

Blackbirds — Sparrows: An early Bobolink was at Cortland Apr 28 (Mulholland) and another was at Deposit Apr 30 (S. Wilson). Baltimore Orioles arrived at the Triple Cities May 3 (TCNC) and were quickly abundant. A few Rusty Blackbirds were reported; the first Apr 4 at Deposit (S. Wilson) and the last May 9 near Endwell (TCNC). Cowbirds were particularly abundant at Bainbridge (E. J. Smith) and around the Triple Cities. An early Scarlet Tanager was at Cortland May 1 (Wilson), a week earlier than in other areas. They were quite numerous at Unadilla and at Deposit they were particularly numerous May 16 and 17. They were seen along streams and roads and quite a few were killed by cars (S. Wilson).

Rose-breasted Grosbeaks arrived at Choconut Center May 6 (Sheffields) and Indigo Buntings arrived at Unadilla May 5 (Wisner). Evening Grosbeaks thinned out rapidly as the end of April approached and after May 7, when one was at Endicott (Loomis), there were none. Several observers reported Purple Finches to be very plentiful. A flock of a dozen or so Pine Grosbeaks was still at Cortland Apr 13 (Balzano). There were many Pine Siskin reports during April and a few during May. At Cranberry Lake, about five miles south of the Pennsylvania border, a pair was seen building a nest (Washburns) and at Deposit, where they were still present at the end of the period, a pair was seen carrying nesting material. At Oneonta they were thought to be still present at the end of the period, too. Four Red Crossbills were at Maine May 9 (Beaver) and another flock was near Oxford May 11 (Stratton). There were no more White-winged Crossbills at Oneonta after Apr 21 (New) but at the Brookfield-Sherburne state land a flock of over 100 was still present May 30 (Whites). Rufous-sided Towhees were seen regularly in the Triple Cities area after Apr 9. Slate-colored Juncos were gone after May 4 except for a pair nesting at Cranberry Lake (Washburns) and the last Tree Sparrows were at Choconut Center Apr 29 (Sheffields). White-crowned Sparrows were first seen at Newark Valley May 2 (Dean) and were gone after May 17. Only at Choconut Center were they at all common. The first White-throated Sparrows were at Willow Point Apr 4 (Bemont). A few were around until May 17 but most of them were gone after May 10. Fox Sparrows were reported frequently until the last one Apr 23 at Choconut Center (Sheffields). One Lincoln's Sparrow was banded at Deposit May 11 (S. Wilson) and on May 17 a total of four was seen at Greene and around Binghamton. This is the first year that sight records outnumbered banding records. Other Sparrow first dates; Savannah — Apr 12 at Whitney Point (M. Sheffield), Grasshopper — May 8 at Choconut Center (Sheffields), Henslow's — Apr 21 near Binghamton (Sheffields), Vesper — Apr 2 at Deposit (S. Wilson), Chipping — Apr 8 at Cortland (Wilson) and Swamp — Apr 5 at Whitney Point (Sheffields).

710 University Avenue, Endwell

REGION 5 — ONEIDA LAKE BASIN

Fritz Scheider

Early April suffered from residual March snow and cold; even worse was the inheritance of ice that remained, e.g. Oneida Lake jammed with slush ice until April 15, but some species still arrived surprisingly early. The middle two weeks of April were cold and fair with persistent west to northwest winds; these weather conditions probably explain the slow trickling of migrants thru that period. The last six days of April with warm weather and southwest winds brought wonderful lakeside flights (vide hawks, finches) and scattered new arrivals across the region with delightful uniformity of dates. And though April was dry, May was even drier with clear, cool weather thru the first nine days; then a series of cool days, both cloudy and clear, produced warbler waves on May 10, 13, and 17 culminating in a burst of warblers on May 20. The remainder of May was warm, windless, without waves but with rapid foliation. By Memorial Day summer was fully launched, bird, tree, flower, and weather-wise.

Noteworthy for this spring were 1) the poor early shorebird flight,

counter-balanced by a splendid late shorebird migration, both inland and along Lake Ontario; 2) below average counts for early warblers (Black-throated Green, Nashville, Northern Waterthrush) followed by a frank glut of later ones (Cape May, Tennessee, Bay-breasted, Blackpoll; 3) a short, rapid diving duck migration, held up late by ice formation, pushed on early by late April wind and warmth; this was, in turn, compensated for by large numbers of delaying dabblers. Other positives were large but late swallow flights, good counts of flycatchers, lakeshore landbird flights (up to late May), and a fair Brant movement. The few negatives were low counts on certain migrants (Water Pipit, Common Tern, Ruddy Duck, Red-breasted Nuthatch) and very little migrational singing by thrushes. However, this was no spring to complain; it was a spring to enjoy.

Rarities flourished so well this spring that one was reminded of fall. Outstanding finds included Little Blue Heron, Whimbrel, Wilson's Phalarope, Worm-eating Warbler, Yellow-throated Warbler, Bullock's Oriole, Blue Grosbeak, and Sharp-tailed Sparrow; a probable Cattle Egret was reported but could not be subsequently confirmed. This burst of rarities has a strong south-central or Mississippi Valley flavor and all but two of the above were reported either on the day of or within a day after strong south or southwest winds.

Loons — Ducks: Horned Grebe: high count of 125, Apr 12, Oneida Lake; last noted May 17, Lake Ontario. Common Egret: one on Apr 12, Howland's Island Game Management Area (HIGMA) is very early; five to six birds there regularly since. Little Blue Heron: an adult May 19 at Steven's Pond, five miles east of Phoenix, is both the first spring record and the first adult for the region (Scheider, Propst, Estoff). Cattle Egret: on May 2, a bird described as a "small white heron with a heavy yellow bill" was seen feeding amongst cattle in a pasture along Route 3 five miles north of Port Ontario by Mr. and Mrs. A. Zufelt who identified the bird as a Cattle Egret; checks there over the next two weeks failed to find the bird. American Bittern: counts somewhat higher (six-eight/day) in first two weeks of May; a full-fledged courtship performance noted May 16 (to be reported in later Field Notes) at Sandy Pond (Paquette, Wayland-Smith).

Whistling Swan: only reports are a single bird, Apr 12-20, HIGMA and two immatures, May 3-9, on the Salmon River; this paucity of birds is quite in contrast to the heavy flight noted in western New York. Canada Goose: maximum is 2,000, Apr 12-23, Beaver Lake; however, flocks of 20-300 seen across the region and up to 180 were reported at Sandy Pond where they are rarely seen in numbers in spring. Brant: late spring movement with 160, May 24, Sagamore Lake, Herkimer Co. and 22, May 28, Sandy Pond Inlet (Brown).

Mallard, Black Duck, and Pintail: spring counts still in the thousands as of the third week of April; broods of both Blacks and Mallards were afloat by May 19. Gadwall: a pair in vigorous courtship May 19 on Lake Ontario near Texas suggests perhaps later breeding on adjacent farm ponds or on the newly flooded Butterfly Marsh, west of Texas. Blue-winged and Green-winged Teal: April counts never above 100/day, surprising in view of the good counts of other non-wintering dabblers (American Widgeon, Pintail, Shoveler). Green-winged Teal appeared to be breeding again at HIGMA and at Steven's Pond.

Diving Ducks: A Lake Oneida (Brewerton-to-Bridgeport) Count on Apr 12 revealed 4,000 Canvasbacks, 2,500 Greater Scaup, 2,000 Lesser Scaup, 400 Ring-necked Ducks but only 40 Redheads in the many open leads between the slush ice (3/4 ice, 1/4 open water); these numbers dropped sharply by Apr 24 and May figures were dozens only. Ruddy Duck: very scarce this spring; a single male, Apr 12, HIGMA, is the only one noted.

Hawks — Owls: Spring hawk flights (Apr 5, 16, 18, 24, 25, 28, and 30) at Derby Hill along Lake Ontario hit an all-time peak of 5,221 on Apr 25; the count

for that day was two Turkey Vultures, 375 Sharp-shinned, nine Cooper's 73 Red-tailed, 12 Red-shouldered, 4,660 Broad-winged (2,500 in the last hour — 4-5 P.M.), 19 Rough-legged, one Bald Eagle, 29 Marsh Hawk (Harrier), 17 Osprey, one Pigeon Hawk (Merlin), and 14 Sparrow Hawk (Kestrel). Goshawk: four reported thru Apr from Derby Hill with two there on Apr 18. Red-tailed Hawk: B. P. Burtt banded 20 young out of 13 nests, somewhat below the usual two birds per nest of the previous five years. Rough-legged Hawk: a light-phase bird, May 16, Port Ontario (Rusk) is a record departure date.

Virginia Rail: one on Apr 10, Clay Swamp, is quite early. Common Gallinule: arrival date is Apr 23; reported from almost every wet spot in Onondaga and Oswego Co. and several roadside kills were noted.

Early shorebirds (Greater and Lesser Yellowlegs, Pectoral Sandpiper) were frankly scarce with counts all below ten species/day for the first three weeks of April; the rapid fall in flooded areas, the cold weather, and strong west and northwest winds probably contributed to this scarcity. In late April, recently drained pools at HIGMA attracted shorebirds, and this along with the traditional late migration at Sandy Pond made for an exciting May of shorebirding. Spring maxima are: Spotted Sandpiper 28, May 17; Solitary Sandpiper, 9, May 17; Lesser Yellowlegs 12, Apr 26; Pectoral Sandpiper 11, Apr 28; Knot 20, May 24; Dowitcher 30, May 24; Dunlin (Red-backed Sandpiper) 75, May 24; Ringed Plover 39, May 17; Least Sandpiper 52, May 24. Ruddy Turnstones and Sanderlings, however, remained scarce items in the Sandy Pond shorebird flight with high tallies of eight and 15, respectively. Dunlin: first noted on Apr 26 (early) at HIGMA.

Whimbrel (Hudsonian Curlew): 13, a high count anytime, at Sandy Pond Inlet, May 24 (Peterson) were most unusual, as the species had been unrecorded in spring heretofore. Wilson's Phalarope: a pair in superb spring plumage, May 19, at Steven's Pond were also a regional spring first (Scheider). Glaucous Gull: a second year bird, Apr 23, Sandy Pond, is unusual both to time (late) and locality as this was the first "white-winger" seen recently on this rockless strip. Bonaparte's Gull: the spring flight consisted of a single bird seen near Utica on May 3 (Spofford); no other reports, a singular vernal lack. Common Terns arrived Apr 3, ten, at Skaneateles Lake and Caspian Tern on Apr 12, one, at Brewerton; both are record arrival dates.

Both cuckoos appeared rather scarce with first reports May 9 for Black-billed and May 10 for Yellow-billed. Barred Owl: reported May 3 at Tully and May 24 at HIGMA, both new stations for this species.

Goatsuckers — Shrikes: Whip-poor-will: first noted at the Cicero Bog breeding area on May 5 (late). Nighthawk: arrivals first noted on May 11, early in view of the cool weather at that point, not generally common until May 22 (late). Flicker: counts of migrant Flickers at Derby Hill, Lake Ontario, on Apr 23 showed them migrating by at ten/minute for two hours (thus 1,200 birds) with a gradual drop to three/minute by noontime. Sapsucker: heavy mid-Apr flight with a peak of 13, Apr 10, Syracuse; no migrants noted after May 3.

Eastern Kingbird: 35/hour seen in a heavy landbird flight along Lake Ontario on May 19, apparently jammed up along the lakeshore by southwest winds much as the hawks are in April. Crested Flycatcher: arrival date is Apr 25, Camillus, a few days early. Yellow-bellied, Traill's (Alder), and Olive-sided Flycatchers: first birds seen on May 15, May 10, and May 10, respectively, the first on time, the last two early; both Yellow-bellied and Olive-sided Flycatchers were reported seven times in May. Traill's were recorded by the dozens, and Least Flycatchers and Wood Pewees were so numerous as to go uncounted.

Swallows dribbled thru the area thru the first two weeks of April with very low counts (up to 300/day) of Tree Swallows: However, the first two weeks of May produced very heavy swallow flights and on May 19 Bank and Barn Swallows were still migrating past Derby Hill by the thousands (5,000 and 4,000, respectively) along with with hundreds of Rough-winged Swallows. Barn and Tree Swallows and Purple Martins appeared to have suffered no losses from below-freezing temperatures Apr 12-15. Cliff Swallows were reported Apr 10 but remained in low numbers until May 15 when they were suddenly reported widely (Texas, Baldwinsville, Sandy Pond, Phoenix) in slightly increased figures.

Blue Jay: migrants reported flying north over Selkirk shores State Park May 6, reaching a peak of 275/hour on May 19, Derby Hill. Red-breasted Nuthatch: about

ten April reports, all from Syracuse, and twelve May observations, all but one of single birds. Brown Creeper: excellent spring movement (three to 20/day) with a peak of 25, Apr 18, quite in contrast to the scarcity of Red-breasted Nuthatches. House Wren: Apr 20 is arrival date; spring numbers much above previous three years. Winter Wren: though reported widely, spring counts were low (never more than three/day) and reported on migration only to May 2. Carolina Wren: singles reported on May 3 at Camillus and on May 9 and 17 at HIGMA are probably spring strays but one can hope these rapidly rebuild the local population, decimated by the last two winters. Catbird: one wintered thru at Oakwood Cemetery, Syracuse and began singing Apr 24, about a week before migrant Catbirds appeared there; first spring arrival on Apr 18, Selkirk Shores State Park, is early.

Swainson's (Olive-backed) Thrush: spring counts low (maxima 25/day) but night flights on May 11, 19 and 21 were heavy. Veery: though arrival date is May 1, numbers did not appear until May 13-15 (late). Bluebird: late April counts and the number of May nestings reported are quite encouraging, especially in view of the dismal March figures. Blue-gray Gnatcatcher: a single, Apr 18, Selkirk Shores St. Pk. is both a record early date and a new locality record; also reported at Oneida and six individuals reported from Oakwood Cemetery, Syracuse from Apr 29 to May 22. Golden-crowned Kinglet: arrival Apr 4 (early); maxima 60/ hour Apr 18; departure date May 17. Ruby-crowned Kinglet: arrival date Apr 1, maxima 70/hour Apr 10; departure date May 6. Water Pipit: a very poor spring movement with a peak of 75, Apr 5; departure date is May 24, one, HIGMA (late). Cedar Waxwing: heavy May flight with flocks of 25-30 thru the last three weeks of May. Loggerhead Shrike: no April reports; a pair, May 26, near Verona (Wayland-Smith) were almost certainly breeders.

Vireos — Warblers: Solitary (Blue-headed) Vireo: seen everywhere this spring for it popped up in backyards, city parks, and hedgerows; date range Apr 24 to May 18; a peak of eight on May 6 shows how solitary this vireo is, even in migration. Warbling Vireo: first noted on May 1; peak of 12 on May 17; counts of both this and the Yellow-throated Vireo seem to be above those of the past four years.

Spring warblers created no disappointments this spring. Early warblers such as Black-throated Green and Northern Waterthrush were not seen in large numbers (maxima of nine and six, respectively) but later migrants put on a "spectacular." Quite noticeable was the rapid decline in migrant warblers and the lack of waves after May 24. Of the common migrants, arrival dates, maxima with date, and/or departure dates are as follows — Black-and-white: Apr 30 (late), three; nine, May 17. Tennessee: May 7, two; 51, May 20; May 28, two. Nashville: Apr 30, three; six (very low), May 12-14; May 24 (late), two. Magnolia: May 6 (late), two; 15, May 20; May 23, three. Cape May: May 7 (late), five; 23, May 8; May 23, one female. Black-throated Blue: May 2, one; nine, May 10; May 20, four. Myrtle: Apr 15, 15; 60 (low), May 13; May 21, two. Blackburnian: May 6 (late), one; ten (very low), May 20; May 30, one. Bay-breasted: May 11, three; 40, May 17; May 24 (early departure), two. Blackpoll: May 12, two; 15, May 21; May 30, two. Palm: Apr 30, one; singles only; May 20, one. Mourning: May 7 (early), two; last migrant noted May 24 (early). Wilson's: Apr 30 (very early), one; May 23, four; May 25, one. Canada: May 9, one; one, May 19; May 30, three. In the above summary the short interval between peak and departure indicates how accelerated the later migration was and early departures were the rule, not the exception.

Prothonotary Warbler: first seen at Short Point Bay, Oneida Lake, May 9, a trifle early. Worm-eating Warbler: two seen in the woods of the "warbler trap" at Selkirk Shores St. Pk. May 13 (Evans) and one seen at Syracuse May 16 (Freeland) are rare items in this sector any time. Golden-winged Warbler: May 6 is first report; a singing male at Centerville east of Pulaski, May 14, is most likely a new breeding station. Blue-winged Warbler: one seen May 11, 12, and 20 at Oneida (Thurber) would suggest a lingering stray, which will perhaps breed if either other Blue-winged or Golden-winged show up. Brewster's Warbler: one singing male, May 17, Camillus Valley. Orange-crowned Warbler: a record high of three, May 12, with a total of six of these rare spring migrants this year, the last on May 23. Parula Warbler: frankly scarce with maximum count of six, May 6. Yellow Warbler: an estimated 200 on May 9, HIGMA were but prelude to 500 there and at Camillus on May 17. Black-throated Blue Warbler: this spring's counts of seven and nine/day are unusual for

this customarily solitary migrant. Cerulean Warbler: spring maximum at Camillus is 30, May 10; one at Selkirk Shores St. Pk. on May 18 is probably a local overshoot. Yellow-throated Warbler: a single male of this southern species, vigorously singing, observed May 31 at Selkirk Shores St. Pk. (Rusk, Seaman, Spofford) is the second record in ten years of record compilation. Yellow-breasted Chat: one seen near May 8 at Kenwood (Ackley, Wayland-Smith) where it is a spring irregular. Hooded Warbler: one noted on May 20 near Oneida (Thurber) may indicate a new breeding locale and a report of three singing males May 29 near Marcellus almost certainly does.

Blackbirds — Sparrows: Bobolink: numbers well above last year; up to 80/hour noted in the lakeshore landbird flight on May 19, Derby Hill. Baltimore Oriole: first reported on Apr 30; spring counts high with a peak of 90 on May 17; up to 40/hour noted moving with Blue Jays, Kingbirds, and swallows along Lake Ontario, May 19. Bullock's Oriole: an immature male, well seen and carefully studied, noted May 23 at Holland Patent (Freeland) is a very rare western stray here, probably swung off course by southwest winds over the preceding two days. Rusty Blackbird: maximum is 1000, Apr 23, at Clay Swamp; departure date is May 3 (early).

Cardinal: now established at Selkirk Shores St. Pk. Blue Grosbeak: an adult male found in Oakwood Cemetery Syracuse, May 16 (Freeland) and noted there again on May 23 (Peterson) is a very rare spring southern stray for the state (rare but regular on Long Island in the fall) and a new species for the area. Evening Grosbeak: rapid early April decline with a smattering of records thru to departure date, May 19. Purple Finch: Nodecker describes an early April invasion of this species at Sherrill with 90 banded in a few days; these finches were also reported at Morrisville (Carter) in early Apr and 80 were migrating by Derby Hill, Apr 25; however, though regularly seen at Syracuse, no major movement in either Apr or May was encountered. Pine Siskin: scattered flocks (up to 100) thru late Apr and early May with last dates May 19, one, Derby Hill and May 24, 15, Sagamore Lake, Herkimer Co. White-winged Crossbill: late May showed a spate of records with peak counts of 20, May 24 near Oneida (Jones) and 100 near Hamilton, May 30 (White). Goldfinch: counts of 300, Apr 25 and 200, Apr 28 were forerunners to the many hundreds reported pan-regionally thru May with a migrant peak of 350/hour in the flight of May 19.

With the exception of the Slate-colored Junco (departure date May 9) and Vesper Sparrow, migrating sparrows showed up on time and in excellent numbers, especially Chipping, Fox, and Savannah, and even that sparrow shadow, the Lincoln's was seen (nine individuals between May 9 and 24. Henslow's Sparrow: not reported until May 2 (late). Tree Sparrow: last observed on Apr 24 near Port Ontario. White-crowned Sparrow: one on Apr 4 near Manlius (Gould) is most likely the one that wintered there; date range for migrants is Apr 30 to May 25 with up to 30/flock. White-throated Sparrow: first migrants noted Apr 4 (early); the usual late Apr swarms tapered very rapidly thru the first ten days of May; last migrant May 24. Fox Sparrow: excellent April flight (up to 23/day) with a rapid drop in the third week of April; departure date May 8 (late). Sharp-tailed Sparrow: a single in the short marsh grass near Sandy Pond Inlet May 26 (Peterson) is most unusual and a spring regional first; one wonders if this species might not be regular there but exceedingly difficult to detect and whether this particular one was a member of the prairie population or the James Bay group.

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REGION 6 — ST. LAWRENCE

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The reports for April and May were few, brief, and they contained nothing that was unusual, with one or two exceptions. The May 2 to 16 census showed 152 species, 17 of which were not recorded on the census last year. On the other hand, there were 20 species seen last year that were missed on the census this year.

Loons — Ducks: The nesting colony of Double-crested Cormorants was reported to be a little larger this year. Ducks seen at Perch River during the census