

REGION 1 — NIAGARA FRONTIER

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Most of April gave us disappointing birding. True, the first six days were quite warm, but the March ice was too thick to melt quickly, and although a great deal of open water was present in the fields and sinks by the 6th, winter closed in again with a vengeance until the 27th. On the 28th some of the dammed-up migration broke loose and such species as Towhees, Brown Thrashers, and White-throated Sparrows swarmed into the area. May was cold and rainy, but we shall remember it as having provided the most consistently good birding of any May in many years. Vegetation was extremely retarded (foliation was not complete until June), while the birds were nearly on schedule. This made for optimum observing conditions for the small migrants, while the continual heavy rains kept the fields flooded throughout the period, making for good duck and shore bird observing. Extreme cold, particularly on the 17th, when the temperature was in the twenties in most of western N. Y., brought many insectivorous birds (notably tanagers, flycatchers, and swallows) right down to the ground for their food.

LOONS — DUCKS: Fewer Red-throated Loons and Red-necked Grebes than usual were reported. Mrs. McMurtry got the first Green Heron (Apr 29) and first migrant American Bittern (Apr 12) at Wellsville. The maximum count of Canada Geese at Wolcottsville and the Oak Orchard area was 28,000; there were great numbers there after mid-April, and as the heavy rains kept the fields flooded, more geese were reported in May than ever before (3000 May 5, Beardslee). Snow and Blue Geese were seen sparingly at Oak Orchard in April. All of the usual duck species were reported, but there was nothing exceptional either in numbers or in dates.

HAWKS — OWLS: There were good hawk flights along the south shore of Lake Erie Apr 22, 27, and 29, and another along the south shore of Lake Ontario westward into a stiff wind May 5 (seven species, Point Breeze, Beardslee). There was a fairly good shore bird movement. Woodcock were late, snipe on time. An early Black-bellied Plover was found on May 7 (Amherst, F. and E. Cuddy). Common Terns returned early, despite the cold (60 at Niagara Falls Apr 12, Mitchell), and the first Black Tern, also early, was seen at Wellsville May 1 (McMurtry). Barn Owls nested at Alden (Wolfing).

SWIFTS — SHRIKES: Whip-poor-wills were reported twice Apr 29 and twice Apr 30. Although one or two Nighthawks were seen rather early, few were present until well after their normal arrival date. Height of the Hummingbird migration was May 12. Phoebes did not arrive until Apr. 3. Least and Yellow-bellied Flycatchers were considerably more numerous than usual. Most swallows were rather late — exception, Barn (Apr 7, two at Oak Orchard, Beardslee). All thrushes arrived on schedule, none being reported early (a boon to the censors).

VIREOS — WARBLERS: Yellow-throated (May 12) and Solitary (May 6) Vireos were very late indeed. Philadelphia Vireos were unusually numerous, but in general the vireo migration was not very good, being particularly poor on May 20, when our spring bird count was held. All observers reported a splendid warbler migration, although there was some divergence of opinion as to which species were exceptionally numerous, principally due to areas worked. The consensus would be, I think, that Black and White, Magnolia, Cap May (locally), Blackburnian, Mourning, and Wilson's were much commoner than usual. Rarities included a Kentucky Warbler in the Klabundes' yard at Lewistown May 18-22 and a Connecticut in Forest Lawn Cemetery May 19 (Nathan et al). I thought most warblers were more silent than usual.

BLACKBIRDS — SPARROWS: Parker noted six Bobolinks at Stillwater (Chautauqua County) Apr 29. Orchard Orioles were reported from Forest Lawn Cemetery, Delaware Park, and from Lewiston. Kirsch found an Indigo Bunting at Hamburg Apr 30, but most observers had to wait another two weeks. Evening Grosbeaks

stayed at Hamburg and Jamestown until May 8, and at Wellsville until the 21st (McMurtry). Red Crossbills were last reported May 21 (Holland, James). The Klabundes had an Oregon Junco at their feeder Apr 2 to 21; many observers added it to their life list. Eaton collected a female Lark Sparrow Apr 29 (near Vandalia); it is interesting to note that another Lark Sparrow was seen at Morgan's Point, Ont. (outside our territory) May 11. The height of the White-crowned Sparrow migration was May 12.

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REGION 2—GENESEE

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Prolonged cold in April held up many migrants until the week-end of Apr 28-29, when 31 new species were recorded for the year. May migrants arrived mostly on schedule. Birding during May was the best in many years; 206 species were observed during the month and 195 on Spring Census Day, May 20. Noteworthy records of birds observed on a single day were: 152 species at Braddocks Bay (approximately one square mile) on May 12 by Listman, Bieber and McKinney; 115 species at Ling Road (approximately one-fourth square mile) on May 20 by Dobson; and 170 species within a 50 mile radius of Rochester on May 20 by Taylor, Klonick and Rising.

(Ed. note: April-May and August-November 1955 reports not included in this magazine are summarized in 1955, Goshawk 8 (2).)

LOONS — DUCKS: Large numbers of Common Loons, Red-throated Loons and Holboell's Grebes were seen by the Kemnitzers during April along Lake Ontario east of Rochester. Counts were 494, 412 and 14, respectively on Apr 14; and 818, 723, and 9, respectively on Apr 21. Counts of 50 to 75 Common Loons were reported through the first week of May. Two American Egrets were observed for a few days at Braddock's Bay. A Snowy Egret was found in Durand Eastman Park on May 15 (Mrs. Moon) where it remained for a week and was seen by numerous observers. A few Whistling Swans remained in the area longer than usual. One was seen at Braddock Bay (Listman), two in Durand Eastman Park (Dobson), and one on Irondequoit Bay as late as May 20 (McDonald). A good variety of ducks was present throughout this period except that Green-winged Teal did not arrive until Apr 2 and Wood Ducks were comparatively few, usually only one or two birds being reported at a time. There were no records of European Widgeon this spring. Two Surf Scoters were seen at Mendon Ponds Park on Apr 2 by the Whites and Dakins, and 138 White-winged Scoters at Port Bay on May 26 by the Kemnitzers. A Harlequin Duck was seen by Listman and Haft at Braddock Bay on May 27 much later in the season than the other few records for this bird here.

HAWKS — OWLS: Best day at the Hawk Lookout at Braddock Bay was May 12 when Listman, Bieber and McKinney recorded 11 species of hawks, including 2000 Sharp-shinned, 2200 Broad-winged, 14 Bald Eagles, and 17 Ospreys. Many observers had good close looks at Dowitchers in spring plumage at Ling Road. They remained for two weeks, with a maximum count of 16 on May 26. Ruddy Turnstones were present in good numbers at Braddock Bay. From the same area a Willet was reported by Bieber on May 12, and a Knot on May 26 by Miller. The latter bird is seldom seen here in spring and only sparingly in fall. A few Red-backed Sandpipers were seen, but no White-rumped. Winter gulls made surprisingly early departures considering the cold spring. Last dates for the Glaucous, Iceland and Black-backed Gulls were Apr 29, 4 and 14, respectively. A Barred Owl was heard in the pre-dawn hours at Conesus Lake on May 20 by Taylor, Klonick and Rising. Other owls recorded were the Screech, Great Horned, Long-eared, Short-eared, and Saw-whet, but these were all below their normal count. An evening owl trip to