

ADDENDUM: Results of the Waterfowl Census, Jan. 8-16, compiled by A. Reckhow, show totals of 15,237 individuals and 21 species—near-record lows for its 23-yr. existence. A N. Shoveler appeared on the count for the first time ever, spotted by HA. High counts were: 2,769 Mallards, 54 Gadwalls, and 4 Ring-necked Ducks. Low counts were: 1 Horned Grebe, 4,582 Black Ducks, 2,216 Canvasbacks, 1,357 (Greater + unspecified) Scaups, 547 Oldsquaws, 4 White-winged Scoters, 3 Hooded Mergansers, 3,295 Com. Mergansers and 35 Red-breasted Mergansers.

Amity Lake, Belmont, New York 14813

REGION 2 — GENESEE

ROBERT SPAHN

The spring season began with March weather see-sawing between weeks of record heat and shorter periods of record cold. There was only one snowfall of any significance and that was short-lived on the ground. April began miserably—wet and cold for the first ten days, then switched to two weeks of warm, sunny weather, and concluded on another cold, windy note. Unfortunately, the massive high pressure systems producing the warm weather were so widespread that the warm, southerly winds were generally very light. As a consequence, as temperatures soared, the warm air over the land rose and moderately strong, cold, lake breezes developed day after day, snuffing out any budding hawk flight or surge of early migrants. The one day this pattern broke, April 21, brought a one-day-record hawk flight. The cold of late April persisted through the first half of May accompanied by snow flurries in Rochester and a heavy, damaging snowfall to the south May 8-9. Cold nights continued through mid-month followed by a change to hot days and warm nights through the end of the month. Precipitation was below normal all season, climaxing in a record low of only .36 in. (.91 cm) in May.

In analyzing the regional records, particularly comparing with the past, two major factors must be weighed: 1) over the past two or three years there have been more and better-qualified observers spending more hours in the field than ever before, with their numbers and quality growing, and 2) probably 80% or more of the coverage is in a band from Irondequoit Bay to Point Breeze (*ca.* 35 miles) and within 5 miles (mostly 1 mile) of Lake Ontario. Many observers are mainly interested in listing and all know that most of the rarities occur in this lakeshore area.

With all these observers in the field, a general note in common was that while numbers of species were excellent and at average dates, numbers of individuals seen were often very low, to the point of being alarming. The weather and the lopsided lakeshore coverage may explain some of this. Those who birded early found most mornings through 8:00 a.m. too cold for much birdsong or movement. The persistent lake breezes and northwest winds may have sent most migrants through many miles inland where coverage was poor. However, on the occasions when the "inland" areas were covered, the same long stretches of silent, deserted woods were often noted. An additional complication present by early May when the small passerine migrants arrived, was the advanced foliage caused by early leafing in the warm spells of March and April.

Birds particularly on the downside were: the southern herons, Saw-whet Owl, Com. Nighthawk, Yellow-bellied Sapsucker, Loggerhead Shrike, some warblers, and the winter

finches. Also, the half-hardy species, particularly Carolina Wren and Mockingbird, appear to have been decimated by the severe winter.

On a brighter note, there were many rarities found and observed by numbers of people. Red-necked Grebes appeared and persisted in unprecedented numbers, and E. Bluebird, some warblers, and the pastureland sparrows—Savannah, Grasshopper, Henslow's, and Vesper—were up.

RARITIES: Eared Grebe, Yellow-crowned Night Heron, Barrow's Goldeneye, Harlequin Duck, Willet, Ruff, Thayer's Gull, Laughing Gull, Acadian Flycatcher, White-eyed Vireo, Prothonotary Warbler, Worm-eating Warbler, Prairie Warbler, and Western Meadowlark.

ABBREVIATIONS: BB—Braddock's Bay; D—Durand Eastman Park; IC—Island Cottage Woods, Greece; LO—Lake Ontario; MP—Mendon Ponds Park; NC—Northrup Creek Refuge, Long Pond, Greece; and WL—West Lakeshore area.

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LOONS—DUCKS: Com. Loon arrived at the usual locations and dates: max 200 Pultneyville Apr. 16 (CP,CIT). Red-throated Loon was very scarce: 1 MP Apr. 27 (RBA). The incredible Red-necked Grebe invasion summarized: max 1,210 WL Apr. 10 (RC,CP); range LO Mar. 28-May 3 (mob). A pleasant surprise was a breeding-plumaged **EARED GREBE**: 1 IC May 1-7, 28-31 (KG,CIT,mob).

The low numbers of southern herons were reflected in only scattered reports of Cattle Egret, Great Egret, and Snowy Egret: 3 BB May 23 (JSk,mob); 1 Greece May 24 (KG). A lone **YELLOW-CROWNED NIGHT HERON**: Irondequoit May 2-17 (MMo,mob), spent many days sitting in a backyard sassafras clump; (photo). Many of the regular breeding herons appeared low, but this may be due to low water levels pushing them back to less accessible areas.

Canada Goose is nesting in the area in increasing numbers. The closest to Rochester is a family in Greece; 9 Buck Pond May 30 (photo FD,mob).

Ducks moved through in good numbers at normal dates, but departed early, particularly from LO, except for the few lingering on "borrow pits" along the Lake Ontario Parkway. Of particular interest were: Black Duck: very low; Ring-necked Duck: 262 BB Mar. 20 (GOS); **BARROW'S GOLDENEYE**: 1 ad. male (1st regional record), 1 imm. male, possibly 1 fem. BB vicinity Mar. 20-Apr. 4 (AT,GOS,RBA); **HARLEQUIN DUCK**: 1 LO thru Mar. 12 (GOS,RBA); and Ruddy Duck: 36 Manitou Apr. 14 (AKI).

HAWKS—ALCIDS: This spring's hawk flight along Lake Ontario, mainly observed from the BB hawk lookout, was excellent in spite of several periods of unfavorable wind conditions. The season's count was about 22,900 hawks. The peak was 10,470 BB Apr. 21. Of particular note are: very early Turkey Vulture: 2 BB Mar. 9 (GOS,RBA); Goshawk: only 8 recorded; Broad-winged Hawk: total 16,423; max. 9,653 BB Apr. 21 (LM,mob); Golden Eagle: 1 ad. BB Mar. 13 (GOS,RBA); 1 imm. Kendall Apr. 1 (RC,BS); 1 imm. BB Apr. 11

(GOS,RBA); 3 ad., 1 imm. BB Apr. 21 (RBA,GOS); Bald Eagle: 1 imm. BB Mar. 11 (HD, *fide* RS); 2 ad. Kendall Mar. 12 (RC,CP,BS); 1 ad., 2 imm. Hamlin Mar. 30 (WLi,TT); 1 imm. Kendall Apr. 3 (GOS); 1 ad. BB Apr. 27 (GOS,RBA); 1 imm. BB May 7 (CP); 1 imm. BB May 18 (LM); 1 imm. Greece May 26 (KG); Osprey: total 33; Peregrine: 1 Hilton Mar. 12 (RO); 1 Ontario Mar. 16 (WLi,DSK); 2 Webster Mar. 20 (WLi); 1 BB Mar. 30 (WLi,DSK); Merlin: 1 BB Mar. 13 (TT,mob); 1 Gates Mar. 30 (CP); 1 BB Mar. 30 (RC,BS); 1 Kendall Apr. 4 (RC,BS); 1 Hamlin Apr. 10 (RC,CP); 1 Hamlin May 9 (CP); and Am. Kestrel: total 107 BB, very low.

As the fields dried early and the lake level remained high, shorebird prospects appeared dull. In fact, good early birds were reported in the puddles before they dried and the few farm ponds left and the lakeshore spots uncovered as the water level fell provided considerable excitement in May. The best records were: **WILLET**: 1 Kendall May 22 (GOS,RBA), winter plumage, 2nd regional spring record, (photo); Red Knot: 1 NC May 27 (MC,mob); 1 Fair Haven May 30 (RS); Sanderling: 1 Kendall May 22 (GM,mob); Western Sandpiper: many records of 1-2, many locations May 2 thru; max. 60 NC May 27 (MC,mob), carefully observed, documented, (photos); **RUFF**: 1 Perinton May 12 (D&MT,DSH); 1 reeve Perinton May 13 (R&SS,mob); 1 reeve NC May 27-28 (MC,RBA,mob), a different reeve, *fide* RS; Wilson's Phalarope: 3 fem. Perinton May 12 (M&DT,DSH); 1 fem. Perinton May 13 (A&BK, mob); 1 male Carlton May 22 (GOS,RBA); 1 male Perinton May 23 (FD); 1 male NC May 28 (RBA).

Gulls and terns, except Black Tern, were generally a bit low. Of note were: **THAYER'S GULL**: 1 ad. Parma May 9 (CP), well documented; **LAUGHING GULL**: 1 ad. (1st adult regional record) Sodus May 22 (D,M,TT); 1 ad. NC May 29 (JK,mob), possibly the same bird; and Forster's Tern: 2 BB May 1 (AKe,mob); 1 BB May 14 (CP,mob).

PIGEONS-WOODPECKERS: Cuckoos were in good numbers, Black-billed predominant. Short-eared Owl tarried: 30 Avon thru Mar. (J&AF). Saw-whet Owl was very low; normally 6-10 per season (per day with diligent effort) for one active observer, one record: 1 Manitou Mar. 13 (J&WLi,mob). Com. Nighthawk still low. Red-headed Woodpecker: 35 Avon Mar. 12 (F&BD).

FLYCATCHERS-STARLINGS: Flycatchers were generally good with E. Phoebe still low, but recovering; a few **ACADIAN FLYCATCHER** reports: 1 Manitou May 22 (GM, mob); 1 IC May 28 (RBA); 1 IC May 30 (RS); 1 Bergen May 30 (BS); and 5 Olive-sided Flycatcher records on the usual late May dates.

Swallows passed in good numbers, especially Cliff Swallow in the lakeshore area. Blue Jays also poured through: 3,000 (½ hr.) Manitou May 6 (RS); 5,000 BB May 15 (CP). Short-billed Marsh Wren was recorded at 5 locations. Golden-crowned Kinglet seemed low; Cedar Waxwing very high: max. 5,000 BB May 22 (WLi,mob); and Loggerhead Shrike: very low, only 5 records.

VIREOS-WARBLES: With the exception of few reports of Philadelphia Vireo, the vireo migration was normal. A single **WHITE-EYED VIREO**: 1 IC May 19 (HeS) was reported.

While observation was difficult due to advanced foliage and rapid, concentrated passage in the latter half of May, warblers also were within normal bounds. Records of special note were: **PROTHONOTARY WARBLER**: 1 Pittsford Apr. 26 (SK); **WORM-EATING WARBLER**: 1 IC May 21 (B&DC); Orange-crowned Warbler: 1 IC Apr. 22 (J&TM); 1 Manitou May 22 (GM,mob); Yellow-rumped Warbler: max. 500 WL Apr. 23 (RC,CP); Bay-breasted Warbler: max. 150 BB May 22 (JSk,mob); Pine Warbler: 1 IC Apr. 11 (MC,mob); 1 BB Apr. 11 (RO); 1 IC Apr. 20 (KD,AS,DW); 1 BB Apr. 24 (GOS); 5 D Apr. 30 (CP); 1 IC May 1 (GOS); **PRAIRIE WARBLER**: 1 D Apr. 23 (RC,CP); 1 BB May 5-8 (JC,mob); 2 BB May 14 (CIT, mob); 1 IC May 14 (CP,mob); Palm Warbler: 1 BB May 17 (KD,AS,DW), late. Both hybrid

warblers were reported: "Brewster's": 1 Murray May 14 (GOS); 1 Canadice May 30 (JF); "Lawrence's": 1 Canadice May 30 (JF).

WEAVERS-SPARROWS: Bobolinks were very plentiful this season. A **WESTERN MEADOWLARK:** 1 Gaines May 9 thru (RC,mob), appeared to be nesting, mated to an E. Meadowlark. Orchard Oriole: 3 Pt. Breeze May 15 thru (WLi,mob), again nesting. House Finch has nested successfully again: 2 young at feeder Brighton May 25 thru (F,J,&LM). Of the few winter finches reported, interesting is White-winged Crossbill: 1 Brighton May 25-26 (J&ND), at a thistle feeder. Rufous-sided Towhee is very low on the lakeplain, good elsewhere. The sparrow migration was normal except as noted above and lower than usual White-crowned Sparrow numbers. Fox Sparrow passed in about a one week window: max. 10 WL May 13 (RS). Similarly with Lincoln's Sparrow: max. 6 Manitou May 22 (B&MM).

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REGION 3 – FINGER LAKES

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March was very mild with the average temperature above normal and precipitation about normal. The warm days of March 10-15 completely thawed Montezuma National Wildlife Refuge. Up to a foot of snow fell on March 23. The month closed with higher temperatures which hit the mid 80°s F (28° C). April 1-10 was rather cold with a little snow, the only snow of the month. A very warm and dry period followed with the temperature often in the 80°s F (28° C). A heavy rain on the 24th preceded a cooler period running to May 15. On May 9th the Region was blanketed with snow ranging from one inch in the north to nearly a foot in some parts of the south. The last half of May was sunny, hot and dry, the driest May since 1966. The temperature was in the 80's daily and was over 90 on the 21st.

Seasonal pluses: (1) At Elmira the heavy rain of April 24th brought in many Common Loons, White-winged Scoters and terns, including 2 Arctic Terns; (2) a beaver pond near Guyanga hosted 11 species of shorebirds, the most since 1970. It included a Baird's Sandpiper, a very rare migrant here in the spring; (3) a very good Whistling Swan migration; (4) the best Ring-necked Duck movement in several years; (5) improved numbers, tho still somewhat minimal, of both cuckoos probably in response to the many tent caterpillars; (6) hundreds of Horned Larks along the roadsides after the March 18 snowstorm; (7) very good numbers of Blue-gray Gnatcatchers, Warbling Vireos and Northern Orioles; (8) the most White-crowned Sparrows in many years.

Seasonal minuses: (1) scarcity of white herons; (2) continued low numbers of Black-crowned Night Herons; (3) few scaup of either species; (4) continued scarcity of Eastern Phoebe; (5) reduced numbers of Bank and Rough-winged Swallows and almost no Cliff Swallows; (6) fewer Purple Martins; (7) a disappointing migration of flycatchers, vireos and warblers. The latter was variously described as "slow," "dull" and "boring" with the Yellow-rumped being the only migrant warbler seen in any numbers. However, a look at the reports shows that all of the migrant warblers normally seen here, except for the Prothonotary, Orange-crowned, Connecticut and Yellow-breasted Chat, were seen by someone during the season. Most observers missed many species. The uniformly warm, sunny weather, without the conditions which built up "waves" of birds, no doubt allowed the birds, which did not seem to be singing as much as usual, to slip thru quickly, unobtrusively and without detection. The summerlike weather of mid-April had pushed leaf growth so that most trees were