

REGIONAL REPORTS

HIGHLIGHTS APRIL AND MAY

Most regional reporters agreed that the small land bird migrants were later in arriving and fewer in numbers than in many years. The surge of southern species, so outstanding during the same period last year, did not materialize this year.

American Egrets appeared this spring in regions 1, 3, 4, 5, 8, 9, 10. Upstate nesting by this bird should be watched for.

REGION 1 — NIAGARA FRONTIER

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The spring migration of the great majority of species reflected the dullness of the weather pattern. Only a single relatively short period of mildness in late April and early May accelerated the movement. Thereafter the weather reverted to seventeen straight days of normal temperatures and sub-normal precipitation. Two or three days were reported to be fairly good, but most were characterized by poor birding. The Buffalo Ornithological Society's spring census on May 22 found the lowest number of migrants ever seen on a comparable date.

LOONS — DUCKS: Early records for American Egret were supplied by McMurtry (one near Wellsville April 12 and 13th) and Cummings (2 at Oak Orchard 15th, single birds 13th and 22nd). The last Whistling Swans were seen May 13 at Wellsville (McMurtry) and May 22 at North Cuba Marsh (Eaton). Canada Geese visited the Wolcottsville-Oak Orchard region in their usual large numbers and were last reported there by Brockner on May 29 (24 individuals). Snow and Blue Geese were also noted there regularly at the season peak. A maximum of 5,000 Pintail were counted at Wolcottsville April 1 (Brockner). Scoters did quite well, with 250 White-wings and one Surf at Mayville May 1 (Eldgerkin) and an American May 24 at Lakeside (Brockners). Ruddy Ducks were reported seldom but from widely separated locations.

HAWKS — OWLS: No very large number of any of the hawks was seen, although all regular migrants were reported. Of greatest interest was a late Goshawk seen at Scio May 1 by Mitchell and party. Mrs. McMurtry found the first Virginia Rail (April 12) and Sora (April 14) at Wellsville. Western New Yorkers do most of their shore-birding along the extra-territorial north shore of Lake Erie, but a few species are reported, particularly in the spring, from the interior of New York. This year the most interesting phenomenon of the shore bird migration was the splendid showing of Pectoral Sandpipers, of which many good sized flocks (maximum 300 at Wolcottsville April 19) were reported; it is necessary to go back twenty years to find similar numbers here. Spotted Sandpipers were early; Upland Plovers late. Brockner, on a drive from Rochester to Buffalo on April 1, estimated 9,000 Herring and 22,000 Ring-billed Gulls feeding on or near the flooded fields.

SWIFTS — SHRIKES: Nighthawks were late; earliest reported May 15, but none thereafter until the 20th. All of the flycatchers were later than average. This was true of some of the swallows also, notably the Tree, which was not reported until April 2; the fact that the Cliff Swallow was not seen until May 8 is probably due more to its rarity around Buffalo than to its actual lateness. Our records of thrushes, with the exception of the Hermit, are free from April dates this year. Gnatcatchers were first reported April 20 (one, Grand Island, Brownstein), and records in May were numerous. Pipits were last reported May 1 (several from Batavia by Buckland).