

REGION 9 – DELAWARE-HUDSON

EDWARD D. TREACY

The warm weather of February brought one of the earliest thaws to the Region, and because of it the waterfowl migration was anything but spectacular. Most species slipped through early and in numbers sufficient to prohibit any buildup. March was cool, with no extremes of weather. The only snow was about three or four inches in the southern portion during the first week, and the end of the month saw 80° F. weather.

April continued warm, with showers in each of the last two weeks. Foliage was well along by the end of the month. A shift of winds to the south on April 28 and 29 brought showers and the first wave of migrants. For a day or two into May, warblers and other passerines were everywhere, with most species being represented. Another warm front on May 12 triggered another wave just in time for the bird clubs' "big day" and censuses. Foliage hampered much of the viewing, but not for long. The Gypsy Moth hatch at mid-month had much of the canopy stripped by early June, and undoubtedly imperiled many species dependent upon it for food and shelter. Never had the trees been so viciously attacked, and thousands of acres of mountainside were completely denuded. This was especially true in the mid-Hudson area and parts of the Catskills, for the second consecutive year. Considerable private spraying went on, but it appears that most municipalities were more cautious. Only time will tell the effects of the devastation on bird life, and it is hoped that birders will be alert to the changes and publicize them.

Rarities for the period include: Glossy Ibis; Fulvous Whistling-Duck; Ruddy Turnstone; Prothonotary, Kentucky and Orange-crowned Warblers, and Brewer's Blackbird.

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Abbreviations: The first four or five letters of each county; HMHW—Hook Mountain Hawk Watch, Mar. 15-May 5; MC—Marshlands Conservancy, Rye; PL—Playland, Rye; USMA—U.S. Military Academy; WCC—Waterman Club Census, Dutchess Co., May 17.

LOONS—DUCKS: Com. Loon: usual few migrants reported in Apr. and May. Max seven over Hook Mt. May 5. Double-crested Cormorant: migrants appeared in mid-Apr. and reached a max of 30 on the Hudson at Esopus by May 16. Great Blue Heron: seven at the Stissing Rookery by the end of Mar. Two or three are nesting near the old site at Tamarack Swamp in Dutch. LITTLE BLUE HERON: one in Dutch Apr. 6 and another at MC May 17. Cattle Egret: two at the Rye YMCA ball field Apr. 25, and two others at Piermont Marsh May 13. The latter was the first record for Rock in three years. Great Egret: two at North Bay, Cruger's I. Apr. 11. LOUISIANA HERON: unusual in spring, one PL May 17-31. Yellow-crowned Night Heron: returned to MC in early Apr. Only two nests found during May after last year's Great Horned Owl predation. Least Bittern: returned in usual numbers in early May. Three on WCC were the first since 1976. Am. Bittern: rarely reported in recent years in Rock; one at Blauvelt May 14 and another at West Haverstraw May 18. GLOSSY IBIS: one was a surprise when it flew south down the Bashakill May 17 (Joan & Dewey Clark). Brant: first report of three flocks of 300-400 in each flying up the Hudson

the evening of May 19. 300 more flying north over Ft. Montgomery May 20. Snow Goose: seven at MC Apr. 26. 40 over E. Walden Apr. 5, and two during Apr. at separate locations in Dutch. Two blue morphs were also reported there. **FULVOUS WHISTLING-DUCK**: one at Cruger's I. Apr. 9—was not seen after that date. Gadwall: a few more than usual. Max six at Monroe Mar. 28. Pintail: six at L. Tappan Mar. 24 was a good number. Rarely more than five reported at any time. Wood Duck: in good numbers and nesting in Dutch. At least ten in the Stanfordville area. Com. Goldeneye: a male at PL thru May 23 was quite late. Oldsquaw: only report inland was one on the Hudson at New Hamburg Mar. 10. White-winged Scoter: 160 at MC May 2 were observed moving west along the Sound. Black Scoter: only report a male at Orange L Apr. 3. Ruddy Duck: max 122 at Croton Pt. Mar. 8. Hooded Merganser: six at Kenozia L Mar. 18. A female obs at Bashakill May 14 and again May 16 was very late—no evidence of breeding there. Com. Merganser: max 200 at Ashokan Mar. 22.

HAWKS—ALCIDS: Goshawk: more reports of single birds than usual. Obs. in at least six locations. Two on HMHW, the first Apr. 21 and the other Apr. 29. Two at MC Feb. 25 remained thru Mar. 8. One Bashakill Apr. 28; one Cruger's I. Mar. 27. Sharp-shinned Hawk: the best movement at HMHW was Apr. 18-20 when 113 passed the lookout. Another good day was Apr. 29 when 35 were counted in less than two hours on a cloudy, rainy day. Cooper's Hawk: 11 on HMHW. Max. 2 on Apr. 18. This made nine days when single birds were observed. None after Apr. 28. Red-tailed Hawk: max. on HMHW was 15 on a cold Mar. 28. Red-shouldered Hawk: two obs. over Mine Rd., USMA May 23 were unusual in that location. Regularly found there 30 years ago. One obs. courting in the town of Sauger-ties Apr. 8. HMHW had 16 from Mar. 15 thru Apr. 2—none after. Broad-winged Hawk: migration started in earnest on HMHW Apr. 16 when 115 were counted. Peak flight was Apr. 18-20 when 791 were obs. Rough-legged Hawk: after an excellent winter, most were gone by early Mar. Last Warren Sod Farm near Pine Island Mar. 25. Bald Eagle: one at Bashakill Mar. 7; an imm over Ashokan Mar. 12; one imm over P'kpsie Mar. 1. Marsh Hawk: HMHW had a long drawn out migration of single birds each day from Mar. 28 thru Apr. 30. Max. five on Apr. 28; total for the season 18. Peregrine: two on HMHW; the first Apr. 30 and the second May 5. Merlin: only three on HMHW; one on Apr. 16, and two Apr. 22. Am. Kestrel: HMHW tallied 111 with a max of 27 on Mar. 29, followed closely by 21 on Apr. 4. Bobwhite: always on the edge of extirpation. This season a record high of 32 on WCC. Three May 30 south of Pine Plains. Turkey: spreading eastward out of Sull; sev obs during May at Bashakill. Sora: fewer than usual. One at Bashakill Apr. 17, and another at Iona I. May 24. Semipalmated Plover: one Cornwall Bay May 16 and another Bashakill May 25. Black-bellied Plover: five at Warren Sod Farm May 12, and one Esopus Flats near Kingston May 16. **RUDDY TURNSTONE**: two at Piermont Pier May 13 were unusual in that there are only two previous spring records for Rock. Am. Woodcock: back in all the usual places on the usual dates. Upland Sandpiper: usually arrives in Apr. but this year first reports were in May. Four at Stewart Airport May 2 inc. to eight May 4. Breeding at Blue Chip Farm and Galeville Airport by end of May. Solitary Sandpiper: one Apr. 4 on Waterman Bird Trip was very early. Purple Sandpiper: more than 20 were still on the waterfront at Rye May 17. Laughing Gull: first noted at MC on Apr. 4; early. In good numbers there by mid-month. Bonaparte's Gull: one at Ashokan May 16. Black Tern: one at Ashokan May 13, and another at Bashakill May 16.

PIGEONS—WOODPECKERS: Mourning Dove: exc. numbers of last winter continued into spring. Black-billed Cuckoo: reported in Dutch to outnumber Yellow-billed by two to one. A good year for both species. Owls: a few more Barred reported than usual. Short-eared Owl: last reports, three at Galeville Airport Mar. 24, and a very late bird at Warren Sod Farm May 16. Saw-whet Owl: one at Bowdoin Pk. New Hamburg Mar. 11. Com. Nighthawk: a poor migration, late and in low numbers. First reported sev. areas May 16. No more than one or two per report. Red-bellied Woodpecker: continues to increase. Reports from all areas, and in better numbers than Red-headed Woodpecker.

FLYCATCHERS--STARLING: BSe observed all five species of *Empidonax* flycatchers in the Bashakill May 27. E. Kingbird: earliest report at MC Apr. 26. Yellow-bellied Flycatcher: unreported in Dutch. One singing May 18 west of Tompkins Cove, and another the same date at Rye Nature Center. Acadian Flycatcher: fewer than usual, but still well-represented by several birds in the Bashakill area—one at Rye Nature Center May 21, 22 and two at MC May 31; one at Peekamoose May 16, another at Turkey Hollow, Dutch May 26. Alder Flycatcher: always uncommon, and even less this year. One at PL May 25 and three at MC the same date. Only one reported south of Bashakill May 24 to end of period. Olive-sided Flycatcher: unreported in Dutch and very few elsewhere. Tree Swallow: max 300 at Tamarack May 11. Usurping bluebird boxes in Dutch by end of May. Bank Swallow: arr late but in usual numbers. First Apr. 30 at Bashakill and Apr. 25 at Thompson Pd. Rough-winged Swallow: unusually early at Wurtsboro. First Mar. 29, nesting on Twin Arch Rd., Washingtonville by May 8. Cliff Swallow: colony at Camp Buckner holding up well for many years now. Has not spread elsewhere in the immediate area. First arr there May 6. More than 100 on wires at Bashakill May 8. **COMMON RAVEN:** one obs flying west over Hook Mt. Apr. 30 by Hugh Martin is the sixth local record for Rock and first spring date. Fish Crow: continues to increase in numbers and distribution. Regularly found inland from the Hudson. Red-breasted Nuthatch: numbers improving from dearth of a few years ago. Single birds reported from Rock on the late dates of Apr. 30 and May 4. Several reported at Middletown Res. thru May. House Wren: absent from many of its usual haunts. Almost all reports mention numbers reduced. Brown Thrasher: one returned to MC as early as Mar. 25. Am. Robin: appeared everywhere in good numbers on Mar. 18-20. Swainson's Thrush: abundant in Rock on May 25, but not one was to be found on the 26th. Gray-cheeked Thrush: missed by most birders this season. Unreported in Dutch. (We emphasize it when a bird goes unreported in Dutchess county, since this is the most heavily-birded county in the Region with the greatest number of active, skilled observers. Any bird that goes unreported there must surely be scarce.) Only reports of this species from Bashakill May 15 and again May 24, 25. Veery: numbers very low on most reports. Arr most areas late. E. Bluebird: a pair obs nesting at Winding Hills Park, apparently died or abandoned after the county sprayed in late May. Florence Germond reported sev. building along bluebird trail in Mar. Never had them so early before. Young were in by the 24th of Apr. 123 young were banded from the first nesting in May. Blue-gray Gnatcatcher: very numerous and widely distributed. Appeared most areas by mid-Apr. Cedar Waxwing: usually uncommon in spring, but obs. in good numbers this season. At least 35 on Mine Rd., USMA June 1 feeding on Mayfly hatch. **NORTHERN SHRIKE:** one at Galeville Airport Mar. 24 was the only report (BSe). **LOG-GERHEAD SHRIKE:** two reports from Dutch: one at Millerton Mar. 3 and another at Tamarack Mar. 31.

VIREOS--WARBLERS: White-eyed Vireo: always rare, but fewer this year. First P'kpsie Apr. 29 was earlier than usual. Three others in Dutch dur. May. First in Rock appeared May 5. Yellow-throated Vireo: the only member of the group that was near normal in numbers. Solitary Vireo: three in Dutch Apr. 18. Last Mine Rd. USMA May 23. Philadelphia Vireo: none in Dutch, but two were obs. at Bashakill May 14 and 16. Another was there May 24. Warbling Vireo: normal most areas, but RFD reports the best numbers in Rock in memory. First there May 2. Twelve near Tompkins Cove May 18. There are three nesting pairs in two blocks along the Nyack waterfront. Black-and-white Warbler: first Apr. 23 at Bashakill. Very large movement noted Apr. 28. **PROTHONOTARY WARBLER:** one seen well at Tallman Mt. Park, Rock on the amazingly early date of Mar. 29 (VS). Previous early date was Apr. 19, 1954. Orange Co. may well have its first verified record for this species with a singing bird found off Port Orange Rd. a few miles south of Bashakill on May 31. Bird was found by BSe and confirmed by mob. Worm-eating Warbler: more this season than in recent years. Max eight on the south end of Mine Rd. where it leaves the Military Reservation. "Brewster's" Warbler: one near Moore's Mills May 23, and another on Mine Rd. May 26. **ORANGE-CROWNED WARBLER:** one May 12 near Stillwell L. USMA was well-des-

cribed (KM). Another singing at Bashakill May 24 (BSe). Another the same date at Middletown Res. (JT). No. Parula: most reporters feel their numbers reduced. Rock had a new early date of Apr. 12 at Palisades. Previous early date was Apr. 19. Cape May Warbler: only four reports in Dutch in May. Also low through rest of Region. Many active birders reported seeing only one or two thru entire period. Cerulean Warbler: first appeared Mine Rd. May 2. Max there 12 on May 10. Blackburnian Warbler: reported "shockingly scarce" in Rockland. RFD birded almost every day in May, and had his first on May 5, with only two reported after that date. Usually sees a couple of dozen migrating thru the county. Bay-breasted Warbler: BSe had his first May 6, and described it as a poor year. Only one or two per trip. Blackpoll Warbler: RFD reports a most extended migration with the first appearing on Apr. 29, tying their previous early date for Rock set in 1956 and 1962, and continuing thru the month of May. BSe feels the numbers for this species was the lowest in 40 years. EP described them as unbelievably low in Dutch, with only seven reported thru the entire month of May. Pine Warbler: this early migrant rarely reported. A few more this year than usual. Four at Ashokan Apr. 19. One at Bard College May 16 was very late. One on WCC May 17 was the second time for that count since 1967. Prairie Warbler: BSe heard 17 different singing birds along a one mile stretch of the upper Mine Rd., USMA on May 6. BSc and EDT had 15 in the same location May 10. Palm Warbler: last report six at Weyant's Pd. USMA Apr. 26. Louisiana Waterthrush: one on the very early date of Mar. 29 at Ft. Montgomery. Other arrival dates and numbers were normal. **KENTUCKY WARBLER:** one, singing near Weyant's Pd., USMA May 31. Seen by several observers, gone the next day. An earlier bird at Bashakill May 17. Mourning Warbler: one at Palisades May 25. A singing male at Bashakill May 14 remained in the same location for more than a week giving mob a look and listen. A second bird was found about a half mile away from the first on May 25, but only stayed a day. Two birds were at Rye Nature Center May 25-30. Another was at MC May 31. Yellow-breasted Chat: one May 13 and May 16 singing at Hackensack Creek in Blauvelt was the fifth record in Rock in ten years, and only the second record for the eastern part of the county since 1969. One was at MC May 30, and two at Purchase May 31. One at the north end of the Bashakill May 15, inc. to two the next day and remained thru the end of the period. Hooded Warbler: one arr at Black Rock Forest May 9, but disappeared after the foliage was stripped late in the month. Another was at Bashakill May 24. Canada Warbler: one of the few warblers to have a good year. First at the Bashakill May 8 by BSe who several times reported more than 20 birds on each of several trips. It appears that others did not find them in these numbers. Reported low in Dutch thru May.

WEAVERS-SPARROWS: E. Meadowlark: a rarity now in Rock. One at New City Mar. 17 was the first record in several years. Disappearing there as its habitat is destroyed. Orchard Oriole: more than usual. At least six correspondents reported it. One at Iona I. May 24 was unusual there. A pair were together at Kingston May 16. There were three reports from Dutch between May 2-May 16. Rusty Blackbird: very few reports. First eight Mine Rd. USMA from Mar. 15 thru 29. **BREWER'S BLACKBIRD:** a very convincing report submitted by Fred and Wava Abbott of Goshen. Two males in a flock of mixed blackbirds and Starlings. They were compared at close range with Redwings, grackles and Starlings and met all the field marks. They were discovered at Warren Sod Farm near Pine Island, May 10. A first for the Region. Indigo Bunting: arr May 9 along Mine Rd. where breeding pairs were established every few yards by the end of the month. Evening Grosbeak: last reports May 9 at Stissing, and May 18 at Middletown. House Finch: WCC count has increased from two in 1965 to 145 last year and 173 this year. Pine Grosbeak: two along Mine Rd. Mar. 28 were in song. Com. Redpoll: four lingered at a Middletown feeder thru Mar. 12, and one was at Pleasant Valley Mar. 28. Pine Siskin: remained at feeders in Dutch thru mid-May. Last at Verbank May 15. Grasshopper Sparrow: returned to usual breeding locales in Westbrookville, Galeville Airport, and Unionville. Also found in two places along the Shunpike in Dutch. Tree Sparrow: last appeared on Mine Rd., USMA Apr. 19, and thru Apr. 30 in Dutch. White-throated Sparrow: an unusually large flock of more than 200 near Palisade,

Rock Apr. 30. Last reported May 10 along Mine Rd. Lincoln's Sparrow: unreported in Dutch, and very few elsewhere. One at Palisades May 4 and one at Bashakill May 24. Snow Bunting: last report six at Middletown Res. Apr. 19.

Pellwood Lake, Highland Falls, New York 10928

REGION 10 — MARINE

BARBARA J. SPENCER

Many active local observers came to the conclusion that Spring passed to the west of Region 10 this year. Prevailing weather conditions with easterly winds kept waves of birds from the coast during early May. There was a modest flight mid-week on May 13 and 14 and a large wave that lacked variety on May 24 and 25. This extraordinary late push of birds brought enormous numbers to banding stations on the beaches. Over 700 birds were banded on Fire Island and almost 600 at Tobay. Common Yellowthroat was the most numerous species; together with Magnolias, Canadas, and American Redstarts, they accounted for 60% of the total. Blackburnian and Mourning Warblers were also in good numbers. Interestingly, 65% of the birds on Sunday were males and on Monday 61% were females. Breeding birds returned on schedule.

March was dry with about one quarter of the usual rainfall and higher temperatures than average, especially toward the end of the month. Precipitation conditions became more normal as the spring went on, bringing some relief to the area.

BIG DAY REPORTS

Using three parties, the Queen County Bird Club members found a total of 150 species on May 16. Unusual species included a Curlew Sandpiper and a Gull-billed Tern at Jamaica Bay, Upland Sandpiper and Grasshopper Sparrow at Mitchell Field, an Orange-crowned Warbler at Alley Pond Park and a Sooty Shearwater off Fire Island. Thrushes were scarce. Not a single Swainson's Thrush was located. No owls were found.

The Lyman Langdon Audubon Society's Big Day, held early, on May 9, found only 124 species, highlighted by a Townsend's Warbler, a Yellow-throated Warbler, and a Gull-billed Tern. Spotted Sandpiper, Northern Waterthrush and Savannah Sparrow were missed.

Positive notes for the season include: Cerulean Warblers in a "wave" in early May, Yellow-throated Vireos in better numbers in migration, a large late flight of more common warbler species after a dull spring. Ospreys returned to nesting locations on schedule.

Negative features: very few thrushes this spring with Swainson's Thrush almost unseen. Phoebe seemed scarce; a drab and erratic spring migration in general.

Rarities include: White-faced Ibis, Swallow-tailed Kite, Black-necked Stilt, Arctic Tern, Sandwich Tern, Swainson's Warbler, Townsend's Warbler.