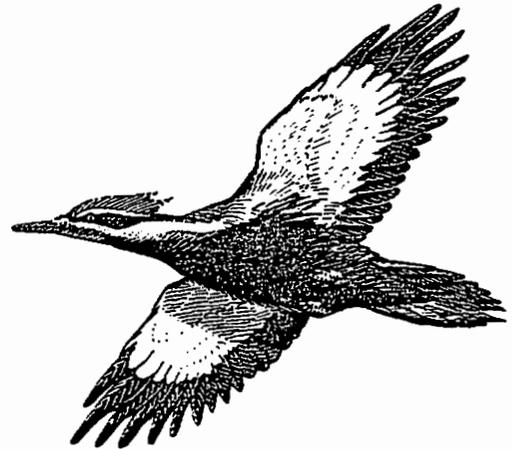


FIELD TRIPS

William Gorman
Chairman

BLACK CREEK MARSH

May 9, 1981



At about 6:00 a.m. approximately 20 Hudson-Mohawk birders started down the railroad tracks at Black Creek Marsh. Red-winged blackbirds and swamp sparrows were singing along with yellow warblers and common yellowthroats. A green heron, some Canada geese, and tree swallows flew by. After listening to a warbling vireo and a least flycatcher, we decided to look for rails. With the aid of a tape recorder we called Virginia rails into clear view and had many calls from soras. We were unable to find common gallinules, marsh wrens, or American bitterns. As bobolinks and meadowlarks sang across the fields we watched rose-breasted grosbeaks and a white-crowned sparrow. Before we started back we sighted a magnolia warbler and searched for a blue-winged warbler singing in the brush. On the way back we met the late risers and went on for the pancake breakfast. Over 37 people attended this trip and we ended the morning with a list of 65 species.

SPECIES: Green heron; Canada goose; mallard; black duck; wood duck; red-tailed hawk; broad-winged hawk
American kestrel; ruffed grouse; Virginia rail; sora; killdeer; rock dove; mourning dove; chimney swift; belted kingfisher; common flicker; hairy woodpecker; downy woodpecker.

Eastern kingbird; Eastern phoebe; least flycatcher; tree swallow; barn swallow; bluejay; common crow; black-capped chickadee; tufted titmouse; white-breasted nuthatch; brown creeper; house wren; mockingbird; gray catbird; American robin; wood thrush; blue-gray gnatcatcher; ruby-crowned kinglet; cedar waxwing; starling; warbling vireo; black-and-white warbler; blue-winged warbler; yellow warbler; magnolia warbler; yellow-rumped warbler; chestnut-sided warbler; common yellowthroat.

House sparrow; bobolink; Eastern meadowlark; red-winged black-bird; Northern oriole; common grackle; brown-headed cowbird; scarlet tanager; cardinal; rose-breasted grosbeak; house finch; American goldfinch; rufous-sided towhee; field sparrow; white-crowned

Field Trip Reports (con't.)

sparrow; white-throated sparrow; swamp sparrow; song sparrow.

--Bill Gorman

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BEAR SWAMP

May 30, 1981

Twelve people showed up for the field trip to Bear Swamp. We arrived at the first stop on the way, Basic Reservoir, at 7:45 a.m. Most of the north side of the causeway was a vast mud flat because the reservoir had been drained to repair a gate valve. No sooner had we set up the scopes than Bob Kirker found a large bird perched low to the ground across the flat about 300 yards away. It was a bald eagle; but we were not positive of the identification until a couple of minutes later when it took off, flew across the causeway and perched in a tree on the opposite side of the reservoir. Quite a good start for the day. Semipalmated plovers, greater yellowlegs, dunlin, least sandpipers, and ring-billed gulls were also present on the mud flats.

When we arrived at Bear Swamp, we already had a good list started. A Canada warbler kept us occupied for quite a while with his song from the rhododendrons, but he showed himself to just a few of our group. A good number of warblers were present, but many were heard only or not seen very well.

We continued to the Huyck Preserve where we got good looks at a pair of waterthrushes, but they were not singing and so we could not be certain of their identity. There were 80 species on our list when the trip concluded about 1:00 p.m.

SPECIES: Great Blue Heron (10); Canada Goose (6); mallard (12); sharp-shinned hawk; red-tailed hawk (2); bald eagle; marsh hawk; American kestrel; semipalmated plover (6); killdeer (8); spotted sandpiper; greater yellowlegs; least sandpiper (20); dunlin (2); ring-billed gull (5); rock dove*; mourning dove (5); chimney swift; ruby-throated hummingbird; common flicker (6); hairy woodpecker; downy woodpecker; Eastern kingbird (10); great crested flycatcher (5); Eastern phoebe (4); least flycatcher (3); Eastern wood pewee (6); tree swallow*; rough-winged swallow*; barn swallow*; cliff swallow*; blue jay*; common crow*; black-capped chickadee*; tufted titmouse; white-breasted nuthatch; red-breasted nuthatch; brown creeper (2); house wren (6); mockingbird; gray catbird (4); American robin*; wood thrush*; hermit thrush (2); veery (3); cedar waxwing

Field trips (con't.)

(16); Starling*; solitary vireo (2); red-eyed vireo (12); warbling vireo; black-and-white warbler (11); golden-winged warbler; blue-winged warbler (3); yellow warbler*; black-throated blue warbler; black-throated green warbler (2); chestnut-sided warbler (10); bay-breasted warbler (2); prairie warbler; ovenbird*; Northern water-thrush (2); Louisiana waterthrush (2); common yellowthroat*; Canada warbler (4); American redstart (4); house sparrow*; bobolink*; Eastern meadowlark (4); red-winged blackbird*; Northern oriole (4); common grackle*; brown-headed cowbird*; scarlet tanager (5); cardinal; rose-breasted grosbeak; American goldfinch*; Savannah sparrow; chipping sparrow (2); field sparrow (2); song sparrow (4).

*numerous

--Ronald Laforce

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MOUNT GREYLOCK

June 6, 1981

Ten birders endured periods of dense fog, heavy rain, and intermittent drizzle which gave way to brilliant sunshine and then to a violent wind and thunderstorm (on the way home), and still managed to record 56 species on or in the immediate area of Mt. Greylock near Adams, Mass. Highlights included good looks at mourning warbler, solitary vireo, and several indigo buntings. Swainson's thrush was heard clearly and some members of the party heard a possible grey-cheeked thrush, but weather conditions made a search and confirmation impossible. Upon descent of the mountain, the party paused to watch a ruffed grouse with several young amble off into the woods. All were in agreement that with optimal weather this trip could really be a bonanza.

SPECIES: American kestrel; ruffed grouse; rock dove; mourning dove; common flicker; yellow-bellied sapsucker; hairy woodpecker; downy woodpecker; Eastern phoebe; least flycatcher; Eastern wood pewee; barn swallow; blue jay; common crow; black-capped chickadee; white-breasted nuthatch; brown creeper; gray catbird; American robin; wood thrush; #veery; ruby-crowned kinglet; cedar waxwing; yellow-throated vireo; solitary vireo; red-eyed vireo; black-and-white warbler; Nashville warbler; magnolia warbler; black-throated blue warbler; yellow-rumped warbler; black-throated green warbler; Blackburnian warbler; chestnut-sided warbler; bay-breasted warbler; black-poll warbler; ovenbird; mourning warbler; common yellowthroat; Canada warbler; American redstart; house sparrow; Northern oriole; scarlet

#Swainson's thrush

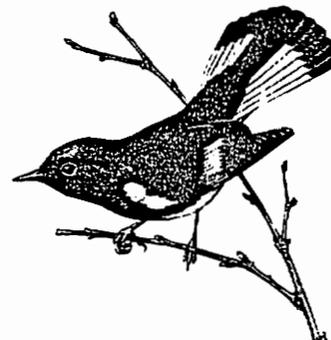
Field trips (con't.)

tanager; cardinal; rose-breasted grosbeak; indigo bunting; purple finch; American goldfinch; rufous-sided towhee; dark-eyed junco; chipping sparrow; field sparrow; white-throated sparrow; song sparrow.

--Michael Kuhrt

PALMER'S RAVINE

June 7, 1981



Due to the inclement weather of May 31 this a.m. field trip was rescheduled for June 7 as per DIAL-A-BIRD. Weather was partly cloudy and mild with westerly winds at times gusty but much improved over the previous week's conditions.

Five observers tallied a total of 53 species among which were upland sandpiper, Eastern bluebird, red-headed woodpecker, scarlet tanager, indigo bunting, great blue heron, red-tailed hawk, American kestrel, black-and-white warbler, least flycatcher, Louisiana waterthrush. The highlight of this trip was the sighting of two (a pair) upland sandpipers alighting on fenceposts just after we had stopped our cars. Excellent views at 200 ft. were had by all of a sometimes elusive species. Upon leaving this location one observer remarked, "Are you sure this wasn't staged?" My reply was, "No, but it couldn't have been better if it had been."

A most enjoyable morning was had by all.

SPECIES: Great blue heron; red-tailed hawk; American kestrel; killdeer; upland sandpiper; rock dove; mourning dove; chimney swift; common flicker; red-headed woodpecker; hairy woodpecker; Eastern kingbird; great crested flycatcher; least flycatcher; Eastern wood pewee; tree swallow; barn swallow; bluejay; common crow; black-capped chickadee; white-breasted nuthatch; house wren; gray catbird; brown thrasher; American robin; wood thrush; veery; Eastern bluebird; cedar waxwing; starling; red-eyed vireo; black-and-white warbler; yellow warbler; chestnut-sided warbler; Louisiana waterthrush; common yellowthroat; American redstart; house sparrow; bobolink; Eastern meadowlark; red-winged blackbird; Northern oriole; common grackle; brown-headed cowbird; scarlet tanager; cardinal; rose-breasted grosbeak; indigo bunting; American goldfinch; Savannah sparrow; chipping sparrow; field sparrow; song sparrow.

PARTICIPANTS: Mike Crevier; Paul Hebert; Ted Koniowka; Art Garland; Tom Palmer.

--Tom Palmer

Field trips (Concluded)

SARATOGA NATIONAL HISTORIC PARK

June 13, 1981

Eighteen enthusiastic birders found 59 species at the Saratoga National Historic Park on June 13. Many colorful birds were included: blue-winged warblers, Northern orioles, scarlet tanagers, indigo buntings (Notice all plurals) rose-breasted grosbeaks, cardinals, common yellowthroats, American redstarts, rufous-sided towhees, cuckoos (both black-billed and yellow-billed); bobolinks; Eastern meadowlarks, cedar waxwings, and Savannah sparrows.

A golden-winged warbler was seen well at the Visitor Center area. A nest with a pair of blue-gray gnatcatchers was observed along the Nature Trail. Bob McCullough's keen sense of hearing helped us find several of the birds including a pileated woodpecker.

We started with a one-hour walk in the area of the Visitor Center. Car birding followed along the auto tour road through the park with stops at about six of the historical site parking areas. At the last stop we enjoyed our lunches in the picnic place before walking the one mile nature trail. Linda White, summer park ranger and a birder, was our co-leader.

This historical park is certainly a sanctuary for many nesting birds. A detailed trail map is being printed and should be available by the time this report appears in FEATHERS.

SPECIES: Red-tailed hawk; American kestrel; *rock dove; mourning dove; yellow-billed cuckoo; black-billed cuckoo; belted kingfisher; common flicker; pileated woodpecker; downy woodpecker; Eastern kingbird; great crested flycatcher; Eastern phoebe, Eastern wood pewee; tree swallow; barn swallow; purple martin; blue jay; common crow; black-capped chickadee; tufted titmouse; white-breasted nuthatch; mockingbird; gray catbird; brown thrasher; American robin; veery; blue-gray gnatcatcher; cedar waxwing; starling; yellow-throated vireo; red-eyed vireo; warbling vireo; black-and-white warbler; golden-winged warbler; blue-winged warbler; yellow warbler; chestnut-sided warbler; ovenbird; common yellowthroat; American redstart; bobolink; Eastern meadowlark; red-winged blackbird; Northern oriole; common grackle; brown-headed cowbird; scarlet tanager; cardinal; rose-breasted grosbeak; indigo bunting; American goldfinch; rufous-sided towhee; Savannah sparrow; chipping sparrow; field sparrow; song sparrow.

*ring-necked pheasant

--Bob Marx

FORTY YEARS AGO
In the Berkshires

Half Dozen SBC Members Participate in First Annual Week-end of
Massachusetts Society, with List of 121 Species - Greylock,
Pittsfield, and Mount Everett Included in Territory

Ann Bainbridge

The first annual Berkshire weekend of the Massachusetts Audubon Society was held in the Berkshires June 13, 14, and 15. The Schenectady Bird Club was fortunate indeed to be among those invited to the affair and the six members who attended had a most enjoyable time. The program beginning on Friday evening at the Berkshire Museum with an illustrated lecture and helpful talks by various members, was followed later that evening by an informal reception.

A definite schedule, well arranged and executed, included many interesting events. Those present divided into groups each of which had one or more competent leaders. Field trips beginning at 4, 6, and 8 a.m. on Saturday and lasting throughout the day yielded a surprising number of bird species. Pontoosuc Lake was first on the list for waterbirds. Then "Up Greylock!" was the cry. Because of previous rain and fog, the birds very obligingly perched in the tops of dead trees where they preened and dried themselves whenever the sun broke through, meanwhile singing as though they were truly happy about the attention given them. With the foliage so luxuriant and well developed, this was indeed an unusual opportunity to study the birds and listen to their songs. The thrill on Greylock was perhaps a close-up view of the Bicknell's thrush, in full song, was something long to be remembered.

After lunch, a trip through an old CCC campground was rewarded by finding a pair of olive-sided flycatchers.

Again early Sunday morning cars left the Museum for Everett State Park. Several stops were made en route to look and to listen. The chat and a lone white-crowned sparrow, the latter busily stowing away potato beetles, were the prizes.

(At Everett) A good road and well-traveled trails led quickly to the summit. The visibility was generally poor but now and then bright sunshine opened vistas of unusual grandeur. Several chewinks, cedar waxwings, and hermit thrushes added interest to the trip. Someone was fortunate enough to see a turkey vulture.

The large number (121) of species found in the two days' trip was consequent upon the diverse terrain from lowlands to mountain tops, thus embracing many of the Canadian zone birds.

REQUEST FOR INFORMATION

COMMON TERN COLOR-MARKING BY THE CANADIAN WILDLIFE SERVICE

During 1981 Dr. Hans Blokpoel of the Canadian Wildlife Service color-marked Common Terns at two large colonies in the Great Lakes area, with the objective of determining the year-round distribution of the birds, especially their migration routes and wintering areas in Latin America. Adult Common Terns were trapped on their nests at the Eastern Headland of the Toronto Outer Harbor (Lake Ontario) and at Tower Island (Niagara River). Orange plastic tags were attached to both wings of the trapped adult birds. In addition, young Common Terns were marked with pink plastic wing tags at those colonies. One standard metal leg band and one colored plastic leg band (yellow with a black horizontal stripe) were put on each of the tagged birds.

If you see a Common Tern with a pink or orange wing tag, please record the following details: place, date, and color of the tag. If possible, also record the combination of numbers and/or letters on the tag (the two tags on any bird have the same color and the same combination of letters and numbers) and note which legs the plastic and metal leg bands are on. Thankyou very much for your assistance. All reports will be acknowledged and should be sent to Bird Banding Office, Canadian Wildlife Service, Ottawa, Ontario, CANADA, K1A 0E7.

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REQUEST FOR INFORMATION

NEW YORK STATE - ENDANGERED SPECIES UNIT

The New York State Division of Fish and Wildlife is interested in obtaining information on the breeding status of the Cooper's Hawk, Red-shouldered Hawk, Marsh Hawk, Loggerhead Shrike. Please send any information to New York State Department of Environmental Conservation, Wildlife Resources Center, Delmar New York, 12054. Attention: Endangered Species Unit. Thank you for your assistance and cooperation.

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HIGHLIGHTS OF THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETING-MONDAY, JULY 13, 1981

The Field Trip Committee, William Gorman, Chairman, 477-4921, is soliciting suggestions for new field trips for 1982 and for volunteers to lead said field trips.

Anyone with bird sightings to report should send them to Mr. Richard Guthrie, Records Chairman, Box 46, New Baltimore, NY 12124. (756-9094)

Since the Club will no longer be sponsoring the Audubon Film Series, we no longer have a viable program. Any ideas to rectify this situation would be welcomed. A committee has been formed to look into this matter.

The Club is beginning to experience problems with rising costs due to inflation, etc. Taxes on the Sanctuary are rising at an alarming rate and printing costs of FEATHERS are also going up. A possible solution to this dilemma might be a dues increase. The Executive Committee will be studying this financial problem and will make recommendations at the next Board meeting to be held in September.

The Board of Directors would like comments and suggestions from the members as to their concerns and would ask that they call Bill Shuster, President, 235-2479, with such suggestions.

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Shirley Schadow, Editor
230 Lake Hill Road
Burnt Hills, NY 12027

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Membership: Life, \$150; Sustaining, \$10; Active, \$5; Student, \$2; with an additional charge of \$1 per additional family member. Write or call Membership Chairman: Mrs. E. L. Thomas, 37-B Fuller Road, Albany, NY 12205 - 518/489-2267.

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TOUGH TIMES AT THE BIRD FEEDER

by Robert P. Yunick

This winter the chickadees are going to have to work harder. Economic hard times have struck even the bird feeding business! Most of the blame lies with energy cost inflation, a strange mix of agro-economics and a change in product mix in the seed market. It is the story of the emergence of the black, oil-grade sunflower seed. To appreciate its telling, it is necessary to trace some history.

About thirty years ago when winter bird feeding was in its infancy and was plagued with many myths about what would work or not work, most feeder operators insisted, or were led to believe, that the only sunflower seed to use was the largest of the gray-striped seeds. These were the most expensively priced because of the size and color grading and cleaning required to bring them to market. Slowly, more economical grades (smaller size, darker color, more debris) of seeds became available.. However, at first they were not readily available due to continued misbelief about the need for large gray seed, and dealers' reluctance to stock unwanted inventory for a then-small bird feeding clientele.

However, today's popularity in bird feeding coupled with an energy crises in 1973-74 and other general economic inflationary pressures have changed all that, and have hastened a change in agricultural practice. Consider for a moment that in 1972 a 100-lb. bag of cracked corn could be bought for \$6.25 (\$3.95 in the late 1960's) vs. \$11.10 today; and a 50-lb bag of sunflower seed sold for \$6.95-7.95 then vs. \$11-14 now. Seed and grain prices are sensitive to changes in energy cost because their production (planting, harvesting, drying, delivery to market, etc.) is energy dependent. The change in corn price reflects this. The sunflower seed price reflects it to a lesser extent, and is influenced also by a change in quality of seed. Today's sunflower seeds in the nation's bird feeders are not the same kind of seed as were there thirty years ago.

For years I have used the cheapest sunflower seed I could buy, for two reasons. As a youngster thirty years ago I found that something less than the premium quality seeds of that day worked, so I continued using them; and more recently as an annual purchaser of 300-750 lbs. of sunflower seed, I have sought

Tough Times (con't.)

economy in purchasing them. Several years ago I purchased small gray-striped seed costing approximately \$12-15 per 50-lb. bag. It was an economical seed loaded with many seeds out of the hull. Some people who used it thought that these seeds without shells compromised its quality; but on the contrary, why pay for useless hull? Gradually, the small gray seed became blended with the smaller, black, oil-grade seed. As of last year, production of the oil seed was sufficient, and dealers dared to offer it as a new product at a cost of about \$13-14 per 50-lb. bag. I have used it for several species and all of them seem to like it.

This year, the oil seed is abundantly available at \$13-14 and has been "economized" even further with a less select version (more stems, debris, and empty hulls) available at \$10-11 per bag. No longer is the largest of the gray-striped available in the current market, because it cannot compete at these prices. Users of the small gray seed and the black seed have found that those birds that eat sunflower seeds will eat just about any kind. So how are the birds affected, if at all, by this change?

Well, this leads me back to the opening remark about harder working chickadees. Those birds which take away only one seed at a time and eat it away from the feeder in the way that chickadees, nuthatches, woodpeckers, etc. do will have to make more trips to acquire the same weight of food from this oil-grade seed. But all is not bleak.

Last winter I fed a small gray-striped seed at my feeders at Jenny Lake, Saratoga County, during an unprecedented chickadee and nuthatch invasion (see FEATHERS, 43: 10-12 (1981), I determined the number of seeds per unit weight in order to find out how many visits per day were being made to my feeders to consume the weight of seed I knew from other measurements was being used. I made the same seed count this year with the new oil-grade seed and found the following:

<u>Seed type</u>	<u>No. of seeds per kilogram</u>	<u>No. % seeds w/out hulls</u>	<u>Wt. % of debris</u>	<u>Wt.% yield of nutmeats</u>
Sm gray, Dec/80	13307	13.9	n/d	n/d
Sm gray, Feb/81	12930	6.3	n/d	65
Blk, oil, Mar/81	27763	n/d	2.4	72
Blk, oil, Nov/81	25087	5.4	2.4	n/d
Econ, oil, Nov/81	24332	1.9	5.0	66

n/d - not determined

As one can see, the oil-grade seed offers about twice the number of seeds per unit weight, and thereby increases the trips needed to carry away an equal weight of seed. However, as slight

Tough Times (concluded)

compensation for this, the better grade of oil seed produces a higher weight yield of nutmeats (72 vs. 65% for the gray striped seed). The economy grade of oil seed yields less weight of nutmeats primarily due to debris and empty hulls.

Thus, while the chickadees and nuthatches will work harder to acquire their food from feeders stocked with oil-grade seed, we benefit from a relatively lower cost for this seed; and most people will appreciate the greater traffic at their feeders as these chickadees work harder for their handout.

* * * * *

FROM THE PRESIDENT

William Shuster

During the past few months the Board of Directors has directed considerable attention to the financial state of the Bird Club. The Board has noted with concern the continued decline in income and the rising costs associated with the operation of the Club.

In the past a principal source of income has come from the Audubon Film Series. Because of declining attendance at this Series, this activity no longer yielded an income but actually resulted in a loss to the Club, and has been discontinued. Expenses have sky-rocketed due primarily to the very large increase in the taxes on our Sanctuary and the increased costs of publishing FEATHERS.

It is with extreme reluctance that the Executive Committee has decided that the answer to our financial dilemma is an increase in our membership dues. The new rates approved by the Committee are as follows: Student, \$5.; Active \$10.; Sustaining \$15. and Life \$150. \$2. is added for each additional family member.

It is felt that the income provided by the new dues structure should allow the continuance of the services and activities provided by the Club to its members and to the Community. The Board of Directors has every expectation that our Club will continue to attract those, both young and old, who have interests in birds and birding.

Note: Because of the holidays the publishing of FEATHERS was delayed. You have already received the dues notice for 1982 containing the new dues structure.

--Editor

REPORT OF SIGHTINGS FROM JUNE THRU AUGUST, 1981

submitted by Tom Palmer

The following were seen at Langley Road, Town of Florida, unless otherwise noted.

1. Great blue heron - (1) 6/7; (1) 7/11
2. Green heron - along Mohawk R* NY 5675B, BBAP
3. Mallard - Along Mohawk R *
4. Turkey vulture - (2) 6/22; (2) 8/28
5. Red-tailed hawk * NY 5675C BBAP
6. Broad-winged hawk (1) 7/30 Sloane Ave., Amsterdam; (2) 7/31 Forrest Ave., Amsterdam
7. Northern Harrier - (1) 8/11
8. American Kestrel - *
9. Ruffed grouse - uncommon thru period; 8/18, 1 immature FL - 5675C BBAP
10. Killdeer - 6/7; fairly common thru period
11. American woodcock - (1) 6/27 5675B BBAP
12. Upland sandpiper - (3) 6/7; (10) 8/2 migrating; (2) 8/3; (2) 8/5
13. Spotted sandpiper - common along Mohawk R Jun and Jul
14. Ring-billed gull - scattered sightings along Mohawk R
15. Rock Dove - *
16. Mourning Dove - *
17. Black-billed cuckoo - 6/28 5675B BBAP - 1 pair
18. Great horned owl - *
19. Chimney swift - common especially in Amsterdam Jun & Jul
20. Belted kingfisher - seen along Mohawk R *
21. Common flicker - *
22. Pileated woodpecker - A pair probably nested in Palmer's Ravine - couldn't confirm
23. Red-headed woodpecker - * Nested in 5675C BBAP
24. Hairy woodpecker - #
25. Downy woodpecker - #
26. Eastern Kingbird - * Nested in 5675B & C
27. Great crested flycatcher - #
28. Eastern phoebe - #
29. Least flycatcher - (1) 6/7
30. Eastern wood pewee - #
31. Horned lark - (1) 7/13
32. Tree swallow - common to mid Jul; uncommon thereafter
33. Bank swallow - common in Yosts, N.Y. FL fairly common in Aug migration
34. Rough-winged swallow - Common Chuctanunda Creek, Amsterdam 5675C
35. Barn swallow - common thru late August NY 5675B&C
36. Blue jay - * NY 5675C
37. Common crow - *

Sightings, Summer 1981 (con't.)

38. Black-capped chickadee - #
39. Tufted titmouse - (1) 8/2
40. White-breasted nuthatch - #
41. Brown creeper - 6/28 Adult & young 5675B BBAP
42. Red-breasted nuthatch - (1) 6/28 " "
43. House wren - *
44. Mockingbird - scattered sightings thru period
45. Gray catbird - fairly common to common thru period
46. Brown thrasher - uncommon thru period, (1) 6/7, 2A 1 Imm 7/11
near Amsterdam
47. American robin - *
48. Wood thrush - Common to last of August
49. Veery - fairly common to mid August
50. Eastern bluebird - common, 1 pair to mid August, moved on
after raising young
51. Cedar waxwing - fairly common to common thru period
52. Starling - *
53. Red-eyed vireo - *
54. Warbling vireo - fairly common early (along Mohawk R
especially) in period; uncommon thereafter
55. Black-and-white warbler - (1) 6/7, singing male
56. Golden-winged warbler - 6/6 1 singing male 5675B BBAP
57. Blue-winged warbler - confirmed breeder " "
58. Yellow warbler - # June & July, less common in Aug
59. Chestnut-sided warbler - # Jun, Jul & early Aug
60. Ovenbird 6/28, BBAP (1 pair) 5675B
61. Louisiana waterthrush - # Jun and early Jul; uncommon t
thereafter
62. Common yellowthroat - *
63. American redstart - # Jun & Jul; uncommon in Aug
64. House sparrow - *
65. Bobolink - Common resident Jun & Jul; migrant in Aug
66. Eastern meadowlark - *
67. Red-winged blackbird - common Jun & Jul; less common in Aug
68. Northern oriole - *
69. Common grackle - #
70. Brown-headed cowbird - #
71. Scarlet tanager - *
72. Northern cardinal - *
73. Rose-breasted grosbeak - *
74. Indigo bunting - * last seen in 3rd wk of Aug
75. Evening grosbeak - (1) 7/27; seen & heard over Sloane Ave.,
Amsterdam
76. Purple finch - scattered sightings thru period
77. House finch - common, especially in urban, suburban areas
78. American goldfinch - *
79. Rufous-sided towhee - 6/27 BBAP 5675B (1 male)
80. Savannah sparrow - (4) 6/7; scattered sightings thereafter
thru period
81. Vesper sparrow - (1) 7/12; (1) 7/18

Sightings, Summer 1981 (concluded)

- 82. Chipping sparrow - Seen Jun & Jul
- 83. Field sparrow - Seen Jun, Jul & first part of Aug
- 84. Swamp sparrow - 6/27, 6/28 BBAP 5675B
- 85. Song sparrow - *
- 86. Common nighthawk - (1) 8/24 Amsterdam

BBAP - Breeding Bird Atlas Project

* Common thru period

Fairly common thru period

* * * * *



FIELD TRIP

REPORTS

HELDERBERGS
September 12, 1981

Twenty-one people attended the hawk watching trip to Pinnacle in the Helderbergs on September 12, 1981. It was a mild (65°F) day, with the wind shifting from W at 10 mph at 8:40 am to NNW at 10 mph by 12:40 pm. Visibility was not too good (about four miles) with an average of 60% cloud cover. Only seven migrating birds were observed in the first two hours. After that, the visibility improved slightly and the migration greatly. Thirty hawks were seen in the next 1½ hours. Most observers had left the lookout by 1:10 pm when it began to rain and the counting stopped. We had counted 37 broadwings, 5 sharpshins, 3 red-tails (appeared to be migrating), 1 kestrel, 1 turkey vulture, 1 osprey, and 6 unidentified hawks. A number of local red-tails were seen throughout the morning as well as one local goshawk.

SPECIES SEEN: Turkey vulture (1); goshawk (1), sharp-

Field Trip Reports (con't.)

shinned (5); red-tailed hawk (3); broad-winged hawk (37); osprey (1); American kestrel (1).

--Ron Laforce

HELDERBERGS
PINNACLE HAWK WATCH
October 24, 1981

Hawk watchers numbered 26 on the field trip to the Helderbergs on October 24, 1981. Hawks numbered 65 and Canada geese 288. The geese were in flocks of 30, 60, 70, 78, and 50.

SPECIES SEEN: Goshawk (2)-1 local; sharpshinned hawk (4); Cooper's hawk (1); red-tailed hawk (39); red-shouldered hawk (4); rough-legged hawk (1)-1st this fall; Northern harrier (1); merlin (1); unidentified (12).

--Bob Marx

ROUND AND SARATOGA LAKES
November 21, 1981

Eleven birders made the traditional November visit to Round and Saratoga Lakes on a cloudy and windy day. Round Lake had a few gulls while most of the waterfowl were found on the west shore of Saratoga Lake.

A flock of 100 pine siskins were seen feeding on weed seeds along the shoreline of the lake as we walked along Stony Point Road. Six red-breasted nuthatches were also seen here.

It was a good trip.

SPECIES SEEN: Com Loon (6); Canada goose (15); Mallard and Black duck (many); ring-necked duck (3); scaup (6); common goldeneye (many); bufflehead (20); hooded merganser (6) common merganser (many); sharpshinned hawk (1); red-tailed hawk (3); American coot (many); herring gull (many); ring-billed gull (many) mourning dove (15); belted kingfisher (3); downy woodpecker (12);

Blue jay (many); common crow (2); black-capped chickadee (many); tufted titmouse (4); white-breasted nuthatch (many); red-breasted nuthatch (6); house sparrow (3); cardinal; evening

Field Trip reports (concluded)

grosbeak (40); pine siskin (100); American goldfinch (many);
Northern junco (2); tree sparrow (12); song sparrow (1).

* * * * *

FIELD NOTES
Summer 1981

Bill Cook

July was wet for a change according to the local American Meteorological Society, with almost five inches of rain for the month. Temperatures averaged cool with July's minimum at 7°C (42°F) in Fulton Co and maximum at 37°C (98°F) in Columbia Co.

The average cooler temperatures were probably of no consolation to the many forest species trying to avoid the heat and drying of direct sunlight in their gypsy moth-denuded woodlands. However, the winter-like landscape was indeed conducive to nest spotting. Some broad-winged hawk breeding confirmations were a direct result of this arthropod's appalling appetite.

Cuckoo populations have responded to this larval abundance to the point that roadkills have offered breeding confirmation. A female yellow-billed cuckoo with an egg in her oviduct was found near Columbia-Greene Community College where she now resides as a permanent member of the study-skin collection. One of her drawer mates, also recently enrolled in the club, is a common flicker of apparently eclectic breeding since she is adorned with several red feathers in her tail and wings. Her exact origin remains a mystery since she arrived at CGCC via an unidentified bumper.

The Breeding Bird Atlas "green sheets" received by regional coordinator Dick Guthrie, about 75 in number from nearly 40 observers, have supplied a majority of the data for this report. He points out that most of the work was done by individuals who are not active club birders and is pleased with this "grass roots" support.

At least fourteen of the species missed in the confirmed category last year made it this year. They include green heron, turkey vulture, goshawk, sharp-shinned hawk, screech owl, pileated woodpecker, Eastern wood pewee, willow flycatcher, horned lark, common raven, brown creeper, blue-gray gnatcatcher, mourning warbler, and Savannah sparrow.

Field Notes (con't.)

Common raven FY recorded on the North River BBS (RPG). Dick Guthrie also reported FL for mourning warbler the same day after detecting food calls.

Species that still have eluded confirmation include least bittern, Cooper's hawk, bobwhite, alder flycatcher, yellow-throated vireo, Henslow's and swamp sparrows. Observations of a pair of osprey on the Hudson River have Dick Guthrie hoping that they are nesting in Greene County. Confirmation of this species in our region would be a significant highlight.

To the delight of rare bird watchers, a quiet residential neighborhood around East Park in Glens Falls hosted a yellow-headed blackbird this summer. According to local residents he could be found on lawns periodically through much of July. He was last seen on the ides of August and attempts to relocate him on the sixteenth failed.

Anyone interested in adding bananaquit, mangrove cuckoo, pearly-eyed thrasher, and Antillean crested hummingbird to his/her life list should contact Sherrie Orne at (518) 392-3521 to inquire about the Reef Ecology course that will be held on St. John USVI in May.

A correction for the last issue was pointed out recently. Ron Laforce's sighting of Connecticut warbler was on May 24 at Little Bear Swamp.

Good Birding and may the hoary redpolls at your feeder refrain from harassing that lonely shrike on the fence row.

Contributors: Peter Feinberg, William G. Gorman, Andrew & Richard P. Guthrie, Michael F. Kuhrt, Ronald Laforce, Tom Palmer, Alice G. Ross, P. L. Worthington, Robert P. Yunick and all of the Breeding Bird Atlas participants.

Abbreviations: BBS - Fish and Wildlife Breeding Bird Survey; CO - confirmed breeding, PR - probable breeding, and PO - possible breeding from the Breeding Bird Atlas Project. County names are also abbreviated.

LOONS-DUCKS: Com. loon: A bird migrating through Coxsackie on Aug 23, two months ahead of schedule, didn't live to go any further. Dick Guthrie speculates that acid rain resulting in too little food prompted this early and unsuccessful migration. Pied-bill grebe: PO Wash Co. Double-crested cormorant: PO Gn Co. Great blue heron CO in Schn and Scho Cos. Green heron: CO in Ful and Mont Cos. Great egret: two Coxsackie Aug 2. Black-crowned night heron: two imm New Baltimore Aug 18. Am bittern: PO Warn and Wash Cos. Mallard: CO in nine cos, all but Rens Co. Black duck: CO in Ful and Wash Cos. Gadwall: PO Gn Co.

Field notes (con't.)

Pintail: PR Wash Co. Green-winged teal: PO Gn and Wash Cos.
 Blue-winged teal: CO in Wash. Co. Wood duck: CO in Alb., Gn.,
 Warn., and Wash. Cos. Hooded merganser: CO in Gn., Ful., Mont.,
 and Wash Cos. Common merganser: CO in Gn., Ful., Scho., Warn.,
 and Wash Cos.

HAWKS-ALCIDS: Goshawk: CO in Alb. and Ful Cos. Sharp-
 shinned hawk: CO in Alb. and Scho. Cos. Red-tailed hawk: CO
 in all but Sart Co. Broad-winged hawk: CO in Gn., Ful. and
 Sart Cos. Rough-legged hawk: PR Scho Co. Northern harrier: PR
 Ful. and Schn. Cos. Osprey: PR Gn Co. Am. kestrel: CO in Alb.,
 Gn., Ful., Mont., Rens., Schn., and Wash. Cos. Ruffed grouse:
 CO in Alb., Gn., Ful., Mont., Warren and Washington Cos. Ring-
 necked pheasant: CO in Alb. Co. Turkey: CO in Alb and Gn Cos.
 Virginia rail: PO Alb. Co. Com. gallinule: PR Alb. Co. Killdeer:
 CO in Alb., Gn., Ful., Schn., Warn., and Wash. Cos. Am. woodcock:
 CO in Alb. and Ful. Cos. Upland sandpiper: PO Gn., Mont., and
 Wash. Cos.; ten observed migrating through Mont. Co Aug 3 (TP).
 Spotted sandpiper: CO in Alb., Gn., Ful., and Mont. Cos.; fledg-
 lings were banded at Cocksackie Res. and Embough Bay Jul 5 (RPG).
 Gr black-backed gull: PO Gn Co. Herring gull: PO Gn., Ful., and
 Warn. Cos. Ring-billed gull: PO Gn. and Mont. Cos.

PIGEONS-WOODPECKERS: Rock dove: CO in Alb., Ful., Mont. and
 Schn Cos. Mourning dove: CO in Alb., Gn., Rens., Schn., Warn.,
 and Wash. Cos. Black-billed cuckoo: PR in seven counties. Barn
 owl: PO Gn and Wash Cos. Screech owl: CO in Alb., Gn., and Scho.
 Cos. Great horned owl: CO in Alb., Ful., Schn., and Scho. Cos.
 Barred owl: PR in five counties. Saw-whet owl: PO Sart. Co.
 Whip-poor-will: CO in Ful. Co. Com. nighthawk: CO in Scho. Co.
 Chimney swift: CO in Alb. and Gn. Cos. Ruby-throated humming-
 bird: CO in Gn. Co. Belted kingfisher: CO in Alb., Gn., Ful.,
 Mont., Rens., and Warn. Cos. Com. flicker: CO in Alb., Gn.,
 Ful., Mont., Schn., and Wash. Cos. Pileated woodpecker: CO in
 Alb., Sart., and Schn. Cos. Red-headed woodpecker: CO in Gn.
 and Mont. Cos. Yellow-bellied sapsucker: CO in Alb., Gn., Ful.,
 and Warn. Cos. Hairy woodpecker: CO in Alb., Ful., Mont., Sart.,
 and Warn. Cos. Downy woodpecker: CO in Alb., Gn., Mont., Sart.,
 Schen., Warn., and Wash. Cos.

FLYCATCHERS-STARLINGS: Eastern kingbird: CO in all but
 Sart. and Wash. Cos. Great crested flycatcher: CO in Alb.,
 Mont., and Warn. Cos. Eastern Phoebe in all but Scho. and Schn.
 Cos. Yellow-bellied flycatcher: PR Gn. Co. Willow flycatcher:
 CO in Mont. Co. Alder flycatcher: CO in Mont. Co. Least fly-
 catcher: CO in Alb. and Ful. Cos. Horned lark: CO in Sart.
 Co.; one Mont. Co. Jul 13. Tree swallow: CO in all but Sart.
 and Scho. Cos. Bank swallow: CO in Gn., Mont., Rens., Schn. and
 Warn. Cos. Barn swallow: CO in all but Rens., Sart. and Schn.
 Cos. Cliff swallow: CO in Gn., Ful. and Warn. Cos. Purple

Field Notes (con't.)

martin: CO in Wash. Co. Blue jay: CO in all but Saratoga and Scho Cos. Com. raven: CO in Warn. Co. (RPG & DM). Com. crow: CO in all but Sart. and Scho. Cos. Fish crow: New Baltimore Jun. Black-capped chickadee: CO in all but Rens., Scho. and Wash Cos. Tufted titmouse: CO Alb., Gn., Schn. and Warn. Cos. White-breasted nuthatch: CO in all but Sart. and Scho. Cos. Red-breasted nuthatch CO in Schn., Sart. and Warn. Cos. Brown creeper: CO in Ful., Mont., Sart. and Schn. Cos. House wren: CO in Alb., Gn., Ful., Mont., Rens., and Warn. Cos. Winter wren: PR Ful. and Warn. Cos. Carolina wren: occasionally heard in its preferred tangle in New Baltimore. Marsh wren: one Embough Bay Catskill Jun 20 (RPG). Mockingbird: CO in Alb., Rens., Mont., Schn., and Wash. Cos. Gray catbird: CO in all but Sart., Scho., and Wash. Cos. Brown thrasher: CO in Alb., Gn., Ful., and Wash. Cos. Am. robin: CO in all but Sart. Co. Wood thrush: CO in Alb., Ful., Mont., Rens., Warn., and Wash. Cos. Hermit thrush: CO in Ful. and Warn. Cos. Veery: CO in Alb., Mont., and Warn. Cos. Eastern bluebird: CO in all but Sart., and Scho. Cos. Blue-gray gnatcatcher: CO in Alb. and Saratoga Nat'l Historical Park Jun 13. Golden-crowned kinglet: PR Scho. Co. Ruby-crowned kinglet: PO Wash Co. Cedar waxwing: CO in all but Sart., Scho., and Wash. Cos. Starling: CO throughout the region.

VIREOS-WARBLEDERS: Yellow-throated vireo: PR Scho. and Wash. Cos. Solitary vireo: PR Ful. and Scho. Cos. Red-eyed vireo: CO in Alb. and Mont. Cos.; very low numbers at New Baltimore but 55 on North River BBS. Warbling vireo: CO in Alb. and Warn. Cos. Black-and white warbler: CO in Green and Warren Counties. Worm-eating warbler: two near Cairo Jun 20 (RPG). Golden-winged warbler: CO in Gn Co. Blue-winged warbler: CO in Alb., Gn., Mont., and Schn. Cos. Nashville warbler: one North River BBS Jun 28. Northern parula: one North River June 28. Yellow warbler: CO in all but Scho and Wash. Cos. Magnolia warbler: singing male Speculator BBS in Warn. Co. Black-throated blue warbler: CO in Warn. Co. Yellow-rumped warbler: CO in Sart. Co. Black-throated green warbler: CO in Alb. Co. Blackburnian warbler: PR Ful., Scho., and Warn. Cos. Chestnut-sided warbler: CO in Alb., Gn., Ful., Mont., and Warn. Cos. Ovenbird: CO in Ful., Mont., Rens., and Wash. Cos.; numbers reported up greatly in Greene Co. Northern waterthrush: CO in Ful. Co. Louisiana waterthrush CO in Alb., Schn., and Warn. Cos. Mourning warbler: CO in Warn. Co. Com. yellowthroat: CO throughout the region. Canada warbler: CO in Sart. Co; ten max North River BBS. Am. Redstart: CO in Gn., Ful., Mont., and Warn. Cos.

WEAVERS-SPARROWS: House sparrow: CO throughout the region. Bobolink: CO in Alb., Gn., Mont., and Wash. Cos. Eastern meadow lark: CO in Alb., Gn., Mont., Schn., Scho., and Wash. Cos. Yellow-headed blackbird: Glens Falls Jul-Aug. Only two others ever reported in our region. Red-winged blackbird: CO throughout the region. Northern oriole: CO throughout the region.

Field Notes (concluded)

Rusty blackbird: PO Warn. Co., Com. grackle: CO throughout the region. Brown-headed cowbird: CO in Ful. and Scho. Cos. Scarlet tanager: CO in Alb., Gn., Mont., Sart. and Warn. Cos. Cardinal: CO in Al., Gn., Mont., Sart., and Warn. Cos. Rose-breasted grosbeak: CO in all but Gn. Scho., and Wash. Cos. Indigo bunting: CO in Alb., Mont., Sart., Scho. and Wash. Cos. Evening grosbeak: PR Warn. and Wash. Cos. Purple finch: CO in Ful., Sart., and Warn. Cos.; RY banded 743 Apr-Aug and observed FY as late as Aug 16. House finch: CO in Alb., Mont., Rens., Schn., and Warn. Cos. Pine siskin: Jenny Lake Jun 28 (RY); Warn. Co Jul 8. Am. goldfinch: CO in Alb., Gn., Ful., Warn., and Wash. Cos. Red crossbill: PO Schn Co.; Jenny Lake, Sart. Co., Jun 28; Warn. Co. Jul 8. Rufous-sided towhee: CO in Alb., Gn., Ful., Rens., and Schn. Cos. Savannah sparrow: CO in Gn., Mont., Rens., and Schn. Cos. Grasshopper sparrow: PR Gn. Co. Vesper sparrow: CO in Wash Co. Northern junco: CO in Alb., Ful., Rens., Sart., Schn., and Warn Cos. Chipping sparrow: CO in Alb., Gn., Ful., Mont., Warn., and Wash. Cos. Field sparrow: CO in Alb., Gn., Ful., Rens., Schn., and Wash. Cos. White-throated sparrow: CO in Ful., Rens., Warn., and Wash., Cos. Swamp sparrow: PR Rens., Sart., and Gn. Cos. Song sparrow: CO in all Sart. and Scho. Cos.

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BALD EAGLE SURVEY
13,709 Birds in 'Lower 48'
January 1981

The National Wildlife Federation has announced that its third annual midwinter bald eagle survey in the 'lower 48' states, taken during the first two weeks of January, 1981, resulted in a count of 13,709 eagles--an increase of five per cent over last year's count.

"The annual survey is taken during the winter in order to increase our knowledge of bald eagle numbers and distribution at that time of year, when the numbers of birds found in the lower 48 are at their peak," said William S. Clark, director of NWF's Raptor Information Center. "uring January survey conditions are ideal because eagle movements are at a minimum."

The 1981 midwinter survey data is now being entered into NWF's computer for analysis and easy retrieval. "One of the

Bald Eagle Survey (con't.)

major uses of the survey data," said Clark, "is to provide state and government agencies as well as independent researchers with the most current and comprehensive information on wintering bald eagle distribution." The Raptor Information Center distributes standardized results of the survey to all cooperating agencies annually.

The bald eagle was adopted as the national symbol by the Continental Congress in 1782. While the decline of bald eagle populations is due mainly to habitat loss, use of DDT and other pesticides during the 1950's and '60's seriously impaired the bird's reproductive process. Use of these pesticides was largely outlawed in the 1970's.

Clark feels that the bald eagle is making a comeback, "especially in the Chesapeake Bay and Great Lakes regions." Habitat loss continues to be the long-range problem, however. "That's why it's important to have the valuable data our midwinter surveys provide," Clark emphasized. "Finally we are getting a feel for what habitat is essential to the birds."

--National Wildlife Federation

Note: While many states tallied an increase in the eagle midwinter survey, New York's count was down 1 from 1980 and down 5 from 1979. That may have been due to weather conditions.

--As above

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EAGLES' BICENTENNIAL

Next year (1982) will be the 200th anniversary of the designation of the bald eagle as the national symbol of the United States. A resolution is pending in both houses of Congress, declaring 1982 as the Bicentennial Year of the Bald Eagle and June 20th--the actual anniversary date--as National Bald Eagle Day. Audubon Society members (and all birders) are urged to write their representative (the House Zip Code is 20515) and senators (Zip 20510) to urge them to become co-sponsors of the resolution.

--Audubon Leader, 12/18/81

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WELCOME TO NEW MEMBERS

A welcome to William K. F. Becker, Patricia Canavan, Robert J. Connor, Ann R. Gaynor, Christina Hepp, Nan Mahoney, Alan A. Mapes, Mark Oliver, Frank C. Reed, Ruth and Chet Vanderbilt, and Mrs. George DeWolf Wever. We look forward to your joining other members of the Club on the field trips planned for 1982.

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SPECIAL NOTE: Check your Field Trip List for 1982. Please change the date for the New York State Federation of Bird Clubs' Annual Meeting from Sept. 25-26 to Oct 1-3.

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NOTE: All material for the Winter 1982 edition of FEATHERS must be submitted by February 15. I urge all trip coordinators to send reports of the field trips to me promptly. I feel that reports not submitted for inclusion in FEATHERS cause a lessening in the quality of our quarterly publication.

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Shirley Schadow, Editor
230 Lake Hill Road
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