

REGION 9 — DELAWARE - HUDSON

EDWARD D. TREACY

The spring of 1963 was characterized by extreme dryness; one of the driest in the history of the weather bureau. Temperatures remained relatively normal with April being slightly on the cool side. Birdwise, the season, although not among the best, was far from some of the lean years we have been having. There were several warbler flights; the first (a small one) occurred on Apr 28-29, another occurred on May 4, and there was an excellent show on May 11 and 12. The last movement was recorded in Dutchess County on May 19.

This report will seem unbalanced for two reasons: one, the voluminous reports received from our Westchester and Dutchess County reporters, and two, the fact that two of our contributors from eastern Orange, upon whom your writer depends greatly, were unable to come thru this time.

Abbreviations used: First four letters of each county — ex. Rock — Rockland County; Mearns Bird Club — MBC; Sullivan Audubon Society — SAS; Waterman Bird Club — WBC; Maximum — max; Arrived — arr.

Contributors: Ba — Bob Augustine; RB — Robert Bowler; JB — Julius Breier; MB — Mable Brewster; EB — Elsie Brown; EBr — Eugene Brown; PC — Pauline Chernick; RD — Rosamond Davis; ID — Iris Dean; GD — G. Decker; RFD — Robert F. Deed; FG — Florence Germond; RG — Ruth Grierson; SOG — Stanley O. Grierson; TH — Thelma Haight; LH — L. Holmes; Dr.MH — Dr. Marjorie Hopper; FH — Fred Hough; RJ — Ronald James; AJ — Alice Jones; J,MK — Jim & Mary Key; ML — Mable Little; DL — Dorothy Lloyd; JMa — Joseph Malone; HM — Helen Manson; JM — J. Mattson; PM — Peg Moon; BN — Bruce North; DN — Dorothy Nyce; RO — Ralph Odell; LP — L. Palmatier; VP — Vivian Parkhurst; EP — E. Pink; AP — Ann Piper; DR — D. Reid; WR — William Russell; HS — Herb Saltford; MS — Mike Shannon; DS — Dan Smiley; JS — James Southward; PS — Paul Spofford; RS — Ruth Steffens; W,DS — William & Dixie Straus; CT C. Terhune; MV — M. VanWagner; OW — Otis Waterman.

Loons—Ducks: Common Loon: Reported from most regions, first appeared on Highland Res Middletown on Apr 6, and is still resident and calling at the close of the period. The possibility of breeding is under investigation (BN). Pied-billed Grebe: Arr on schedule and in usual numbers. Great Blue Heron: Population appears to be normal. Green Heron: Arr Apr 21 in Sull (SAS), Apr 27 in West, (SOG), and Apr 29 in Dutch (AJ). **Cattle Egret:** One Apr 27 at Pine Plains, Dutch (LP). Common Egret: One at Katonah, West on May 8 (rare spring event) (RG). Black-crowned Night Heron: Uncommonly reported in the region, one Dutch May 11 (EP). Least Bittern: one May 11 Crugers Is, Dutch (only report) (AJ, MV). American Bittern: Three reports; one Apr 7, East Park, Dutch (JM); one Apr 18, Briarcliff, West (LH); one May 11 Basher Kill, Sull (MBC). Ducks: Reported as "meager" in Ulst and "conspicuous by their absence" in West. Mute Swan: Regular but local nesters in West and Rock; a pair, Apr 28, Wappingers Falls, Dutch (J, MK). Canada Goose: Nesting at Swift Pond, Dover Plains, Dutch. Again this year your reporter received records of large May flights of this species, and being a year older and much sassier, he feels that he must call them Brant which made a good showing this year. Strangely enough none came from Rock, but there were many reports from West, Dutch, and Ulst from mid-May on. Flocks were small compared with some years, with max flock about 1,000. Snow Goose: A flock of undetermined size heard over Hawthorne, West on the night of Apr 2 (BA); about 200 observed at Swift Pond, Dover Plains, Apr 3 (GD); one May 22 (late) at Pine Plains, Dutch (VP). Mallard, Black and Wood Duck: maintaining good numbers. Teal: Stragglers of both species remained in Dutch till the close of the period. Nesting never proved. American Widgeon: two males and one female wintered in Hawthorne, last seen May 11 (BA). Bufflehead: eight Byram Lake, Mt. Kisco, Apr 26, and 12 at Tarrytown May 11 (vary late) (RO). Scoter: Basher Kill Apr 14 (SAS). Numbers and species not mentioned, but probably were White-winged. Mergansers: Late dates in Dutch for both the Hooded and Common; the former, a female, May 4; and the latter, two birds May 11 (EP).

Hawks — Owls: Turkey Vulture: Population normal to good throughout the region. Accipiters: Only two Sharp-shinned reported Apr 13, Pleasantville, West (BA). Red-tailed Hawk: One nesting at North Salem, West Apr 16 (MS). Population normal throughout region. Red-shouldered Hawk: very few reports. Two in the vicinity of Crugers Is, Dutch during May, and another pair at Amawalk, West May 19 (BA). Broad-winged Hawk: Considerable movement between Apr 17 and 20. Resident population normal. Rough-legged Hawk: Last recorded at Pleasant Valley, Dutch on Apr 17 (AJ). Marsh Hawk: Very scarce, only four records, all from Dutch. Osprey: Sparingly reported, first over Kensico Res West, Mar 29. Pigeon Hawk: One, over Hawthorne Apr 20 (BA). Sapsucker Hawk: Reported in usual abundance in Dutch, but down in numbers in West. None reported from the latter county on their "big day". Ruffed Grouse: No noticeable change in population, numbers are good. Bobwhite: Two chicks were noted just after the close of the spring period on June 3 in Katonah, West on the property of Mrs. R. T. Barrett. Ring-necked Pheasant: Usual population throughout region. Virginia and Sora Rail: Appear more plentiful, widely reported throughout region. **Purple Gallinule:** A most unusual record of this bird at the home of Mrs. Carl Breuninger in Pound Ridge, West from May 13 to the end of the period. Common Gallinule: Widely reported throughout region. More reports than usual, probably due to better coverage with more people than ever in the field. Coot: No reports this spring. Killdeer: Usual population. Woodcock: Seem to be up in numbers over last year. Common Snipe: A flock of 12 at Mabbettville, Dutch on Apr 6 is an unusually high number (WBC); one was heard in courtship during the last two weeks of Apr at Tri-Loba Hill Sanct, Katonah (SOG). Spotted Sandpiper: Arr Apr 28 at Tarrytown, West, but reported much later in Dutch. Solitary Sandpiper: Found in normal numbers on migration, but generally arr late throughout region. Yellow-legs: No change from previous years; the usual reports. Pectoral Sandpiper: A rare transient in spring, two reported from Dutch; one at Millbrook on Apr 29, and another on May 11 (EB, OW). Great Black-backed Gull: Now an uncommon summer resident on the lower Hudson; last reported from the mid-Hudson region of Dutch May 4 (WBC). Laughing Gull: commonly found on the lower Hudson in spring and summer, like the previous species is not common to the mid-Hudson area of Dutch; one May 4, Crugers Is (WBC); one May 11 Lithgow (HM). Black Tern: rarely reported in migration, and then mostly in the fall; one at Pleasant Valley, Dutch May 12 (J,MK) where it had been reported both in 1961 and 1962. Mourning Dove: Population reported normal throughout most of the region, but appears to be up in Putn. Cuckoos: Numbers of both species much higher than usual, especially the Yellow-billed; arr early in most areas. Owls: No particular changes in numbers for all species.

Goatsuckers — Shrikes: Whip-poor-will: New early date of Apr 3 for Rock (JB). Nighthawk: Few reports. Late in West, May 19 at Hawthorne (BA). Early in Dutch, two May 6 (HS). Chimney Swift: six, Dutch Apr 19 (earliest date ever). Hummingbird: Fewer than usual in West but populations seem normal elsewhere. Dutch had an interesting early date of a "beautiful male" at the home of Mrs. James Key's sister in Poughkeepsie on Apr 19. Although this is extra-ordinarily early, the species can hardly be mistaken. Kingfisher: No apparent change in population. Flicker: Usual numbers. **Red-bellied Woodpecker:** A female in Standfordville, Dutch all winter, remained until May 2 (WBC); another of this species, Basher Kill, Sull Apr 2 through May 11 (MBC). Red-headed Woodpecker: Single birds reported from Salt Point, Dutch May 11 (CT, RD) and Lake Mohonk, Ulst May 15 (DS). Sapsucker: Scarce all season. Flycatcher: Most species seemed to be late in the West area, but were reported up in numbers throughout the region. Kingbird: Arr about on schedule the first week of May. Crested Flycatcher: Arr May 4 in Dutch and May 5 in West; majority arr after mid-May. Phoebe: Bob Deed reports them missing from many areas of Rock, but Otis Waterman reports the usual number in Dutch; early arrival date of Mar 9 at Purchase, West (PS). Yellow-bellied Flycatcher: Always rare; one May 16 at Amawalk, West (RO); one May 19 at Thompson's Pond, Dutch (EP); one May 25 at Tamarack Swamp, Lithgow, Dutch (MV). Acadian Flycatcher: another rarity, one May 16 Amawalk (RO). Traill's Flycatcher: two May 12 at Crugers Is (RB), nests there annually; one May 30 Hawthorne (only other report) (BA). Olive-sided Flycatcher: unusual in any numbers in spring. This year there are four reports; a new early date for Oran of May 11 at

Fort Montgomery (Dr.MH); two in Harriman State Park on May 24 (Dr.MH); one at Elmsford, West on May 27 (JMa). Horned Lark: Apr 21. (late for Sull) at Divine Corners (SAS), could have been resident birds rather than migrants. Swallows: Heavy migration on May 11 for all species. Rough-winged: Arr Apr 13 Hawthorne (BA). Martin: reported as scarce in the Dutch region (WBC), normal elsewhere. Titmouse: Population continues to increase in the northern part of the region, where breeding occurred only in recent years. Red-breasted Nuthatch: two observed along the Hudson at Vandebaugh's Cove, Dutch from May 5 thru 16. A possibility of nesting, but no proof (WBC). Brown Creeper: A number of reports continuing into late May. The nesting occurrence of this species is probably much larger than heretofore expected. House Wren: Arr, late in most quarters; but early in Dutch; one Apr 21 (J,MK). Population better than in recent years. Winter Wren: one singing at Pine Swamp, Palisades Interstate Park May 24 (EBr); one Apr 13 Wappingers Falls, Dutch (OW); one May 11, nesting near Thompson's Pond, Dutch (WBC). Long-billed Marsh Wren: Late in arriving but numbers seem to be normal. Mockingbird: continues to increase in the region, but slowly. Occasionally, some birds are lost to certain areas, for example, the bird which has been at Hawthorne since Aug 23, 1962 has not been seen since Apr 16. An interesting report comes from Iris Dean of two birds establishing at Mt. Hope, Oran on Apr 18. The male was killed by a Red Squirrel whereupon the female disappeared for a day, only to reappear with another male. They remained only a short time and then moved elsewhere. This species appeared in at least three new locations in Dutch this year with breeding in two of them (WBC). Brown Thrasher: More numerous in Putn (ML); normal in numbers in Dutch (WBC). Earliest arrival Apr 18 in Dutch at Millbrook (EB). Robin: Lower in numbers in Putn, but generally normal elsewhere. Wood Thrush: normal arrival dates and numbers. Hermit Thrush: one, singing at Pine Swamp on May 24 (EBr). Swainson's Thrush: one, singing at dawn in South Nyack June 1 (RFD). Movement described as heavy through Dutch (WBC). Gray-cheeked Thrush: one May 4, Amenia, Dutch (only report) (W, TS). Eastern Bluebird: Sam Phelps Jr. of Walden reports that disaster has struck all of the nine nests started in boxes, he provided near his home. Perhaps we can prevail upon him for an elaboration in a future edition's "Field Notes". WBC reports several houses in use which they provided. Species continues scarce. Blue-gray Gnatcatcher: another southern invader which is making gains; reported from West May 11 (BA); a nesting pair May 11 at Pomona, Rock (RS); a pair near Blauvelt, Rock May 14; two pair Apr 17 Basher Kill, Sull (ID), it was previously reported there on Apr 14 by the SAS; May 4 saw two pair, one of which was building, in the Weyant's Pond area of the USMA at West Point, Oran (MBC); Dutch had one and possibly a pair at Crugers ls. from Apr 28 thru May 16 (WBC). Kinglets: Normal numbers and dates. Pipit: 50 Apr 5 at Moore's Mills, Dutch, (HM); one May 13 at Millbrook, Dutch (RD). Northern Shrike: Last autumn produced the earliest date on record, and this spring produced the latest with a bird at Divine Corners, Sull on Apr 12 (PC).

Vireos—Warblers: Mabel Little of Putn says that she is "encouraged by the increase in vireos over what seemed to be a down run last year." Reports from Bob Deed in Rock and Otis Waterman in Dutch do not agree with this increase in their areas. Most species of vireos were late arriving in any numbers, and then they were generally lower. Philadelphia Vireo: Two reported from Dutch; one May 11 (WBC), and the other at Barrytown May 12 (RB). **Prothonotary Warbler:** one May 11 at Vassar College (J. MK). **Swainson's Warbler:** one reported by Mrs. Stanley Conyes of Croton Dam Rd. Ossining, but not verified. Golden-winged Warbler: arrival Apr 29, at Basher Kill, Sull (ID). Lawrence's Warblers: well reported in West. Two breeding localities known there (BA). Reported once from Dutch May 12 at Statsburg (DN, MB). Tennessee Warbler: more common this year. First May 7 at Hawthorne (BA). Orange-crowned Warbler: one May 12 at Barrytown, Dutch (RB); and another in Dutch the same day (DN, MB). Nashville Warbler: four in Palisades Interstate Park May 24 (Dr. MH); rather late if they were migrants. Cape May Warbler: unusually numerous. First reported by (MBC) in the Basher Kill area of Sull on May 11. Cerulean Warbler: five or six known nesting pairs in Dutch and the species were reported twice in West, and twice in Oran. This is more than usual. Blackpoll Warbler: first date May 5 at Harmon, West (JMa).

Pine Warbler: only report of this rare migrant one at Armonk, West Apr 6 (DR); Prairie Warbler: quite early date of Apr 29 in West. More reported this year than last. Northern Waterthrush: reports are down in numbers, one in Oran and two in Dutch. Kentucky Warbler: one May 6, Basher Kill (ID). Connecticut Warbler: two birds, one at Basher Kill, May 12 (PM); one observed by the students and brothers at St. Joseph's School, Barrytown on the same date. Mourning Warbler: one at Huguenot Swamp, Oran (no date given — ID); one at Statsburg, Dutch from May 18 to 23 (DN, MB); one at Katonah, West May 25 (WR). Chat: several reports; two nesting pairs in Dutch; one male at Cruger's Is. has a bright orange breast instead of yellow. Redstart: very plentiful.

Blackbirds—Sparrows: Bobolink: all records mid-May, less than last year in West, but normal elsewhere. **Orchard Oriole:** sparingly reported. Two pairs nesting in Ulst, one at Stone Ridge, and the other east of High Falls (FH). One pair nesting at New Hempstead, Rock (Dr. MH); and two individuals observed in Dutch, one Apr 30 at Poughquag (EB), and another by the boys at St. Joseph's School, Barrytown on May 12. Baltimore Oriole: seem to be more plentiful than ever. Grackle: numbers up even more than last year. Cowbird: same as former species, if that's possible. Scarlet Tanager: Mabel Little has recorded the arrival date of this species as May 5 in the Carmel area of Putn for the past ten years. This year the arrival date was May 7. Population seems to be normal throughout the region. Indigo Bunting: early arrival date of May 5 at Cross River, West (RG). Dickcissel: only one report of this rare accidental; that of a bird in Upper Nyack at the home of Dr. Marjorie Hopper throughout the day of May 9. Evening Grosbeak: no "possible breeding" reports this year so far. Late dates of May 6 at Monticello (PC), and May 16 at Katonah (AP). Purple Finch: a few undoubtedly nesting, usually reported throughout spring and summer. House Finch: fairly well established at Hawthorne, West, but merely visitors elsewhere. One resident in Rock from Nov 5-May 10 at the home of Dr. Marjorie Hopper in Upper Nyack. Three reports in Dutch; one Apr 12 at Rockdale (DL) and two males Apr 1 at Red Oaks Mill (J, MK). Pine Siskin: two May 11 (very late) at Stissing, Dutch (TH); and an extremely late date of May 18 for two at Katonah, West (AP). Rufus-sided Towhee: as common as ever. Sparrows: Savannah: Apr 11 (early) in the Neversink area, Sull (PC). As many as seven birds on the WBC census in Dutch on May 11. Vesper: late bird on May 24 at Long Mt. Circle, Bear Mt Park where it is not resident. A good spring population reported from Dutch. Slate-colored Junco: late birds reported from both Dutch and Sull, the former till May 11 at Pine Plains (LP); and the latter till May 22 at Neversink (PC). Tree: a most unusual record of two birds **May 11** in Dutch (JS). The find was not verified, but the observer was sure of himself. Chipping: arr May 4 (bit early) in Dutch and May 5 (early) in West. White-crowned: one observed at Poughkeepsie on Apr 7 may have been a wintering bird (HS). An early migrant was reported from the Neversink area of Sull Apr 18 (PC). White-throated: peak migration in Dutch not until the late date of May 21 (WBC). Fox: movement through the region was good; five Apr 19 (last) in Dutch (FG). Lincoln: unusually common in West; BA reports as many as six from May 9 to 12. Only other reports are of two birds from Dutch during the same period.

Pellwood Lake, Highland Falls

Corrigendum: In the past your reporter has referred to the Basher Kill area as being in Orange County. It has been recently brought to his attention that it is on the Orange-Sullivan County line, with most of the area in Sullivan County. Records previously attributed to Orange County would more accurately be attributed to Basher Kill, Sullivan County.