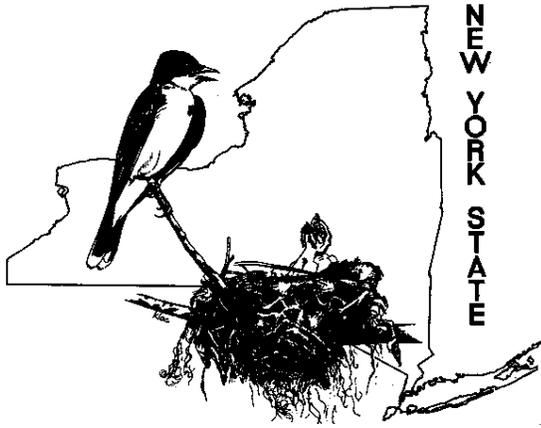


FEDERATION OF NEW YORK STATE
BIRD CLUBS

in cooperation with

New York State Department of Environmental Conservation
Cornell University Laboratory of Ornithology
National Audubon Society
New York State Museum



BREEDING BIRD ATLAS
NEWSLETTER

NUMBER 7

JANUARY 1983

Blockbusting Begins

Those who know that Mount Marcy is 5,344 feet high can just add one to remember that there are 5,345 Atlas blocks in New York State. (Those who don't, can memorize the fact that there are 5,345 blocks, subtracting one anytime they need to know the height of Marcy). Anyway, at the start of the 1982 season only 1,929 blocks had received any coverage. If that were a trip up the state's highest peak, we were just leaving the village of Lake Placid. With 3,416 blocks still to be surveyed, many of them unassigned, a special effort was needed if we were to make it to the summit by 1984. That effort was dubbed "block busting," and since "suicide squad" might make recruitment difficult, the teams were known as "blockbusters." Their mission, which began this past summer and which will continue for the remaining two years, was to "bust" as many blocks as possible. Different methods were tried and valuable lessons learned, but the immediate impact on the range maps of many species was greater than anyone had imagined.

DEC Volunteers

Two DEC volunteers, Michael Milligan and Martha Dunham, were employed to blockbust previously uncovered terrain, mainly in the Adirondacks, from June 3-August 6. Over that two-month period they managed to cover 36 blocks, scattered over seven northern counties in four regions. Each block was birded most intensely during the hours between dawn and noon, concentrating first on swamp and marshland habitats and then hitting any other available habitat types within the block, using topographic maps as a guide. Working as a team made it possible for them to survey more than one habitat type at once. As other observers have found, map-chosen rendezvous points sometimes didn't work out, however, because many of the topo maps were out-dated. "More than once "

Mike says, "I'd find myself picking my way through some swamp by compass along where a trail was supposed to be, wondering if I would ever see my partner again that day."

Their main objective was to obtain "adequate coverage" of at least 76 species in a block, with 38 Confirmed. They experimented spending from 8 hours in a block to spending over 20 hours always with some night vigilance. Their results indicated that one day (plus some night surveying) spent per block achieved the most efficient results. This, as Atlas workers might guess, leaves quotas for "adequate coverage" a bit short-changed, particularly the number of Confirmed species. This type of blockbusting is relatively effective with passerine species, but less so with many hit-or-miss and elusive species, such as raptors and rails.

Mike and Martha found that weather was an important factor in their efforts. Fortunately, 1982 was mostly sunny in northern New York, but there were times when downpours and fog-filled binoculars would limit a day's results to about three confirmations. On the other hand, a cooling light shower on a hot afternoon sometimes brought out singing comparable to a dawn chorus. Local residents often provided valuable data, particularly if the DEC team stopped to chat with those who had put up bird houses. Conservation officers and forest rangers were helpful giving advice on trails and landmarks. Milligan adds, "Even then, we'd often end up following just a deer trail in the general direction. If the binoculars were my right hand, then the map and compass were surely my left."

By early August they had obtained 2,460 records. They had located 143 breeding species and managed to Confirm 97 of them. When people ask Milligan what he did last summer, he finds that it's fun to say, "I was a professional birdwatcher!"

Blockbusting, Continued on page 2

Oneida Basin

A coverage map of Region 5 at the start of 1982 showed many blank areas. Some were only one or two squares, but northern Oneida and Herkimer Counties were almost untouched. Dorothy Crumb's plan for the summer was to work in blocks 20-30 miles from home whenever she had a free morning. Sometimes she went alone, but more often with at least one other observer.

Blockbusting in June was fun because of all the singing birds, but at least one or two more trips into the block was required later in the season to confirm species. The best time turned out to be the second or third week in July when, in prime breeding locations north of Oneida Lake, it proved possible to adequately cover a block in just three or four hours.

Dorothy spent a weekend in late June blockbusting in the Boonville area of Oneida County with Ruth Knight. Maps and field cards were ready as they headed north out of Rome on Route 46. The first block they planned to cover was an A Block, but since they had to pass through the C Block on the way up, decided to make a few stops as they passed through. As sometimes happens to all blockbusters, they discovered they were on the wrong side of the river, and wound up acquiring 16 species for an adjacent D Block. When they finally got over to the C Block, the first stop produced the first nest record for Prothonotary Warbler in Region 5 in nearly twenty years ...plus a young Bald Eagle, "which wasn't an Atlas bird, but certainly fun to see." At last they made it to the A Block, where they found 63 species in 4 1/2 hours. By the time the two days were over they had spent a total of 18 1/2 hours in the field and managed to cover 7 blocks in five different squares. The species maps no longer look deserted in northern Oneida County. During 1983, the Oneida Basin blockbusters plan to work Herkimer County.

Adirondack-Champlain

This is the second largest region in the state, with 700 blocks to be surveyed. Many of them are on state land within the Adirondack Park designated as Wilderness or Wild Forest, or on large tracts of private land within the park where access is equally difficult. At the end of the first two years, only 264 blocks had obtained even partial coverage, and only about 60% of the squares has been assigned:

The main blockbusting effort came during the months of June and July. Atlas workers went out alone or in pairs (for safety, verification of rarities, and companionship) into previously uncovered blocks on trips of 1-5 days. These observers supplied their own vehicles, tents, canoes, sleeping bags, backpacks; and other equipment for wilderness travel, as well as binoculars, spotting scopes, tape recorders, and other birding gear. Most of the ten observers eventually recruited had demonstrated their ability to record 76+ species in a single block.

The results exceeded all expectations. This pilot effort resulted in over 3,000 records from more than 100 previously uncovered blocks in Region 7 and some coverage of blocks in St. Lawrence Region 6 and Hudson-Mohawk Region 8.

As teams gained experience, they found that in a previously uncovered block with mixed habitats and some roads they could get 26+ species in about an hour, 51+ species in about a half-day, but that 76+ were tough to come by and took at least several visits to all habitat types. Thus, before "adequate coverage" could be obtained, blockbusters moved on to the next unassigned block. This flaw was perhaps compensated for by some of the species, they turned up: Spruce Grouse, both Brack-backed and Three-toed Woodpeckers, and both White-eyed and Philadelphia Vireos. Their list of warblers included Tennessee, Cape May, Louisiana Waterthrush, and Mourning, while their sparrows included Clay-colored, Vesper, and Lincoln's.

All blockbusting trips are productive, but some are more productive than others. During three days, June 22-24, spent mostly in open farm country along the Canadian border in northern Franklin County, Elsbeth Johnson and Mike Peterson added 591 records from 22 blocks, representing 14 different squares. In the course of a five-day expedition, July 3-7, the team of Dan Nickerson and Mike Peterson accumulated 850 records from over 28 blocks in Hamilton County and neighboring areas.

Blockbusters assume the rhythm of the summer solstice, up at 4 a.m. just as the Barred Owls are hooting their way to their roosts, collapsing in the tent at 10 p.m., and still trying to hear owls through the night. Blockbusting strains every talent of field identification to the fullest, stretches the limits of sight and hearing, of planning and endurance. Peterson, who we must remember: spent most of his summer living in a tent, suspects that, "Perhaps blockbusting helps satisfy some deep-seated, atavistic hunter-predator within the human psyche," adding with a smile, "I've never had more pure fun birding in my entire life."

Pressed by time, blockbusters are always concerned with efficiency and productivity. But blockbusting is fun, as revealed in the following first-hand account by Region 9 coordinator Berna Weissman of Dobbs Ferry.

Hudson-Delaware

A Red-shouldered Hawk screamed from the woods above the swamp as we stopped the car on a remote road in Sullivan County's Catskills. Two hours into our second day of blockbusting, and coming up on 50 species in the block we had chosen to work that day, I would have been content to let that one go as an "X", convinced that any attempt to chase it would only spook the bird long before we saw it. Undaunted, my partner lunged into the puckerbrush while I lit out down the road after easier prey: a noisy family of pileated woodpeckers.

Continued on page 7

Blockbusting, continued from page 2

Twenty minutes later he was back to gleefully announce the discovery of two partially fledged young-it was they who were calling-and the nest they had come from. This was momentous news indeed: not only an "NY" for that block, but the first confirmed breeding of that threatened species in Region 9. I needed no persuasion to hike in to see for myself. While we were inspecting the nest, an adult flew in, dropped a small furry prey into it and shrieked a command to its young to return for their meal. So, we had learned a good deal about atlasing for red-shoulders with that encounter and the lesson was reinforced a week later when we had an identical experience, right down to the feeding at the nest, in Ulster County.

We had embarked on two weeks of blockbusting in early July, with the goal of covering one Atlas block out of each yet-untouched square in my region. Our field routine quickly fell into a pattern. After dinner at our base in a DEC campground, we spread out the maps and picked our target for the next day, giving preference to the block in each square which seemed to have the best road access, the biggest variety of habitats and the fewest main highways and developments. (You can't imagine how paranoid I am about peering into backyards with my binoculars. Has any birder ever been locked in the slammer as a peeping-tom? Don't answer.)

Each morning we crawled out of our tents at 4 AM, not without a modicum of,whimpering on my part, made a thermos of coffee and hit the road. Having already laid out our route-designed to cover every road in the block-the navigator clutched the map as we approached the entry point. "In about half a mile we'll cross a brook. There. Now two houses close together, then a space, now another house. We're in!" Windows came down, field card came out and the driver slowed to a crawl.

Progress down the road was fitful."Stop! I saw a bluebird. It's a whole family of them-FL. Stop! I hear a white-throat. Damn, it's not doing anything. Just an X.

Stop! I hear an oriole. We need that." At each major habitat we got out and ran in opposite directions, regrouping after a half hour or so to record what we'd found. When it was time for lunch-in a rural cemetery if the block had one-we totalled our "finds" and decided where we might hunt for any bad "misses" before heading campward to recuperate.

In this fashion we pretty thoroughly covered one block each day, recording in each a very consistent 65 to 70 species, with about half of them confirmed, and made occasional afternoon forays into adjacent blocks with more mediocre results. This was all done, I might emphasize, without straying more than 100 yards off a road anywhere.

After two weeks of blockbusting, we had filled in a lot of holes in Region 9, and this inveterate "lister" had enough field cards going to make her believe she had died and gone to heaven.

Northern Saw-Whet Owl

Atlas observers responding to our HELP II article have this to say about the diminutive Northern Sawwhet Owl:

I live in Lattingtown on the north shore of Long Island. Last year I found a pair of saw-whet owls in my woods. There was also a pair of Eastern Screech-Owls. My woods consist mostly of ash, locust and Norway maple with a lesser amount of choke cherry, oak, hickory, walnut and tulip. Underneath all of this is a lot of spice bush and arrowwood viburnum. There is also a large wood pile which attracts small animals-owl food. The saw-whets were usually seen and heard in the tops of the bushes or lower half of the trees. They even liked the edge of the woods and a couple of times I heard them near the house. From what I observed, the sawwhet and the screech seemed to be harmonious; living in the same territory.

-Joan Bowden, Region 10

Habitat: Pasture, brush and small trees. Owls were communicating from one habitat to another unmistakable call.

--Doris Gibson, Region 6

Willowimor Swamp near Claryville-most frequently heard in an area of thick red spruce-small stunted stuff 8-12 feet high which is surrounded by large conifers and hardwoods.

--Joe Weise, Region 9

Heard one calling in mature conifers bordering a lake and sandwiched by an old timber sale in the Central Adirondacks.

--Sam Droege, Region 7

Heard almost exclusively during early June. Preferred habitat is conifers such as thick stands of young white pine. Also heard often in mixed woods with many conifers, but not purely deciduous stands.

--Mike Milligan, Regions 6 and 8

Here's an occupant of almost the same type of country used by the Olive-sided Flycatcher. I've encountered this tiny owl in a large alder swamp and heard it calling from cedar swamps and remote pond shores. The little Northern Saw-whet seems to respond well to imitations of its simple tooting call.

--Merry Baker, Region 7

As you can see, the habitat requirements of the saw-whet are different in different areas. Long Island owls may be found in deciduous woodlots, but northern birds are generally found in coniferous or mixed woods.



Contributions to support DEC wildlife conservation programs, including the Atlas project and endangered species restoration, may be made directly through your 1982 income tax form on line 18 of the long form and line 12 of the short form.

Atlasing in Region Five The Oneida Lake Basin

Three organizations are actively working on the Atlas project in Region Five: Onondaga Audubon Society, Oneida Bird Club and Kirkland Bird Club. These organizations and their members are located centrally in the region and coverage shows this concentration. Most blocks in Onondaga and Madison Counties have had some work. Oswego and southern Oneida Counties have had relatively good coverage, but northeastern Oneida and Herkimer Counties need much time and effort.

A glance at a topographic map of the region shows that it contains four biogeographic units. The northern part of Herkimer County is part of the Adirondacks highlands. Although there is no alpine habitat, such typical northern bog species as Black-backed Woodpecker, Olive-sided Flycatcher, Gray Jay and Boreal Chickadee have been confirmed. Yellow-bellied Flycatcher has not been confirmed but surely nests in this area and Common Goldeneye and Philadelphia Vireo both were located near Stillwater Reservoir by a blockbusting team this summer.

The Tug Hill Plateau is an 800-1300 foot elevated highlands located west of the Adirondacks and cut off from it by the Black River valley. Relatively uninhabited, it contains extensive undisturbed woods.

There are dirt roads into many blocks in the Tug Hill, so access has not been as difficult as in northern Herkimer County. Its rich avifauna is much like that of the Adirondacks, but species associated with bog habitats are rare or lacking. Accipiters, Barred Owls, Yellow-bellied Sapsuckers, and a great variety of wood warbler species make this a fascinating place. The atlas worker who is concentrating on the Tug Hill expects at least 80 species in each block there.

The southern border of the region contains our third highlands, hills cropped off by Ice Age glaciers at about 1700 feet. The highest points reach the 2000 foot level. Much of this hill country was reforested in the 1920's and 1930's. Its birds are a mix of species with both southern and northern affinities. An 'A' block in the Town of Georgetown in Madison County has produced 103 species of birds, with 65 confirmed. It is the most diverse in our Region, with about a dozen more species reasonably to be expected. Five of the seven species of hawk found there have been confirmed. Wild Turkey is widespread in the southern highlands and was easily confirmed in this Georgetown block. Eleven of the 18 species of warbler located there have been confirmed nesting.

The remainder of Region Five consists of the lowlands along Lake Ontario and around Oneida Lake. This area is typical of central New York. It has a few cities, many large and small towns, some excellent wetlands, and a diverse mix of agricultural, secondgrowth and forested lands. These habitats, especially when undisturbed, encourage many nesting birds, including Red-bellies(Woodpecker, Blue-gray Gnatcatcher,

Yellow-throated Vireo and Cerulean Warbler with distinctly southern affinities. While very diverse blocks are scarce in the lowlands, even blocks in urban Syracuse produce 60 to 70 species.

The Atlas project has inspired many local people to investigate new territory and find new species. At least 178 species and three hybrids have been located in Region Five through 1982. Of these, 153 have been confirmed, including six species of vireos and 28 species of wood warblers. Both the hybrid Brewster's and Lawrence's Warblers are present. Cape May, Baybreasted, Tennessee and Blackpoll Warblers have been reported. Prothonotary Warbler was rediscovered, and nesting confirmed, in Region Five this year after nearly 20 years' absence. Prairie Warbler is a strange miss, for although suitable habitat occurs, no nesting 'colonies' are known from Region Five. Both Worm-eating and Kentucky Warblers have been observed singing in suitable habitat well into the nesting season, but not since the start of the Atlas project. The most widespread species still unconfirmed is Common Snipe! With additional coverage during the next two years, perhaps these species will be added to the Region Five list.

The amount of work completed in Region Five is most encouraging, but more remains to be done. Our goal for next season is to finish as many blocks with 'good' coverage as possible and also to expand coverage into adjacent but less well covered blocks. Those 19 squares with no data, particularly in Herkimer County, are now of very high priority. The 1982 season in particular has shown our workers the pleasures and rewards of exploring for birds in unfamiliar territory.

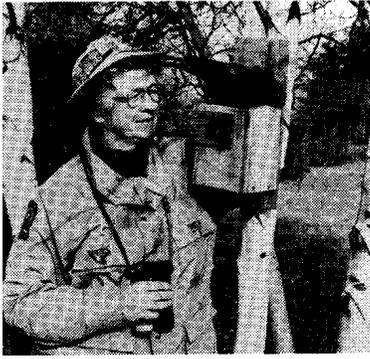
-Dorothy Crumb

The Living Bird Quarterly

Cornell University's Laboratory of Ornithology has begun publication of a new magazine devoted to the study of birds, The Living Bird Quarterly.

Color-illustrated and directed toward everyone with an interest in birds, the quarterly will feature articles and photographs on bird behavior, habitat, conservation, art and research, and will be international in scope. The first issue, for example, contains articles on the reproductive success of songbirds, the conservation efforts of the International Crane Foundation, the restoration to the Maine coast of the Atlantic puffin population, and a direct-from-life color painting and story by artist and author George Miksch Sutton.

In addition to articles written by professional writers and ornithologists, the laboratory will encourage amateur "birders" to contribute. This is part of the larger mission and tradition of the Laboratory of Ornithology-to act as a liaison between the amateur and professional ornithologist and to encourage people's interest and increase their knowledge of living birds.



**Dorothy W. Crumb
Region 5 Coordinator**

Dorothy Crumb of Jamesville remembers the first time she learned that people would go places to see birds. About twenty years ago, a woman called to ask for a ride over to the agricultural school at Michigan State University; her car wasn't running and she had heard that a flock of swans had landed on the farm ponds. Dorothy obliged, and when they arrived couldn't believe her eyes. Not only were there elegant white birds, but also twenty or more cars and a crowd of people. Even today, "I can still recall this incident so clearly that I can well understand the doubting farmer who questions the Atlas worker at the edge of his field."

The Crumb family moved to Maryland, but the two boys were still small and allowed too little time to take up the silly pursuit of birds. As Dorothy worked around a hillside rock garden though, she became aware of assorted birds visiting a circulating waterfall. The Eastern Bluebird she recognized from the fields of upstate New York where she had grown up, but the others were a mystery. Curious, she signed up for a birdwatching course at Delaware University, and has been hooked ever since, carrying her birding interest to New York State.

Her favorites have always been smaller birds such as warblers, sparrows, and finches. Many times, as hundreds of large and majestic raptors sail over the Derby Hill hawk watch on the southeast shore of Lake Ontario, Dorothy can be found staring at a chickadee or warbler in one of the bushes. And if dickie birds are an obsession, ducks are simply a listing necessity, not really to be admired.

For three summers., Dorothy Crumb studied 40-50 nesting pairs of American Goldfinches in a field behind her house, recording dates, nesting attempts, nesting success and other data. Through this study she obtained a bird-banding permit from the U. S. Fish & Wildlife Service in 1975 and although the abandoned field grew up and the goldfinches moved on she's continued banding birds at her feeder ever since.

Mrs. Crumb's husband is a civil engineer and has worked overseas for the past several years. This has given Dorothy the opportunity to become acquainted with many new birds in England, other European countries, and even in Iran. Extensive travels in the United

States as well have helped push her North American life-list safely past the 600 species mark. She finds listing fun and has done her

best to see every bird possible in New York State. Although her-state list is now up over 350 species, or about 85% complete, this doesn't stop her from taking a genuine interest in breeding birds and spending considerable time studying their nesting habits. During 1982, she did considerable blockbusting in Region 5 squares that had no assigned coverage. Bird-bander and lister, Atlas coordinator and blockbuster, many who know her consider Dorothy Crumb the "complete birder."

**Name Changes
of North American Birds**

Roy S. Slack

Reprinted with revisions from **The Kestrel**,
Newsletter of the Onondaga Audubon Society, Inc.

The American Ornithologists' Union Committee on Classification and Nomenclature has issued the Thirtyfourth Supplement to the A.O.U. Checklist of North American Birds. This document lists the scientific and common names, and the taxonomic sequence, that will appear in the 6th Edition of the check-list scheduled for publication in 1983. As a result, we have some new names to learn. Some of these names have been in use for several years, while others are relatively new. Listed below are changes that directly affect us. Copies of the complete supplement are available for \$3.00 each postpaid from G. E. Woolfenden, Dept. of Biology, University of South Florida, Tampa, Florida 33620.

New Name	Old Name
Green-backed Heron	Green Heron
Black-crowned Night-Heron	Black-crowned Night Heron
Yellow-crowned Night-Heron	Yellow-crowned Night Heron
American Black Duck	Black Duck
Northern Pintail	Pintail
Northern Harrier	Marsh Hawk
Northern Goshawk	Goshawk
Common Moorhen	Common Gallinule
Northern Bobwhite	Bobwhite
Lesser Golden-Plover	Golden Plover
Common Barn-Owl	Barn Owl
Eastern Screech-Owl	Screech Owl
Northern Hawk-Owl	Hawk Owl
Northern Saw-whet Owl	Saw-whet Owl
Three-toed Woodpecker	Northern Three-toed Woodpecker
Northern Flicker	Common Flicker
Eastern Wood-Pewee	Eastern Wood Pewee
Northern Rough-winged Swallow	Rough-winged Swallow
American Crow	Common Crow
Sedge Wren	Short-billed Marsh Wren
Marsh Wren	Long-billed Marsh Wren
Northern Mockingbird	Mockingbird
European Starling	Starling
Northern Cardinal	Cardinal

NOTE: The Breeding Bird Atlas forms will **not** be changed to reflect the new nomenclature, however, our final publication will.

The Challenge of the Short-eared Owl

In Eaton's *Birds of New York* published in 1914, the breeding grounds for the Short-eared Owls were identified as being in the marshes of the Seneca River above and below Montezuma and the wetlands near the eastern end of Lake Ontario. Bull's *Birds of New York State* published in 1974 indicates the two major breeding localities are Long Island and western New York. Thus far, after three years of Atlas work, only 11 breeding records have been obtained on this species and only six fit into the Eaton or Bull distribution categories-two in Long Island, one in Allegany County, and three near Lake Ontario, one near the village of Three Mile Bay, one near the town of Limerick, and the other near Braddock's Bay. The other five records are in the Champlain Valley (3), along the St. Lawrence River (1) and in northern Franklin County (1). This will be an interesting species to document.

Obtaining breeding records on the Short-eared Owl is difficult and requires a special effort. Drive any roads in your block which have large marshy or grassy areas nearby and look for this owl either on an observation perch or coursing over an area hunting for its favorite food, the meadow vole. Keep in mind they are most active at dusk and early dawn but often hunt during the afternoon.

If you observe this owl early in the breeding season, you will be treated- to an unusual courtship display. Listen for its toot, toot, toot call and then look high in the sky for the bird. It will make short dives and at the end of a dive bring its wings down beneath its body, clap the wings together, then swoop upward for a repeat performance.

The Short-eared Owl nests on the ground in the same marsh or grassy habitat as the Northern Harrier. If you are near the owls nest, it will fly above and around you while making barking noises. It also has a distraction display which consists of a high pitched squealing cry uttered while the bird is on the ground floundering around simulating injury.

The egg laying period for the Short-eared Owl is from the first of April to mid-May with incubation lasting 24-28 days. The young remain in the area of the nest for approximately six weeks.

Please keep in mind that this ground nesting bird, should not be disturbed at the nest. Good luck in your search for the Short-eared Owl!

Fifteen Peregrine Falcons and 21 Bald Eagles were released this past summer in the Adirondacks and western New York. An additional release site for the peregrines in the Adirondacks is being investigated for next year. The Bald Eagle hack site is being moved to the Adirondacks with a possible second site being considered for southern New York.

Atlasing Calendar

January--Great Horned Owl, White-winged Crossbill

February--Horned Lark

March--Mute Swan, Canada Goose, Wood Duck, Red-tailed Hawk, Red-shouldered Hawk, Bald Eagle, Golden Eagle, Peregrine Falcon, American Woodcock, Mourning Dove, Eastern Screech-Owl, Barred Owl, Long-eared Owl, Northern Saw-whet Owl, Gray Jay, American Crow, Fish Crow, American Robin, House Sparrow, Red Crossbill

April--Pied-billed Grebe, Great Blue Heron, Greenbacked Heron, Snowy Egret, Black-crowned NightHeron, Yellow-crowned Night-Heron, American Black Duck, Hooded Merganser, Northern Harrier, Osprey, American Kestrel, Ruffed Grouse, Ring-necked Pheasant, Wild Turkey, Clapper Rail, Sora, American Coot, Killdeer, Common Snipe, Upland Sandpiper, Great Black-backed Gull, Herring, Gull, Common Barn Owl, Short-eared Owl, Northern Flicker, Pileated Woodpecker, Yellow-bellied Flycatcher, Hairy Woodpecker, Eastern Phoebe, Blue Jay, Common Raven, Black-capped Chickadee, Tufted Titmouse, White-breasted Nuthatch, Red-breasted Nuthatch, Brown Creeper, Carolina Wren, Northern Mockingbird, Eastern Bluebird, European Starling, Louisiana Waterthrush, Red-winged Blackbird, Common Grackle, Brown-headed Cowbird, Northern Cardinal, House Finch, Pine Siskin.

Owling Time Again

Here we are again with another breeding season gone. Record amounts of data were gathered by Atlas workers this year and our new maps which will be ready this spring will certainly reflect the hard work each of you did.

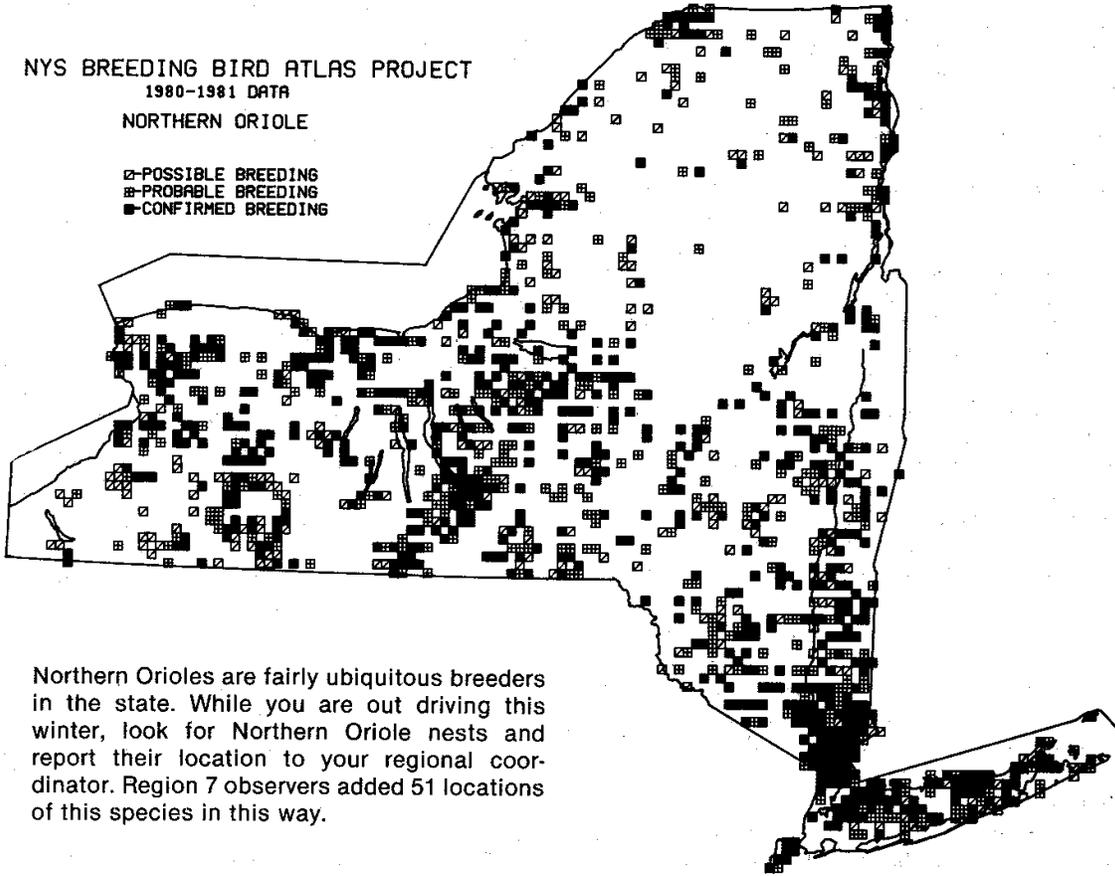
Right now, though, let me remind you again that our owl maps look pretty bare. So this year, please make an effort to locate owls in your blocks. Get out last year's newsletter for this same time and review the procedures for calling owls. In checking the "Atlasing Calendar" in this issue you will note that Great Horned Owls are beginning to nest now, so now is the time if you haven't already been out. The screech, saw-whet, barred and long-eared owls will be setting up their territories a little later since most of them begin nesting in March and April. Hold off working on these species until then. If you are particularly fond of owling, your Atlas coordinator will give you several blocks to do if you are willing.

If you just can't get yourself to go owling, there is another way to find owls. Start asking the residents of your block if they hear owls. You will have to be discriminating when doing this to be sure you are getting good information. You may need to test the observer or to play owl tapes to make sure the right species is marked, but it is a good way to find owls, and other species as well.

Good Owling!

NYS BREEDING BIRD ATLAS PROJECT
1980-1981 DATA
NORTHERN ORIOLE

☐ POSSIBLE BREEDING
▣ PROBABLE BREEDING
■ CONFIRMED BREEDING



Northern Orioles are fairly ubiquitous breeders in the state. While you are out driving this winter, look for Northern Oriole nests and report their location to your regional coordinator. Region 7 observers added 51 locations of this species in this way.

New York State Breeding Bird Atlas Newsletter
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