

## February 2016 Sightings Report

This month was a huge contrast with last year's coldest ever; 17.3 °F warmer for the 4<sup>th</sup> warmest February on record. Temperatures averaged 29.5 °F, 3.1° above normal. It still was cool, with 23 days with the low below freezing and 10 days with the high below freezing. Precipitation totaled 3.78", 1.83" above normal. Snowfall at 28.0" was 6.5" above normal. But the only big snow event was 18.3" (at the airport, much more elsewhere) on the 16<sup>th</sup>, with another inch the next morning for the 5<sup>th</sup> highest calendar day snowfall on record. But temperatures into the 50's on the 19<sup>th</sup> sucked the snow pack back into the sky or melted it into the ground in short order. A warm last couple of days to the month brought a little taste of spring migrants. Lake Ontario remained largely open, with only a narrow rim of shore ice other than after a period of north winds after the big snowfall when, for a day or so, ice extended to the horizon. The next shift to south winds blew most of that out quickly. The surprise of the season to me has been, given the general warmth, how quickly ponds and bays have been totally covered with ice after only 12 hours or so of overnight cold.

A story of the season has been the continuing presence of large numbers of Snow Geese scattered across the region. This is the first winter I can recall with Snow Geese here all season. With them and large numbers of Canada Geese have been a good number of Greater White-fronted Goose and Cackling Goose reports. Other waterfowl have been in average to low numbers, though variety has remained good. The waterfowl have been pushed about quite a bit by the periods where open ponds or bays have suddenly locked up tight for a few days. A King Eider near the mouth of Braddock Bay attracted birders, and toward month's end an increase of both species and numbers occurred there. Loon and grebe numbers remained low, and a few Double-crested Cormorants popped up from time to time, but Great Blue Heron remained hard to find.

Black Vulture was back on the missing list, and Turkey Vultures were few. Near month's end, a few birders at the Braddock Bay hawk watch caught a movement of hawks and a few other early migrants: Killdeer and American Pipit among them. Off on the edges of the Northern Montezuma Wildlife Management Area in the Town of Clyde, we had a few Sandhill Cranes present into February, another unusual event. Good numbers of Bald Eagles were present, and we had the usual numbers of Sharp-shinned and Cooper's Hawks raiding local feeders in their usual about 1:2 ratio, respectively. Again, only a lone Northern Goshawk was reported plus about 8 Red-shouldered Hawks. It was again not a big winter for Rough-legged Hawk, American Kestrel, Merlin, and Peregrine Falcon, though numbers were up some from last year's dismal month. A highlight was a dark morph Gyrfalcon seen and photographed near South Livonia on the 21<sup>st</sup>, unfortunately not relocated later.

The Mendon Ponds Virginia Rail was NOT reported this year, probably because there were enough open patches out in the cattails that it did not need the stream and pool area where it is normally seen. American Coots were in decent numbers only on Conesus Lake.

The erratic coming and going of ice edges on the bays, resulted in relatively few of the expected white-winged gulls and Lesser Black-backed Gulls, though increases in reports occurred toward month's end. Reports from the local landfills were down.

There was a surprising burst of Eurasian Collared-Dove reports from the Greenwell farm, still not an automatic find by any means. Snowy Owl was reported from only two locations. An early Long-eared Owl was found right at month's end in the Manitou Owl Woods. Numbers of Short-eared Owls found on the regular biweekly DEC counts remained good through the month. No Red-headed Woodpeckers and only three Yellow-bellied Sapsuckers were reported. Northern Shrikes were scarce but remained findable with effort. Fish Crows were found all month in the Charlotte area, with a maximum of 14, high for winter.

Surprisingly for this open winter, reports of wintering half-hardy species remained very low. We had a decent selection of species, but very few individuals: only 2 Winter Wrens, one Ruby-crowned Kinglet, two Hermit Thrushes, one Yellow-rumped Warbler, two Eastern Towhees, a lone Chipping Sparrow, a few Savannah Sparrows, and a lone Eastern Meadowlark. Among the wintering field birds (Horned Larks, Snow Buntings, and Lapland Longspurs), numbers were relatively low. American Tree Sparrow and Dark-eyed Junco seemed more prevalent late in the month, but reported counts were still low. The other expected sparrows could just be counted as "present". After the big burst of blackbird reports around the late January Yellow-headed Blackbird search, numbers dropped way off. Waxwings were few. Winter finches were essentially nonexistent other than at a very few feeders.

There were about 17,480 eBird records, again very high for February and largely due to the Great Backyard Bird Count reports. This also boosted the number of eBird observers to 288 (vs. a normal for February of just over 100).

Please send your records by the 5<sup>th</sup> of the month following to Lynn Bergmeyer, 187 Longridge Ave., Rochester, NY 14616.

	<u>2016</u>	<u>2015</u>	10-year Average ( <u>2006-2015</u> )
Species for February	127	107	113.9
New for the year	<u>7</u>	<u>5</u>	<u>4.4</u>
Total for the year to date	139	133	133.6

*Bob Spahn*

**Observers:** Jim Adams, Janet Akin, Carolyn Barnhart, Jessie Barry, Jim Barry, Sue Barth, Doug Beattie, Don Bemont, Linda Clark-Benedict, Steven Benedict, Mike Bergin, Barry Bermudez, Robin Blakesley, John Boettcher, Lynn Braband, Kris Braell, Robert Buckert, Sara Burch, Bruce Cady, Brad Carlson, Judy Caysinger, Kelly Close, Andrew Consler, Kathleen Dalton, Doug Daniels, Willie D'Anna, Laurie Dirxx, Bret Ewald, Daena Ford, George Ford, Drew Fowler, Kenny Frisch, Kyle Gage, Andy Garland, Kristine Genagon, Jamie Glydon, Meg Grindrod, Sheryl Gracewski, Jay Greenberg, Kevin Griffith, Ralph & Georgia Guenther, Michael Gullo, Andrew Guthrie, Rich Guthrie, Anita Gwara, Ethan Gyllenhaal, Helen & Chris Haller, Kim Hartquist, Jim & Allison Healy, Sue Heffner, Christina Hoh, Dick Horsey, Bill Howe, Carolyn Jacobs, Nicholas Kachala, Laura Kammermeier, Jim Kimball, Kathy Kirsch, J. Gary Kohlenberg, Chris Lajewski, Tom Lathrop, Leona Lauster, Greg Lawrence, Tim Lenz, Joan & Vern Lindberg, Peggy Mabb, Mary Magistro, Melissa Mance-Coniglio, Cindy Marino, David Mark, Pat Martin, Lauri Mattle, Dianne McCullough, Jay McGowan, Bob McGuire, Chita McKinney, Jim Miles, Adrielle Mitchell, Celeste Morien, Brian & Brooke Morse, Linda Mott, Dave Nutter, David Odell, Sue O'Neill, Lori Osgood, Bill Ostrander, Jay Ovsiovitich, Norma Platt, Betsy Potter, Jay Powell, David Prill, Carolyn Ragan, RBA Field Trips, Wade & Melissa Rowley, Kevin Rybczynski, Scott & Catherine Salber, Jackie & Robert Salisbury, Shirley Shaw, Carol Ann Shay, Judy Slein, Robert & Susan Spahn, Dave Spier & Donna Mason-Spier, Chris Stanger, Joe Stevenson, Kimberly Sucy, Steve Taylor, Joyce Testa, Mike & Joann Tetlow, Brad Walker, Mike Wasilco, Bridget Watts, Doris Waud, Joe Wing, Jim Wood.

## NOTEWORTHY RECORDS

### February 2016

<u>Species</u>	<u>No.</u>	<u>Date</u>	<u>Location</u>	<u>Observers</u>
<u>Greater White-fronted Goose</u>	1-4	thru 10	Mendon Ponds Park	mob; sev w. photos
<u>Greater White-fronted Goose</u>	2-3	6-11	Kings Bend Park (Pittsford)	D. & D. Spier, mob
<u>Greater White-fronted Goose</u>	2	6, 7	North Ponds Park (Webster)	G. Ford, K. Hartquist
<u>Greater White-fronted Goose</u>	6	5	NMWMA (Carncross Rd)	W. & M. Rowley, J. Wing
<u>Greater White-fronted Goose</u>	3	28	NMWMA (Van Dyne Spoor)	W. & M. Rowley
Snow Goose	<u>9500</u>	5	Hamlin (Redman Rd)	A. Guthrie
Snow Goose	<u>7000</u>	28	Hamlin (Jacobs Rd)	A. Guthrie
Snow Goose	<u>max 50000</u>	28	NMWMA (Railroad Rd)	J. G. Kohlenberg
<u>Ross's Goose</u>	1	4F	West Port Bay (Wayne Co.)	W. & M. Rowley
<u>Cackling Goose</u>	~ 11 rep, 16 ind	month	10 loc	mob; sev w. photos
Canada Goose	<u>max 10000</u>	24	Groveland Flats (Livingston Co.)	M. W asilco
<u>Snow x Canada Goose</u>	1	7, 9	North Ponds Park (Webster)	K. Hartquist, J. Wing
<u>Snow x Canada Goose</u>	1	5	NMWMA (Carncross Rd)	W. & M. Rowley, J. Wing
Mute Swan	<u>max 47</u>	15	Braddock Bay	Bri. Morse
Trumpeter Swan	<u>max 7</u>	5,7	NMWMA	W. & M. Rowley, D. Nutter
Tundra Swan	<u>max 76</u>	28	Braddock Bay (Hawkwatch)	M. Tetlow, <i>et al.</i>
Wood Duck	1	21FS	Braddock Bay - West Spit	J. Miles, L. Mattle
Gadwall	10-14	21FS	Braddock Bay - West Spit	B. & B. Morse, A. Guthrie
American Wigeon	max 20	21FS	Braddock Bay	B. & B. Morse
Am. Black Duck	<u>max 18, low</u>	20	Braddock Bay - West Spit	K. Hartquist, P. Martin
Mallard	<u>max 300</u>	5	NMWMA (Carncross Rd)	J. Wing
N. Shoveler	1-2	<u>month</u>	sev	sev
N. Pintail	3-22	21FS	Braddock Bay area	sev
N. Pintail	<u>max 46</u>	28	Braddock Bay (Hawkwatch)	M. Tetlow, G. Lawrence
Canvasback	<u>max 35</u>	3	Braddock Bay - West Spit	K. Hartquist, G. Lawrence
Redhead	<u>max 4500</u>	12	Conesus Lake	M. W asilco
Ring-necked Duck	<u>max 45, low</u>	7	Conesus Lake Inlet WMA	D. Spier
Greater Scaup	<u>max 385, low</u>	7	Braddock Bay - West Spit	A. Guthrie
Lesser Scaup	<u>max 90, low</u>	6	Braddock Bay - West Spit	K. Hartquist
King Eider	1 fem	6-29F	Braddock Bay - West Spit area	E. Gyllenhaal, G. Lawrence, mob
White-winged Scoter	<u>max 225</u>	20	Braddock Bay - West Spit	G. Lawrence
Long-tailed Duck	<u>1200</u>	14	off Manitou Beach	R. & S. Spahn
Long-tailed Duck	<u>max 1385</u>	6	Rigney's Bluff (Greece)	E. Gyllenhaal, G. Lawrence

**NOTEWORTHY RECORDS (cont'd)**  
**February 2016**

<u>Species</u>	<u>No.</u>	<u>Date</u>	<u>Location</u>	<u>Observers</u>
<u>Barrow's Goldeneye</u>	1 m	7;14; 26	Pt.Breeze	B. Ewald; E. Gyllenhaal, G, Lawrence
<u>Com. Goldeneye x Hded Merganser</u>	1	20-21	Braddock Bay	A. Guthrie, B. & B. Morse
Common Merganser	<u>max 350</u>	20	Ontario Beach (Charlotte)	R. Buckert, N. Kachala
Red-breasted Merganser	<u>max 100, low</u>	21	Braddock Bay - West Spit	J. Miles, L. Mattle
Double-crested Cormorant	<u>max 11</u>	<u>5</u>	Summerville Pier	B. Carlson, J. Glydon
Northern Harrier	<u>max 9</u>	6	Nations Rd area (Hogmire Rd)	Bro. Morse
<u>Northern Goshawk</u>	1	3	N. Wolcott	W. & M. Rowley
Red-shouldered Hawk	<u>total 8</u>	7-28	5 loc	sev
Red-tailed Hawk	<u>max 39</u>	28	Braddock Bay (Hawkwatch)	M. Tetlow, G. Lawrence
Rough-legged Hawk	<u>~ 21 rep, 20 ind</u>	month	sev	sev
American Coot	<u>max 48</u>	12	Conesus Lake	M. W asilco
Sandhill Crane	<u>5</u>	<u>6</u>	T Clyde (Tyre Rd)	T. Lenz, B. Walker
Killdeer	1	<u>20F</u>	Hamlin (Jacobs Rd)	K. Sucey
Killdeer	1	<u>28</u>	Hamlin (Jacobs Rd)	A. Guthrie
Killdeer	1	<u>28</u>	Braddock Bay (Hawkwatch)	G. Lawrence
Herring Gull	<u>max 735</u>	6	Irondequoit Bay - S	E. Gyllenhaal, G, Lawrence
Iceland Gull	<u>~ 12 rep, 13 ind</u>	8-22	sev	sev
		all		
<u>Lesser Black-backed Gull</u>	<u>~ 15 rep, 15 ind</u>	month	10 loc	mob
Glaucous Gull	<u>total 7</u>	2-28	sev	sev
Great Black-backed Gull	<u>max 17, low</u>	29	Irondequoit Bay - W	K. Hartquist
<u>Eurasian Collared-Dove</u>	1-2	5-28	Hamlin (Greenwell Farm)	mob
<u>Snowy Owl</u>	1	3, 7, 22	Genesee County Airport	sev
<u>Snowy Owl</u>	1	28	Braddock Bay	sev
Long-eared Owl	1	<u>29</u>	Manitou (Owl Woods)	J. Caysinger
Short-eared Owl	<u>max 13</u>	21	Nations Rd IBA	E. Gyllenhaal, G, Lawrence
Yellow-bellied Sapsucker	1	<u>12-14</u>	T. Marion (Wayne Co.)	K. Braell
Yellow-bellied Sapsucker	1	<u>18</u>	Oatka Creek Park	J. Adams
Yellow-bellied Sapsucker	1	<u>22</u>	Wesley Hill Pres. (Ontario Co.)	D. Daniels
		all		
American Kestrel	<u>16 rep, 12 ind</u>	month	sev	sev
Merlin	<u>10 rep, 10 ind</u>	20-29	sev	sev
<u>Gyr Falcon ph</u>	1 drk morph	21F	South Livonia	D. McCullough
Peregrine Falcon	<u>10 rep, 12 ind</u>	5-29	sev	sev
Northern Shrike	<u>8 rep, 8 ind</u>	4-28	sev	sev
American Crow	<u>max 1500</u>	3	Pinnacle Rd (T Rush)	N. Kachala
American Crow	<u>max 1500</u>	3	SUNY Geneseo Campus	S. Burch
<u>Fish Crow</u>	<u>max 14</u>	7	Summerville Pier	B. Carlson
Winter Wren	1	<u>8F</u>	Oatka Creek Park	J. Adams
Winter Wren	1	<u>16</u>	N. Wolcott	W. & M. Rowley
Ruby-crowned Kinglet	1	<u>7</u>	Beechwoods SP (Wayne Co.)	J. Wing
Hermit Thrush	1	<u>14</u>	Manitou Beach	E. Gyllenhaal, G, Lawrence
Hermit Thrush	1	<u>20</u>	Webster Park (Whiting Rd.)	G. Ford
American Robin	<u>max 48, low</u>	2	Newark	L. Clark-Benedict
American Pipit	1	<u>28FS</u>	Braddock Bay (Hawkwatch)	M. Tetlow, G. Lawrence
Lapland Longspur	<u>max 28</u>	28	Hamlin (Jacobs Rd)	A. Guthrie
Snow-Bunting	<u>max 250</u>	23	Nations RD IBA (Hogmire Rd)	B. Howe
Yellow-rumped Warbler	1	<u>4</u>	Mendon Ponds Park	M. Gullo
Eastern Towhee ph	1	<u>15</u>	T Ogden	L. Osgood
Eastern Towhee	1	<u>14F-15</u>	Sodus (Rotterdam Rd.)	J.Wood

## NOTEWORTHY RECORDS (cont'd)

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<u>Species</u>	<u>No.</u>	<u>Date</u>	<u>Location</u>	<u>Observers</u>
Am. Tree Sparrow	<u>max 110</u>	19	T Penfield	J. Miles
Chipping Sparrow	1	<u>14F-15</u>	N. Wolcott	W. & M. Rowley, D. Fowler
Savannah Sparrow	<u>5; 1</u>	<u>18F; 19</u>	Nations Rd. IBA	K. Griffith; M. Wasilco
Savannah Sparrow	1	<u>19</u>	T Penfield (Gloria Dr.)	M. Gullo, J. Miles
White -crowned Sparrow	<u>max 21</u>	<u>26</u>	N. Wolcott	W. & M. Rowley, D. Fowler
Dark-eyed Junco	<u>max 44</u>	18	Nations Rd. IBA	K. Griffith
Eastern Meadowlark	1	<u>3</u>	Braddock Bay (Hawkwatch)	G. Lawrence
Rusty Blackbird	1-2	<u>thru 11</u>	Mendon Ponds Park	mob
Brown-headed Cowbird	<u>max 510</u>	1	Honeoye Falls (Works Rd)	B. Howe
Pine Siskin	<u>max 31-32</u>	13-15	East Palmyra (Wayne Co.)	S. & C. Salber