

REGION 7 — NEW YORK

The most prolonged migration in avian history passed through the lower Hudson Valley this year. And the same weekend rainstorms that attenuated the migration period plagued the birders, despite which **Rockland Audubon Society** parties turned in one-day lists of 93 each on May 10 and 11 and 99 species on May 23. Between 1.5 in. and 2 in. of rain fell each weekend from Apr. 26-27 through May 30-June 1. On June 1, the weather station at Bear Mountain noted 3.54 in. of rain from midnight to 3 p. m.—and more fell after 3 p. m.

The migration appeared to break into three pronounced crests. An early wave about Apr. 19-24 (when temperatures were steadily in the high 70s) brought migrants ahead of dates that had stood in the record books for as much as 20 years. Another big wave flooded the Rockland County area on May 8-11, and a third and biggest wave on May 20-25.

Loons — Ducks:

The first Green Heron arrived Apr. 19 (former record, Apr. 28, 1935). Black-crowned Night Heron was also early on Apr. 12. Frank and Ruth Steffens discovered a Least Bittern at Congers Lake on May 10, and this supposedly extremely rare bittern also turned up at Piermont marsh, May 23 and May 28. A very late American Merganser was seen flying over Piermont marsh May 23 (former record, May 5, 1947).

Hawks — Owls:

The spring hawk flight was most disappointing. A Broad-Wing lingered near Blauvelt till May 23, a week later than normally, though there have been several June records. Ruffed Grouse seem to be broadening their distribution; Ring-necked Pheasants in the wild are a scarcer bird than ever before. A few each of Virginia Rail and Sora were found at Piermont marsh; the latter had never been recorded there until last autumn. A late date for the Great Black-backed Gull at Iona Island, near Bear Mountain, on Apr. 27 (John C. Orth); the former record was Apr. 12, 1936. Yellow-billed Cuckoos far outnumbered Black-billed Cuckoos in May, breaking their usual parity.

Swifts — Shrikes:

Whip-poor-will was a week early, Apr. 20 (Betty Fox). Chimney Swift also gained three days, Apr. 23 (Homer S. Kelsey). Traill's Flycatcher continues to appear in more localities, apparently remaining to breed. In Rockland County, its habitat coincides pretty much with Warbling Vireo territory, though it does skip the village shade trees the vireo favors. Rough-winged Swallows were found nesting, June 2, in the crevices of a tunnel through which Hackensack Creek passes under a railroad embankment. Bank Swallows were more numerous than usual on migration. The last Red-breasted Nuthatch of a banner winter season was on May 5 (Robert and Louise Deed). Carolina Wren is established at least in Upper Nyack and the southern end of Haverstraw, after having been absent for 15 years or more.

Vireos — Warblers:

Generally speaking, it was a big spring for Blackburnian, Bay-breasted, Canada, Magnolia, and Wilson's Warblers, a poor season for Red-eyed Vireo, Black-throated Green Warbler, Northern Waterthrush, and Blackpoll Warbler. Yellow-throated and Warbling Vireos were relatively abundant, outnumbering the Red-eye until after May 20. Early date for the Yellow-throated Vireo was Apr. 23 (Ruth Steffens); the old date was May 6, 1937. Mrs. Steffens also reported the Blue-headed Vireo a week early, on Apr. 18.

Worm-eating Warbler, a breeding species, showed a nice gain in numbers. An exceptionally early date for the Parula Warbler, Apr. 19, on a South Nyack street (Deed); former record, May 2, 1934. Cape May Warbler was reported twice, as was Tennessee Warbler; both are quite rare here. An early Black-throated Green Warbler, Apr. 22, six days ahead of the old date. Bay-breasted Warblers were commoner than usual, starting with an early record on May 11, five days ahead of time (Mr. and Mrs. Steffens). Blackpoll Warbler didn't appear in large numbers until May 28, though a few had trickled through with early waves; their movement seemed to have skipped this area by night flying, for not many were noted. An Ovenbird beat the old early date by three days, and Mr. and Mrs. William G. Irving found a Louisiana Waterthrush on the startling date of Apr. 6 (old record, Apr. 18, 1935). Mourning Warbler was found twice, singing each time, May 23 and May 31, setting new early and late records. Canada Warbler arrived early, Apr. 23 (Dr. Marjorie R. Hopper, Eugene R. Brown), five days ahead of the old record.

Blackbirds — Sparrows:

A big event of the spring was discovery of a Summer Tanager, in yellow plumage with rusty tinge to the tail, on Apr. 6 (Betty Fox, Edmond Barron) at the New Jersey line near Palisades. The date is far in advance of arrival time even in Maryland and Delaware, but 75-mile gales and a series of tornadoes had struck north as far as Maryland on Apr. 5; local birders assume the Tanager was driven by the storm. Its bedraggled plumage for the first two days bore out this theory. The bird was last seen by Miss Fox on Apr. 11.

Rose-breasted Grosbeak was more than a week early, Apr. 23 (Brown). The last Pine Grosbeak was reported by Miss Fox on Apr. 3. A late date for the rare White-crowned Sparrow was May 23, three birds at Piermont. A White-throated Sparrow remained till May 28 (Brown).

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REGION 8 — LONG ISLAND

Spring migration was characterized by an influx of early dates among migrants along the coast or slightly inland. After two warm days in early spring, the weather remained cool, bird movements were fairly on time or slightly late as the general breeding populations arrived. Cool weather stayed on well into May; most weekends were wet, retarding bird observations. There were no remarkable flight days, but there was a gradual movement throughout the spring season. 120 species were recorded on an island-wide trip, May 6 (Wm. Reid).

Loons — Ducks:

The Loon flight was regular; last Holboell's Grebe, Zach's Bay, April 20. Maximum Gannet flight around mid-April; there were five or six European Cormorant reports in mid-March. Snowy Egret arrived at Lawrence, April 23; several American Egret reports in April, May; eight Yellow-crowned Night Herons, Jones Beach, May 18. There was a flock of 14 Snow Geese flying over Lake Success, April 27; last European Teal, one at Jones Beach, April 16. Shoveller and Ruddy Ducks remained on western Long Island into early May.

Hawks — Owls:

Few or no Turkey Vulture reports; one Bald Eagle, May 13 at Manhasset. Good report of Rails at Lawrence; both Yellow and Black Rails seen and calling within an hour on April 19 (Mayer, Rose); calling Sora at Idlewild same day and King Rail seen at Lawrence, April 24 and April 28. Several Florida Gallinule reports on Western Long Island. There was a rather good flight of shore birds; an early Upland Plover, March 28 at Montauk; Lesser Yellow-legs were reported from several locations and two Curlew Sandpipers at Pennsylvania Avenue flats, Jamaica Bay on May 2. Otherwise very few rarities; several Lesser Yellow-legs, no Stilt Sandpipers or Phalaropes were reported. A Pomarine Jaeger was seen chasing Terns near the Atlantic Beach jetty, May 25 (J. Bull). Several Roseate Tern reports, but no Black or Caspian Tern records. A very early Yellow-billed Cuckoo was observed at Manhasset, April 19 (J. Ricks); otherwise other Cuckoo records were slightly late.

Swifts — Shrikes:

There was a rather poor Nighthawk, Whip-poor-will flight; Red-headed Woodpecker was reported daily at Seaford from May 3 to end of period (E. Morgan). First Olive-sided Flycatcher, Far Rockaway, May 16; only one or two Cliff Swallow reports, first May 4; there was a Tufted Titmouse, rare on Long Island, at Bayside, May 6, and a Bewick's Wren at Prospect Park, April 15-18 (several observers). A Mockingbird was singing at Merrick, May 13; early Veery at Jones Beach, April 20; maximum Blue-gray Gnatcatchers, three at Seaford, April 28 (E. Morgan).

Warblers — Sparrows:

Warbling and Yellow-throated Vireos were reported from western Long Island. Hybrid warblers were practically unreported; several Worm-eating, Golden-winged and Hooded Warbler reports; Yellow-throated Warbler, Prospect Park, April 23 (G. Caletan). The Bobolink flight was light; first Orchard Oriole, Jones Beach, May 4; this species slightly more frequently reported than for past several years; late Evening Grosbeak, Prospect Park, May 2; early Indigo Bunting, one at Gilgo, April 18, 19 (Elliott); also one, Short Beach, April 20 (Carleton, Grant, Mayer). Maximum Ipsich Sparrow, four, Gilgo, March 22; last one seen, same place, April 12 (Elliott, Mayer, Rose). White-crowned Sparrow came through in mid-May with a maximum of 12 on western Long Island during the weekend of May 10, 11; there were one or two Lincoln Sparrow reports; Fox Sparrow left early, but there were one or two Tree Sparrow records in late April.

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