

diminishing numbers at Westernville (Mrs. F.W.M.); however, at Syracuse, Oswego, and Oneida, birds began to appear 5/4, 4, and 6 respectively, built up to a peak (25) about the 15th, and then quickly passed on with the last dates 5/22, Syracuse, and 5/27, Oneida. Purple Finch — scattered reports in last 2 weeks of April, but peak numbers did not come until 5/12 (about 10 days late). Redpoll — 2, 4/15, Selkirk is record last date. Pine Siskin — although there were no April records, this, like the Evening Grosbeak, had a fine May flight, beginning 5/1, peaked (25) 5/8, with last date, 1, 5/22, Oneida. White-winged Crossbill — 2, 4/25 and 1, 4/26, Oneida (H.P.N.) are the only records. Towhee — 1 ♂, 3/30, Syracuse is very early. Savannah and Vesper Sparrows — 4/10 (Oneida) is arrival date for both, but birds not widespread until at least 1 week later. Henslow's Sparrow — 1 on 4/23, and Grasshopper Sparrow — 1 on 5/3, (W. R. Spofford) probably represents the normal arrival dates rather than the concentrated flurry of records in mid-May attendant on the increased birding of that season. Tree Sparrow and Junco — the poor flights of March were only prelude to the low flock counts of these species in early April; Tree Sparrow's last date is 4/13, a few days earlier than expected. White-crowned Sparrow — like the Pipits, almost completely absent; it was not recorded at Oneida throughout May and only 1 (usually 25-40) was seen at Oakwood Cemetery, Syracuse; high count was the ridiculous low of 3. White-throat — a poor, late flight with peak numbers this year only 1/3 of comparable '54 counts.

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REGION 6 — ST. LAWRENCE

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Few reports for April and May were received and all were brief. Many birds arrived early this spring. All who mention the Bluebirds say that fewer have been seen and that they have heard others give similar observations.

LOONS — DUCKS: Double-crested Cormorants appear to be more numerous than last year and they have started nesting. Several Brant were seen in Lake Ontario about May 20. A pair at Bass Island Refuge remained all day and acted like a breeding pair (Clements), (June 6). A White-winged Scoter was found dead in Lake Ontario by a game protector.

HAWKS — OWLS: Several Rough-legged Hawks were seen in April by Belknap, J. Blake has observed a decrease in the numbers of Marsh Hawks, Ruffed Grouse and Common Terns. There is an increase in the number of Ring-billed Gull nests. The last Snowy Owl seen by Belknap was April 14. A few Red-headed Woodpeckers — about the normal number — have been seen.

THRUSHES: Several reports from various parts of Jefferson and St. Lawrence Counties all agree that there is a marked reduction in the number of Bluebirds this year. J. Blake has seen many Brown Thrashers. A white Robin is living in Watertown and has attracted the attention of many people. Only the under parts are normal color.

WARBLERS — SPARROWS: A Connecticut Warbler has been reported as well as many of the more common Warblers. The last Evening Grosbeaks were seen in Watertown May 18 (F.C.) and the last in Potsdam May 31 (L. Blake). One Lapland Longspur reported near Perch April 4.

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REGION 8 — HUDSON - MOHAWK

JAMES K. MERITT

The months of April and May were both warmer and drier than normal in the Schenectady area. The average May temperature was 62.3 degrees, a whopping 4.2 degrees above normal. While May rainfall was only slightly below average, virtually all of it came during the last ten days of the month. The hot and dry weather which prevailed virtually without exception during the peak of the migration period accounted for a noticeable lack of any general flight, especially among the warblers. An exception to this general

statement was the White-crowned Sparrow migration, which, although brief, was very marked.

April was a very interesting month since there were an above-average number of reports of species normally associated only with winter weather. A freak find that month was an American Magpie, the first local record (not unexpectedly). May reports included no rarities, except possibly the Mockingbird, and few concentrations of the more common arrivals.

Many observers commented on the heavy tent caterpillar infestation which was particularly conspicuous in very late April and the first two weeks of May.

The annual Century Run conducted by the Schenectady Bird Club on May 14 revealed 126 species. Nine parties participated.

LOONS — DUCKS: A dozen or so Common Loons and several Horned Grebes were in evidence at Saratoga Lake on April 17 (Schenectady Bird Club). A Horned Grebe was observed at Washington Park, Albany, the first week in May (Lillian Stoner). The American Bittern was first seen locally at Vischer's Ponds on April 2 (James Meritt). An American Egret was recorded on the May 14 Century Run. On April 2 some 65 Snow Geese were along the Mohawk at Niskayuna, near Schenectady, and on the following day 38 were at Niskayuna and a group of about 30 was at Saratoga Lake (SBC). The latter were apparently a breakaway group from the April 2 flock. The Snow Goose had not previously been recorded locally in such numbers. The species was last reported on April 5, when only a few were seen (Esly Hallenbeck). Eighteen species of ducks were observed during this two-month period, with a May 14 Redhead being particularly noteworthy in this line.

HAWKS — OWLS: The Bald Eagle was reported by several Century Run parties, and an immature was seen flying over Schenectady on May 23 (Nelle Van Vorst). A Virginia Rail was seen near Vischer's Ferry on May 14, and a Sora was also reported that day. These were the only Rail reports received. The Woodcock was reported from Niskayuna on April 16 and on several April and May dates thereafter. Lesser Yellow-legs and Least Sandpiper were other shorebird species recorded on May 14. A pair of Wilson's Snipe was observed at Vischer's Ponds on April 9 (Rudd Stone, Frazer Turrentine). A Great Black-backed Gull was seen near Vischer's Ferry on April 2 (SBC), and on April 9 two individuals were reported in that vicinity (RS, FT). Two Bonaparte's Gulls were observed at Saratoga Lake on April 17 (SBC). No terns were reported. Cuckoo reports were not numerous. The Yellow-bill was first seen in Schenectady on May 10 (H. O'Meara), and the Black-bill was first seen the following day in Scotia (EH). Two species of owls were reported. A Great Horned was heard at Alplaus on the evening of April 16 (Adelaide Heitcamp), and on May 2 a Great Horned was reported at the southern edge of Albany (Allen Benton). Two parties reported the Great Horned on May 14. On April 24 a Barn Owl was observed on some campus grounds in Troy (E. Austin), and another bird was present throughout most of May at Washington Park in Albany (AB, LS).

SWIFTS — SHRIKES: The Yellow-bellied Sapsucker was quite common at Jenny Lake, near Sacandaga Reservoir, on April 16 (Guy Bartlett), and there were additional April reports of scattered individuals. The first local Eastern Kingbird report was from West Berne on May 5 (AB), and the Crested Flycatcher was first seen at Burnt Hills on May 1 (Marjorie Foote). An Olive-sided Flycatcher was recorded by one party on May 14. The Eastern Phoebe was not recorded until April 2, one bird near Vischer's Ferry (JM). Several Alder Flycatchers were seen and heard at Meadowdale Marsh on May 22 (SBC). Bank Swallows and Rough-winged Swallows were both first seen near Altamont on April 24 (SBC), and the Tree Swallow was first noted at Niskayuna on April 2 (SBC). The Purple Martin put in its first local appearance at Amsterdam on April 12 (Margaret Fitzgerald). An American Magpie at Slingerlands, near Albany, was the record of the period. The bird was heard and seen by Dr. R. J. Erickson in a brushy area near his home on April 22. Since he has spent most of his life in the West, Dr. Erickson is completely familiar with the species, and the bird is, of course, unmistakable. During the summer of 1954 some Magpies were released in Vermont (**Audubon Field Notes**,

Vol. 9, No. 1, page 13), and I would be inclined to consider this bird one of these rather than a natural straggler from the West. Scattered 1953 New Jersey, Connecticut, and Long Island records were attributed to the release of five birds in the summer of 1952 at Cranford, New Jersey. There are 1950 and 1951 records from Orient, Long Island (AFN, Vol. 6, No. 3, page 188). Red-breasted Nuthatches were rather widely reported early in May. The House Wren was first recorded at Gallupville on April 30 (Grace Zimmer), and a Carolina Wren was present at Collins Lake, Scotia, throughout the period. A Mockingbird was observed in Schenectady on May 18 by Dr. C. W. Woodall and several others. A Gray-cheeked Thrush was seen at Burnt Hills on May 10 (Marjorie Foote), and 1-2 were present at Loudonville between May 17 and May 22 (Mabel French). It was a dismal spring for the Olive-backed Thrush, and in fact the only report I have is of one bird at Mount McGregor, just north of Saratoga Springs, on May 15 (Marjorie Foote). Ruby-crowned Kinglets were quite widely reported the latter part of April, and Cedar Waxwings were widely reported from mid-April on. A Loggerhead Shrike was observed near Vischer's Ferry on April 2 (JM).

VIREOS — WARBLERS: The Red-eyed Vireo was first seen in Schenectady on May 1 (SBC), and the Warbling was first observed at Scotia on May 6 (EH). A Blue-headed Vireo was also recorded at Scotia on May 6 (EH). Only two species of warblers were reported in April. Myrtles moved in during the latter part of the month, and on April 30 a Black-throated Green was seen in Schenectady's Central Park (Alice Holmes). As expected, there was a flood of first dates the first week in May. The Black and White was observed on May 1 (JM), and the Northern Water-thrush was recorded that day at Burnt Hills (Marjorie Foote). The first Blackburnian was also seen on May 1 — at Albany (AB). The Nashville Warbler was seen on May 3 at Albany (AB). Firsts on May 7 included the Golden-winged Warbler, Magnolia Warbler, Cape May Warbler, and Chestnut-sided Warbler (Marjorie Foote). The Parula, Black-throated Blue, Canada, and Louisiana Water-thrush put in an appearance on May 8 (SBC). A Worm-eating Warbler was recorded on May 14, and three Yellow-breasted Chats were observed on May 22 (SBC).

BLACKBIRDS — SPARROWS: The Baltimore Oriole was first seen at Scotia on May 6 (EH), and the birds were subsequently present in good numbers. The Scarlet Tanager was observed at Wolf's Hollow, near Amsterdam, on May 8 (SBC). and the Rose-breasted Grosbeak was first noted at Scotia on May 6 (EH). There have been the usual several Cardinal reports, virtually all from feeders. In May a pair frequented a feeder at a locality a few miles south of Albany (Mrs. Richard Law); this is the only period record of a female bird of which I know. Evening Grosbeaks were widely reported, although they were nowhere present in large numbers. In April groups of up to ten or so frequented several Schenectady feeders. Seven individuals were seen at Saratoga Springs on April 17 (SBC), and several birds were present throughout April at Gallupville (Grace Zimmer) and late in the month at Loudonville (Mabel French). On May 8 a lone individual was seen near the Van Curler Hotel in downtown Schenectady (SBC). The Evening Grosbeak was easily recorded on the May 14 Century Run. The species was last observed locally on May 22, a pair at Amsterdam (Margaret Fitzgerald). Incidentally, between the dates of October 26 and May 17 Mrs. Fitzgerald banded no less than 677 of these birds, out of a supposedly permanent flock numbering considerably less than this number. There were a fair number of Purple Finch reports during both months. On April 7 and again on April 17 a male Pine Grosbeak was observed by Mrs. Gordon Stancliffe in Niskayuna. On April 16 a female Pine Grosbeak stunned itself by hitting a window of Mrs. Stancliffe's home. Another unusual record is that of 12 Red Crossbills, the majority of them males, seen in Schenectady by Gloria Meader on April 21. Eight to ten Redpolls were observed in Loudonville on April 4 (Mabel French). Pine Siskins were present throughout April at Albany (AB), and on the late date of May 22 a flock of 20, in full chorus, was seen at Loudonville (MF). The White-crowned Sparrow migration was, as stated, a very conspicuous one. The species was first observed on May 8 at Amsterdam (Margaret Fitzgerald) and at Gallupville (GZ). From May 9 through May 13 a small group of these birds, in company with White-throats, was singing lustily at one of Schenectady's most popular spots, the GE main entrance. A good total of 30 was observed at Burnt Hills on May 10 (Marjorie Foote). The species was last observed on April 13 at Loudonville (Mabel French). The Chipping Sparrow was not recorded until April 11 (EH).

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