

about the identification of this bird. The big question concerns its origin. It has been reported from the area previously, see Beardslee and Mitchell, *Birds of the Niagara Frontier Region*, but Axtell writing in the *Prothonotary* believes that they may well have been escaped birds. It is impossible to properly evaluate records of exotic waterfowl. Unfortunately, there is no Federal law requiring color marking of captive birds. Such a law would help to remove some of the questions surrounding this type of record.

And now for the moment that you have all been waiting for: the name of the winner of the BOTS award. Because of its extreme rarity, its difficulty of identification, and the fact that it made it through the rigors of the BOS Statisticians, the LeConte's Sparrow at Belvidere in Region 1 is the obvious winner.

In a future issue there will be a new list of deadlines for individual reports. In the meantime, please get your reports to the regional editors as soon as possible. It is much easier if done on a monthly basis. This gives everyone more time to work on the records.

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REGION 1 – NIAGARA FRONTIER

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It was a grim April. Although Lake Erie was ice-free April 1st, the month was cold with a delayed winter storm arriving the 3rd and numbing the Region for a week. Birds flocked to feeders in unprecedented numbers and in the field congregated on available open ground where stupefied robins in particular showed little fear of observers. Following the storm came reports of phoebe and robin kills and generally lower numbers of flycatchers and swallows. The Allegany County Count was held as scheduled, but, because of the 13-inch snow cover in the snow belt, the Buffalo Ornithological Society Census was postponed a week. May was warm with frequent light rains but little total precipitation, and for the Regional Count, foliage was well advanced. Usual migrants for the first week of the month, especially insectivorous species, arrived about a week late at higher elevations.

Rarities for the spring are: Cattle Egret, Snowy Egret, White-fronted Goose, Golden Eagle, Bald Eagle, Peregrine Falcon, Laughing Gull, Barn Owl, Black-backed Three-toed Woodpecker, Acadian Flycatcher, Common Raven (for Winter '74-'75), Prothonotary Warbler, Prairie Warbler, House Finch, and LeConte's Sparrow.

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Abbreviations: BOS—Buffalo Ornithological Society; BOSApC—Regional Census Apr. 6, 13; BOSMaC—Regional Census May 17, 18; NWR—National Wildlife Refuge; WMA—Wildlife Management Area.

LOONS—DUCKS: It was an unusually poor flight of Common Loons with maximum of 20 Apr. 23 in Hanover and Evangola St. Pk. (AS, ArC), and only 13 on the BOSApC. However 21 on the BOSMaC was much better than last year. Six Double-crested Cormorants, never common here, appeared on the BOSMaC, with seven also reported from four Lake Erie and adjacent areas. A rare **CATTLE EGRET** was spotted Apr. 21 and 22 near Frewsburg (FE) and another Apr. 21 at Frissell Rd., Kiantone (RS). Appearing on the BOSMaC in the Ont. section of the Region was an equally uncommon **SNOWY EGRET**. 70 (!) Black-crowned Night Herons were counted Apr. 26 at Niagara F., Ont. (AS, ArC) while among the other 19 reported was one May 28 at Cuba L. (Scott), a most unusual area, since this is only the second sighting in Allegany Co. in ten years. Seven Least Bitterns seen in May in two locations indicate either that there are more than usual or that observers are becoming more skilled in detecting this retiring species.

Although several areas were treated to a sight of Whistling Swans, the 254 for the Region on the BOSApC was an unusually low figure. The Canada Goose migration was also disappointing with maximum count 37,600 Apr. 10 at Iroquois NWR (JM); of special interest were the four with yellow collars, seen in Apr. near Lyndonville and banded this last winter at Mattamaskeet NWR in N.C. (DK); nor would we overlook the little family of 7 adults with 2 young May 28 near Hume (KP), an unusual breeding area. A very rare goose species was reported from the Iroquois NWR: the **WHITE-FRONTED GOOSE**: three Apr. 13 on the BOSApC at the Cayuga Overlook (Wilcove, Goodman), and two Apr. 14 at the Co. Line Dike (JM).

Comparison of BOSApC's shows considerably higher numbers of dabbling ducks this year than last except for Green-winged Teal, Blue-winged Teal and Gadwall, which are fewer.

Among diving ducks there was more variation in numbers from last year's BOSApC (H=Higher; L=Lower, than 1974) with 1975 tallies: Redhead 480(H), Ring-necked Duck 780(H); Canvasback 853(L); Gr. Scaup 1984(L); L. Scaup 1377(L); Com. Goldeneye 428(H); Bufflehead 1079(H); Oldsquaw 54(L); White-winged Scoter 28(H); Ruddy Duck 7(L); Hooded Merganser 399(H); Com. Merganser 648(H); Red-br. Merganser 287(the same!)

HAWKS—OWLS: Contrary to an otherwise apparently late season, the first Broad-winged Hawk arrived Apr. 9, about a week early, at Alfred (EB). The best hawk flights were reported Apr. 9, 30 and May 3-10 with maxima at Youngstown (HK, WK): 38 Turkey Vulture, Apr. 9; 62 Red-t. Hawk, Apr. 23; 4 Red-sh. Hawk, Apr. 10; and 13 Rough-leg. Hawk, Apr. 23; at Pinehurst, all Apr. 30 (AS, ArC, RA): 240 Sharp-sh. Hawk; 4 Cooper's Hawk; 5545 Broad-winged Hawk (What a one-day Count!); 14 Marsh Hawk; 34 Osprey; and 19 Am. Kestrel. On the BOSApC, 39 Rough-legged Hawks is very high, and the last report was three May 21, late, near Barker (DK). A rare, but not unexpected, **GOLDEN EAGLE** was seen Apr. 9 near West Clarksville (Carrier). Three sightings of the unusual Bald Eagle are encouraging: an adult, Apr. 7 at the Allegheny Reservoir Rd. (FE), and two immatures, one Apr. 13 at Iroquois NWR (Olsen) and another May 20 on Hickox Rd., Hamburg (TB). A most exciting bird was the rare **PEREGRINE FALCON** identified Apr. 1 near Frewsburg (FE). Other Hawk highlights of the season were: Cooper's again unexpectedly outnumbered Sharpies on both Regional Counts; Red-shouldered are still declining badly, but Marsh are up sharply; in addition to the Osprey flight mentioned above, 24 were seen in 14 areas, a better than usual showing.

On the BOS Counts, Turkey numbers of 28 for Apr. and 30 for May were down over 25% from last year, but 16 individuals were gobbling on the Gobbler Census, Apr. 16–June 2 in Humphrey (Eaton). Rails were exceptionally few: Virginia: three on the BOSMaC and reports of six birds in four locations; Sora: one on the BOSMaC, and up to two birds Apr. 30–May 1 at Frewsburg (FE).

Most shorebirds apparently overflowed our Region during the fair weather of early May (DK). Single Black-bellied Plover, rare in spring, appeared May 11 at Erie Beach, Ont. (RA *et al.*) and May 14 at Times Beach, Buffalo (DBF), as well as on the BOSMaC. The Upland Sandpiper, decreasing in recent years, seems to be barely holding its own here with 12 on the BOSMaC and six birds seen in three areas.

Eight each of the uncommon “winter” gulls, Glaucous and Iceland, occurred in Lake Erie areas with two Glaucous remaining very late to May 29 at Mohawk Is., Ont. (RA *et al.*). The counts of the Great Black-backed Gull, 55 on the BOSApC and 13 on the Regional MaC, plus 44 on Apr. 27, and 35 on May 29 at Mohawk Is., Ont. (AS, ArC, RA), dramatize their steady increase noted in recent years. At least 100 Ring-billed Gulls, a remarkable flight away from the Great Lakes, were noted at Cuba L., Apr. 25 (KP). Single LAUGHING GULLS, sighted May 5, 6 and 8 at Times Beach, Buffalo (Happ, Harrington *et al.*), made the “Dial-A-Bird” grapevine (DBF). At Rockhouse Pt., Ont., an unusual Little Gull was spotted Apr. 27, and a second was noted May 11 at Erie Beach, Ont. (AS, ArC *et al.*). Up to 30 Caspian Terns, uncommon in spring, frequented four locations Apr. 18–May 11, while two Black Terns, uncommon for the area, appeared May 5 near Allegany (Eaton). Only 5 Yellow-billed and 19 Black-billed Cuckoos were noted on the BOSMaC.

One lone Barn Owl for the season was near Lyndonville, Apr. 30 (DK), and two Snowy Owls appeared on the BOSApC with another Apr. 4 and 9 at the Sheridan Golf Course, Tonawanda (Thill, Pratt). Very poorly represented were Long-eared Owls: one on the BOSApC, one on the BOSMaC, one Apr. 6 at Hamburg (TB), and a third, nesting, Apr. 27 near Frewsburg (RS). Short-eared Owls were also scarce with but two on the BOSApC and two Apr. 3 at Iroquois NWR (Olsen).

GOATSUCKERS–STARLING: On the BOSMaC, numbers of Common Nighthawk dropped to a tiny ten from 24 last year, while the decrease for Chimney Swifts was even greater, from 1300 in 1974 to 497 this season.

No longer a common species, the Red-headed Woodpecker was up in numbers with eighteen observed in ten areas. Although the Hairy Woodpecker is in trouble in some sections of the country, our Regional Count for the season was up nearly 20% from 1974. A Black-backed Three-toed Woodpecker, unusual for the Region and incredibly late, was noted again this spring on Apr. 27 at Buffalo (Wilcove) where one was seen in Nov. and Jan.

Low, low reports of the Eastern Phoebe came from most areas, but 265 on the BOSMaC (cp. with 318 in 1974) is more than expected, considering fatalities following the Apr. storm. Singles of the rare ACADIAN FLYCATCHER appeared on the BOSMaC and May 21 near Barker (DK). An early Willow Flycatcher arrived May 14 at Times Beach, Buffalo (DBF) and higher than usual numbers were noted for the season. At last: the “half-hardy” Tufted Titmouse and Carolina Wren are noteworthy as too common to report! Although seldom found, a Long-billed Marsh Wren was observed May 3 at Iroquois NWR (Heck), and a rare and secretive Short-billed Marsh Wren was discovered May 21 near Barker (DK), a second May 24 near Eden (TB) and another May 26 at Tonawanda WMA (RA *et al.*).

Nesting Eastern Bluebirds were exceptionally scarce this spring in the northern half of Allegany Co., where normally regular (KP, Wilson *et al.*). A strong showing of 107 Water Pipits on the BOSApC is 78 more than last year. The Loggerhead Shrike, uncommon in recent years, was discovered at a NEST (always hard to find) with 5 eggs, May 22 near Lyndonville, when one adult was dead below; the second adult hatched young (number unknown)

by June 3 (DK); individuals were also noted Apr. 12 near Allegany Reservoir (FE) and Apr. 19 at Hamburg (TB).

VIREOS-WARBLEDERS: Three Prothonotary Warblers—still rare—appeared on the BOSMaC while one to two were seen several times in May in the usual Iroquois NWR area. The uncommon Brewster's Warbler (Hybrid) was back on its nesting grounds May 15–27 at Amity L., Belmont (VP) and three were recorded on the BOSMaC. A Nashville Warbler's nest, first for Allegany Co., discovered Apr. 25 in Amity north of Scio, was found empty and damaged June 3 (VP). With three also on the BOSMaC, singles of the rare Parula Warbler appeared in May in five locations. An alternate yearly fluctuation in numbers of the Yellow-rumped Warbler is noted at Farmersville Station where this season 66 were banded, over twice the 1974 total there (DC, JC). Four "Myrtles" were seen late, May 31, on their breeding grounds at Alfred (EB). The very scarce Cerulean Warbler, with 16 on the BOSMaC, was found in two areas: one May 13 near Frewsburg (EP) and two May 16 at Iroquois NWR (JM, Rebovich). A Pine Warbler, exceptionally rare in spring, was banded Apr. 23 at Farmersville Station (DC, JC) and another appeared very, very late, May 20, at the Allegheny Reservoir Rd. (FE, EP). Unusual for the area, a late **PRAIRIE WARBLER** at Alfred May 14 was near where 2 adults were seen feeding 2 young last summer. The uncommon Yellow-breasted Chat appeared as one on the BOSMaC; one was banded at Farmersville Station May 12 (DC, JC); and five others were noted in four areas.

BLACKBIRDS-SPARROWS: Northern Orioles were exceptionally abundant this year, and 2761 Evening Grosbeaks on the BOSApC was nearly twice last year's figure. Two areas reported the very rare **HOUSE FINCH**: Belmont, with two Apr. 16 and one Apr. 23–25 (DB, LB), an expansion of its usual territory, and Hamburg, with two Apr. 22 (Foster *et al*). Two Red Crossbills, which were very scarce this year, were seen at Scio on the BOSMaC, and one came to a feeder Apr. 28 in Hamburg (Skrzypek). Grasshopper Sparrow numbers were higher than usual, but still lower than Savannahs, on the L. Ont. Plains (DK). The most outstanding bird this season was the rare, and exceedingly difficult to identify, **LE CONTE'S SPARROW** studied Apr. 6 at Belvidere, Allegany Co., by Bruce and Robert Smalley, whose verification "write-ups" were accepted by BOS Statisticians. Henslow's Sparrows were up in number. An exceptionally late, disabled Tree Sparrow came to a Wellsville feeder daily, May 10–21 (Larson). Lincoln's Sparrow was more widely reported than common and three were banded May 12–25 at Farmersville Station (DC, JC).

Addendum: Omitted from the Winter report (*Kingbird*, May 1975, Region 1) was the rare **COMMON RAVEN**, seen Mar. 6 at Hamburg Airport (TB).

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REGION 2 – GENESEE

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April and May were almost direct opposites this spring. The former was cold—6° below average, while the latter was 6° above normal. A record snowfall in early April was hard on such vulnerable species as woodcock, phoebe, Tree Swallow, robin, and Fox Sparrow.

Foliage progressed slowly until mid-May when a sudden heat wave forced both vegetation and migration to a rapid climax. Late May was generally rather poor especially since shorebirds were scarce.