

REGION 3 — FINGER LAKES

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Cold and dry, with north winds much of the time, characterized the weather to May 10 when south winds began to blow and the temperature began to rise so that by the last week in May it was like mid-summer. The deep snow of early March was gone by the twenty-second. The effect was to make the March and April migrants one to four weeks late and delay early May species a week to ten days. When the weather finally broke, the passerine migration was intense, short, fast, and highly visible as there had been very little leaf growth. Birding was fantastic May 10-14 and good for another week. What a contrast with last May!

Positives: 1. More cuckoos of both species—no doubt associated with the high tent caterpillar population. 2. An excellent warbler year with Tennessees, Cape Mays and Bay-breasteds especially plentiful. 3. Better than average numbers of Swainson's Thrushes, Blue-gray Gnatcatchers and Bobolinks. 4. The best year in several for Orchard Orioles. 5. Most winter finches stayed well into spring.

Negatives: 1. A real scarcity of Hermit Thrushes, Eastern Bluebirds and Gold-crowned Kinglets. 2. Continued low numbers of Eastern Phoebe. 3. Fewer Purple Martins. 4. Few shorebirds due to lack of habitat—high water levels maintained at Montezuma National Wildlife Refuge and few flooded fields due to low rainfall.

The goose situation deserves a comment. It is estimated that there were 300,000 Canada Geese in the Region this spring. The Montezuma Refuge count peaked at 135,000 on April 20. Twenty years ago this peak was 7,000. On May 7, the total count on the Refuge was 115,000 with 75,000 of them covering the Main Pool "wall to wall." They were restless and nervous all day. About 5 pm they departed *en masse* for their northern breeding grounds. It was truly one of nature's great "spectaculars." While such concentrations of these magnificent creatures are thrilling to observe, particularly in flight, one cannot help being a bit disturbed about the damage to wheat fields for miles around and concerned over the possibility of disease striking under these crowded conditions. Horicon National Wildlife Refuge in Wisconsin already has a problem with too many geese. Will Montezuma have one too?

Speaking of nature's "spectaculars," Dorothy McIlroy and some friends witnessed one on May 4 along the Esker Brook trail at Montezuma Refuge. She writes—"Thousands of swallows (barn, cliff, tree, bank, rough-winged, purple martin) came in low over the grassy farm fields adjacent to the trail—between the trail and the N.Y. State Thruway. The mass of birds circled over the fields in a clockwise pattern feeding on a plentiful supply of flying insects. In the whirling group one could hear a few scattered voices, but after a five to ten minute interval the number of voices and the pitch increased suddenly as if on signal and the mass moved to a higher level and away to the north. In a few minutes another mass of birds descended for the same low level feeding pattern before moving on. At least three huge concentrations were observed to follow this pattern."

Rarities: White Pelican; Little Blue Heron; Barrow's Goldeneye; Merlin; Glaucous Gull; Iceland Gull; Yellow-bellied Flycatcher; Olive-sided Flycatcher; Com. Raven; Fish Crow; Worm-eating, Orange-crowned, Kentucky and Connecticut Warblers; Hoary Redpoll.

Abbreviations: Cay—Cayuga; L—lake; MNWR—Montezuma National Wildlife Refuge; Sen—Seneca; * (starred)—details on file; † (dagger)—exceeds upstate New York maxima as reported in J. Bull's *Birds of New York State*.

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LOONS—DUCKS: Common Loon: numerous reports including sightings at Elmira Apr. 4 and 12, six migrating over Watkins Glen Apr. 5 and 16 over Penn Yan May 7, six on Cay L and two at MNWR May 21 and one heard on Owasco L May 26. Red-necked Grebe: one Cay L Mar. 11; Elmira Mar. 12 and 17. **WHITE PELICAN:** 3 discovered by Connor and Suman on May 7. Seen by many thru May 19. Double-crested Cormorant: present at MNWR Apr. 16-May 21 with max. of eight. Great Blue Heron: 40 at heronry near Wellsburg Apr. 9. **LITTLE BLUE HERON:** Adult at Guyanoga Pond near Penn Yan (ML) (mob). Second record for that area since 1946. Cattle Egret: one in breeding plumage Ithaca May 15 only report. Great Egret: one MNWR Apr. 22. Whistling Swan: good migration with many reports. Best counts—49 near Elmira Mar. 21 and 40 Savannah mucklands Apr. 9. Brant: 25 Ithaca May 19. Snow Goose: max. 8,000 MNWR Apr. 25 with most of them departing May 5 but 75 still present May 9.

Ducks: the maximum counts reported by the MNWR personnel are as follows:

Mallard	5,000	Apr. 1	Redhead	300	Mar. 28
Black Duck	500	Apr. 1	Ring-necked Duck	300	Mar. 31
Gadwall	300	May 15	Canvasback	50	Mar. 28
Pintail	2,000	Apr. 1	Lesser Scaup	200	Apr. 15
Green-winged Teal	1,000	Apr. 30	Com. Goldeneye	200	Apr. 1
Blue-winged Teal	1,300	Apr. 25	Bufflehead	100	Apr. 25
Am. Wigeon	200	Apr. 20	Ruddy Duck	50	Apr. 25
N. Shoveler	200	Apr. 25	Hooded Merganser	200	Apr. 1
Wood Duck	400	May 1	Com. Merganser	200	Apr. 1

Mallard: At Penn Yan a hen successfully brought off a brood of 11 young from a nest atop a 40 foot spruce tree. Wood Duck: at Elmira the male which accompanied a female and 11 young appeared to be a Mallard-Wood Duck cross. Redhead: 1,000 north end Cay L Mar. 24. Canvasback: 1,000 scattered in small groups on Cay L Apr. 4. **BARROW'S GOLDENEYE:** one MNWR Mar. 25 (G. Hocutt). Bufflehead: a late bird MNWR May 28. Oldsquaw: two Elmira May 8 and 28; small numbers Cay L thru the period. White-winged Scoter: two MNWR Apr. 6; two Elmira May 6; 15 Keuka L May 7; two Elmira May 6; two MNWR Apr. 6. Surf Scoter: one Sheldrake Apr. 30.

HAWKS—ALCIDS: Goshawk: nest with two young at Ithaca May 13; few sightings. Sharp-shinned Hawk: sightings thru the period at Ithaca; one Elmira May 13. Cooper's Hawk: seen thru the period at Ithaca and with increasing frequency around feeders at Penn Yan; one Elmira May 13. Red-shouldered Hawk: one Ithaca Mar. 11 thru period. Broad-winged Hawk: nesting on Mt. Zoar near Elmira; reported on Guyanoga Valley and E. Corn- ing; observed attacking a Red-tailed Hawk at Ithaca. Bald Eagle: an adult sighted at Sapsucker Woods Sanctuary Apr. 23 and an immature the same day at 6 Mile Creek; three MNWR Apr. 23 including a color-banded immature, but not one of the eaglets raised at the Refuge in '77 or '78, and another on May 8 (V. Dewey); 1 Freeville May 3. Marsh Hawk: a few scattered reports. Osprey: one Elmira Apr. 19 and one May 13; one Texas Hollow Sanctuary Apr. 24; two MNWR latter half of period; one shot and killed near Clyde mid-

May. **MERLIN**: one near Tompkins Co. airport Apr. 22 and 23 (C. Leopold *vide* DM). Am. Kestrel: nesting in a telephone pole by Six Mile Creek, Turkey: 14 near Texas Hollow during April; reported from Connecticut Hill and West Hill, Ithaca, also near Trumansburg and one which ate corn outside M. Ehrhart's window in Trumansburg Mar. 4. Am. Coot: 1500 MNWR Mar. 31.

Normally, most shorebird records come from MNWR but there were few this year. Water levels were kept high in an attempt to control purple loosestrife. Mays Point Pool was lowered temporarily in April for a few days and some suitable habitat developed in late May. All records below not attributed to a specific locality are from MNWR. Semipalmated Plover: one Elmira May 13. Black-bellied Plover: three May 21; also two Sen L. same day. Ruddy Turnstone: 11 Sen L May 21. Am. Woodcock: good numbers at Tompkins Co. airport thru May 15 with the first Mar. 21. Com. Snipe: first Elmira Mar. 4; displaying over Watkins Marsh Apr. 1. Upland Sandpiper: three Elmira and four Waterloo both on Apr. 30; reported from Penn Yan and on the Ithaca Big Count; one Sen L. May 21. Solitary Sandpiper: one Ithaca May 9 only report. Greater Yellowlegs: one Elmira Mar. 24 early. Red Knot: 20 May 21 and an unprecedented 110 at Geneva the same day (R. Spahn *et al*).† Pectoral Sandpiper: 128 Apr. 27. White-rumped Sandpiper: one Guyanoga Pond May 21. Dunlin: first Apr. 22; max 100 Sen L. May 21. Wilson's Phalarope: one May 21 (R. Spahn). Northern Phalarope: female in breeding plumage at Ferguson's Corners May 13-14 for the first Penn Yan area spring record (ML). **GLAUCOUS GULL**: one Watkins Glen in Mar. (Betty Strath); one Cay L Mar. 19 (Cay Bird Club). **ICELAND GULL**: one Cay L Mar. 19 (Cay Bird Club). Caspian Tern: five MNWR May 3; two Sen L May 21. Black Tern: 130 MNWR May 9 late.

PIGEONS-WOODPECKERS: Yellow-billed Cuckoo: more widely reported than usual with sightings at Clyde, Ithaca, Geneva, Elmira, MNWR and Watkins Glen. Black-billed Cuckoo: also more widely reported than usual. Barn Owl: one W. Elmira in Apr., the first in several years. Whip-poor-will: one calling Ithaca May 11; one Horseheads May 24. Com. Nighthawk: Elmira May 13; Ithaca May 13; two MNWR May 21. Yellow-bellied Sapsucker: two Watkins Glen Apr. 11-20; relatively low numbers at Ithaca; pair observed excavating nesting hole along Clyde River.

FLYCATCHERS-STARLINGS: **YELLOW-BELLIED FLYCATCHER**: one Tompkins Co. Airport May 20 (G & M Shepard *vide* DM); one Six Mile Creek May 21 (SS). Least Flycatcher: apparently more abundant with many widespread reports. **OLIVE-SIDED FLYCATCHER**: one Clyde May 13 (WB); one Elmira May 24 (WH); one Horseheads (R. Knapp *vide* MW). Bank Swallow: large colony at Ithaca, small one at Myers Point and two at Junius Ponds. Cliff Swallow: a few individuals but no colonies reported. Purple Martin: absent or very scarce in much of the Region: at MNWR one house fairly well-occupied, one with a few pairs and one with none. **COM. RAVEN**: a second report from Connecticut Hill was made at the Ornithology Seminar Apr. 3. **FISH CROW**: one seen and heard at Ithaca Apr. 5 and for two weeks thereafter. Winter Wren: scarce; one Geneva May 21 late. Carolina Wren: one Elmira May 13; a few Ithaca reports. Hermit Thrush: none reported from Ithaca and Penn Yan; one Elmira May 5; one Geneva May 21. Swainson's Thrush: more reports than usual especially from Ithaca and MNWR areas. Gray-cheeked Thrush: one Etna May 11; one Six Mile Creek May 14; one Geneva May 21. Eastern Bluebird: four Ithaca reports, one from Enfield and one from Cay L State Park. Golden-crowned Kinglet: reports vary from scarce to none. Water Pipit: many sightings: max 75 Ithaca Apr. 2; a late bird King Ferry May 20. Cedar Waxwing: almost none in Mar. and Apr. but reappeared in small groups in May. Northern Shrike: Ithaca Mar. 13. Loggerhead Shrike: one MNWR Apr. 3; one Ithaca Apr. 4.

VIREOS-WARBLEDERS: The bulk of the vireo and warbler migrants of all species came with a rush in four fantastic days May 10-13. Philadelphia Vireo: Elmira May 13; Newfield May 14; Ithaca May 20. Warblers: Black-and-white: a strong south wind brought a very early migrant to Six Mile Creek on Apr. 7. Prothonotary: one Ithaca May 4-7; one near Ithaca

May 5; one Penn Yan May 21. **WORM-EATING**: two Elmira-Horseheads area May 13; one Six Mile Creek May 19 (SS)*. "Brewster's": one Elmira May 13; one Ithaca May 20. "Lawrence's": Ithaca May 20. **ORANGE-CROWNED**: one Texas Hollow May 13 (JB). Cape May: 28 Ithaca May 17 (SS)†. Cerulean: Seven to eight MNWR May 20. Pine: Elmira Apr. 30; one Six Mile Creek May 11 (SS)*; one Ithaca May 13. Prairie: Elmira May 10 late and with fewer locations; Ithaca May 12; two colonies one with eight singing birds near Montour Falls. Northern Waterthrush: Elmira May 6; Ithaca May 7 nearly a month late. Louisiana Waterthrush: Ithaca Apr. 22 late. **KENTUCKY WARBLER**: one male Elmira May 13 (T. Bates *vide* MW). **CONNECTICUT WARBLER**: one Hall May 12 (ML); one Elmira May 13 (WH *et al*); one Geneva May 20 (Paris Trail). Yellow-breasted Chat: no reports.

WEAVERS-SPARROWS: Bobolink: reported up in most areas. Orchard Oriole: one Trumbull's Corners near Ithaca May 18; one Sheldrake May 19; one at Lake Ridge and three unconfirmed Ithaca sightings—the most Ithaca sightings since 1970. Indigo Bunting: a male at ML's feeder in Penn Yan on Apr. 20 was very early. Winter Finches: the northern finches which moved into the Region during the winter months continued into the spring. Evening Grosbeak: good movement of birds during May. Purple Finch: good migratory movement the second week of May. Pine Grosbeak: three Ithaca May 12 (SS). **HOARY REDPOLL**: one at an Ithaca feeder Mar. 1-6 along with 100-150 Common Redpolls. Com. Redpoll: after one of the best invasions in recent years their numbers began to dwindle in Mar. Last record at Watkins Glen Mar. 26 and at Ithaca the first week in May. One at Ithaca had a gold rather than red cap. Pine Siskin: some remained to the end of the period. Observed copulating Six Mile Creek Mar. 31. Red Crossbill: flocks of 5-20 at Watkins Glen State Park with the last ones seen May 16. White-winged Crossbill: W. Danby Road Mar. 3; one Keuka Park Apr. 19. Rufous-sided Towhee: one Ithaca Mar. 11 early. Sparrows: Savannah: one wintered successfully at an Ithaca feeder. After some poor years in the MNWR area, numbers seem to be picking up a little. Grasshopper Sparrow: two reports Penn Yan; two Elmira May 13; one Ithaca May 20; two Geneva May 21. Henslow's: one Ithaca May 23; also Penn Yan. Vesper: 10 reports of this species which had all but disappeared from the Region. Dark-eyed Junco: nesting at Guyanoga (ML); still present on Mt. Zoar where it has nested in the past. Tree: Elmira May 12 late. Fox: Ithaca May 20 late. Lincoln: two Six Mile Creek May 11; one Elmira May 11 and two on May 13; one MNWR May 17. Snow Bunting: no large flocks at Penn Yan but 600 on the Savannah mucklands.

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REGION 4 — SUSQUEHANNA

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It was a cold, late spring, although there were quite a few sunny days. There were still two to three feet of snow in parts of the Oneonta area March 11 and a favored spot for ducks at Portlandville was not open until March 25. Snow flurries, and occasional heavier snowfalls, continued all through March and well into April. Temperatures remained low enough to suppress any great amount of insect activity until about May 10-11 with no earlier warm spells to entice and then trap the tenderer bird species.

Waterfowl numbers, Canada Geese excepted, were generally down, possibly because our better waterfowl gathering spots were still frozen when the birds went through or because the delayed migrants hurried on past us. A Double-