

REGION 2 — GENESEE

ROBERT SPAHN

For the third consecutive spring we hear the whispered litany of species, scarce, or at least hard to find. Once again, there are reasons to be found, particularly in weather patterns. Yet, once again, while species totals remain good, many of the season's records are of only one or a very few individuals, and too many observers report too many days afield with too little bird song or activity.

Looking at the weather patterns for explanations, we find first a March cool and relatively dry, precipitation about one inch below normal, snowfall six inches below normal. Temperatures averaged cool, mostly due to cold daily lows, but with three warm spells, 4-5, 11-13 and 30-31 March, with good movements of early migrants in each. Waterfowl variety and numbers were excellent, the hawk count set a record for the month, and the early blackbird flights were good. Early arriving shorebirds and swallows, however, were few or absent. April began with a cold spell, and the last of winter's snowfall with a blizzard on the 6th and a moderate fall on the 11th. By the 7th, most of Braddock Bay and all of the smaller, shallower ponds had refrozen. The cold lasted through the 15th. Many of the early arriving insectivores certainly perished. The latter half of the month seasawed between warm and cool. Good flights, particularly of raptors, were reported on 16-17 and 23-26 April. From the hawk watch records, we see that most days had good winds for lakeshore migration for only a short while, followed by a shift to lake-effect NE to NW breezes. This dispersed the large Broad-winged Hawk concentrations often seen along the lake. Passerines arrived at average to late dates with very few individuals reported for most of the new arrivals through month's end. 13 April brought the best of the shorebird and passerine flights documented for the month. May was again a split month, the first half mainly sunny, warm, and dry with migrants flying over and the latter half, cloudy, cool, and wet with loads of fresh green foliage to hide the later migrants. Daily observers reported very few days when birding could be considered good. In that category we find only 6 and 24 May, with 19 and 31 May added for the hawk watchers. Late in the month, on many nights, large numbers of birds could be heard passing overhead, though there was generally no fallout in the mornings following to reflect this. From the call notes, these flights contained substantial numbers of thrushes and warblers, among the families with low ground counts noted.

Long range trends remain difficult to impossible to extract from a spring's data, but numerous plus and minus observations are available to be studied later in the light of passing time. Among the positives are: most waterfowl numbers good, the large Red-necked Grebe counts, Am. Bittern observations up a bit, eight species of raptors at new highs for the six years of daily counts, Ring-necked Pheasant up a little, good numbers of Com. Flicker, flycatchers—particularly Yellow-bellied and Olive-sided, swallows, Com. Crow, Blue Jay, and Black-capped Chickadee, both kinglets up, Red-eyed and Warbling Vireos abundant, Canada Warbler and Am. Redstart everywhere in numbers, and Brewer's Blackbirds back earlier, more numerous, and remaining later. The negatives include: the repeated massing of boats in the resting and feeding areas of loons, grebes,

and mergansers with numbers of these reported lower than normal, few Red-shouldered Hawks, shorebird habitat again poor—high lakes and dry fields, gulls poor except for thousands of Ring-bills lingering into June, terns very scarce except for breeding Black Terns, cuckoos low—probably cyclic, large losses of Great Horned Owl (old Red-tailed Hawk) nests in winds of March and early April, Whip-poor-will missing from normal breeding spots, few Carolina Wrens—no new locales, Short-billed Marsh Wren missing from several regular sites, thrushes low—particularly Gray-cheeked, Blue-gray Gnatcatcher and Yellow-throated Vireo missing from some breeding areas—though the frequently associated Cerulean Warblers are still present, Loggerhead Shrike back to only one local breeding area, Solitary Vireo late and few, several warblers reported in low numbers—Golden-winged, Orange-crowned, No. Parula, Black-throated Blue, and Ovenbird among these, and grassland sparrows (Grasshopper, Henslow's and Vesper) still bearing close watching. Many rarities which had seemed to be increasing and approaching regularity were missed: Snowy Egret, Glossy Ibis, White-fronted Goose, Sandhill Crane, Common Raven, and Kentucky Warbler (subsequently found in June). Only a single Cattle Egret was sighted following last year's zero.

The total spring species count was 252, down from the totals of the past few years, but still good.

Rarities: European Wigeon, Willet, Stilt Sandpiper, Red Phalarope, Northern Phalarope, Lesser Black-backed Gull, Barn Owl, Boreal Chickadee, White-eyed Vireo, Prothonotary Warbler, Prairie Warbler, Connecticut Warbler, Western Meadowlark, Brewer's Blackbird, Hoary Redpoll, and Sharp-tailed Sparrow.

Abbreviations: BB—Braddock Bay Park and vicinity; H—Hamlin Beach State Park and town of Hamlin; IC—Island Cottage Woods, town of Greece; LP—Letchworth State Park; PB—Point Breeze and nearby parts of the town of Carlton; and WL—general lakeshore area west of Rochester, generally implying extensive lake count or poor localization of the sighting, mob—many observers.

Observers: Robert Ambrose, Ron & Kay Ballard, Doug Bassett, Jean Browning, Nancy Boudrie, Steve & William Carlson, Carolyn Cass, Roberta Childres, Julie Claffey, Sharon Clark, Anne Clarridge, William Colman, Mike Davids, Gertrude Davis, Fritz Davis, Frank & Bob Dobson, Kay Doris, June Feder, John & Arleen Foster, Genesee Ornithological Society, Kevin Griffith, Ralph & Georgia Guenther, Norm Henderson, Ted Jackson, Øivind Jensen, Allen & Bea Kemnitzer, Jane Kesselring, Sandy Klonick, David Levy, Warren Lloyd, Walter Listman, Hayward Madden, Bob & Margaret McKinney, David Miller, Ann Miranian, Laura & Neil Moon, Richard O'Hara, Bernie Olin, P.O.S. (Allan, Brian, Dan, David & Grace Strong, and James Lenhard), Rochester Birding Association, Pat Reister, Marge Schmale, Jeanne & Sharon Skelly, Robert & Susan Spahn, Ann Stear, Harriet Stride, Mary Ann Sunderlin, William Symonds, Steve Taylor, Tom, Mike, and David Tetlow, Lyn & Eric VanderWerf, Joe & Ann Watson, Eleanor Weld, Doris Wilton, Munro Will, and Peter Zachmann.

LOONS—DUCKS: This year's loon flight was poor with no really good counts reported and Red-throated Loon occurring only as singles. Com. Loon: 15 PB 23 May, was a high count for so late. Red-necked Grebe again massed in large numbers: 575 WL 24 Mar (RM, mob); and 1118+ WL 25 Mar (JS). These birds were present in varying numbers from 24 Mar-17 Apr, generally over a 3-20 mile stretch of Lake Ontario shoreline from about BB west. Searches to the east on the peak days produced very few birds. This staging occurred in a cold period prior to the fishing derby mobs appearing on the water. Horned Grebe and Pied-billed Grebe numbers were low. Double-crested Cormorant was observed in or near BB in small numbers thru, except for: 24 BB 9 May. Heron and egret numbers were very low ex-

cept for Green Heron and Great Blue Heron: max 60 in two hours BB 13 Apr (RD). A Cattle Egret: H 25 Apr was the only sighting. Great Egrets were few, only ten records. Black-crowned Night Heron remains very low. Am. Bittern, while still very low, was reported more frequently this spring. Waterfowl numbers and variety were excellent in migration and individuals of many species lingered in the region quite late. Interesting records included: Whistling Swan: max 66 WL ? Mar, down from last year's peak, but good; and one Kendall 22 May thru, late; Snow Goose: 300, mixed phases, Webster 18 Mar (WL1), a good count for this region. **EUROPEAN WIGEON**: one BB 9 Apr (MD, mob); and one PB 13 Apr (WS), the same? Ring-necked Duck: 300 WL 25 Mar; 325 BB 9 Apr, good counts; and one Kendall and Carlton 23-31 May, late. Com. Goldeneye: one off Durand-Eastman Park 4 May, late. Oldsquaw: max 2000 Payne Beach 25 Mar. White-winged Scoter: max 1000 WL 25 Mar; and Black Scoter: three BB 23 May, late.

HAWKS—ALCIDS: The bulk of the raptor records are summarized in the table below. Eight Species (*) were at new highs for the recent six years of daily spring counts conducted and compiled by Laura & Neil Moon. From the hawk watch data, the most obvious trends are that Turkey Vulture is increasing as a local migrant, Red-shouldered Hawk is in poor shape, and Bald Eagle is increasing, with good percentages of immes reported. Some of the high totals for some species must be attributed to better coverage this year on the west spit of BB; birds passing out over the lake or right along the shoreline and not visible from the central hawk lookout.

Braddock Bay Hawk Watch Summary
26 Feb to 30 June

Species	Peak No.	Peak Date	1982 Total	1980 Total	6 yr. Average
Turkey Vulture*	533	3/31	2,512	1,626	1,580
Goshawk*	18	3/31	76	22	33.2
Sharp-shinned Hawk*	2633	4/17	8,452	7,714	5,642
Cooper's Hawk*	48	4/17	167	142	116
Red-tailed Hawk*	375	3/13	3,010	2,823	2,289
Red-shouldered Hawk	76	3/24	243	283	301
Broad-winged Hawk	2098	5/6	18,608	24,204	17,676
Rough-legged Hawk	62	3/13	411	231	325
Golden Eagle	2	4/25, 5/6	11	8	9.8
Bald Eagle*	4	3/31	39	14	19.0
Marsh Hawk	68	4/16	555	437	407
Osprey	21	5/6	148	107	117
Peregrine Falcon	2	5/19	4	3	3.7
Merlin*	2	4/10, 5/6, 5/7	16	6	6.8
American Kestrel*	248	4/17	999	536	570
Unidentified accipiter	3	3/24	6	17	6.3
Unidentified buteo	251	4/16	925	581	697
Unidentified eagle	1	4/26	1	0	0.8
Unidentified falcon	2	4/16	5	2	3.3
Unidentified raptor			49	44	52.5
Total Hawks			36,237	38,800	29,894

1980 was the year of the highest total for daily counts. Additional raptor records of special interest are: Broad-winged Hawk: three H 24 Mar, early; Golden Eagle: about ten additional sightings; Bald Eagle: about eight additional individuals, 4 ad., 4 imm.; Peregrine Falcon: four more records; and Merlin: eight added records. These additional records are generally scattered thru the season from late Mar to 31 May. Ring-necked Pheasant calls were a bit more numerous this Spring. Turkey continues to spread. Ruffed Grouse were rumored good, but very few reports were received; part of the lake effect in local birding. After four

years of increased sightings, no Sandhill Crane this season. Rails received little coverage, as usual. All expected rail species were reported. With high lake levels and low precipitation until late in the season, shorebird habitat was poor. Still, there were many good records, among them: Black-bellied Plover: one Carlton 16 Apr, early; Whimbrel: three H 22 May, lower than many years; **WILLET**: one Pultneyville 30 May (FDa); Lesser Yellowlegs: 41 Greece 10 Apr; Pectoral Sandpiper: 15 H 2 Apr, a good early count; and 300 Bergen 2 May, a good number; White-rumped Sandpiper: one to four Perinton and WL 23-31 May, typical; Dunlin: one Greece 13 Mar, very early; Short-billed Dowitcher: eight BB 13 Apr, early; **STILT SANDPIPER**: one in breeding plumage Perinton 23 May (SK, mob), the third local spring record; **RED PHALAROPE**: one WL 14 Mar (AK), very rare in spring; Wilson's Phalarope: one Perinton 2-3 May (DS, mob), the only report this spring; and **NORTHERN PHALAROPE**: one female PB 29 May (MD, PR, ST), very rare in spring. Gull reports were very uninspiring this season. White-winged gull reports remain low with only: Glaucous Gull: one Round Pond 21 Mar; one imm. BB 17 Apr; and one BB 1, 14 May; and Iceland Gull: one Sodus Bay 7 Mar; and one BB 28-29 Mar. Other good gull records were: **LESSER BLACK-BACKED GULL**: one ad. Buck Pond 10 Apr (MD, KG), a second regional record; the masses of Ring-billed Gulls at Hogan Pt. and in Kendall, 10,000's thru May; and Little Gull: one ad. BB 24 Apr (PSP); and one imm. BB 30 May (ST). Other than the breeding Black Terns, terns were very scarce. The only Forster's Tern was: one BB 17 Apr, a typical arrival date. Com. Tern was observed on only a few occasions in late April and May. Caspian Tern arrived at an early date, 2 Apr, increased as expected, but then was virtually absent by Big Day, 23 May.

DOVES-WOODPECKERS: Mourning Doves had their first fledglings leaving the nest in late May. Both cuckoos were plentiful in migration in late May, but scarce thereafter. Everybody likes the owls in this grouping. The best of their reports included: **BARN OWL**: one Leicester 23 May (MD, KG, CT); Great Horned Owl: few nest reports after the wind losses early in the season; Snowy Owl: one BB 20 Mar; one Hogan Pt. 12 Apr; and one PB 13 Apr, a good spring return flight; Long-eared Owl: the usual migrants around BB plus one IC 9 May, late; Short-eared Owl: one to three H 9, 10 and 14 Apr and 20 May; and Saw-whet Owl: the usual lakeshore migrants, one to four BB 24 Mar to 30 Apr. The rest of this grouping receives less attention, but we do find: Whip-poor-will scarce; Com. Nighthawk observed at a few more locations in better numbers; Ruby-throated Hummingbird numerous at PB, but not reported in numbers elsewhere; Belted Kingfisher: 55 BB 13 Apr, a good count in two hours; and Com. Flicker: 300+ BB 17 Apr, a good representation of their lakeshore flight this season. The lakeshore passage of Red-headed Woodpecker seemed down a bit this year. The other woodpeckers were reported in numbers, dates, and locations expected.

FLYCATCHERS-STARLINGS: Flycatcher arrival dates averaged a bit late, though once here, numbers were good. E. Phoebe certainly must have suffered from the April cold spell; breeding reports should tell. The late May migration of *empidonax* was good, as was the total of 12+ sightings of Olive-sided Flycatcher in the last ten days of May. Acadian Flycatcher singles at IC 25 May; BB 30 May; and PB 31 May were typical for this season. Swallow numbers were also very good; a representative peak being Tree Swallow: 4000+ BB 13 Apr. The Blue Jay and Com. Crow flights were again impressive, but with no active tallier. No Com. Ravens were reported after five consecutive years of spring sightings. The Black-capped Chickadee passage included only one **BOREAL CHICKADEE**: BB 16 Apr (MD, mob), though many were anticipated after last fall's irruption. Winter Wren was again very scarce. Carolina Wren was poorly reported, all records being from known wintering and breeding locales. Short-billed Marsh Wren was reported only from the marshes east of Sodus Bay. Among the thrushes, the Am. Robin flight was documented with counts of 10,000+ in two hours BB 13 Apr; and 15,000+ in four hours BB 30 Apr; while the other species received less particular attention. Gray-cheeked Thrush was especially difficult to locate this spring. E. Bluebird is doing well on nest box trails, mainly south of the lakeplain. Blue-gray Gnatcatcher arrived early: one IC 8 Apr; and is doing well in places, but had disappeared from some regular former breeding haunts. Both kinglets passed through in good numbers.

One No. Shrike lingered to 9 Apr at Parma. Loggerhead Shrike was noted at places and in numbers typical of recent years during migration, but was later present and presumed breeding only in the Carlton area.

VIREOS-WARBLEDERS: All expected vireos were reported: Red-eyed and Warbling numerous, Yellow-throated, Solitary, and Philadelphia fewer than usual. **WHITE-EYED VIREO:** one LP 23 May (DB), was typical for the season. Thirty-four species of warblers were reported, none rare on an absolute scale. Interesting records included: Black-and-white: one 17 Apr, early; **PROTHONOTARY WARBLER:** one Scottsville 23 May, a rare breeder in this region; Golden-winged: numbers down in contrast with the boom in Blue-winged and "Brewster's"; Orange-crowned: one Murray 22 May; and two BB 23 May, down from the numbers reported the past several years; No. Parula: few; Yellow: abundant; Yellow-rumped: max counted 400+ IC 6 May; Pine: many lakeshore records in late April and possible breeders in late May; **PRAIRIE WARBLER:** one LP 21-31 May, a possible breeding site; Louisiana Waterthrush: one IC 14-15 Apr, a rare lakeshore appearance; **CONNECTICUT WARBLER:** one PB 31 May (MD, WLi); Mourning Warbler: 16 LP 23 May, a good count; Yellow-breasted Chat: one Mendon Ponds 17 May thru; and one LP 23 May, never common; Hooded Warbler: one IC 26-29 Apr, usually scarce along the lakeshore; and 23 LP 23 May (DB). Most of the other warbler species received only passing comment on their abundance, e.g. singing Ovenbirds were few; Canada and Wilson's Warblers and Am. Redstart seemed particularly abundant.

WEAVERS-SPARROWS: Bobolink and E. Meadowlark were in good numbers in suitable habitat and in flight along the lakeshore. **WESTERN MEADOWLARK** was reported only as the singing male at PB 16 Apr thru, its fourth spring return. The Orchard Oriole colony in the PB vicinity thrives. **BREWER'S BLACKBIRD** returned earlier—one H 21 Mar (MD); peaked higher—24 H 21 Apr (MD); and stayed later—two H 7 May (MD), than last year's first visitors. Can breeding be far behind? There was a large return flight of winter finches. Noteworthy finch records include: Evening Grosbeak: large flocks first appearing in early May; Purple Finch: relatively scarce; House Finch: breeding all through the region; **HOARY REDPOLL:** one Parma 23 Mar (PR); and one Greece 3 Apr (KG); Com. Redpoll: one Greece 6-8 May, the last; Pine Siskin: large flocks in April and early May; and both crossbills observed in small flocks sporadically thru the season. Among the grassland sparrows, Savannah is abundant; Henslow's and Grasshopper local; and Vesper poor on the lakeplain, fairly good in farmland to the south. A good find was a **SHARP-TAILED SPARROW** at Hogan Pt., Greece, 30 May (RO), certainly a regular migrant here, but very rarely seen. The last of the Tree Sparrows noted was one Parma 3 May. The remainder of the sparrow migration was normal for numbers and dates. Very late records were turned in for Lapland Longspur: one H 23 May; and Snow Bunting: six H 23 May, both without details. A large flock of Snow Buntings was 2500+ BB 13 Mar.

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REGION 3 — FINGER LAKES

W. E. BENNING

Snow was gone by mid-March and late March brought some warm days, but winter 1982 hated to give up. It came roaring back with a foot of snow in Ithaca on 6 April. The northern part of the region got less, but it had snow for each of the first three weekends in April. Temperatures averaged three degrees F. below normal for the month. May was a little warmer than usual. In the north it was dry all month, but the south had some rain in the last half of the month.