

REGION 5—ONEIDA LAKE BASIN

DAVID B. PEAKALL AND MARGARET S. RUSK

April was near normal as regards both temperature and rainfall. In May the rainfall was near normal but the temperatures were well above average. April passerine migrants arrived about on time. The first May warm spell, the 6th to 9th, coincided with some major movements of land-birds.

There was a distinct lack of flooded land, which accounts in part at least for the poor showing of dabbling ducks.

The hawk watch at Derby Hill on the southeast corner of Lake Ontario near Mexico was continued and intensified this year. Several eagles of both species were recorded and high counts were obtained for several species of raptors as well as for some of the passerine migrants.

Rarities included Barrow's Goldeneye, Franklin's Gull, Black-backed Three-toed Woodpecker, Raven, Connecticut Warbler, and Yellow-headed Blackbird.

Abbreviations: GLSP — Green Lakes State Park; HIGMA — Howlands Island Game Management Area; Oakwood — cemetery, Syracuse; Onon — Onondaga; RSP — Rome Sand Plains; SP — Sandy Pond; SSSP — Selkirk Shores State Park; TRGMA — Three Rivers Game Management Area; max — maximum; L — Lake; arr — arrived; N — north.

Regular observers: CA — Clemence Acland; DA — Dorothy Ackley; JB — Jon Bart; GC — Gerald Church; ME — Meredith Estoff; EE — Emma Evans; JH — John Haugh; DP — David Peakall; JP — Jean Propst; MR — Margaret Rusk; FS — Fritz Scheider; CS — Christian Spies; BS — Betty Starr.

Loons — Ducks: Common Loon: despite good coverage at Derby Hill, no major flight was observed. Red-throated Loon: one, Derby Hill Apr 18 (CA); one, Oneida L Apr 24 (FS). Red-necked Grebe: one-four, Oneida L Apr 19-25. Horned Grebe: max 100, Oneida L Apr 19. Great Blue Heron: arr at nests at Scott Swamp near Phoenix between Apr 2 and 5. Green Heron: first date Apr 4, TRGMA. Black-crowned Night Heron: one near Skaneateles May 5 (W. Spofford); up to three HIGMA during May (G. Gage). Am. Bittern: Apr 11 (first), Clay Swamp. Least Bittern: first report May 16, Clay Swamp. Glossy Ibis: one, May 12 Derby Hill (P. Kaplan).

Whistling Swan: one, Derby Hill Apr 25-26. Snow and Blue Geese: two and eight respectively Beaver L Apr 4 (JP). Counts of dabbling ducks were very low, partially at least due to lack of flooded land. Counts of Mallard and Black were 25/day and both Teal only ten/day. Gadwall: few records away from HIGMA. Am. Widgeon: max 75, Oneida L Apr 25. Ring-necked: max 200, Oneida L Apr 20 and 24. Barrow's Goldeneye: a male, Oneida L Apr 4-5 (MR, DP). Bufflehead: one May 16, (last), SP. Red-breasted Merganser: max 700, Derby Hill Apr 24.

Hawks — Owls: The hawk lookout at Derby Hill near Mexico was manned daily from Feb 28-May 7. Since no previous coverage approaches this in completeness, the counts will be given in some detail; for the same reason comparison with previous observations is difficult. The term "main flight" refers to 90% of the total unless otherwise stated. Turkey Vulture: total 82; best days Apr 13 with 15, Apr 23 with 13, and Apr 10 with 12; first, Apr 2; main flight Apr 10-27. Goshawk: total 53 — two in Feb, 30 in Mar, 21 in Apr (last, Apr 21) — numbers lower than last year but confirm that this species passes in fair numbers. Sharp-shinned Hawk: total 2351; best days Apr 12 with 400 and Apr 13, 363; total migration period Mar 7-May 16; main flight Apr 12-May 4. Cooper's Hawk: total 134; max 27 on Mar 28; total period Mar 7-May 5; main flight Mar 21-Apr 27. Red-tailed: total 1143; best days Apr 12 with 205, Apr 13 with 167, Apr 7 with 117; recorded throughout the watch, but 50 plus/day confined to Mar 25-Apr 17. Red-shouldered: total

493; best days Mar 28 with 198, Mar 24 with 130; total flight Mar 3-May 12, but ten plus/day confined to Mar 21-Apr 2; the count is little over half of last year's despite increased coverage. Broad-winged Hawk: total 21,983; best days Apr 23 with 8097, Apr 25, 6711 and May 2, 2275, the two highest counts exceeding the previous best; total flight Apr 10-May 19; 95% of total Apr 23-May 3. Careful counts of high-flying birds contributed to the Apr 23 total. Numbers of birds involved were probably comparable to the 1962 count. Rough-legged: total 119; best days Mar 28 with 16 and Mar 7 with 15; total period Mar 1-May 12; 71 in Mar, 47 in Apr, one in May.

Golden Eagle: one each, Mar 24, Apr 2, 23, and 26, and May 2; two Apr 27 and May 6. Bald Eagle: one each, Mar 7 and 9, Apr 2, 8, 23, 25, and 26, and May 2 and 6; two Apr 7 and May 16. Marsh Hawk: total 371; best days Apr 7 with 71 and Mar 28 with 59; total period Mar 4-May 16; main flight Mar 21-Apr 27. Osprey: total 237, much higher than previous year; max 49 May 3 (record high count); total flight Apr 8-May 22; main flight Apr 13-May 6. Peregrine Falcon: one Apr 5 and 27; two Apr 26. Pigeon Hawk: 19 during the period Apr 2-26. Sparrow Hawk: total 507; best days Apr 7 with 117, Apr 13 with 66, and Apr 12 with 63; total period Mar 7-May 22; main flight Mar 24-Apr 26; counts considerably higher than last year; previous best daily count was 45.

Numbers (approx 50/day) of Red-tailed and Red-shouldered Hawks were noted in late Apr passing over Big Moose (C. V. Bowes); neither species had previously been seen in such numbers on migration in this area. Of Osprey, more records than usual from Skaneateles (R. Seaman) and Beaver Lakes.

Gallinule: one found dead, Derby Hill Apr 12 (MR), early date. Semi-palmated Plover: first, May 10 Onon L; max ten May 26 Onon L. Black-bellied Plover: one near Phoenix and two Onon L May 16. Ruddy Turnstone: one May 16 and two May 23 SP. Solitary Sandpiper: date range Apr 27-May 17. Lesser Yellowlegs: extremely scarce, only a few records, of single birds. Knot: ten SP May 23. Pectoral Sandpiper: first, Apr 19 Kirkville. White-rumped Sandpiper: one, SP May 16 (MR). Least Sandpiper: first, May 16 SP; max 19 HIGMA May 17. Dunlin: first, May 16 SP; max 100 SP May 23. Short-billed Dowitcher: one SP May 16; 12 HIGMA May 17. Semi-palmated Sandpiper: three SP May 16, 150 SP May 23, and 110 SP May 31.

Franklin's Gull: party of six, east of Seneca R near Montezuma, Apr 11 (Farnham, Ives); for details see Field Notes section. Common Tern: first, Apr 20 Oneida L. Black Tern: first, Apr 23 Sage Creek near Derby Hill. Yellow-billed Cuckoo: first, May 11 Eaton; seemed the scarcer of the two cuckoos. Black-billed: first, May 7 Liverpool.

Goatsuckers — Vireos: Whip-poor-will: arr Apr 26 Cicero Bog, slightly early. Chimney Swift: migrants at Derby Hill and arrivals at the Mansion House, Kenwood, Oneida, colony both Apr 23, early. Hummingbird: arr May 7 L Ontario; good max of seven there May 16. Yel-shafted Flicker: max count made at Derby Hill Apr 26 when 100 passed from 9-9:30 AM; continued at a somewhat lower rate, to total 750 by 3 PM. Red-bellied Woodpecker: a female in Apr at the D. Beebe's feeder in Camillus where there was a male during the winter; a male near Phoenix Apr 11 (MR) and a bird sighted in flight at Peru Apr 19 (FS) — both new locations but in the Seneca-Oneida axis. Red-headed Woodpecker: often several in a day passing Derby Hill in May (4th-19th) with a max of eight May 12, may indicate more breeding locations along L Ontario than are currently known; two Liverpool May 29 (CA). Yel.-bellied Sapsucker: widespread arrival Apr 12. Black-backed Three-toed Woodpecker: one working on a dead pine at Camp Twelve Pines, Amboy, Oswego Co, on the surprising date of Apr 11 (J. Weeks).

Kingbird and Crested Flycatcher: one each, Apr 26, Liverpool and Derby Hill respectively, both early. Yellow-bellied Flycatcher: four reports, May 16-25. Alder: two, arr May 15 Oneida. Least Flycatcher: two, arr Apr 28

Plainville. Wood Pewee: arr May 3 RSP (DA) quite early. Olive-sided Flycatcher: singles May 20 SSSP (EE) and May 22 Oakwood (MR).

Major influx of swallows at Derby Hill Apr 18, with the first Bank, Rough-winged, and Cliff. Peak counts there Apr 23: 8000 Tree, 4000 Bank, 35 Rough-winged, 20 Barn, six Cliff, and 30 Martin. The following Derby Hill Blue Jay counts confirm the occurrence of a massive late-May migration: 1275 May 12, 2100 May 16, 1003 May 22 (JH). Raven: two Derby Hill sightings, Apr 17 migrating with Crows, carefully observed by JH, and Apr 27 (JH et al).

Black-capped Chickadee and White-breasted Nuthatch: highest migration counts 120 and 65 respectively Apr 26 at Derby Hill; Chickadees still passing there May 16 with 55 that day. Red-breasted Nuthatch: widely reported but no migrant waves — never more than two in a day. The only large wave of Brown Creeper noted was 40 along L Ontario the morning of Apr 18. Winter Wren: scarce — few reports of migrants, singles and twos only, Apr 13-24. Long-billed Marsh Wren: not found at Clay Swamp, where they are common breeders, until May 9. Short-billed Marsh Wren: only report, one May 19 Clay Swamp (JB), not found subsequently. Mockingbird: one Syracuse for two days in late Apr (D. Dawley); first half of May, one N. Syracuse (R. Guilfoyle), one Skaneateles (Mrs. C. L. Miller), and one Jamesville (Mrs. T. S. Harmon) — fide B. Burtt; one May 20 Camillus and one May 21 near Utica (both E. Beebe). Catbird and Brown Thrasher arr Apr 29 Oakwood and Apr 14 Sandy Creek, respectively, both a bit early.

Wood Thrush: arr Apr 27, early, Onon L; several records during the first half of May of about ten in an hour in a limited area. In contrast, Hermit, Swainson's, and Gray-cheeked were very scarce: only four reports of migrant Hermit, Apr 17-25, with never more than two at a time; Swainson's May 9-22, never more than two per trip; single Gray-cheeked May 16 SSSP, May 22 Oakwood, and May 31 SP. Bluebird nestings at Taberg (three), Rome, New Hartford, Remsen, Sherrill, Richland, Camillus, and Lafayette.

Blue-gray Gnatcatcher: in addition to the regular Camillus colony; one, Cicero Swamp, Apr 29, early, (CS); Nedrow during May (Farnhams); Kenwood (one May 10, H. Nodecker), and Scott Swamp in late May (JP, MR). Ruby-crowned Kinglet: arr Apr 13, Eaton (GC) the migration peaked quickly to a moderate max of 50 Apr 19 and terminated early, May 12. Pipit: none recorded despite searches for them in the areas where usually found. Loggerhead Shrike: one Apr 5 Phoenix (MR) and one Apr 7 Derby Hill (JP). Yellow-throated and Red-eyed Vireos: arr May 5 Pompey and May 3, early, Liverpool (CS) respectively. Solitary Vireo: only three reports, singles Oakwood Apr 29, Camillus May 10, and Oakwood May 12. Philadelphia: one Syracuse May 2 (M. Bitz), one Oakwood May 13 (MR), one each L Ontario (JB) and Oakwood (H. Ives) May 16, and two Oakwood May 22 (JP). Warbling Vireo: increase noted at Rome (H. Aspinwall) and Pulaski (EE).

Warblers: In the vicinity of Syracuse and along L Ontario the first half of May brought the most interesting warbler migration in several years. May 4th, 6th, 9th, and 13th were the best days in numbers of new species arriving and in high counts. The 15th brought one of the largest waves at Rome; in Syracuse it was the last date for migrant Black-throated Blues and Greens, and the 22nd was the last date for migrant Magnolias, Myrtles, Blackburnians, and Bay-breasteds. The last quarter of the month produced no outstanding waves.

Most species arrived on time, e.g.: Parula May 8; Yellow Apr 25; Cerulean, Blackburnian, and Chestnut-sided May 5; Ovenbird May 3; Redstart May 5. Very early is a Black-and-white Apr 19, Oakwood (ME) and somewhat early are a Canada May 6, Morrisville Swamp (DA) and Hooded May 9, Martisco (ME). Late are Black-throated Blue May 5, Black-throated Green May 2, and Yellowthroat May 6 — in the case of the first two, is the late first record due to their scarcity in migration?

Despite fine variety, numbers were not outstandingly high. Some of the larger counts are as follows: Tennessee max 20 in an hour Oakwood May 13 and 20; 100 Yellow May 9 Camillus and HIGMA May 17 (largely resident birds); 50 Myrtle May 10 Ilion; 25 Cerulean May 17 HIGMA (mostly residents — surprisingly high); 12 Blackburnian in an hour Oakwood May 11; ten Chestnut-sided in an hour Oakwood May 10 and 70 in the Tug Hill (mainly residents) May 16; 25 Redstarts in an hour Oakwood May 20. Numbers of Bay-breasted (max six Oakwood May 10) and Palm (only five reports, Apr 26 to May 16, with max of six along L Ontario the last day) quite low. An increase in Golden-winged around Pulaski was noted by EE with a max of six on May 23, probably mostly residents at that date.

Uncommon Warblers include — Worm-eating: one Oswego in May (T. Georgia) and another singing near Baldwinsville May 9 (MR). Blue-winged: only one, Pompey May 13 (JB). Orange-crowned: one Oakwood May 6 (MR) and May 8 (JP). Cape May: singles Oakwood May 6 and 13, Syracuse May 15 and 16, and SSSP May 8. Connecticut: one May 11 SSSP (EE).

Blackbirds — Sparrows: Bobolink: more common this spring, according to three observers (Pulaski, Richland, and Rome). Yellow-headed Blackbird: one Apr 23 Syracuse (Mrs. Henry Brown, fide B. Burt). Baltimore Oriole: max of 53 on May 12, Derby Hill. Rusty Blackbird: highest count at Derby Hill 250 Apr 24; last migrants May 16 New Haven. A singing Cardinal is now a regular spring sound at Derby Hill and in Pulaski. Rose-breasted Grosbeak: arr May 5, somewhat late, Pompey; max 15 Derby Hill May 12. Indigo Bunting: arr May 4, early, Eaton, but not in numbers until May 12 when 16 passed Derby Hill.

Many winter finches remained long into spring, as might be expected in view of the high numbers this winter. Evening Grosbeak: high of migrants at Derby Hill 85 Apr 26; 30 still at Eaton Apr 29; last — 18 passing Derby Hill May 12, and two there and one Oakwood May 16. Purple Finch: good numbers — max ten Oakwood Apr 29 and May 12. Pine Grosbeak: none during the period. Redpoll: a very high count of 400 passing Derby Hill Apr 7; down to 30 there the last day noted, Apr 27. Siskin: from 150 Apr 7 down to 20 Apr 27 at Derby Hill; flocks of up to 60 feeding on dandelion seeds and in trees in Camillus and Syracuse in May; last, May 17 Syracuse. Goldfinch: 345 passed Derby Hill May 12. Red Crossbill: lingered at feeders in Kenwood through Apr and to May 17; five repeats out of 23 banded there by H. Nodecker shows that the flock was at least partly of the same composition; still present at Utica and one at Derby Hill May 15; last two May 22 Syracuse (BS). White-winged Crossbill: not as widespread as the Red — only reports are ten Eaton Apr 15 (GC), a few in Apr at Kenwood with Reds at feeder, and the last two with four Reds at Kenwood May 21 (M. Jones).

Many sparrow species arrived late — e.g., Savannah Apr 12 at Oneida and Baldwinsville; Henslow's not until May 12 at Clay (searched for unsuccessfully earlier); Vesper Apr 5 near Phoenix. Slate-colored Junco: moderate max of 200 Oakwood Apr 14, a little late for the peak. Last Tree Sparrow Oakwood Apr 24. Chipping arr Apr 11, early, Jamesville (BS). Field Sparrow: not present in numbers until the 2nd half of Apr, late. White-crowned and White-throated Sparrows: low numbers of both — White-crowned Apr 4 Kenwood to May 16 when the max of five occurred along L Ontario, and migrant White-throated Apr 19 to May 15 with max of 50 Oakwood May 13-15. Fox Sparrow: moderate max of six Apr 12 Oneida; last reports Apr 19 GLSP and New Haven. Lincoln's Sparrow: only one, May 13 Oakwood (MR). Swamp Sparrow: not generally reported until Apr 18, late. No Apr reports of Snow Buntings from the Derby Hill migration-watch or elsewhere — cf. the low winter numbers.

SUNY Upstate Medical Center, 766 Irving Ave., Syracuse 10