

REGION 7 - ADIRONDACK-CHAMPLAIN

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Cold and snow marked the start of the period, with Plattsburgh -11° F on 9 March and temperatures 19° F to 27° F below long-term averages on some dates by mid-month. The biggest storm of the season dumped a foot of snow 13-14 March, bringing accumulations on the High Peaks to about seven feet. Lovely high pressure dropped the thermometer to 6° F at Newcomb 27 March before the barometer dropped on 29 March, adding up to a foot more snow. This was the third coldest March on record, with over 16" of snowfall (64" seasonal) in lower parts of the region and only 52% sunshine.

The next month began with rain, got cold, and turned to light snow by 8 April with temperatures 10° F cooler than long-term averages. The first half of the month saw only 50% sunshine; the second half began with hail and thunderstorms as a massive low moved to the west. The few fair days (22-23 April) were followed by cloudy, rainy, and cold days of adverse winds (24-25 April). Finally, the weather began to break and the hawks began to move. Coot Hill had 20 birds 26 April, 77 on 27 April, 120 on 28 April, and 68 on 29 April. During six days between 21-29 April a total of 327 raptors were counted from Coot Hill, plus seven more on Belfrey Mt. 23 April.

Early May was marked by more rain and cold, with a delayed migration. Bird-banding operations were conducted on Crown Point peninsula 10-14 May for the ninth consecutive year, although adverse conditions provided only 36 individuals of 14 species, plus returns. Highlight was the first return, at 8 p.m. on 13 May with a cold front pushing in, of a female Yellow Warbler banded at the same station 17 May, 1979. Cold, blustery rains on 19 May, together with a NOAA Small Craft Advisory, forced the seven member team on the Four Brothers Islands to return to the mainland and postpone the Ring-billed Gull census until 24 May, but not before confirming a Double-crested Cormorant as a new breeding species for the region. Lake Champlain stood at 97.96' on 2 March, rising to 99.28' on 27 April, and still above 98 feet at the end of May. Once again landing beaches on the Four Brothers were under water, but management activities were completed by High Peaks Audubon in spite of difficulties. Highest party totals on the mid-May "Big Day" bird counts were 86 species in Hamilton County, 96 species in Franklin, and 97 species in Essex, although the cumulative list for the three-month season was about 192 species, plus a morph ("Blue Goose") and subspecies ("Yellow" Palm Warbler).

Recent publications of regional note include "The Four Brothers" by Robert F. Hall in *The Conservationist* March-April issue, John M. C. Peterson's "NYS Breeding Bird Atlas" in the April *Adirondack*, and a "Checklist of Birds" in the *Adirondack Wildguide*, just published by the Adirondack Conservancy and The Adirondack Council, and listing 279 species of birds recorded in the Adirondack Park through 1983, of which 193 are presumed to breed. This season one new species - Thayer's Gull - was added to the Park list, and one more - Double-crested Cormorant - was found nesting as stated earlier. The season also provided a number of regional rarities, including two Eared Grebes, the mysterious return

of the long-extirpated Northern Bobwhite, the dramatic if untimely end of a Prothonotary Warbler, and two sightings of possibly the same wayward Yellow-headed Blackbird in the lakes district of the Adirondack boreal zone.

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LOONS-DUCKS: Transient Com. Loons were on Penfield Pd. 15 April, heard flying over Moriah 20 April, and on Moody Pd. 29 April. Two **EARED GREBES** were near a Big Tupper dock 2 April, "dark, golden feathers sticking out of sides of head" (MV, *fide* CD), for first Franklin Co. and second Regional record (earlier records from SLCBC and Clinton Co. are no longer accepted). Three Double-crested Cormorants migrated by Coot Hill 26 April, with 75 going by the next day, and one was at Chazy Landing 12 May. Cormorants have frequented the Four Brothers Islands for at least 33 years and, finally, on 19 May an adult was on a nest in a birch tree on Island B (TB, GF, MG, JP); this constitutes the first nesting record for the region and the Adirondack Park. Am. Bittern: arr Moody Pd. 28 April. Great Blue Heron: arr LaChute R. 26 March. Great Egret: in a tree in marsh on Raquette R. 18 April (GS) and at Chazy Landing 12 May (MG). A Snowy Egret was spearing minnows near the Westport sewer plant 8 May (GC), while a Cattle Egret was at Chazy Landing 5-9 May (J & MG). Green-backed Heron: arr LaChute R. 1 May. Black-crowned Night-Heron: several imm Crown Point peninsula in early May and one at L. Alice 9 May. Glossy Ibis: Chazy Landing 26 May (MG). Two Tundra Swans were near Raquette L. in early May (*fide* GL). This was an exceptional season for Snow Geese: Chazy Landing from 24 March, 12 flying lead for a wedge of Canadas at Essex 30 March, 60-75 (several "Blue" morphs) headed north at Crown Point 9 April, several (including "Blue" morph) with Whallon's Bay Canadas in early April, 40 in flight Essex 10 April, two flocks c. 120 each over Moriah same day, 1,000 (including three "Blues") at Chazy Landing 13 April, 35 flying over Coot Hill 27 April, three on Island C of the Four Brothers 19 May and 24 May, and 13 at Chazy Landing up to 27 May. Two Canada Geese with yellow collars at Chazy Landing 18 April had been marked 16 Jan in New Jersey (J & MG). Wood Duck: arr Penfield Pd. 15 April, two clutches in nest boxes, one in natural cavity Kings Bay WMA 6 May. Green-winged Teal: 25 Chazy Landing 18 April. N. Pintail: five Chazy Landing 18 April. Blue-winged Teal: male, Essex Station 19 May. N. Shoveler: pair Chazy Landing 2 May. Gadwall: two pair Chazy Landing 18 April, pair Four Brothers 19 May. Am. Wigeon: one Tupper L. 3 April, four pair Chazy Landing 19 April. Ring-necked Duck: 8-10 Tupper L 21 April, pair Keeseville 26 April. Greater Scaup: Chazy Landing 18 April, pair Rouses Point 31 May (J & MG). Lesser Scaup: two Tupper L. 5 April and 13 April; 20 scaup (sp.) at Ausable Point 24 April. Com. Goldeneye: pair Ausable R. 23 April, two full clutches in Little Chazy nest boxes 28 April. Bufflehead: pair Tupper L. 13 April. Hooded Merganser: two Tupper L. 10 March, full clutch Little Chazy R. nest box 28 April, Corbeau Creek nest box 9 May. Com. Merganser: pair arr Boquet R. 16 March.

HAWKS-ALCIDS: Two Turkey Vultures were at Crown Point by 1 April, max 15 Coot Hill 28 April. Osprey: arr Tupper L. 19 April, max 15 Coot Hill 27 April. Bald Eagle: Tupper L. 22 March, adult Ticonderoga Marsh 2 April tried to feed on fish on the ice, but was chased off by four gulls; two adults and one imm seen almost daily, sometimes all day, at Tupper L. thru 9 April, last there on 22 April. N. Harrier: male arr Crown Point 1 April, migrants still passing Coot Hill 29 April. Cooper's Hawk: arr Moriah 28 April, nest found

16 May (TB, NM). Red-shouldered Hawk: nest with one egg found near Keeseville 26 April (D & JC), but migrants still passing Coot Hill two days later. First two Broad-winged Hawks passed Coot Hill 21 April, max 76 there 28 April. Red-tailed Hawk: Chazy 31 March, max 15 Coot Hill 27 April. A dark phase Rough-legged Hawk was migrating at Keeseville 22 April (D & JC). Golden Eagle: imm Coot Hill 27 Apr, another there 29 Apr ((E), JP), and one was reported picking up raccoon-sized prey along road near Saranac Lake (PS, *vide* TD). Merlin: one Belfrey Mt. hawkwatch 23 April (TB, GC). Peregrine Falcon: adult Whallonsburg 30 March (JPa), Coot Hill 29 April, adult snatched a Rock Dove at the Saranac Lake Grand Union on 30 April and appeared several times after (RH), and a migrant passed the Four Brothers Islands on 3 May (RH, DY). The origin of a **NORTHERN BOBWHITE** heard 19 May just north of Point au Roche is a mystery (H & RB); the last regional record was collected at Willsboro by Augustus Paine some 90 years ago! Com. Moorhen: arr Chazy Landing 12 May. The same location had Black-bellied Plover 27 May and Semipalmated Plover 26 May. Killdeer arr Ticonderoga 20 Mar. Greater Yellowlegs: two Chazy Landing 28 April, one there 12 May, one Westport beach 18 May. Solitary Sandpiper: two Moody Pd. and one Crown Point peninsula 12 May. Spotted Sandpiper: arr Chazy Landing and Crown Point 12 May. Upland Sandpiper: arr Chazy Landing 27 April. Chazy Landing also had eight Ruddy Turnstones and two Semipalmated Sandpipers 26 May, two Dunlins 9 May, and six Short-billed Dowitchers 12 May. Com. Snipe: arr Tupper L. 18 April, where Am. Woodcock arr 9 April. Bonaparte's Gull: six were on the Rouse's Point breakwater 31 May (J & MG). The 24 May actual ground count of Ring-billed Gull nests on Isl. C of Four Brothers tallied 16,697 active nests, down slightly from 17,347 last year, but above the first count of 15,033 in 1982. Pink seagulls set some hearts racing and phones ringing. As the ten thousand Ring-billed Gull nests on Young Island (South Sister), Vermont, were censused for the first time, researchers from the University of Vermont dusted each set of eggs with red dye, producing numerous reports of pink-bellied adults from Clinton, Essex, and Franklin Cos; several even appeared in the midst of the colony on Four Brothers in just a matter of days! Two second-summer **THAYER'S GULLS** were found at Westport beach 18 May for a first county, regional, and Adirondack Park record (EJ, JP; later TB, GC, NM). A Glaucous Gull was at Ausable Point 1 April (SO). Great Black-backed Gull: 16 mostly subadults Crown Point bridge 1 April, several still at Chazy Landing through late May, and one or two pair nesting on each of the Four Brothers. Com. Tern: two Chazy Landing 9 May. Black Tern: one arr Chazy Landing 9 May, four or five thereafter, one arr Tupper L Marsh 18 May.

PIGEONS-WOODPECKERS: Great Horned Owl: Chilson, Crown Point, Essex, Paradox, and Westport. Barred Owl: Chilson, Paradox, Penfield, and Westport. Long-eared Owl: one along LaChute R. 21 March (JC). Short-eared Owl: North Farm Rd., Clinton Co., 6 May (JR). N. Saw-whet Owls began tooting at Paradox 5 March, Blue Ridge 24 March, Elizabethtown 1 April, Chilson and Ironville early April, and one was found dead 16 March near a Tupper Lake feeder. Whip-poor-will: Crown Point 12 May. Red-headed Woodpecker: The Glen 26 May (RH). Black-backed Woodpecker: female, Newcomb 17 April (WC).

FLYCATCHERS-STARLINGS: Purple Martin arr Champlain 28 April. 20 Tree Swallows arr LaChute R. 26 March. N. Rough-winged Swallow: 10-15 Point au Roche 20 May (MG). Com. Raven: pair in nuptial flight at Essex 27 March, noted at new cliff site at Pok-o-moon-shine, several migrants headed north past both Belfrey Mt. and Coot Hill hawkwatches 22-28 April, and a northerly record from the Old Chazy dump 29 April. A "white-capped" leucistic Black-capped Chickadee was at the Crown Point Historic Site 12-13 May, mated with a normal bird. Two Boreal Chickadees continued to visit a Newcomb feeder through 18 April, and two Tufted Titmice continued to come to a Crown Point feeder. A dozen Brown Creepers were migrating at Moriah 29 April, yet a pair nest-building near Elizabethtown 6 May. A flock of a dozen Golden-crowned Kinglets were in hazelnut bushes at Paradox 10 April, where a Ruby-crowned Kinglet arr 17 April. Blue-gray Gnat-

catchers were at Crown Point and Port Kent in early May. A Gray-cheeked Thrush, a rare migrant in the region, was at Moriah 22 April (GC). N. Mockingbird: Newcomb 17 April. A Brown Thrasher visited a Peru feeder from 8 Dec to 25 April (VM). Bohemian Waxwing: 12 Essex 1 April (JPa). Loggerhead Shrike: one south of Tupper L 21 April (DR).

VIREOS-WARBLEDERS: Keen competition among regional observers, as always, produced a host of arrival dates and good finds. Solitary Vireo: Newcomb 28 April (WC). Warbling Vireo: Elizabethtown 7 May (JP). Red-eyed Vireo: Paradox 12 May (MB). Tennessee Warbler: Paradox 23 May (MB). Nashville Warbler: Moody Pd. 3 May (D & MB). N. Parula: Paradox 7 May (MB), Crown Point 13 May, Elizabethtown 20 May. Yellow Warbler: Crown Point and Tupper Lake 11 May (JP, CD). Chestnut-sided Warbler: Paradox 7 May (MB). Magnolia Warbler: Tupper Lake 17 May (CD). Cape May Warbler: Tupper Lake 11 May (CD), plus migrants at Plattsburgh 16-18 May (H & RB). Black-throated Blue Warbler: Paradox 7 May (MB). Yellow-rumped Warbler: Keeseville 22 April (D & JC). Black-throated Green Warbler: Moody Pd. 1 May (D & MB). Blackburnian Warbler: Paradox 7 May (MB). Pine Warbler: Moody Pd. 22 May (D & MB). Prairie Warbler: singing male Crown Point 11 May (TB, JP). Palm Warbler: ("Yellow" Palm) Keeseville 22 April (D & JC); Port Kent 2 May (MM); Plattsburgh 18 May (H & RB); Moody Pd. 20 May (D & MB). Black-and-white Warbler: Moriah and Paradox 29 April (NM, MB). Am. Redstart: Paradox 11 May (MB). Prothonotary Warbler: singing male along Dry Mill Brook, Peru, near Ausable Marsh was feeding when caught by a Sharp-shinned Hawk, who landed on the bank to get a better grip and then flew off into the pines with the first Clinton Co. record in its talons (E & SB). Ovenbird: Moriah 29 April (NM). N. Waterthrush: Auger Pd. 28 April (D & JC). Louisiana Waterthrush: Keeseville and Moriah 22 April (D & JC, TB); Elizabethtown 3 May (JP); the three singing males found in one Atlas block on Hammond and Hoisington Brooks, Westport 27 May (EJ, JP) are suggestive of regional abundance and distribution of this species, usually overlooked prior to the Atlas, and still only sketchily known. Mourning Warbler: Elizabethtown 22 May (JP). Com. Yellowthroat: Paradox 10 May (MB). Wilson's Warbler: Moody Pd. 22 May (D & MB); pair, I-87 rest area north of Frontiertown 27 May (LM, ER). Canada Warbler: Paradox 20 May (MB).

TANAGERS-WEAVERS: Last Am. Tree Sparrows were at Elizabethtown 20 April (JP) and Tupper L 22 April (CD). Fox Sparrow: reports of one or two from Elizabethtown, Newcomb, Paradox, and Peru from 9-20 April. Lincoln's Sparrow: banded Crown Point peninsula 12 May and 14 May (JP), and one visited a Newcomb feeder (WC). White-crowned Sparrow: Moriah 28 April to Tupper L 20 May. Dark-eyed Junco: returning migrants began to appear in early April; max 100+ Paradox 13 April and 150 Chilson 20 April. Snow Bunting: 200 Wadhams and several at a Tupper L feeder in early March. **YELLOW-HEADED BLACKBIRD:** a bird described as a female was at a Raquette L feeder 11 May (*fide* GL); a bird first described also as a female, but later felt to be a subadult male, was at a Tupper L feeder 27-30 May (C & JC, CD, TD, mob), and may have been the same individual, providing first records for both Hamilton and Franklin Cos. Orchard Oriole: male, Crown Point peninsula 14 May (TB, JP; also EJ). N. Oriole: arr Tupper L 11 May (CD). Purple Finch: male arr Paradox 3 April (MB). House Finches were reported from Newcomb, Ticonderoga, and Tupper L. Red Crossbill: Paradox 7 March (MB). Last Com. Redpoll was at Champlain 7 April. Pine Siskins, Am. Goldfinches, and Evening Grosbeaks were present through the end of May.

Addendum: Two of 18 Brant feeding in fields south of Great Chazy boat launching site 6 Nov 1983 wore large yellow leg bands bearing bold letters. They had been banded 8 Aug near Cape Dominion, southern Baffin Island, Northwest Territory, Canada, near the Arctic Circle, some 1,400 miles to the north. The birds are part of a study examining to what extent Brant from different breeding colonies intermix while on their wintering grounds along the Atlantic coast of the U.S. (J & MG).

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