

February 2017 Sightings Report

Only 2 years after the coldest February on record, we had the warmest February on record. Temperatures averaged 35.5° F, 9.1° above normal. There were 3 record highs set: 54° on the 7th, 63° on the 18th, and 67° on the 23rd plus a record high low of 47° on the 23rd. That last record high was the highest February temperature since 1997. Precipitation totaled 2.33", 0.38" above normal, but snowfall at 14.6" was 6.9" below normal. The only real snow "event" was 6.2" on the 12th- 13th, though east of us in Wayne and Oswego Counties they were hit with 12"-18". The last half of the month was mild, a taste of spring, and brought us a surge of migrants and some rare birds locally and nearby. Lake Ontario remained open, and most bays and ponds opened up, though still prone to ice cover with only a night or two of cold.

The warmth starting after the first week of the month brought a wave of waterfowl with spring arrivals and numbers jumping for many species by month's end. The arrivals were well distributed across the region from the south shore of Lake Ontario ponds to the Finger Lakes to the Northern Montezuma Wildlife Management Area. Again, good numbers of Snow Geese remained across the region, with Ross's Goose found with them. Tundra Swans and several of the puddle ducks arrived in the fields with the geese, including very large numbers of Northern Pintails accompanied by American Wigeon, Mallards and American Black Ducks, and Green-winged Teal on Carncross Road. A Greater White-fronted Goose was found in Genesee Valley Park, and Cackling Geese were also present. After a Eurasian Wigeon was found just outside the region in Risser Swamp, and many had rushed to Oswego for a 1st-for-the-state Clark's Grebe, a male Tufted Duck was found with rafts of other diving ducks on Honeoye Lake with an early Eurasian Wigeon also there followed by another on Braddock Bay, then several just outside the region in the Montezuma area. The Eurasian Wigeons were record early and in unprecedented numbers. March would bring even more surprises for next month! Likely the female Harlequin Duck showed up again on Irondequoit Bay and a male was also seen and photographed off Wolcott to the east. Yet waterfowl, loons, and grebes on the big lake remained relatively few. Double-crested Cormorant numbers on Irondequoit Bay varied up and down, but Great Blue Heron was scarcer than many winters.

There was no Black Vulture, but Turkey Vultures began to appear away from their winter sites. A few hawks were moving by month's end and two early Golden Eagles were seen on the 25th. Bob Baez began his work as this year's official hawk counter at Braddock Bay. A lone Sandhill Crane was heard and seen over Huckleberry Swamp on the 25th. Killdeer arrived widespread and in good numbers in the last week of the month. American Woodcocks were also heard displaying at 10 locations beginning on the 23rd, many for those early dates. Again this year, an American Pipit passed the early hawk watchers. It was again not a big winter for Rough-legged Hawk. American Kestrel, Merlin, and Peregrine Falcon numbers were back to a bit lower.

The Mendon Ponds Virginia Rail was again NOT reported this year; again likely still present out in open water patches in the cattails. American Coot numbers were low.

A detailed assessment of the winter gulls must wait for the eBird record download. Numbers were a bit low from a quick scan of the data. There was one report of an early flock of Bonaparte's Gulls at Charlotte on the 18th.

One observer caught up with Eurasian Collared-Dove at the Greenwell farm this month. Snowy Owl was seen at the start of the month on the Summerville Pier, then a few times later on Buck Pond. An early Long-eared Owl and 3 reports of Northern Saw-whet Owl, possibly all the same individual, were noted from the Manitou Owl Woods area. Numbers of Short-eared Owls found on the regular biweekly DEC counts remained lower this year than in recent years. Part of this may be less attention to the Taft and Sand Roads area due to concern over complaints from residents due to too many and rude birders. No Red-headed Woodpeckers were reported, but 4 Yellow-bellied Sapsuckers was a good number. Northern Shrikes were scarce but remained findable with effort. Fish Crows were found all month in the Charlotte and Summerville areas and also in the North Gate Plaza area of Greece to the west. Again surprisingly, for as open as this winter seemed, reports of wintering half-hardy species dropped back to few this month with only a small bounce with the late warmth. With little snow, reports of the wintering field birds (Horned Larks, Snow Buntings, and Lapland Longspurs) were low. As nice additions, a lone Bohemian Waxwing showed up in Webster, Yellow-rumped Warblers in Webster Park, a Chipping Sparrow in Corbetts Glen, a Savannah in Bergen, and 8 Fox Sparrows scattered across the region, with several photographed. There was also a nice surge in blackbird reports late in the month that included an Eastern Meadowlark in Thousand Acre Swamp and at least 7 Rusty Blackbirds in five locations. Winter finches were essentially nonexistent other than Common Redpolls and Pine Siskins at a few feeders.

Completion of the Noteworthy Records table and detailed commentary must await the resolution of an eBird download security issue which has prevented our normal monthly download. I have looked at most of the expected species using Explore Data tools, but it is far too time consuming to do all the details or even to look for all species in any month other than February. The Great Backyard Bird Count set new records for reports, so there should be good numbers of reports and observers again for February when we can see all, but also much more hand analysis to assess noteworthy details.

Please send your reports by the 5th of the month to Andrea Patterson, 144 Greystone Lane, #24, Rochester, NY 14618.

	2017	2016	10-year Average (2007- 2016)
Species for February	127	127	114.2
New for the year	11	7	4.6
Total for the year to date	137	139	132.0

Bob Spahn and the RBA Records Committee

Observers: Jim Adams, Carolyn & Jerry Barnhart, Jessie Barry, Jim Barry, Sue Barth, Doug Beattie, Linda Clark-Benedict, Steven Benedict, Barry Bermudez, Deborah Blazek, John Boettcher, Lynn Braband, Robert Buckert, Sara Burch, Bruce Cady, Brad Carlson, Kelly Close, Andrew Consler, Chris Constable, Kathleen Dalton, Doug Daniels, Willie D'Anna, Mark Druziak, George Ford, Jared Gadsbury, Andy Garland, Candy Giles, Sheryl Gracewski, Jay Greenberg, Kevin Griffith, Ralph & Georgia Guenther, Michael Gullo, Judy Gurley, Andrew Guthrie, Rich Guthrie, Ethan Gyllenhaal, Helen & Chris Haller, Kim Hartquist, Christina Hoh, Jennalee Holzschuh, Dick Horsey, Bill & Mari Howe, Carolyn Jacobs, Nicholas Kachala, Laura Kammermeier, Jim Kimball, Chris Lajewski, Tom Lathrop,

Leona Lauster, Greg Lawrence, Tim Lenz, Joan & Vern Lindberg, Peggy Mabb, Melissa Mance-Coniglio, Cindy Marino, Pat Martin, Lauri Mattle, Dianne McCullough, Jay McGowan, Bob McGuire, Chita McKinney, Jim Miles, Adrielle Mitchell, Celeste Morien, Brian & Brooke Morse, Tom Nash, Jay Ovsiovitch, Norma Platt, Betsy Potter, Jay Powell, Carolyn Ragan, RBA Field Trips, Wade & Melissa Rowley, Kevin Rybczynski, Shirley Shaw, Judy Slein, Robert & Susan Spahn, Dave Spier & Donna Mason-Spier, Kris Squires, Chris Stanger, Rick Srevens, Kimberly Sucy, Steve Taylor, Mike & Joann Tetlow, Rick Thomas, Brad Walker, Mike Wasilco, Bridget Watts, Joe Wing, Chris Wood.

NOTEWORTHY RECORDS

February 2017

<u>Species</u>	<u>No.</u>	<u>Date</u>	<u>Location</u>	<u>Observers</u>
<u>Greater White-fronted Goose</u>	1	7F-12	Genesee Valley Park	E. Gyllenhaal, 13 oth obs
<u>Greater White-fronted Goose</u>	1	27	North Ponds Park, Webster	G. Ford, J. Wing, <i>et al.</i>
<u>Greater White-fronted Goose</u>	3	27	T Bergen	Bri. Morse
<u>Snow Goose</u>	<u>max 12000</u>	10	Poplar Hill Rd, Livingston Co.	M. Wasilco
<u>Snow Goose</u>	<u>4800</u>	25	NMWMA (Savannah Mucklands)	G. Lawrence
<u>Ross's Goose</u>	1	11	N. Hamlin Rd.	R. & S. Spahn
<u>Cackling Goose</u>	~ 27 rep, 36 ind	month	16 loc	19 obs
<u>Cackling Goose</u>	<u>max 8</u>	25	Hamlin	A. Guthrie
<u>Canada Goose</u>	<u>max 6700</u>	19	Groveland Flats, Livingston Co.	K. Close
<u>Mute Swan</u>	<u>max 145</u>	18	Braddock Bay - N. Marina	R. Spahn
<u>Trumpeter Swan</u>	<u>max 20</u>	28	NMWMA (Morgan Rd marshes)	A. Lieras S. Billerman, J. McGowan, K. McGowan
<u>Tundra Swan</u>	<u>max 305</u>	25	NMWMA (Carncross Rd)	McGowan
<u>Tundra Swan</u>	<u>175</u>	28	Braddock Bay - N. Marina	A. Guthrie
<u>Wood Duck</u>	1	25FS	Braddock Bay - N. Marina	C. Wood G. Lawrence, L. Mattle, Ji. Miles
<u>Gadwall</u>	26-30	19FS	Braddock Bay - N. Marina	E. Gyllenhaal, G. Lawrence, mob
<u>Eurasian Wigeon</u>	1 m	25F-28	Sandy Bottom Park, Honeoye	mob
<u>Eurasian Wigeon</u>	1 m	27-28	Braddock Bay	P. Martin, B. Carlson, mob
<u>American Wigeon</u>	<u>64-max 90</u>	11FS	Braddock Bay - N. Marina	mob
<u>Am. Black Duck</u>	<u>max 88, low</u>	2	Conesus Lake	M. Wasilco
<u>Mallard</u>	<u>max 359</u>	2	Conesus Lake	M. Wasilco
<u>N. Shoveler</u>	2-3	23FS	Braddock Bay area	M. Gullo, P. Martin
<u>N. Shoveler</u>	<u>max 20</u>	25	NMWMA (Carncross Rd)	E. Gyllenhaal, G. Lawrence
<u>N. Pintail</u>	to 41	19FS	Braddock Bay	sev
<u>N. Pintail</u>	<u>5000+</u>	22	NMWMA (Carncross Rd)	R. & S. Spahn
<u>Green-winged Teal</u>	<u>40+</u>	22	NMWMA (Carncross Rd)	R. & S. Spahn
<u>Canvasback</u>	<u>max 110</u>	25	Braddock Bay - hawkwatch	Je. Barry, C. Wood
<u>Redhead</u>	<u>max 3800</u>	28	Conesus Lake	M. Wasilco S. Billerman, J. McGowan, K. McGowan
<u>Ring-necked Duck</u>	<u>max 800</u>	25	NMWMA (Carncross Rd)	McGowan
<u>Tufted Duck</u>	<u>1 m</u>	27F-28	Sandy Bottom Park, Honeoye	B. Howe, 13+ other obs
<u>Greater Scaup</u>	<u>max 135, low</u>	7	West Port Bay, Wayne Co.	E. Gyllenhaal, G. Lawrence
<u>Harlequin Duck</u>	1 fem	5-17	Irondequoit Bay	20 obs
<u>Harlequin Duck</u>	1m, ph	16	West Port Bay, Wayne Co.	W. & M. Rowley
<u>Harlequin Duck</u>	1m dist ph	16	Brown Rd, T. Wolcott	W. & M. Rowley

NOTEWORTHY RECORDS (cont'd)
February 2017

<u>Species</u>	<u>No.</u>	<u>Date</u>	<u>Location</u>	<u>Observers</u>
<u>Harlequin Duck</u>	1	21	flying west, 2/16 bird?	W. & M. Rowley
White-winged Scoter	<u>max 135, low</u>	5	Point Breeze	A. Guthrie
Long-tailed Duck	<u>max 1600</u>	6	Rigney's Bluff, Greece	K. Griffith
Long-tailed Duck	<u>1200</u>	17	Irondequoit Bay Outlet	R. Spahn
Long-tailed Duck	<u>1505</u>	20	off East Manitou Rd.	K. Griffith
Common Goldeneye	<u>max 442</u>	17	Irondequoit Bay - North	R. Spahn
<u>Com. Goldeneye x Hooded Merganser</u>	1	11-12	Braddock Bay - N. Marina GBYBC - off Newport Yacht Club	G. Lawrence, 3 oth obs
Common Merganser	<u>max 836</u>	17	Club	R. & S. Spahn
Red-breasted Merganser	<u>max 700</u>	16	West Port Bay, Wayne Co. GBYBC - off Newport Yacht Club	W. & M. Rowley
Red-breasted Merganser	<u>443</u>	17	Club	R. & S. Spahn Je. Barry, C. Wood, E.
Ruddy Duck	<u>max 12</u>	28	Sandy Bottom Park, Honeoye	Gyllenhaal, G. Lawrence
Red-necked Grebe	1	<u>28</u>	off Webster Park GBYBC - off Newport Yacht Club	E. Gyllenhaal, G. Lawrence
Double-crested Cormorant	<u>max 12</u>	<u>17</u>	Club	R. & S. Spahn
<u>Black Vulture ph</u>	1	<u>18FS</u> all	Hamlin Beach SP	H. M., B. Hewitt
Bald Eagle	166 eBird lines	month all	many	mob
Red-shouldered Hawk	<u>total ~8</u>	month	6 loc	sev
Rough-legged Hawk	<u>max 8</u>	27 all	Braddock Bay - hawkwatch	M. Tetlow
Rough-legged Hawk	<u>total ~37+</u>	month	16 loc	34 obs
Golden Eagle	1 ad	<u>25F</u>	Braddock Bay	Je. Barry, C. Wood
Golden Eagle	1 (later)	<u>25F</u>	Edgemere Dr., Greece	Je. Barry, C. Wood
Sandhill Crane	1	<u>25F</u>	Huckleberry Swamp	Jared Gadsbury
Sandhill Crane	1	7	NMWMA (Savannah)	S. Mackensie
Sandhill Crane ph	1	8	NMWMA (Morgan Rd marshes)	J. Akin
Killdeer	2	<u>22F</u>	NMWMA (Morgan Rd)	R. & S. Spahn
American Woodcock	1	<u>23F</u>	Brockport	J. Holzschuh
American Woodcock	3	<u>24</u>	Purcell Rd, T Canadice	B. & M. Howe
American Woodcock	<u>total ~16</u>	<u>23F-28</u>	10 loc	sev
Bonaparte's Gull	15	<u>18F</u>	Charlotte	K. Squires
Herring Gull	<u>max 1400</u>	28	Martin Rd., Hamlin	A. Guthrie
Iceland Gull	<u>total ~6+</u>	5-18	6 loc	16 obs
<u>Thayer's/Iceland Gull</u>	1	12	Long Pond, Greece	A. Guthrie
<u>Lesser Black-backed Gull</u>	<u>total ~10+</u>	4-16 14;	7 loc	12 obs
Glaucous Gull	<u>1; 1, low</u>	13-18	Irondequoit Bay; West Port Bay	M. Gullo; sev
Great Black-backed Gull	<u>max 56</u>	12	LaSalle Landing Park	R. Buckert, N. Kachala
<u>Eurasian Collared-Dove</u>	1; 3	11; 12	Greenwell farm, Hamlin	R. Thomas; A. Guthrie C. Giles, E. Gyllenhaal, G. Lawrence, M. Gullo
<u>Snowy Owl</u>	1	3, 5, 19	Buck Pond Greece	Lawrence, M. Gullo
<u>Snowy Owl</u>	1	1-2	Summerville Pier	M. Druziak, D. Horsey
Long-eared Owl	1	<u>25</u>	Manitou (Owl Woods)	C. Wood
Short-eared Owl	<u>max 9</u>	14	DEC Avon survey	sev
N. Saw-whet Owl	1	<u>9, 11, 14</u>	Manitou (Owl Woods)	owls surveys
N. Saw-whet Owl	1	<u>17</u>	<u>Black Creek Park</u>	B. & B. Morse
Yellow-bellied Sapsucker	<u>total 7</u>	<u>5-28</u>	7 loc	9 obs
American Kestrel	<u>19 rep, 19 ind</u>	6-28 all	15 loc	16 obs
Merlin	<u>18 rep, 17 ind</u>	month	16 loc	16 obs

NOTEWORTHY RECORDS (cont'd)

February 2017

<u>Species</u>	<u>No.</u>	<u>Date</u>	<u>Location</u>	<u>Observers</u>
Peregrine Falcon	<u>15 rep, 14 ind</u>	all month	12 loc	16 obs
Northern Shrike	<u>10 rep, 9 ind</u>	2-23	7 loc	9 obs
Fish Crow	<u>max 7</u>	18	<u>Irondequoit Bay North</u>	R. Spahn
Horned Lark	<u>max 150</u>	26	NMWMA (Savannah)	K. McGann
Winter Wren	<u>1, singing</u>	<u>21</u>	Durand-Eastman Park	B. & M. Howe, J. Slein
Hermit Thrush	<u>total 6</u>	<u>5-28</u>	5 loc	6 obs
American Robin	<u>max 400</u>	1	T Williamson, Wayne Co.	M. Gullo; sev
Gray Catbird	<u>total ~4</u>	<u>9-28</u>	4 loc	8 obs
American Pipit	1	<u>27FS</u>	Braddock Bay (Hawkwatch)	Gullo P. Martin, B. Carlson, M. L. Mattle, Ji. Miles, 12 other
<u>Bohemian Waxwing</u>	1	23-28	Whiting Rd NP, Webster	obs
Cedar Waxwing	<u>max 24, low</u>	24	Hamlin	A. Guthrie
Snow-Bunting	<u>max 450</u>	12	Hamlin	A. Guthrie
Yellow-rumped Warbler	2	<u>25</u>	Hamlin Beach SP	R. & S. Spahn
Am. Tree Sparrow	<u>max 95</u>	11	T Chili	N. Kachala
Savannah Sparrow ph	1	<u>3</u>	T. Bergen	M. Coniglio
Fox Sparrow	<u>total ~9</u>	<u>5-28</u>	5 loc	6 obs
Dark-eyed Junco	<u>max 65</u>	5	Churchville Park	Bri. Morse S. Billerman, J. McGowan, K.
Red-winged Blackbird	<u>max 14000</u>	25	NMWMA (Van Dyne Spoor)	McGowan
Eastern Meadowlark	1	<u>19F</u>	Nations Rd. area	D. Beattie
Eastern Meadowlark	1	<u>25</u>	Manitou (Owl Woods)	C. Wood
Rusty Blackbird	1	<u>15FS</u>	Webster Park	Ji. Miles
Rusty Blackbird	2	<u>25</u>	Island Cottage Woods	C. Wood
Rusty Blackbird	1	<u>26</u>	Thousand Acre Swamp	C. Wood
Rusty Blackbird	1	<u>27</u>	Manitou (Owl Woods)	M. Gullo
Rusty Blackbird	2	<u>28</u>	Sandy Bottom Park, Honeoye	5 obs
Common Grackle	<u>max 800</u>	25	NMWMA (Morgan Rd marshes)	B. McGuire S. Billerman, J. McGowan, K.
Brown-headed Cowbird	<u>max 80</u>	25	NMWMA (Van Dyne Spoor)	McGowan
Common Redpoll	2	1	Conesus Lake Inlet	K. Close
Common Redpoll	1	14	Greece	K. Griffith
Pine Siskin	<u>max 37</u>	8	Hamlin	A. Guthrie