

the best numbers ever. First May 6 at Wawarsing was early. Found every few yards along Mine Rd. USMA. Evening Grosbeak: the poor numbers of last winter continued thru spring. No increase in migrants noted. Last in Dutch May 7. Purple Finch: continues to decline, especially low in the Mohonk area. Pine Siskin: low numbers of winter continued this spring. Only report one at Stissing May 2 thru 4 (TPH). Rufous-sided Towhee: first Apr. 17. Normal numbers. Grasshopper Sparrow: resident in at least three areas in Dutch dur May. A pair again this year at Little Leage Field, Westbrookville from May 19 (KM). Vesper Sparrow: unreported! Dark-eyed Junco: numbers continue down in Mohonk area. Last at Wawarsing Apr. 24, and in Dutch May 6. Not found in areas of Dutch where it formerly nested. Chipping Sparrow: arr Wawarsing Apr. 13. Numbers normal thereafter. **CLAY-COLORED SPARROW:** Tom Burke obs a singing bird at Ward Pound Ridge Res. May 26 from 7:00 to 10:30 a.m. Not found thereafter. White-crowned Sparrow: numbers severely reduced. Unobserved by many active birders. Dutch had only three in May, and only two reported elsewhere May 16. White-throated Sparrow: reduced winter numbers continued into spring. Left in early May. Fox Sparrow: one singing in Dutch May 13 was a very late record. Lincoln's Sparrow: one Kingston May 11 was the only report.

Pellwood Lake, Highland Falls, New York 10928.

REGION 10 – MARINE

BARBARA J. SPENCER

Spring weather was generally mild and wet through the period; May saw almost double the normal amount of rainfall, washing out weekend birding and "big day" counts. Southerly winds in early April pushed in a few early or overshooting migrants. Expected mid-April migrants, kinglets, Brown Creepers, Winter Wrens, Hermit Thrushes, were scarce in most areas and absent in others. Early May saw greater numbers of migrants moving through making birding in city parks rewarding. The last half of May produced limited birding because of the adverse weather.

Herbert Johnson

Birders in our area were saddened to learn of the death of Herbert Johnson, of cancer, on March 8th at the age of 68. Herb was the superintendent of Jamaica Bay Wildlife Refuge for many years, and devoted himself to creating the sanctuary we know. Perhaps we can follow the advice of Rene Dubos and "think globally and act locally," as did Herb Johnson, and make some impact on an environmental concern close to home.

An Award

Senator Proxmire presents his "Golden Fleece" award.

"Thanks a Lot"

This column is initiating a "Thanks a Lot" (we needed that kind of help) award to be awarded occasionally as the spirit moves. The first presentation goes to the *New York Times* feature writer whose article on spring birding highlighted policemen assigned to Central Park to watch bird watchers because many

of them carry expensive "\$900" binoculars. Birders meeting the next day nervously fingered their \$85 optics and took hope in the thought that muggers might not read the *Times* regularly.

Great Gull Island Report

The spring season report from Great Gull Island documented the best mist netting in several years. Compiler Joseph DiCostanzo noted that during May 1149 individuals of 69 species were banded compared to fewer than 500 each of the two previous years. May 1st saw a movement of ground birds (Hermit Thrush, White-throated Sparrow, towhee, Swamp Sparrow). May 9th and 10th brought a big movement of Blue Jays with 125 banded. Thirteen species of warblers also were banded. The prize of the banding period was a male Summer Tanager banded on May 9th. Yellowthroats were plentiful on May 18th with 74 banded. Movement continued through the month ending with a flycatcher flight May 30 and 31. These dedicated people on Great Gull Island continue to provide valuable data from their isolated vantage point.

Mississippi Kites

The most exciting find of the spring was the pair (?) of Mississippi Kites present May 26 thru June 9 at the LaTourette Golf Course on Staten Island. These birds were feeding on the huge number of 17 year Cicadas erupting at the time. These birds constituted a first state record; they were seen and enjoyed by many, both perched on a dead snag and in flight.

Pelagic Trip Reports

The Federation pelagic trip June 2 to Block Canyon proceeded to beyond the edge of the Continental Shelf approximately 90 miles south of Montauk. The high points were splendid sightings of South Polar Skuas which circled the boat allowing careful study. The penultimate experience occurred near the end of the day when tired birders sighted a dead bird floating miles out to sea. As we approached, this bird was variously identified by groggy birders, with the smart money on Black Guillemot and Cape Pigeon. When retrieved, the object proved to be a submarine officer's cap which was appropriated by Tom Davis for use on future trips. Maybe we could say it was a cap pigeon? (Eds. note—perhaps there should be an appropriate award for that pun.)

March 12: Block Canyon (R. A. Rowlett); 265+ Northern Fulmars, 3600+ Gannets, one Iceland Gull, 5000+ Great Black-backed Gulls, one adult Lesser Black-backed Gull, 3000+ Herring Gulls, 11 Black-legged Kittiwakes, one Razorbill, one unidentified alcid, 13000+ unidentified birds. There were ten fishing trawlers present.

May 26: Hudson Canyon (Urner/DVOC Trip, R. Kane, THD *et al.*): 69 Northern Fulmars, eight Greater Shearwaters, 50+ Sooty Shearwaters, one Manx Shearwater, 160 Wilson's Storm-Petrels, seven Gannets, one Northern Phalarope, one South Polar Skua, one Parasitic Jaeger, one Long-tailed Jaeger, two Arctic Terns.

June 2: Block Canyon (Federation of New York State Bird Clubs trip): six Northern Fulmars, 22 Cory's Shearwaters, two Greater Shearwaters, 87 Sooty Shearwaters, two Manx Shearwaters, 250+ Wilson's Storm-Petrels, one Gannet, three South Polar Skuas, two Pomarine Jaegers.

June 3: Cox's Ledge (TWB *et al.*): 12 Northern Fulmars, three Greater Shearwaters, 162 Sooty Shearwaters, two Manx Shearwaters, 15 Wilson's Storm-Petrels, five Gannets, two Parasitic Jaegers.

Spring positives include: normal shorebird migration, a record total of 24 Summer Tanagers suggesting the possibility of a range extension in the near future, a big flight of Blue-gray Gnatcatchers, Prothonotary Warblers in increasing numbers including several females.

Spring negatives: low numbers of thrushes, kinglets, Carolina Wrens, Ruby-throated Hummingbirds, Empidonax Flycatchers were scarce.

Rarities include: Swallow-tailed Kite, Mississippi Kite, Black-necked Stilt, Great Gray Owl, Varied Thrush, Swainson's Warbler, Boat-tailed Grackle.

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LOONS-DUCKS: A breeding plumaged Red-throated Loon was unusual at Great Gull Island on the late date of May 24 (JDiC). Red-necked Grebes were present at several locations in March with two seen Mar. 4 at Shinnecock Inlet (RA), three at Montauk Mar. 10 (RH), one Mar. 25 at the Robert Moses Bridge (GSR), one at Jamaica Bay Mar. 29 appeared oiled (TS), two were at Oak Beach near the "Sore Thumb" Mar. 31 (L. Brown), while another in changing plumage was off Great Gull Island Apr. 24 and 25 for a first record there (JDiC, H. Hayes). 22 Cory's Shearwaters June 2, 60 to 85 miles south of Montauk, were early, while Greater Shearwaters were late in their migration pattern this year. Two Manx Shearwaters were seen in the same area, while two more were at Cox's Ledge the next day (TWB). A Northern Fulmar was found dead Apr. 6 at Cedar Beach; the specimen was sent to the American Museum of Natural History (N. Wilkins). A big flight of Gannets moved along the south shore on strong SE winds Mar. 24 from Jones Beach to Shinnecock at the rate of 250 to over 600 per hour (AJL, GSR, D. Kibbe). Great Blue Herons were noted in groups of five to eleven Mar. 30 through Apr. 12 in a number of locations. The first Cattle Egrets moved into the area Mar. 25 with one at Tobay (GSR) where the first Snowy Egret was also seen. Snowy Egrets had advanced to the north shore by Mar. 31 with one seen at Sands Point (GQ). A Glossy Ibis was noted the same day at Jamaica Bay (GD, MD). A Least Bittern was heard calling at Calverton May 31 (GSR). Snow Geese were in passage during March and early April with 14 Mar. 10 at Jamaica Bay (GSR), 130 flew over Manorville Apr. 8 (GSR), and 500 were seen overhead at Sands Point Apr. 12 (GQ). A European Wigeon which wintered in the Mecox area was last seen Apr. 28 (DL, GSR). A Ring-necked Duck May 26 at Moriches was late, as was a Bufflehead at Poxabogue (GSR). A pair of Common Mergansers was last seen Mar. 24; Hooded Mergansers lingered until Mar. 31 at Hempstead Lake (SBD).

HAWKS-ALCIDS: Turkey Vultures were reported from several locations: one was seen overhead at Muttontown Apr. 6 (AL, LL), one in Upton Apr. 19 (GSR), one in Manorville shortly afterwards thought to be the same bird (RA), another the same day was in Mill Neck (J. Madden), and two were seen from Prospect Park May 2 (TS). A **SWALLOW-TAILED KITE** was an exciting find in Brookhaven May 5 (J. & C. Hastings), while the pair (?) of **MISSISSIPPI KITES** at the LaTourette Golf Course on Staten Island were both unprecedented in the state, and cooperative in staying in the area from May 26 through June 9.

(R. Clairmont, R. ZainEldeen *et al.*). One bird was fully adult, while the other retained immature feathers in the tail and lacked several primaries. A Red-shouldered Hawk Mar. 10 at Muttontown may have been the bird that wintered at the preserve. Another was seen at Miller Place Apr. 19 (DL). An immature Bald Eagle was seen at Jones Beach Mar. 3 (SBD). Apparently at least two Peregrines were involved in sightings around Kennedy airport: one was banded the last week in March (SC), one was seen May 3 at Kennedy without a band (SC, HR, TS), one May 7 was at Forest Park (JA), and one flew over Brooklyn streets May 8 (TS). A Merlin was seen Apr. 18 at Ridge (DL). Six American Oystercatchers arrived at Jones Beach Mar. 9 (W. Wilkins) and one was seen in flight off Montauk Point Mar. 10 (RH). Three Whimbrels were seen May 5 at Shinnecock (GSR), one remained there May 10 (DL). One Upland Sandpiper was located May 12 at Mitchell Field where at least one pair persists despite severe human pressure (EL). A pair arrived at Kennedy airport Mar. 13 (SC). An albino Willet at Lawrence marsh Apr. 22 must have required a second look (RH). A maximum of 40 White-rumped Sandpipers were present May 11 at the Oak Beach marsh (HD). A breeding-plumaged Curlew Sandpiper was located May 19 and May 28 at Jamaica Bay (PAB, THD, *et al.*). Single Stilt Sandpipers were found Apr. 28 at Mecox (GSR, DL), Apr. 28 thru May 10 at Jamaica Bay, and May 9 at the Oak Beach marsh (HD). An early Ruff was a good find at Sagaponack Mar. 7 thru 10 (RH); two were present at the Oak Beach marsh May 9 thru 13 where they were photographed by HD. A **BLACK-NECKED STILT** was an exciting find May 15 at Mecox (C. McKeever), while four of this species May 24 thru 28 at the Oak Beach marsh were an unprecedented number (R. Miller, J. Greenlaw). A pair of Wilson's Phalaropes arrived at Jamaica Bay May 5, a female was at Oak Beach marsh May 10 thru 13, and a pair at Jamaica Bay May 27. Many observers also enjoyed seeing Northern Phalaropes at Jamaica Bay; a female May 20, a pair May 27 thru 28; three were present May 30. Jaegers were late in their migration as few individuals were seen on pelagic trips through June 3. Three South Polar Skuas were well seen and highlighted the Federation pelagic trip June 2. A second year Iceland Gull was at Jamaica Bay Apr. 29 (GD, MD). A pair of Lesser Black-backed Gulls was observed among Herring Gulls Mar. 4 (AJL). The earliest Laughing Gull report was Apr. 3 from Hempstead Harbor (BJS). Numbers increased on the north shore with highs of 59 at Mt. Sinai May 8, and 32 Apr. 22 in Glen Cove (RC). The persistence of adult birds on the north shore through the summer suggests that breeding may be attempted although suitable sites are scarce. Up to four adult Little Gulls were among the Bonaparte's Gulls in Jones Inlet during late April. Three Little Gulls were seen at Fire Island Inlet Mar. 17 (RH); two were at Plum Beach, Brooklyn Mar. 25 (JDiC). A pair of Gull-billed Terns returned to Jamaica Bay May 5 while one was seen carrying food into the Cedar Beach tern colony May 13 (EL). A Common Tern flying over Great Gull Island Apr. 22 was their earliest return (JDiC) as terns moved into the area generally from Apr. 28 through the first week in May. Three Caspian Terns May 2 at Shinnecock were the only ones reported (GSR). A Black Tern was spotted flying with newly arrived Common and Roseate Terns at dawn Apr. 30 at Great Gull Island (JDiC).

PIGEONS—WOODPECKERS: Both species of cuckoos were well reported during May. A gray-phase Screech Owl, the rarer of the two phases on Long Island, was seen in Locust Valley Mar. 4 (R. Miller); the same observer found an injured red phase bird in Mill Neck Mar. 16. The previously reported **GREAT GRAY OWL** lingered until Mar. 29 at Lloyd Neck (S. Ruppert). Another was found dead on the beach at Centerport Mar. 12 and the specimen was added to the Theodore Roosevelt Sanctuary collection in Oyster Bay. Several Chuck-will's-widows were reported: one Apr. 22 at Stony Brook (C. Worster), one May 9 through May 31 in Calverton (DL, GSR), while two calling males were present during May at Oak Beach. One observer reported four birds at that location May 10 (GD). Ruby-throated Hummingbirds were in low numbers. One was seen in Central Park May 13 and another in Prospect Park May 23 (TS).

FLYCATCHERS—STARLINGS: Four Acadian Flycatchers were banded on Great Gull

Island, two May 30 and two June 2 (JDiC). Another was found at LaTourette Golf Course May 30 (BJS). A singing Alder Flycatcher at Jamaica Bay May 30 was unusual although numbers probably go unrecorded as most birds must pass through silently (BJS). Olive-sided Flycatchers were reported from Central Park May 10 (GD, MD), from May 15 and Muttontown May 17 (RC). Observers on Long Island reported swallows moving in from April 28 on with a few earlier records: two Tree Swallows March 24 at Poxabogue Pond (DL, RS). Four Rough-winged Swallows Apr. 12 at Hempstead Lake were with six Barn Swallows (EL). Cliff Swallows are hard to find on Long Island. One was at Shinnecock May 9 (GSR) and one at Baiting Hollow May 13 (RA). Purple Martins were first seen at Calverton Apr. 13 (DL). Ten titmice in Sands Point Apr. 1 may have reflected movement from outside the area (GQ). Carolina Wrens seem very scarce on Long Island following several severe winters except for the good numbers on Gardiner's Island. One was seen Apr. 20 at Yaphank (GSR) while another was at Garvie's Point during May (RC). The previously reported **VARIED THRUSH** remained at Mastic until Mar. 17 (GSR). Blue-gray Gnatcatchers were widely distributed and well reported. A pair was observed building a nest in Yaphank in late May and successfully fledged young (DL). Northern Shrikes lingered through Mar. 30 at Jamaica Bay (TS) and Apr. 18 at Jones Beach (L. Shore). A total of 20 gnatcatchers were banded on Gull Island starting with six on April 25 (JDiC).

VIREOS-WARBLERS: A White-eyed Vireo Apr. 8 at Hempstead Lake was very early (SBD, EL). Yellow-throated Vireos were reported from three locations: two were in Central Park May 3 (TS), one in Manorville May 8 (GSR), and one in Sands Point May 27 (GQ). Prothonotary Warblers were more in evidence than usual with perhaps eleven individuals reported: a male was seen in Central Park Apr. 24 by many observers. Two males were in Central Park Apr. 26-27. Apr. 28 one was found at Moravian Cemetery Staten Island (R. Zain Eldeen); another was in Lattingtown Apr. 29 (RC). A female was present in Yaphank May 5 and 6. A male appeared soon after and was seen until May 31 but observers thought the female had left before the male arrived (J & C Hastings, GSR, RA, DL). A female was found in Forest Park May 12 (DC, RA *et al.*) while a male was in Oyster Bay May 12 (J. Ricks). A pair at Nissequogue Park toward the end of May managed to locate each other and remained to nest successfully rearing three fledglings (M. Wheat, G. Mertz). A singing male **SWAINSON'S WARBLER** was present in Central Park May 7 through 11 seen by (TS, B & W Baumann, S. Rosenberg, P. W. Post and others). Golden-winged Warblers were in better than usual numbers with five individuals reported from the city parks, one at Central, three at Forest and at Alley Pond. A bird in West Babylon May 10 was the only report away from the city (F. File). A "Lawrence's" Warbler was seen by many in Central Park May 4 and 5; and one was found May 6 at Forest Park (BJS, *et al.*). May 1 was notable for the huge number of Yellow-rumped Warblers moving through the area. One observer called the concentration "incredible" at Hempstead Lake with over 100 in a small area along a creek (SBD). Cerulean Warblers were reported from all of the city parks with at least three present at Forest Park in mid-May. Additional Ceruleans were at Hempstead Lake May 5 (EL), at Yaphank May 15 (RA, GSR) and one at Wildwood State Park May 19 (RA). An early Yellow-throated Warbler was seen inspecting the interior of a Dempster Dumpster at Jones Beach on Apr. 8 (A. Wollin, S. Schiff). Another was found dead Apr. 22 at Alley Pond (W. Reilly), while a third was reported Apr. 27 from Central Park (P. W. Post). Pine Warblers are not usually regular at Hempstead Lake where three lingered several days from Apr. 12 on (EL). A Kentucky Warbler was seen to advantage in his backyard birdbath at Baldwin (EL), while a maximum of three Kentucky Warblers were at Forest Park on May 10 (THD) and seen by many for several days thereafter. Two were present at Yaphank woods May 15; one was still there May 22 (GSR, RA, DL). Muttontown Preserve had two singing male Yellow-breasted Chats present from mid-May through the period and seen by many (AL). At least one of the birds appeared to be paired. Chats have not bred on Long Island for a number of years. Another chat was banded on Great Gull Island May 17 (JDiC, AL *et al.*).

WEAVERS-SPARROWS: Bobolinks were noted moving through in early May with six seen at Cedar Beach May 8 (EL), 24 at Manorville May 14 (GSR). An adult male Yellow-headed Blackbird was at a feeder in West Sayville Mar. 17 thru Apr. 15 (K. Lindfors, W. Lamoureaux). A female was seen Apr. 5 at Dongan Hills, Staten Island (R. ZainEldeen). **BOAT-TAILED GRACKLES** were reported from several locations near Jamaica Bay. A pair was at the refuge Apr. 21 (W. Kurau); the female lingered to May 13 (JA). A male was seen Apr. 29 at Riis Park (GD, MD, *et al.*). A male was at Point Lookout May 6 (A. Dignan). Two males and a female were seen May 9 on Pearsall's Hassock (HD, A. Dignan). Orchard Orioles appeared at several locations: first year males were in Central Park May 7 (TS), and on Great Gull Island from May 4 to May 12 (JDiC). Two pairs were in Glen Cove where they have bred previously (RC). Two were seen at Wading River May 8, one May 19 at Calverton and one May 20 and 27 at Manorville (all GSR). An unprecedented total of 24 Summer Tanagers were reported from the area including seven at Forest Park, five from Central Park and a number from Eastern Long Island localities including Babylon, Wading River and Great Gull Island. Fifteen of the birds were males, six females and three unspecified. Four subadult male Blue Grosbeaks were found at Riis Park Apr. 29 (THD, M. Chamberlaine). A male was at Forest Park May 3 (T. & A. Torba), two males were at Forest Park May 8 thru 11, subadult males at Jamaica Bay May 13 thru 15 (D. Reipe, *et al.*), LaTourette Golf Course Staten Island (GD), and one found at Jones Beach May 3 lingered three weeks (A. Wollin *et al.*). "White-winged" House Finches were highlighted in the recent issue of *American Birds*. House Finches of this description have been seen for at least two winters on Long Island. In 1977-78 a male and a female were at a feeder in Sea Cliff (BJS). They ranged to nearby Glen Head (J. Doran). A female was present all winter (1978-79) at a feeder in Roslyn (H. Roth). All observers felt that it was unlikely that these birds would be confused with other species as they were clearly like the other House Finches and noted them only as a curiosity. It would be interesting to know if these Long Island birds were related to the Jersey birds in any direct way or whether the white wing panels have cropped up in separate populations. A Lincoln's Sparrow was seen at Forest Park May 17 (H. Roth, J. Lamoureaux) and two were banded on Great Gull Island May 21 (JDiC), where a surprising number of Swamp Sparrows, 49 compared to ten for the two previous years combined, were also banded.

Please send breeding bird compilations in as soon as they are completed to ease the writing task in September.

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