

and Apr 20 brought the first Louisiana Waterthrush reports from both Binghamton and Deposit. They were also reported from Sherbourne and Unadilla. A Mourning Warbler was found at Unadilla May 20 (Wisner) and another returned to Norwich May 25 (Whites). Our first Yellow-throat was at Newark Valley May 3 (Dean) and Yellow-breasted Chats returned to the Binghamton area May 16 (Bemont). Our first Wilson's Warbler was at Newark Valley May 16 (Dean) and our last at Choconut Center May 30 (Sheffields). Their numbers were at about the same relatively high level attained last year around Binghamton. A Canada Warbler at Norwich May 3 was our first (Whites). A Redstart was reported from Newark Valley Apr 26 (Dean), but there were no more until May 1. At Deposit they seemed unusually plentiful (Wilson).

**Blackbirds — Sparrows:** There were two unusually early Bobolink reports, one at Newark Valley Apr 26 (Dean) and another at Ely Park Apr 27 (Sheffields). No more until May 6. Baltimore Orioles were first seen at Maine May 5 (Beaver) Three Rusty Blackbirds were at Norwich Apr 6 (Whites). There were only a few others reported, the last May 8, at Binghamton (Marsi). Scarlet Tanagers were first reported at Newark Valley May 11 (Dean). At Unadilla at least, they were quite plentiful (Wisner).

Rose-breasted Grosbeaks were at Endwell May 7 (Bemont) and an Indigo Bunting came to a feeder near Unadilla May 3 to May 5 (Wisner). The last of the Evening Grosbeaks were three at Deposit May 25 (Wilson). Their departure brought sighs of relief in several areas. There were quite a few reports of Purple Finches between the first ones at Deposit Apr 20 (Wilson) and May 18. Two Pin Siskin reports: three at Choconut Center May 11 (Sheffields) and some at Newark Valley May 24 (Dean). Three Redpolls at Choconut Center Apr 6 (Sheffields) were the only ones reported. The first Towhee was at Choconut Center Apr 20 (Sheffields).

Savannah Sparrows were at Whitney Point Apr 5 (Sheffields). Our first Grasshopper Sparrows were at Choconut Center May 4 and our first Henslow's Sparrows were at the same place Apr 20 (Sheffields). The latter species seems to have been quite plentiful in the Triple Cities and Greene areas. Three Vesper Sparrows at Whitney Point May 5 (Sheffields) were our first. Slate-colored Juncos were around until May 18 in both the Binghamton and Oneonta areas. There were no Tree Sparrows reported after Apr 20. Chipping Sparrows arrived at Deposit Apr 22 (Wilson) and Field Sparrows arrived at both Deposit (Wilson) and Binghamton (Marsi) Apr 17. Our first White-crowned Sparrow was at Newark Valley May 1 (Dean) At Binghamton they were fairly plentiful, but at Deposit and Unadilla they were scarce. A White-throated Sparrow at Bainbridge Apr 17 (E. J. Smith) was our first. In the Greene area where they bred last year they were still around at the end of the period (Maxon). They were not especially common anywhere. Fox Sparrows were first seen at Choconut Center Apr 4 (Sheffields) and were seen in the Triple Cities area until Apr 20. The only other area where they were reported was Oxford. A total of five Lincoln's Sparrows, four of which were banded, was recorded in the Triple Cities area, the first May 16 and the last May 25 (Bemont, Sheffields). Our first Swamp Sparrow was at Willow Point Apr 18 (Marsi).

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## REGION 5 — ONEIDA LAKE BASIN

FRITZ SCHEIDER

April weatherwise, although chronically cold, was not an impressive month and no striking variations from the norm stayed for long. Birdwise it was a long string of disappointments, e. g., very poor loon and grebe flight, early departure of migrant ducks and geese, few good hawk flights (because of unfavorable conditions), and a generally sluggish migration. The May migration continued the slowness of the April flight, particularly in the cold, wet days of May 2-10, but was relieved by a few good warbler waves between May 9 and 21 and excellent numbers of the more colorful migrants — Scarlet Tanagers, Baltimore Orioles, Evening and Rose-breasted Grosbeaks. The abrupt fall-off of migrants in the last week of May and the poor shore-

bird flight at Sandy Pond added two more smudges to a distinctly gray season.

Marked scarcity to almost complete absence was the rule in certain migrants (Fox Sparrow, Hermit Thrush, Winter Wren, Solitary Vireo) and some summer residents (House Wren, Tree Swallow, Robin, Bluebird, Phoebe). The paucity of waterfowl, shorebirds, and gulls along Lake Ontario may be correlated with the very low water levels and the scarcity of food there.

Good sightings for the season include Snowy Egret, Glossy Ibis, Oregon Junco, and three Golden Eagle reports.

**Loons — Ducks:** Without question, the lightest spring loon and grebe flight in ten years; maximum number of Common Loons was 15, Apr 27, near Texas and of Horned Grebes, 20; only one Red-necked Grebe reported, May 1, Selkirk Shores State Park. Two winter-plumaged Common Loons on May 28, Sandy Pond, are probably summering birds.

Common Egret: first report is Apr 26, two, Howland's Island Game Management Area. Snowy Egret: an adult of this rare visitant was seen May 18, feeding in the shallows of Sage Creek near Texas (Spofford). Least Bittern: a high of ten (calling), May 18, at Clay Swamp. Glossy Ibis: an adult seen May 17 near East Syracuse (Scheider) is the second spring record in as many years for the region.

Canada Goose: high of 5,500 on Apr 19, Beaver Lake GMA, near Baldwinsville. Brant: only reports are of 100, Three-Mile Bay, Oneida Lake on May 11 (Spofford) and three, May 25, Sandy Pond (Rusk). Mallard and Black Duck: spring flight very light but breeding numbers appear as good as or better than last year, particularly on the many N. Y. S. Conservation Department wildlife marshes and at Clay Swamp. Pintail: high count of 2,500 near Port Byron, Apr 26, a surprising date for that large number. American Widgeon and Wood Duck: numbers of both down sharply this spring with peaks of 50 (extremely low) and 14 (a fifth of normal) respectively. Shoveler: one male, reported Apr 25 from flooded lands near Chittenango, is quite unusual as this species is practically unknown east of Route 11.

Diving ducks had a very poor flight throughout April, especially poor on Oneida Lake. An index of the paucity of these birds can be drawn from the high counts of certain species in April — Goldeneye, 205 (a third of the usual numbers) on Apr 6; Red-breasted Merganser, 400 (a tenth of the usual number) on Apr 19.

**Hawks — Owls:** Hawk flights along Lake Ontario, although watched more assiduously this year, failed to produce flights comparable to those of last year. A summary of counts from the Hawk Lookout at Derby Hill, Texas, follows. Goshawk: a total of ten, with a high of six on Apr 19. Sharp-shinned Hawk: total 1000 plus with 500 plus on Apr 24. Cooper's Hawk: peak of 25 on Apr 13. Red-tailed Hawk: surprising are counts of 22 and 21 on May 10 and 11 respectively from that area; the majority of these were, as expected, immatures. Broad-winged Hawk: high count was 700 plus in four hours, Apr 24. Rough-legged Hawk: last date is three, May 11, a record late date (Nisbet). Golden Eagle: single birds seen and carefully identified near Texas on May 10 and 11 by I. C. T. Nisbet; on Apr 18 an immature bird was seen riding the edge of an advancing cold front three miles south of Mexico in company with a smattering of other hawks (Nisbet). Marsh Hawk: high count is 39, mostly immatures, Apr 24. Peregrine Falcon: only reports are one, May 11, Derby Hill (Nisbet), and another hunting over the Salmon River marshes May 18 (Evans). Pigeon Hawk: five reported from Apr 13 to May 11, all from Derby Hill; one seen May 12, Syracuse (Estoff, Propst).

Common Snipe: three more sites have been abandoned this spring (three unoccupied last year also) and only Clay Swamp, Skaneateles, Dead Creek, Three Rivers GMA, and Bridgeport seem to have these "sky dancers" this year. Spotted and Pectoral Sandpipers: arrival dates of Apr 25 and Apr 20 are late but in keeping with the slow migration in general. Solitary Sandpiper: very scarce this spring, high count is five with date range Apr 27 to May 18. Knot: a single flock of 20, May 28, Sandy Pond, is the only report. No spring reports of Black-bellied Plover or Dowitcher. White-rumped Sandpiper: a single seen with a flock of other "peep," May 28, Sandy Pond. Sanderling: maximum count is five, May 28, Sandy Pond (a fifth of usual numbers); other shorebird counts were similarly reduced.

Mourning Dove: spring numbers up considerably, especially between Syracuse and Skaneateles; from the number of spring birds, one would surmise a light hunting toll

and/or a negligible winter kill. Short-eared Owl: three in courtship flight on Apr 13 near Bridgeport is a record late date; ? possible breeders. Saw-whet Owl: one heard May 18, Camp Woodland, Constantia, is an unusual report.

**Goatsuckers — Shrikes:** Nighthawk: one, May 6, Syracuse, is surprisingly early in view of the cold weather at that time. Ruby-throated Hummingbird: earliest report is May 13, two, about a week late.

Flicker: spring peak is 75, Apr 20, near Texas; some reduction in breeding numbers apparent. Red-headed Woodpecker: total of spring reports is ten birds; indications of possible winter kill in this scarce and conspicuous species. Kingbird: reports from Skaneateles, Oneida, and Baldwinsville indicate a good flight (up to 60 per day) and an equally good breeding population. Yellow-bellied Flycatcher: singles seen May 17, 18, and 24 at Syracuse and May 18 at Selkirk Shores State Park; about six reports followed.

All swallow arrival dates were late by approximately six to eight days; both Tree Swallows and Purple Martins seem to have suffered losses from either April cold spells or earlier southern winter weather. Rough-winged Swallow: a decrease in the Camillus Valley colonies noted currently with no apparent cause: Blue Jay: late May saw a heavy lakeshore flight through Texas, Derby Hill, and Selkirk Shores State Park (up to 300/hour), this at a time when local Blue Jays are nesting. Red-breasted Nuthatch: no records of April migrants; a scattered flight in the first two weeks of May with May 18 as the departure date.

Wrens seem to have taken a severe loss in the past winter; no spring Carolina Wren reports; a panregional drop in House Wrens; Winter Wrens unreported as migrants in most areas, scarce in known breeding areas. The former colonies of the Short-billed Marsh Wrens continue deserted but this seems to be more than a single winter's effect. Mockingbird: one seen in Fayetteville through late April; another, or perhaps the same bird, seen irregularly near Manlius from May 22 on (Anglis fide Burtt). Hermit Thrush: migrants very scarce, unreported prior to Apr 20; breeding population appears slightly reduced. Gray-cheeked Thrush: singles seen May 15, 17, and 18 at Syracuse and Port Ontario; no migrational singing (usually an early June feature) noted. Bluebird and Robin: marked reduction in breeding birds across the entire region; the loss of Robins has been commented on by many observers, including non-birders; an indication of the scarcity of the Bluebirds is the total of **two** seen on the Onondaga Audubon Society May Day, May 18.

Blue-gray Gnatcatcher: singles reported from Oakwood Cemetery, Syracuse, May 22, and from the Rome Sand Plains, May 18 (Paquette, Wayland-Smith), the last a most unusual place for the species. Kinglets: spring numbers woefully reduced; spring peaks are 12 (Apr 20, Golden-crowned and May 2, Ruby-crowned). Pipit: four April reports of small (2-12) groups and the fact that the majority of observers saw none attest to the scarcity of this migrant this season. Northern Shrike: last reported Apr 13 (very late) near West Eaton (Carter).

**Vireos — Sparrows:** Philadelphia Vireo: only one spring report, May 18, Camillus Valley.

The warbler migration, severely retarded by cool, moist weather in late April and early May, shifted into high gear with a 12-species wave on May 10. The next ten days provided excellent, though spotty, "warblering." The remainder of May produced no waves of late warblers and no conspicuous movement of female warblers. Prothonotary Warbler: one noted May 7, Oneida Lake, is a record arrival date (Evans). Blue-winged Warbler: no spring reports. Brewster's Warbler: one present from May 18 on at Camillus Valley. Orange-crowned Warbler: three reports, all singles, of this rare spring migrant, May 17, 18, and 23. Nashville Warbler: peak count is 40 on May 11; second only to Myrtles in numbers this spring. Cape May Warbler: a remarkably short peak this year with ten/day as high count between May 10 and 13. Myrtle Warbler: a late flight with fair numbers (high of 75 on May 16). Black-throated Green Warbler: late flight but good numbers with 40 as a peak on May 16. Cerulean Warbler: with the current dying of the many elm trees from Dutch Elm Disease, one wonders how long the high population of this species will continue in the elm-arched Camillus environs and careful yearly counts should be made; high for this spring was 18 singing males on May 25. Bay-breasted and Blackpoll Warblers: date ranges this spring are May 12 to 24 and May 18 to Jun 3 respectively, both quite late and very short. Mourning Warbler: arrival date of May 22 is somewhat early but major wave and multiple records did not come until May 20 to Jun 1. Yellow-breasted Chat: a new station for this erratic species located west of Camillus,

May 18. Wilson's Warbler: total of nine reported this spring with date range May 16 to 31. Redstart: outstandingly scarce in migration though there appears to be no decrease in the numbers of breeding birds.

Meadowlark: reports from Skaneateles, Texas, Brewerton; and Oneida indicate increased numbers of this species; this is surprising in view of the depletion of other early migrants and the marked local loss of this species in the past winter.

Cardinal: despite a hard winter, spring reports of this species are more abundant than ever, especially in the Camillus-Marcellus Valley to the west of and the Limestone and Butternut Creek Valleys to the east of Syracuse. Evening Grosbeak: present through May in small flocks (4-20) with the last report on June 1, six males near Rome (Aspinwall). Redpoll: a female, carefully observed at three-foot distance, on May 13 near Stokes is phenomenally late (Smith fide Aspinwall). Pine Siskin: a short late May flight, May 11 to 25, with a peak of 30 on May 21. Savannah and Vesper Sparrows: both late in arriving, Apr 6 and 5 respectively; daily checks at Oakwood Cemetery in Syracuse, an area where they do not breed, showed these species and Swamp Sparrows migrating through until early May. Slate-colored Junco: departure date is May 17, Syracuse. Oregon Junco: an adult bird feeding with a flock of Slate-colored Juncos, Apr 20, Selkirk Shores State Park is a rare find (Spofford, Scheider, et al). Chipping Sparrow: a notable wave of these with warblers on May 13 and for the next week they flocked with anything — Siskins, Goldfinches, Warblers, and Waxwings. White-crowned Sparrow: very late in arriving (May 11) and hasty in departing (May 18). Fox Sparrow: remarkably scarce through entire spring; high count is three, Apr 24, with the total number of reports **six**; last date is May 1.

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## REGION 6—ST. LAWRENCE

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In early April the weather was about normal. Birds seemed a little late in coming to us, but this could hardly be explained by the weather conditions in this region. In May the temperatures were about average, but with no hot days. The birds began to arrive at about the usual time.

The second Annual Spring Bird Census taken May 3-18 showed 157 species in this region. This is about the same as last year, but thirteen species seen last year were not reported in this census.

**Loons — Ducks:** Two Glossy Ibis were found at Perch Lake Refuge May 4 by Charles Mayhood. Later they were seen by Gordon, Allen and district game manager John Wilson. Canada Geese stayed in St. Lawrence County as late as May 12. Wood Ducks arrived early in St. Lawrence County, Apr 8. On that date Nichols saw nine species and reports that there were thousands of ducks at Chippewa Bay. At Perch Lake Refuge the Wood Duck population is good this year and more of the nesting boxes are being used this year than last year (Wilson). Pintails and Red-heads stayed late at Perch River and may be nesting there. Some dates for St. Lawrence County are: Green-winged Teal and American Widgeon May 6, and Bufflehead May 13.

**Hawks — Owls:** The Osprey nest is being used again this year (Allen). Five Bald Eagles were seen at Stony Point May 10. The first date for Sora Rail at Perch Lake was May 3. Wilson finds that the Gallinule, Coot and Black Tern population at Perch Lake is high. An Iceland Gull appeared at Pillar Point Apr 6. A Barn Owl was seen in Dexter May 25 and appears to be living there (Allen). There seems to be no other recent record of a Barn Owl in this region. Gordon saw two Short-eared Owls flying over the fields north of Watertown Apr 6.

**Swifts — Sparrows:** Two Red-headed Woodpeckers were observed near Perch River May 18 where they are now nesting. Wilson saw few Bluebirds and Wrens this spring. Gordon reports few Hermit Thrushes and no Bay-breasted Warblers. Palm Warblers were seen in St. Lawrence County May 13 and in Jefferson County May 18. The last date for Evening Grosbeaks in Watertown was May 17. The first date for Rose-breasted Grosbeaks near Watertown was May 11 and they seemed unusually numerous this spring (Gordon).

More information has been obtained about the Richardson's Owl mentioned