

REGION 6 — ST. LAWRENCE

KENNETH L. CROWELL

After the warmest, driest winter in 50 years, we had one of the coldest, wettest springs on record. The coldest weather of the period was the 1st week of March, while the heaviest snowfall of the year came on 19 and 20 April. Temperatures in March were above normal; the range was -1° to 65° F. Precipitation in March was about normal, and there was little snowfall. There were warm periods the end of the first and beginning of the third weeks of March. Lows 22 March to 2 April were in the teens with sleet and snow on several days. Temperatures in April were below normal, while precipitation was well above normal. The week of 16-22 April was marked by readings in the freezing range. The warmest April temperatures occurred the last few days of the month. May was on-again-off-again. Daytime highs were often in the sixties (max 76°), but there were 13 days with minimum temperatures below 40° F. and 18 days with rain. The period 8-10 May was cold and wet, and there was a heavy frost and record low of 27° F on 17 May. Warmer periods occurred 1-3 May, 13-15 May and the last 10 days of the month.

The first Northern Shrikes of the winter appeared in March. Early migrants such as Canada Goose, Red-winged Blackbird, American Robin, and American Kestrel arrived on schedule in March. Things always drag a bit in April, but the wet snow 19 April brought large numbers of robins and Killdeer to the roadsides and flocks of juncos to feeders. Aggregations of starlings were seen in late March and early April. Flocks of American Robins were in evidence in mid-April and blackbirds were moving throughout the first two weeks of April and again the last week. Northern Harrier was numerous in late April, and on 23 April we observed all three accipiters as well as Ospreys migrating along the St. Lawrence River. Lee Chamberlaine wrote that warblers and flycatchers trickled in during May—between showers, and several days late. Arrival dates from Marilyn Badger in Brasher were several days ahead of those recorded in Canton. The weather was no better for birding than for the birds, and I received fewer reports than usual. All told, Region Six recorded 176 species of which 165 were seen in May.

For trends, the Upland Sandpiper showed a gratifying increase after last year's zilch; Ruby-throated Hummingbird, Eastern Kingbird, Brown Thrasher, and Scarlet Tanager were abundant, as were Mourning Dove and American Goldfinch. On the downswing was Golden-winged Warbler (none).

Rarities were few: Willet; a probable intraspecific Northern Flicker hybrid and Orchard Oriole. Throw in a Surf Scoter, Spruce Grouse, and eight Northern Mockingbirds and a few Sedge Wrens for seasoning.

Abbreviations: RMSP—Robert Moses State Park; St.LCo—St. Lawrence Co.; SLR—St. Lawrence River; ULL—Upper and Lower Lakes Wildlife Mgt. Area; WH—Wilson Hill WMA.

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LOONS—DUCKS: Com. Loon: one Pt. Peninsula 1 May; single 23 Apr, pair Rainbow Flow, Colton 1 May; pair adult 14 May ULL. Pied-billed Grebe: good numbers in StLCo.

Horned Grebe: one Perch Lake 1 May. Double-crested Cormorant: 18 Southwick Beach 12 May. Am. Bittern: arr PR 17 Apr, ULL 23 Apr, frequent sightings thereafter. Least Bittern: one ULL 25 May (PVD). Great Blue Heron: arr Potsdam 7 Apr. Great Egret: one Canton 12 May; one WH in May. Green-backed Heron: singles ULL 25 and 31 May. Black-crowned Night Heron: one Eldorado 15 May (RW). Mute Swan: three adult, at least 5 young PR 13 May (CD). Brant: 300 moving across L. Ontario in three waves 4 May; 200 Waterman Hill, Canton 16 May; 100 PR 25 May (CD). Wood Duck: one Canton 15 May; two Canton 19 May. Among eight species of dabbling ducks reported were Green-winged Teal: one WH (JVR). Am. Black Duck: 40 ULL 30 Mar. N. Pintail: five ULL 30 Mar. Am. Wigeon: four ULL 30 Mar; three Kring's Pt. 30 Apr; three WH 1 May. Gadwall: two pairs 1 May; six WH 4 May. Nine species of divers were reported, including: Ring-necked Duck: six ULL 30 Mar. Lesser Scaup: pair PR 1 May; eight WH 11 May. Oldsquaw: 200 Sawyer's Bay, L. Ontario 26 Mar (LC). SURF SCOTER: one Eldorado Shores 30 May (RW). Com. Goldeneye: 200 Stony Pt. 26 Mar; three WH 4 May. Hooded Merganser: one with young PR 13 May (RA).

HAWKS-ALCIDS: Turkey Vulture: arr Canton 9 Apr, many sightings thru; 13 going to roost near Westcotts Beach 16 May. Osprey: one PR 17 Apr; many reports in May for Grass R, Little R. and ULL, Canton. Bald Eagle: imm at Allen Pd., Degrasse 17 Apr (JE). N. Harrier: arr Canton 9 Apr; max four ULL 13 Apr, three PR 23 Apr. Sharp-shinned Hawk: five Brownville 28 Apr. Cooper's Hawk: one ULL 13 Apr. N. Goshawk: pair Dillingham Pd., Clifton 30 Apr (JME). Three migrating, Chippewa Pt. 23 Apr. Broad-winged Hawk: ca. 400 in 15 kettles Brownville, 4-5:00 pm 28 Apr; one in woods Canton 12 May, only StLCo. sighting. Rough-legged Hawk: one ULL 13 Apr, two RMSP 21 Apr, one Massena 1 May. Am. Kestrel: pairing first week of Apr in Canton area. Ring-necked Pheasant: male Canton 14 Apr; one Massena 14 May. **SPRUCE GROUSE:** one Seevey's Corners 22 May (DW). Wild Turkey: sightings near Pierrepont release point. Virginia Rail and Sora: widespread response to tape in vicinity of WH and ULL. Am. Coot: no reports. Killdeer: arr Henderson 5 Mar. Solitary Sandpiper: one Massena 22 May. Spotted Sandpiper: only a few sightings in May. Greater Yellowlegs: one Sulphur Springs 1 May. Lesser Yellowlegs: one Sulphur Springs 1 May. **WILLET:** one Eldorado 5 May (RW). Upland Sandpiper: one displaying Canton 23 Apr; one Massena 14 May; two Canton 14 May; one Pierrepont 15 and 29 May. Semipalmated Sandpiper: two WH 22 May. Pectoral Sandpiper: one Sulphur Springs 1 May. Com. Black-headed Gull: aberrant individual at PR 14 May, fifth year (RW). Caspian Tern: 6 Pt. Peninsula 1 May. Com. Tern: small numbers at WH in May. Black Tern: three PR 14 May; six ULL 16 May.

PIGEONS-WOODPECKERS: Great Horned Owl: singles Lakeview 5 Mar, Thompson Park, Watertown 14 May, ULL 22 May; pair Henderson 5 Mar. Barred Owl: one Black Lake 26 May. N. Saw-whet Owl: one DOR Pierrepont 2 Apr. Com. Nighthawk: arr Watertown 29 May. Whip-poor-will: arr Canton 5 May; six Black Lake 26 May (DK). Chimney Swift: arr Canton 25 Apr; 50 Massena 3 May. Ruby-throated Hummingbird: pair Pierrepont 17 May thru; three Massena 17 May; two Canton 31 May. Belted Kingfisher: arr Canton 24 Apr. Red-bellied Woodpecker: periodic at feeder in Henderson thru (LC). Yellow-bellied Sapsucker: arr Canton 23 Apr; several thru. N. Flicker: abundant Henderson mid-Apr. Apparent Yellow-shafted x Red-shafted intermediate on Woodbridge Corners-Rensselaer Falls Rd. 31 May, dead on road (specimen frozen); possible sighting of one in same vicinity in 1982.

FLYCATCHERS-STARLINGS: E. Wood-Pewee: six Massena 17 May; three Canton 28 May. E. Phoebe: arr Canton 6 Apr; numbers still down (LC). Horned Lark: 50 Canton 20 Apr; one Canton 16 May. Purple Martin: 30 Massena 1 May. Mixed swallows: 200 Canton 15 May. Cliff Swallow: 2,000 pairs in Massena (600-800 Moses-Saunders Dam) 1 May (MB, JVR). Gray Jay: one Seevey's Corners 22 May (DW). Com. Raven: two Canton (M & EH). Tufted Titmouse: one Henderson 24 Apr. Winter Wren: one Massena 22 May. Sedge Wren: one ULL 29 May; 5 Sayer Rd., DeKalb 26 May (DK). Golden-crowned Kinglet: two Massena 1 May; Pierrepont 5 May. Ruby-crowned Kinglet: 20 Massena 1 May; one Canton 28 May. E. Bluebird: arr DeKalb 6 Apr. nesting Pierrepont and Potsdam in May. Swainson's Thrush: one Massena 23 May (JVR). Hermit Thrush: singles S. Colton and Massena 1 May (MB). Am. Robin: 150 over heating pipes in lawn on St. Lawrence U. campus 21 Apr. N. Mockingbird:

one Lisbon thru Mar; one Ogdensburg 8 Mar (NS); 5 Massena 17 May (MB). Brown Thrasher: arr Canton 30 Apr; very abundant. Cedar Waxwing: arr 12 Pierrepont 21 Apr. N. Shrike: one Lakeview WMA 20 Mar; one Pierrepont 23 Mar; one Henderson 25 Mar.

VIREOS-WARBLERS: Solitary Vireo: arr Watertown 7 May. Philadelphia Vireo: one Thompson Park, Watertown 21 May (RW). Warbling Vireo: arr Massena 7 May, abundant. Twenty-two species of warblers were reported. Tennessee Warbler: one WH 14 May; one Canton 26 May. Nashville Warbler: arr Massena 7 May. Cape May Warbler: arr Massena 7 May; arr Canton 12 May. Bay-breasted Warbler: Massena 7 May; none Canton. Blackpoll Warbler: Massena 13, 14 May; Canton 29 May. Mourning Warbler: Massena 18 May. Com. Yellowthroat: arr Canton 7 May.

TANAGERS-WEAVERS: Scarlet Tanager: Massena 8 May, abundant thereafter. N. Cardinal: five resident in Massena (MB). Indigo Bunting: singles Canton 13, 22 May, pair 17 May. Am. Tree Sparrow: 4 Pierrepont 20 Apr. Field Sparrow: one Pierrepont 2 May. Vesper Sparrow: one Pt. Peninsula 1 May. Fox Sparrow: arr Pierrepont 23 Mar, pair thru 21 Apr. White-crowned Sparrow: arr Watertown 7 May, max 10 per day mid-May; five Pierrepont 8 May. Dark-eyed Junco: max 15 at feeder in Pierrepont 21 Apr. Red-winged Blackbird: arr Canton 6 Mar. Flocks of mixed blackbirds first two weeks of Apr. E. Meadowlark: arr ULL 30 Mar, seem up this year. Rusty Blackbird: one Lisbon 29 Mar (JVR); two Pt. Peninsula 1 May (RW). **ORCHARD ORIOLE:** one Potsdam 31 May, singing (MDiG). Purple Finch: 12 Pierrepont 21 Apr; 75 (total count) Massena 1 May (MB). House Finch: at least two pairs in Canton in May (M & EH, KC). Evening Grosbeak: large flocks Canton 20-22 Mar; 30 Pierrepont 20 Apr; 55 Massena 1 May. Am. Goldfinch: abundant thru.

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REGION 7 -- ADIRONDACK-CHAMPLAIN

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Both adherents of the El Niño shifting ocean current theories and followers of the Mt. St. Helens-El Chichón-Kileuea volcanic ash and dust school of meteorology agreed that the weather continued unusual during the Spring 1983 season. The balmy winter held into March, which came in like a lamb before getting tough. By 8 March the Boquet River was largely open, but there was light snow on the 13th, and on 14 March Ray Brook was the coldest spot in the nation at +12^o, yet winter temperatures were still almost 7^o warmer than long-term averages at mid-month. Sap buckets were imitating Northern Saw-whets along back roads until a cold snap sent thermometers dropping to -4^o at Newcomb on the 25th. March hawkwatchers, those eternal optimists, had to settle for a single Common Raven headed north past Belfrey Mt. on the 12th.

Then came "Aprill whis his shoures soot," that more than pierced the drought of March to the root, as Chaucer put it. By the 25th it was the second wettest April on record. And it began snowing—nearly 16" in parts of the Region on 17 April, followed by a storm that added a record 20" on 19-20 April—only the fifth late April storm of this century at Plattsburgh. Striking at the height of migration for Fox Sparrows and Dark-eyed Juncos, the storm forced extraordinary numbers of these and other species into yards with feeders and out onto plowed road shoulders.