

31 March, 1963

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AFN Winter Notes

November was a dry month, temp. slightly above normal. December was a little colder than normal, and dry with one to three inches of snow on the ground from the 25th. January was the third coldest on record, but low in precip. and little snow on the ground until the 12th, then five to eight inches. February was cold but dry with ground snow decreasing to one in. on the 28th. March was slightly warm and somewhat wet with numerous rainfalls.

No waterfowl wintered despite the relatively mild temp. and lack of heavy snowfall.

No wintering visitant owls reported except one Long-eared.

My ninth winter population study in Greenwood Park showed a drastic reduction in most species other than House Sparrows and Starlings. Compared with the averages for the previous eight years, weighted for temperature and sky cover, titmice were down 77%, chickadees and nuthatches 59%, downies 18%. Starlings were up 28%.

Few, if any, Red-breasted Nuthatches were seen. No Bohemian Waxwings or Northern Shrikes were reported.

One Myrtle Warbler was seen on the Christmas Census and seven a week earlier.

Meadowlarks wintering were fewer than usual.

Usually there are very few grackles and cowbirds wintering, but this winter there was a very large roost composed principally of Starlings but including numbers of Red-wings, grackles and cowbirds.

The Redpoll is an erratic visitor, but this year only one was seen. Song sparrows were scarce.