

B.A.N.C. on May 15 (Davis), Webster on May 19 (Lloyd), and Mendon Ponds Park on May 22 (MacRae, Lloyd).

Blackbirds — Sparrows: A Western Meadowlark was seen and heard in Webster from Apr 30 to May 15, at which time it disappeared (Kemnitzner, Lloyd). Some 20,000 Redwings, 15,000 Grackles, and 15,000 Cowbirds seen Apr 3 at Manitou (Listman, Bieber) represent a continuing heavy flight of these respective species from the spectacular numbers seen in late March. About 5,000 Cowbirds were seen Apr 30 at Manitou (Listman). Two hundred Rusty Blackbirds seen Apr 30 at Manitou (Listman) is a good count of this species for the spring migration, and a count of 15 on May 12 at Rose's Marsh (Listman) is a rather late date.

An immature male Summer Tanager was trapped and banded May 7 at Dr. Leubner's residence in Irondequoit. On May 12 the bird was taken from a cat, and the specimen was turned over to the Rochester Museum. This is the second record for the region, the first being at Highland Park on May 19, 1947, by Elisha Atkins. Approximately 150 Evening Grosbeaks Apr 30 at Manitou and 125 there on May 7 were the last flocks of these birds reported (Listman). A single bird was observed at Manitou on May 15 (Listman), and another was seen that day in Webster (Kemnitzner).

Three hundred Purple Finches were noted migrating at Manitou on Apr 30 (Listman). Some 300 Common Redpolls were seen Apr 3 at Braddock's (Listman et al), and five seen Apr 15 at Webster Park (Kemnitzner) were the last reported for the season. Pine Siskins were present in small numbers, the ten seen May 15 at Manitou (Listman) being the last report received. Two Red Crossbills seen in Highland Park Apr 15 (Starling) and two birds seen at the Hillside Home on Apr 22 (Peters) were the only reports of this species for the period. About 25 Towhees were seen at Manitou on Apr 30 (Listman). This bird is scarce as a summer resident along the lake in our area but is fairly common farther inland. An Oregon Junco was observed at Meadowood, near Avon, on Apr 16 (Haller).

A Clay-colored Sparrow was first observed in Webster Park on May 28 (Kemnitzner, Lloyd). The observers' attention was first directed to the bird by its peculiar, rasping song, Al Kemnitzner having had field experience with the bird in the midwest. The Clay-colored Sparrow was still present no May 31. Several other observers had ample opportunity to carefully study the bird at leisure at close range and to listen to its distinctive song. Although the bird is new to this region, its identification seems irrefutable.

The 2,500 White-throated Sparrows reported by Listman at Manitou on Apr 30 is probably the greatest number of this species ever seen here by a single observer. Lincoln's Sparrows were rather frequently reported, with a maximum of five May 21 at Manitou (Listman).

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REGION 3 — FINGER LAKES

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There was snow the first week in April, followed by unseasonable heat the weekend of the 16th. May lacked the extreme cold spells of last year, but it was consistently cool, and rainfall for the month broke records throughout the region, being from one to five inches above normal. Rain fell on 23 out of the 31 days. This certainly slowed up migration (and probably reduced the number of man-hours spent in studying migration!), eliminated mudflats and consequently cut down on shorebird counts, and it interfered greatly with first nestings of many birds. The Hornell Reservoir was not free of ice until mid-April this year.

Everyone commented on the scarcity of birds — that is of everything except Redwings, Grackles, and Starlings. With the exception of Yellow Warblers, the Parulidae were exceedingly scarce, although a good variety of species was found on census day, represented by singles. The winds of April 2 and 3 brought in Song Sparrows, and more blackbirds. Some thrushes and warblers came in on May 7, but most of these birds were very late, not arriving until after the 16th, the majority on the 21st.

Particular scarcities are noted in the body of this report, but special mention should be made of the second "crash" in three years of the Bluebird. Crows were increasingly numerous, bold, and destructive everywhere.

Unusual birds for the reporting period included Little Blue Heron, Cattle Egret, Glossy Ibis, Northern Phalarope, Sharp-tailed Sparrow, Yellow-throated Warbler, and Clay-colored Sparrow.

Loons — Ducks: Migrant Common Loons were on Cayuga Lake on May 10, and there was one Red-throated Loon at Aurora, rare in Spring migration here. J. Morse reported one Red-necked Grebe at Montezuma on Apr 24. Pied-billed Grebes were scarce at Keuka Lake this spring. The first ones appeared at Montezuma on Apr 7; 20 were seen on May 7, and the Refuge appeared to have a good breeding population this year (Morse). There were no reports of Cormorants this spring. Up to 64 Great Blue Herons were at Montezuma in May, and they are nesting in the rookery at Vanderbilt swamp, north of the Refuge. An adult Little Blue Heron was at Montezuma on Apr 24 and for several days thereafter. It is usually immatures of this species which turn up here, and then rarely. A Cattle Egret was seen the first week in May just northeast of Montezuma; the bird later flew on to Howland's Island (Region 5). The first Common Egrets were at Montezuma on May 22. No Least Bitterns were observed at Montezuma during the period, but the first one at Ithaca was on May 1 (J. Shepard). Glossy Ibis seem to be appearing every year at Montezuma. There were two this year on May 12, four on May 13, seven on May 15 (on census day, hence seen by dozens of observers), and three on May 16. There was a Mute Swan on the Refuge storage pond the first week in May, and a Whistling Swan was on the main pool Apr 24 (Scheider). Another Whistling Swan was on Dryden Lake on May 15 and 16.

Good numbers of Canada Geese went over Hornell on Apr 2 (Groesbeck); Hewitt estimated 10,000 on Cayuga on Apr 13, and Morse reported the peak of the Goose count the same day at Montezuma, some 15,000. The number remained about 11,000 until the night of May 2-3, when most left the Refuge. Three pairs nested on the display pond, and on May 31 one Goose was incubating at Sapsucker Woods.

Twenty years ago Brant were seldom seen in the Finger Lakes, and never in spring. On May 26 Morse noted a heavy flight over the Refuge, with one flock of 1500. That same day 26 were seen on Seneca (Smart), probably part of the same flight, and there was one individual at Stewart Park, Ithaca, from Apr 13 until its capture in early May. The bird was placed on the Sapsucker Woods pond. In mid-April up to 30 Snow Geese and 25 Blue Geese as well as at least one Snow-Blue hybrid were reported on Cayuga and at Montezuma. One Blue Goose was seen Apr 18 by Walker on Mound Road near Waterloo, and he also noted one Snow still at Montezuma on May 30.

The first Mallard brood at Montezuma was noted on May 27, and at Sapsucker Woods the first brood hatched about May 31. The first Black Duck and Blue-winged Teal broods at Montezuma appeared on May 26. In general, because of the late spring and severe flooding conditions usage at Montezuma was irregular; comparison with other years was quite difficult. About 1000 ducks, mostly male Pintails, were at the Refuge the last week in April (in contrast, there were no Pintail records for Keuka Lake this spring.) The duck flight was poor at Seneca except for Blue-winged Teal and American Widgeon (Ward). Teal were almost absent on Keuka. The first Common Teal in many years was spotted at Montezuma on Apr 9 by Scheider. This was also the first date for a European Widgeon, which remained through Apr 26. There were at least six Wood Duck pairs at Sapsucker Woods, but no broods had appeared by May 31. Ward saw 2000 Scaup at the north end of Seneca on Apr 2. Cayuga had nothing comparable. Buffleheads seemed somewhat more common this spring, on Cayuga and at the Refuge. There were 35 Oldsquaws on Seneca on Apr 2 (Ward), and 12 Oldsquaws were seen on Keuka Lake on the late date of May 15 (Guthrie). There were almost no scoter reports, although a White-winged was reported at Jennings Pond on Apr 27 (Hewitt). A Hooded Merganser was seen from May 14 through the end of the month inspecting boxes and holes at Sapsucker Woods.

Hawks — Owls: Hawks were scarce everywhere. The first Turkey Vulture was at Geneva on Apr 3 (Peck), and up to 12 were seen at Montezuma that month.

My find

May 15
A Cooper's Hawk nested at the northwest corner of Ithaca's municipal airport in May, a new location. Red-shoulders were strangely inconspicuous and quiet at Sapsucker Woods, although they probably nested, and Morse reported that Red-tails and Red-shoulders probably nested at Montezuma, although nests were not seen.

There were almost no reports of Broad-winged Hawks (and none at all at Keuka), but one was over the Cornell campus on Apr 17 (Ficken). Two late reports of Rough-legged Hawks (especially considering their winter scarcity in the region) were May 15 near Geneva (Ward) and May 20 near Montezuma (J. Elliott). The Bald Eagles began incubating on Apr 11, were still at it on May 10, but once again were unsuccessful in bringing off young. The first Osprey report was Apr 3 at Montezuma (Scheider), and reports in the Cayuga Basin were a little more numerous this year. One of these birds spent considerable time at Sapsucker Woods catching goldfish. An immature female Peregrine was at Montezuma on Apr 26 (Hoyt et al), and a male was seen there on May 1 (A. Fudge).

A number of reports of Bobwhites in the Ithaca area probably represent some recent releases, but one found in K. Thorp's basement garage on May 9 must have come from some distance. The Wild Turkeys released on Connecticut Hill seemed to be doing well, and a nest with 12 eggs was found by R. Fischer the end of May. Gallinules and Coots were in normal numbers at Montezuma. Shorebird reports were very spotty because of high water, and some species were unreported. There were two reports of Black-bellied Plover: one on May 7 at the southwest corner of Cayuga Lake (Severinghaus) and one on May 17 at Jasper (Margeson). A ruddy Turnstone was seen May 20 at Myers Point (J. Shepard).

Upland Plover returned to their usual station near Dryden (P. Kelsey) and were reported from a new station near Peruville (Patterson). Two pairs were found near Elmira this year (Welles). Greater Yellowlegs were found at Montezuma from Apr 6 through May 5. Twelve Dowitchers, very rare in spring migration, appeared at Sapsucker Woods on the late afternoon of May 16 and remained all evening, to be seen by the Seminar audience. A Northern Phalarope was found at Horseheads on May 31 and was photographed by K. Fudge.

In early April 500 Herring Gulls and 1000 Ring-billed Gulls feasted on winter-killed fish at Montezuma. There were fewer Bonaparte's Gulls than usual this spring; the first two were reported on Apr 21. Common Terns appeared at Montezuma on May 1. About 40 scattered pairs seemed to be breeding there. A Caspian Tern was seen on Cayuga on Apr 13 (Hewitt); two were on Seneca Lake on May 21 (Ward), and three were on Cayuga on May 13 (Walker). Black Terns returned on May 1 (Futuyma), and Morse reported a Montezuma breeding population of 400.

Mourning Doves were in usual numbers at most places. Groesbeck found them in numbers around Hornell, where he saw 10-15 in a 30-mile drive. The ones that have nested in past years at Refuge Headquarters at Montezuma have been driven out by Grackles. Except at Avoca, both species of cuckoos seemed quite abundant. There were several instances of cuckoos being killed by flying into windows.

There were no Barn Owl reports this spring. The Great Horned Owl nested again in Stewart Park, where it was not found last year.

Goatsuckers — Shrikes: The only Whip-poor-will reports this year were of one at Sapsucker Woods the night of Apr 29 (DGA) and one at Horseheads on May 21 (K. Fudge). While an occasional Hummingbird came in on time, most reports said they were a week late, arriving around May 15-20.

Mrs. Carter reported all woodpeckers to be scarcer at Avoca this year. Red-headed Woodpeckers continued their slight comeback at Elmira, where at least three pairs were known to be nesting (Welles). One has appeared at Odessa this year (Strath), one was seen along Dobbin Road in Geneva (Genung), and there was another at Stewart Park, Ithaca, on May 15. The latter bird was not subsequently seen. The Red-bellied Woodpecker seemed to be missing from some of its recent stations — the Montezuma, Howland's Island, and Keuka birds have not been seen recently. The Pilated Woodpecker nested in Stewart Park this year, for the first time, along one of the main paths where it was enjoyed by Saturday morning bird-walkers. Among the flycatcher group Phoebe's were still scarce at Keuka and Avoca, but they have picked up somewhat around Ithaca. There were no reports of Yellow-bellied Flycatchers anywhere in the region. There was one report of the Acadian at Ithaca on May 8 (M. Michener). Traill's Flycatchers appeared to be in good numbers this year — both "fee-beo" and "fitz-bugh" were to be heard on the Sapsucker Woods pond dike. There was one report of the Olive-sided Flycatcher, on May 25 at Monkey Run, Ithaca (R. Ficken). Tree Swallows went through in good numbers, and if judged by the concentration at Montezuma the last of April and early May they seem to have recouped much for their loss. Barn Swallows were also in good numbers everywhere this year. Purple Martins have increased around

Hornell (Groesbeck), and a new enormous house at Branchport should provide for an increase in the Keuka Lake area. Another new station for the Tufted Titmouse is the Maple Grove Cemetery in Waterloo, where one was seen by J. Walker Apr 6.

A red-breasted Nuthatch was found feeding young in the Cayuga Heights section of Ithaca on May 18. This is the first nest of this species ever located in the Cayuga Lake Basin, although young Red-breasts were seen at the Arthur Lanes' feeding station in the early 1930's. Brown Creepers nested in Sapsucker Woods again.

The Watkins Glen area had the only report of a Winter Wren on the May 15 census; the species was scarce this year. The only report of a Short-billed Marsh Wren was from Summit Marsh on May 15 (Hewitt).

The Mockingbird in Ithaca left the Mesic feeding station in mid-April. Shortly thereafter there were two reports of Mockers from different parts of Ithaca, and one was seen east of Dryden on May 16 (K. Thorp). The pair is reported to be nesting at Larzelere's, north of Esperanza, near Branchport, and I hope to have more information on this in the next regional summary. Another Mocker was reported in early May north of Horseheads, and there was still another at Jasper on Apr 16 (MacDonald). Brown Thrashers were seen more frequently than usual around Ithaca in April. There were fewer reports in May, and they were missing around Avoca and Jasper.

The cold rains of May brought reduced nesting success in Robins; a few young were to be seen at the end of the month. Hermit Thrushes were very scarce in migration, and none were seen at Keuka. Wood Thrushes and Veeries have picked up somewhat this year around Ithaca and the Geneva area. Bluebirds have had another very serious crash. In the Ithaca area Hartshorne reported that only five of last year's 16 pairs he studied have returned and that the situation is 50% worse than 1958, which was the "bad" year. Some areas of the region reported only one bird seen all spring. The Sapsucker Woods pair was broken up. Blue-gray Gnatcatchers were building in Stewart Park, Ithaca, on Apr 28 (Johnson), and another nest was located later. Ruby-crowned Kinglets were abundant in migration the last week of April. Golden-crowned Kinglets were scarce. Water Pipits were seen along Warren Road, north of Ithaca, on Apr 3 by Michener, but there were few other reports. Cedar Waxwings were reported as scarce or almost absent at Watkins Glen, Avoca, and Jasper.

Vireos — Warblers: Yellow-throated Vireos were still down in numbers, but Red-eyes were in better numbers this year than last (22 singing males in Sapsucker Woods as opposed to 14 last year). Warbling Vireos were about the same. Philadelphias were almost unreported again this year; one was seen May 21 on Hickory Grove Road, Elmira (M. Smith).

unreported this one
The warbler migration was much delayed — it didn't really begin until May 16, and in the Ithaca area it reached a peak on May 21. It was marked by superb variety of species, but there were few individuals, with the exceptions of Yellow Warblers at Ithaca, Geneva, Montezuma, and Howland's, and Bay-breasts and Blackburnians around Elmira.

The Worm-eating Warblers returned to Elmira (York). Blue-winged Warblers increased around Ithaca while Golden-wings were not so easy to find. At Keuka, however, Guthrie reports four records of Golden-wings, where usually only one is known. A new station for both of these is along the RR tracks at Varna and east along Fall Creek there. Two Brewster's were also seen in that area. Nashvilles were conspicuous around Ithaca, but scarce at Keuka. Ceruleans were at Stewart Park again. Of great interest was the appearance on Apr 22, for the first time in many years, of a Yellow-throated Warbler at Stewart Park (Ficken). The bird has sung consistently from one small area through May and has been seen and heard by dozens of people. There were only two reports of Pine Warblers. Prairie Warblers were again found on Connecticut Hill, southwest of Ithaca (Kelsey). This warbler was also noted on Apr 29 at Horseheads Marsh (Andus) and along Bowlby Road, Elmira, on May 13 (M. Smith). Ovenbirds were somewhat more abundant this year. Mourning Warblers have been reported from Friend-Potter woods near Branchport (Spiker), at the Mills Road woods near Waterloo (Walker) for the first time in several years, and on Star Stanton Hill and the Irish Settlement Road southwest of Dryden (Kelsey). Chats remained scarce. Canada Warblers have picked up a little everywhere. There were seven pairs nesting in Sapsucker Woods this year. While Redstarts seemed fairly abundant, M. Ficken reported one or two fewer pairs in her study area in Stewart Park this year, and so the count remains about 60% of that of 1957.

2

Blackbirds — Sparrows: Bobolinks were scarce, and Meadowlarks abundant. At Elmira Meadowlarks seemed to raise young successfully in spite of May rains (Welles). Redwings and Grackles were everywhere, and the latter in particular drove out more desirable song birds, destroyed nests and young, and usurped nesting places. There was one Orchard report, in Ithaca on May 1 (D. Futuyma). Rusty Blackbirds did not seem as abundant as in some years during migration. Indigo Buntings arrived about May 20-22 with the exception of one very early bird Apr 30 at Forest Home, Ithaca (R. Little). This species was definitely up in numbers this year, being noted singing everywhere along roads. Most Evening Grosbeaks were gone by May 8, but I have late dates up to May 24 (Hornell) from several locations, and one female remained near Ithaca through the end of May. My Etna birds remained until May 19. There was an increase noted in flock numbers the last week of April, when migrants came through. Redpolls left on the nights of Apr 16 and 17, with south winds, but one remained at the Ficken feeder in Ithaca until Apr 30, and one female was seen in mid-May (C. Turk). Scattered Pine Siskins remained at feeders through most of April. The flock of Red Crossbills remained near Monkey Run through May (J. Brown). A few turned up on the Cornell campus in mid-May, some were seen on May 10 along Triphammer Road (York), and two were along the Danby Road on May 28 (Mrs. D. Layton).

The first Grasshopper Sparrow was Apr 24 (MacInnes), the first Henslow's Apr 22 (L. Pearsall). A first report in some years of the Sharp-tailed Sparrow was of one seen at Montezuma on May 15 (R. Hough). Tree Sparrows left the third week in April. Chipping Sparrows arrived in numbers on Apr 20 and 21. The Clay-colored Sparrow returned to the exact location in Cayuga Heights, Ithaca, where it spent over two months last summer. The bird was kept under close observation for signs of nesting. Its return to the area a second year arouses much conjecture.

White-crowned Sparrows were reported scarce at Watkins Glen and Scarce on the lowlands at Keuka, but a large concentration was seen in Pleasant Valley by Sturtevant. At Ithaca the main migration was on May 17 and 18. White-throated Sparrows had their main migration at Ithaca on Apr 18, although a few had appeared earlier. The Geneva migration was around May 1 (Ward). A White-throated Sparrow was still singing at the end of May at Star Stanton Hill and will be watched (Kelsey). There was only one report of a Lincoln's Sparrow: at Stewart Park, Ithaca, in mid-May (Kelsey). Song Sparrows appeared in numbers on Apr 3, following strong winds the night before. Resident Song Sparrows, however, seemed scarce.

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REGION 4 — SUSQUEHANNA

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April was much warmer and slightly drier than normal, on average, but the meteorological event most easily correlated with bird behaviour was the heavy snowfall of the ninth. Flocks of Slate-colored Juncos and Tree Sparrows flocked to feeders and banding traps to find food, along with a scattering of other species, including an Oregon Junco. The latter half of the month was warm enough to speed up what had been a slow migration and put it ahead of schedule.

The warm weather and the advanced migration continued through the first week of May but then it suddenly turned cold and wet. The migration then slowed down very markedly and in the case of some species stopped entirely and may even have gone into reverse, judging by the absence of such species as Tennessee Warblers for a week after they were first recorded. The end result was one big wave made up of both early and late species around the May 21-22 weekend but perhaps not coinciding with it. A migration of this type might explain the complaint of one observer that the nesting warblers were normal but the transients were few in number, especially if the one big wave missed the weekend.

The single most interesting record of the period was, of course, our first Cattle Egret.

Loons — Ducks: The only Common Loon report was from Unadilla Apr 30 (H. Wisner). Horned Grebes at Oneonta Apr 23 (J. New), three the same day at Whitney Point (R. & M. Sheffield) and two at Norwich Apr 30 (R. & S. White) were all that were reported, a distinct contrast with last year when many more were reported starting almost two weeks earlier. Pied-billed Grebes were only reported twice; one at Whitney Point Apr 10 (R. & M. Sheffield) and on Apr 13 at Owego