

REGION 5 — ONEIDA LAKE BASIN

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Spring 1967 probably was one of the coldest on record and certainly one of the latest. Day after day in April cold NW winds chilled the area and what few migrants braved the cold seemed to trickle thru; exceptional flights Apr 9 and 22 underscored the paucity and tardiness. A burst of migrating hawks Apr 29-May 2 raised hopes of spring, but May was more of the same—cold NW winds, buckets of rain, more and more non-birding. Few waves were noted—minor ones May 2, 10, and 14; major waves May 19–21 and again May 28–30—and many observers missed normally common migrants. Notable thru the spring was a marked reduction in song by migrants; this was even more noticeable on the few wave days, when one could hear 20 species but see 50 in a few hours.

Positive features for the spring include 1) a scattering of Whistling Swans; 2) high Canada Goose numbers with a sprinkling of Blues and Snows; 3) widespread Shovelers and an “inland” Oldsquaw flight; 4) fine early hawk migration days which produced some record species tallies q.v.; 5) early flycatcher arrivals; 6) rising numbers of Blue-gray Gnatcatcher; 7) a heavy and protracted Ruby-crowned Kinglet flight; 8) heavy but late swallow and icterid flight.

Negatives include 1) the paucity of certain waterbirds—Black-crowned Night Heron, some dabbling ducks, Redhead, Canvasback, and Scaup; 2) distressingly low counts of Osprey, Peregrine, and Pigeon Hawk; 3) very poor shorebird flight, both early and late; 4) a regionwide scarcity of cuckoos, caprimulgids, and Ruby-throated Hummingbird; 5) a Martin kill for the second year, plus possible weather-caused Barn Swallow disaster; 6) extreme scarcity of Winter Wren, Gray-cheeked Thrush, Red-eyed Vireo, and later warblers; 7) virtually no winter finch return flight; and 8) low numbers of all four “meadow sparrows” q.v.

Rarities: include Common Teal, Peregrine, Ruff, Wilson's Phalarope, Laughing Gull, Worm-eating and Prairie Warblers, Western Meadowlark, Dickcissel, and Oregon Junco.

Abbreviations: CV—Camillus Valley; DH—Derby Hill near Texas; FHBSP—Fair Haven Beach State Pk; HIGMA—Howland's Island near Port Byron; SP—Sandy Pond; SSSP—Selkirk Shores State Pk near Pulaski; Syr—Syracuse; TRGMA—Three Rivers Game Management Area near Baldwinsville.

Observers: DWA—D. W. Ackley; VB—V. Billings; GLC—G. L. Church; MLE—M. L. Estoff; C&EF—C. & E. Farnham; FLF—F. LaFrance; KGH—K. G. Hanson; JRH—J. R. Haugh; SEH—S. E. Hosler, Jr.; DBP—D. B. Peakall; B&SP—B. & S. Peebles; JWP—J. W. Propst; MSR—M. S. Rusk; FGS—F. G. Scheider; SS—S. Schultz; CGS—C. G. Spies, Jr.; WT—W. Thurber; J&EVD—J. & E. VanDresar.

LOONS—DUCKS: Common Loon: arr Apr 1 DH (MSR); spring max 150 Apr 30 DH. Red-necked Grebe: singles Apr 8 and 9 Beaver and Oneida L respectively; two Apr 20 Carpenter's Pond, Pompey (FLF); very scarce. Horned Grebe: max 45 Muskrat Bay, Oneida L Apr 23; numerous lesser counts thru first three weeks of Apr on Oneida L, but scarce on L Ontario. Double-crested Cormorant: first on Apr 8 (early) DH (JRH); two Woodman's Pond near Hamilton May 28 (GLC), a most unusual inland locality. No Cattle Egret nor Glossy Ibis. Common Egret: max four HIGMA May 18–22; unreported elsewhere. Black-crowned Night Heron: single at Woodman's Pond May 3–7 (GLC)—the *only* report.

Mute Swan: individuals reported from Onondaga L (M. L. Peakall); Bernhard's Bay, Oneida L (Mrs. Butler); and Beaver L (SEH). Whistling Swan: one-five/day from Brewerton, Sylvan Beach, Scott Swamp near Phoenix, and Columbia Center in Herkimer Co (mob); more than the usual spring few and surprising in view of their absence in Mar. Canada Goose: 4000–5000/day in Cross L-Beaver L area; numerous 1000+ tallies from other areas and 400+ plus on small farm ponds; exo-

dus last two days of Apr and first week of May, late. Blue and Snow Geese: five and nine respectively throughout Apr at Beaver L. (mob).

Mallard: first broods May 11 HIGMA; this species, Black Duck, Gadwall, Common Snipe, and other early marsh nesters were wiped out along the western reaches of Seneca R by disastrous flooding in late Apr and early May; pond-nesting ducks seemed to fare better. Despite the delay in the Mar flight of dabblers, no large Apr numbers were forthcoming. **Common Teal:** a male Apr 13-14 near Phoenix (WT, FGS, DBP), the second Regional record. Shoveler: eight and five respectively, Oneida L Apr 15 (DWA) and Woodman's Pond May 7 (GLC), unusually high numbers for the eastern part of the Region. Apr max for divers include 18 Redhead, 530 Canvasback, 1000+ Greater Scaup Apr 4 Oneida L (all very low). Bufflehead: 40-80/day thru first two weeks of Apr; numerous reports of one-five/day thru mid-May. Oldsquaw: excellent "inland", i.e. away from L Ontario, flight -22 Otisco L Apr 8 (E. M. Starr); 49 Woodman's Pond Apr 15 (GLC); numerous reports of one-four/day along Oneida and Onondaga Lakes (mob). Ruddy Duck: widespread but numbers low, one-four/day-DeRuyter Reservoir (FLF), Fox Ridge near Port Byron (FGS), Oneida L (mob), Beaver L.

HAWKS-OWLS: Data on DH hawk migration from daily observations of JRH with the assistance of Dr. Tom Cade, MLE, C&EF, JWP, MSR, FGS, CGS, WT. Bold face figures are record high counts.

Species	Date range	Total	Date range of 90% of birds	Peak day(s)	No. on peak day(s)
T. Vulture	Apr 1-May 1	162	Apr 1-Apr 30	Apr 15	48
Goshawk	Mar 2-Apr 30	103	Mar 8-Apr 15	Mar 29, Apr 1	11 each
Sharp-shin	Mar 23-May 2	1783	Mar 31-May 2	Mar 31	247
				May 1	272
				May 2	240
Cooper's	Mar 9-Apr 27	196	Mar 23-Apr 15	Mar 31	48
Red-tail	Mar 8-May 2	2224	Mar 22-Apr 22	Mar 31	749
Red-shoul.	Mar 10-May 1	977	Mar 23-Apr 1	Mar 31	420
Broad-wing	Mar 29-May 6	13,573	Apr 15-May 1	Apr 30	4364
				May 1	3783
Rough-leg	Mar 9-May 2	193	Mar 13-Apr 26	Mar 31	28
Golden E.	Mar 30-Apr 30	10		Apr 21 & 26	3 each
Bald Eagle	Mar 23-Apr 30	11		Apr 2	4
Marsh Hawk	Mar 8-May 2	405	Mar 26-Apr 28	Mar 30	65
				Mar 31	71
Osprey	Apr 2-May 12	108	Apr 20-May 2	Apr 30	31
				May 1	44
Peregrine	Mar 30 & Apr 15	2			
Merlin	Mar 22-Mar 31	5			
Sparrow H.	Mar 2-May 1	502	Mar 26-Apr 21	Mar 31	166

Total hawks 19,580, over 20% fewer than last year, but this probably reflects, in part, the lack of strong SW winds which concentrate migrants so that high numbers are readily counted, rather than an actual drop in hawk population. There were no 5000+ days, and one of the better days, Mar 31 with 1740, was prior to the Broad-winged Hawk migration period but at the peak for Red-shouldered Hawk. Consequently, the total for the former is about three-fourths of last year's whereas that for the latter is half again as great as in 1966. There were record tallies for Turkey Vulture, Goshawk, Cooper's, Red-tailed, Red-shouldered and Marsh Hawks. Rough-legged Hawk and Bald Eagle tied previous all-time high counts. Peregrine and Pigeon Hawk were disturbingly low. Ospreys only 50% of last year, and Sharp-shinned Hawks less than 40% of the record tally of 1966. Osprey: widely reported elsewhere in Region with one-two/day at Oneida, Holland Patent, Eaton, Camillus from late Apr to mid-May (mob), a distinct contrast to the fall 1966 paucity;

creek-fishing Ospreys noted at CV (FGS), Wampsville (B&SP) and Carpenter's Pond (FLF). Hawk breeding data will be included in the summer report.

Fall-introduced Bobwhite survived thru to spring at Pompey (FLF). Migrant shorebirds were extremely scarce all spring—no Greater nor Lesser Yellowlegs tallies exceeded 12/day, "peep" sandpipers were astonishingly scarce (e.g. Semipalmated Sandpiper max six May 24, no White-rumped), and the *total* Sanderling count was *four*. Bright notes were a breeding-plumaged male **Ruff** (black ruff, steel gray "helmet") Apr 20 HIGMA (FGS), a breeding-plumaged female **Wilson's Phalarope** May 21 near Scriba, Oswego Co (FGS, CGS, M. Pastel) and 21 Short-billed Dowitcher May 18 at Fox Ridge. Great Black-backed Gull: last, FHBS May 14—early departure (MSR). **Laughing Gull**: an adult approaching breeding plumage Apr 15, Jamesville Reservoir (FLF), our first spring record. Bonaparte's Gull: scarce thru Apr (two-seven/day); max 30 May 21 SP (CGS). Tern arr dates all late—Common May 2, Caspian Apr 30, Black Apr 27. Yellow-billed Cuckoo: only *two* individuals, both near Oneida, reported for entire Region. Black-billed Cuckoo: fairly common, one-seven/day from May 16 (late) on.

Horned Owl: a pair successfully raised one young thru the hazards of cemetery caretakers and university students at Syr. Snowy Owl: last, first week of Apr at Onondaga L. Barred Owl: singles at Canastota (SS) and Pulaski (E. Evans) besides the usual ones at Eaton (GLC) and HIGMA (mob).

GOATSUCKERS—STARLINGS: Whip-poor-will: first, Apr 30 SSSP (C. Hepner); next report May 18, and reports for the last third of May were of only one-two/night. Nighthawk: arr May 13 Syr (MLE); extremely scarce thru remainder of May with one-two/day only in last *week* of May. Ruby-throated Hummingbird: first, May 1 Morrisville (A. Carter); scarce thereafter—max five May 20 CV, all feeding in low bushes over the canals and streams. Yellow-shafted Flicker: at DH, first migrants Mar 30, max 358 Apr 15, still passing in numbers in late Apr (138 Apr 30) and early May. Pileated Woodpecker: reported regularly from N Camillus, Pulaski, DH, New Haven, Maple View, Pompey, Tully, Otisco, Wampsville, and s shore of Oneida L near Brewerton, the last a new location. Red-bellied Woodpecker: two new pairs located at CV thru May. Yellow-bellied Sapsucker: first migrants Apr 2 New Haven; desultory flight to Apr 14–15 with scattered birds into mid-May.

Arr dates for flycatchers surprisingly early but the majority of the population outrageously tardy; arr—E. Kingbird May 7, Crested Flycatcher Apr 15, Yellow-bellied May 14, Traill's and Least May 1, E. Wood Pewee May 1, Olive-sided May 20; Crested, Traill's, and Pewee were outstandingly early. Swallows for the second year running appeared to be badly handled by the extreme cold of early May. At least one Purple Martin kill was reported (Stultz at Lafayette), Barn Swallows too weak to fly were noted May 11 at CV (FGS). A huge swallow flight May 1 at DH included 10,000+ Tree, 5000+ Bank, 1000+ Rough-winged, 1000+ Barn; many Bank and Barn Swallows still migrating in late May at SP.

Blue Jay: flight past DH began Apr 30 with 24; unfortunately no late May counts were taken but many Blue Jays noted passing thru SSSP May 25. Tufted Titmouse: reported regularly at Sherrill and Pulaski; newly noted at CV and Verona Beach (Oneida Bird Club). Red-breasted Nuthatch: no flight noted. Winter Wren: extremely scarce—max migrants two Apr 9 New Hartford (VB); however, known nesting areas seem well populated. Long-billed Marsh Wren: arr very late—first May 14 FHBS; max 12 (very low) May 25 Scott Swamp (MLE). Short-billed Marsh Wren: three known sites now active—Toad Harbor, SSSP, SP, all in Oswego Co; unreported from HIGMA.

Mockingbird: regular at Skaneateles, DeWitt, and N Syr; also noted near Holland Patent May 11 and 16 (JVD) and at NY Mills (Dempsey). Robin: almost 1000 Apr 9 DH; still migrating Apr 30, 150 DH, a surprising number for so late but in keeping with the cold tardy spring. Individual thrushes came early—Veery Apr 15

arr—but the majority were late—e.g. the major Hermit Thrush wave was May 5 (Syr and Pleasant L near Phoenix) and some observers missed Wood Thrush on the Region-wide Big Run May 14. Swainson's and Gray-cheeked Thrushes arr May 14 and May 12 respectively; the Swainson's flight fair (max 26 on May 21), but the Gray-cheeked flight abysmal (one/day only). Eastern Bluebird: max migrants 13 on Apr 9 DH; *unreported* as a breeder in Onondaga Co.

Blue-gray Gnatcatcher: max 15 (a record high) May 11 CV; reported at Tully L, Otisco hill, Whiskey Hollow near Baldwinsville (JWP); a pair TRGMA May 18 (SEH). Golden-crowned Kinglet: max 45 Apr 13 Pleasant L; noted in smaller numbers into early May. Ruby-crowned Kinglet: a veritable flood; first, Apr 13 Syr; reported by dozens in every brush patch and woodlot around Syr; one observer felt it was "the most common day-to-day migrant" thru late Apr and early May; in small numbers (four-six) as late as May 21; last, May 23 Syr (MSR). Water Pipit: max 125 Apr 29 Eaton (GLC); last May 21, five Pleasant L (FGS). Northern Shrike: last Apr 4, one DH (JRH). Loggerhead Shrike: 11 migrants Apr 1-5 DH; *unreported* thereafter.

VIREOS—WARBLERS: Solitary Vireo: arr tardy, May 2; max five May 19 Syr (JWP, MLE); last May 29 CV (JWP) very late. Red-eyed Vireo: first May 13; very scarce as migrant with max 12 on May 21. Warbling Vireo: record early arr Apr 15 SSSP (C&EF)—this along with Crested Flycatcher and Veery are probably inland equivalents of the east coast Apr erratics commented on by several Regional editors in *Audubon Field Notes*, August 1964; careful Ontario lakeshore observations in Apr following passage of cyclones ('lows') will almost certainly reveal more such freak dates.

Spring warbler data is best summarized in chart fashion. Note the uniformly late arr dates, the extremely low numbers especially of the later migrants (Bay-breasted, Blackpoll, Tennessee), and the rapidity of departure with warm weather in late May and early Jun. It was not until May 28 that one could hear Tennessees and Blackpolls in the elms of Syr this year—normally this occurs May 20-25. Note also the extremely abbreviated Cape May Warbler migration.

Species	Arrival Date, No.	Peak Count, Date	Departure Date, No.
Black-and-white	May 2, 3, Syr	6, May 11, CV	---
Golden-winged	May 12, 1, Tully	5, May 18, CV	---
Blue-winged	May 16, 1, CV	singles only	---
Tennessee	May 8, 1, Ilion	8, May 29, CV	May 30, 2, CV
Nashville	May 2, 2, Pleasant L	10, May 6, CV	May 26, 1, Syr
Parula	May 6, 1, CV	2, May 2, NCV	May 29, 1, CV
Yellow	Apr 21, 1, Tully	250, May 21, HIGMA	---
Magnolia	Apr 30, 1, DH	30, May 20, CV	May 25, 2, SP
Cape May	May 18, Ilion, CV, Oneida L	4, May 19, Syr	May 21, 3, CV-SSSP
Black-throated Blue	May 2, 1, Liverpool	5, May 18, Holland Patent	May 21, 3, CV
Myrtle	Apr 7, 1, Oneida	200, May 20, CV	May 25, 2, SP
Black-throated Green	Apr 30, 1, DH	20, May 21, CV- Pleasant L	May 30, 1, Syr
Cerulean	May 14, 1, Tully	20, May 18, CV-HIGMA	---
Blackburnian	May 2, 1, Chittenango	14, May 18, CV-HIGMA	May 29, 6, CV
Chestnut-sided	May 14, 1, Carpenter's Pond	5, May 18, CV	May 26, 1, Syr
Bay-breasted	May 18, 6, Oneida L	8, May 27, near Tully	May 31, 1, Labrador Pond
Blackpoll	May 20, 3, Syr	5, May 30, CV-TRGMA	Jun 2, 12, Clay Swamp-Muskrat Bay

Species	Arrival Date, No.	Peak Count, Date	Departure Date, No.
Palm	Apr 26, 1, Sherrill	2, May 4, CV-HIGMA, 2, May 19, Sherrill	May 25, 1, SP
Ovenbird	May 10, 1, Pompey	25, May 18, CV-HIGMA	---
N. Waterthrush	May 1, 1, Chittenango	12, May 13, Eaton	May 25, 1, SP
Mourning	May 19, 1, Syr	7, May 21, CV	---
Yellowthroat	May 1, 1, Chittenango	40, May 21, CV-HIGMA	---
Wilson's	May 16, 1, Chittenango	14, May 21, CV	Jun 1, 2, Tully
Canada	May 16, 1, Syr	25, May 20, CV	May 27, 1, Syr
Redstart	May 4, 1, Tully	45, May 21, CV-SSSP	---

Worm-eating Warbler: one May 29-Jun 3 CV (JWP, mob)—the twelfth spring record in 15 years. **Orange-crowned:** four singles reported, May 5–13, about average. **Pine:** three Apr 29 RSP, first report in this former breeding location in four years. **Prairie:** one May 21 SSSP (FGS, CGS), first spring record in four years.

BLACKBIRDS—SPARROWS: Bobolink: first May 4 (late) DH (JRH); good numbers along L Ontario but appear down in the Phoenix-Cicero area. **Western Meadowlark:** bird in abundant song Apr 14-May 25 Tully (JWP, mob). Red-winged Blackbird: heavy flight along L Ontario thru Apr with 45,200 streaming by DH Apr 22 (JRH); that same day 60,000+ Common Grackles also passed DH, indicating how late large populations of quite common birds were held up by the protracted cold weather of Apr; on Apr 9 at DH, 45,000 Red-wings, 52,000 Grackles, and 8000 Cowbirds made a dawn migration spectacular (JRH, mob). **Rusty Blackbird:** singles at three different sites May 21 (latest ever!) **Scarlet Tanager:** arr May 8 (late) Sherrill (SS); max seven (very low) May 21 CV; many observers commented on both their tardiness and scarcity. **Rose-breasted Grosbeak:** arr May 2 N Syr; numbers not noted until May 14. **Dickcissel:** a male, Apr 16–19 near Oriskany (EVD, fide DWA)—first Regional spring record. **Purple Finch:** few migrants noted at Syr and DH, but numerous pairs thru May at Tully, N Syr, Eaton, DeWitt, Syr, Brewerton, and Ilion (mob). "Winter finches" remained extremely scarce thru spring—totals are 15 Evening Grosbeaks, 13 Pine Siskins, and two Red Crossbills; no Pine Grosbeak, Redpoll, or White-winged Crossbill. **Rufous-sided Towhee:** singles seen from Apr 15 on, but majority not in until mid-May, e.g. 35 Boonville May 14 (KGH).

Sparrows: Vesper and Savannah: arr on time Mar 28 and Apr 2 respectively, but spring numbers very low—max 20 and 25 respectively, Apr 15 Pleasant L (FGS). **Grasshopper:** first Apr 28 New London (J&EVD); scarce thru remainder of May, many observers saw none in the period. **Henslow's:** first Apr 29 Cicero Center; only two reports thru May (extremely scarce). **Slate-colored Junco:** 40–200/day Apr 11–17; scarce in remainder of Apr; last migrant May 21 (late) Oakwood Cemetery, Syr. **Oregon Junco:** singles Apr 17 SSSP (JWP) and Boliver Apr 23 (MSR). **White-crowned:** arr May 3 New Hartford (VB); numbers very low, two-four/day, max 15 on May 11–16 Syr (MSR, DBP); last May 31 (record late) four Sherrill (SS). **White-throated:** no heavy Apr flight noted; 50–100/day thru middle two weeks of May; in numbers thru last week of May, max 100 (probably includes a few breeders) May 28 Boonville (KGH). **Fox:** max 12 on Apr 2 Panther L (B&SP); last Apr 27 Sherrill (SS). **Lincoln's:** first two May 12 N Syr; two-three/day in heavy flight May 19–21; none noted in delayed flights of late May. **Song:** 267 on B. Burt's Apr feeder survey (per 100 reports); usual counts in early Apr 50–70/day; no major flight day detected. **Lapland Longspur:** flock of 12 in full breeding plumage with some individuals indulging in flight singing, Apr 21–22 Syr Airport (FGS).

Thanks are due the compilers Mrs. J. W. Propst and C. G. Spies, Jr.
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