

REGION 1 – NIAGARA FRONTIER

STEPHEN W. EATON

Except for two brief spells of cold weather early and mid-month, March was pleasant with relatively mild temperatures. The 1.95 inches of total precipitation was 1.02 below normal and 44% of possible sunshine was twice the sunshine of gloomy February. The lowest temperature at Buffalo International Airport was on 8 Mar when it was 2°F, but -5° at Belmont. The low at Jamestown was -12° on the tenth. The final week of March was unseasonably warm, sunny and dry, the temperature climbing to 70° on 25 Mar and then to a high of 74° on 29 Mar at Buffalo, and even higher inland. The ground was mostly bare of snow through the month, except in the snow belt. Ice-off at Amity Lake, Allegany Co., occurred on 26 Mar, six days early; on the same day but 5 days early (2 April is 30 year mean with SD of $3 \pm$ days) at Eaton's Pond, Cattaraugus Co. This last warm spell resulted in high counts of migrating hawks at Grimsby.

April started and ended with record heat but in between were two cold snaps. Temperatures for the month averaged 2.4° above normal at Buffalo and 5° above normal at Belmont, Allegany Co. Temperatures reached 70° or above on seven days; five of these came in the final week. This brought eleven species of warblers before the end of the month, five less than in 1985. The first two-thirds of the month was quite wet, with rain on eight consecutive days starting on 4 Apr, but the last eight days were totally dry, providing another contrast for a changeable month. Precipitation in the form of rain was 0.3 inches above normal for the month. Snow in Buffalo was 1.7 inches. March and April added up to "an on-again off-again spring" to quote Terry Mosher. May was dry, bright and warm with temperatures reaching 70° at Buffalo on 16 days, with 55% possible sunshine. Most of the 4.42 inches of rain, 1.5 inches above normal, came on the 18th, 19th and 20th and recharged the soil after a very dry period from 21 Apr to 18 May. This allowed fairly continuous migration up to that time.

Certainly the most exciting event in Region 1 was the successful nesting of a pair of Alaskan-hacked, four year old, Bald Eagles at Iroquois National Wildlife Refuge. To "put the frosting on the cake" the Refuge Manager, Edwin Chandler, could watch from his headquarters with a 60-power telescope and keep track of events as they unfolded. The nest had been located during winter and the pair returned in early March. The eggs, laid about 10 Apr, hatched 14 May. If all goes well they should fledge sometime in Aug. This is the state's third successful eagle's nest since the hacking program began.

The Osprey hacking program at the Allegheny Reservoir on the Allegany Indian Reservation has still not produced young Ospreys but a nest building male was still trying to lure receptive females into the area to form a permanent bond. Copulation was seen again on the nest on 29 Apr but the female failed to be further seduced.

The great mass movement of raptors from western New York to their well stocked larder in the north is best documented outside Region 1 at Grimsby, Ontario, along the Niagara Escarpment 30 miles west of Niagara Falls where

Walter Klabunde reported an all time high March count of 5361 hawks, 7672 hawks in Apr, and 783 hawks in May. The total count of 13,835 hawks of 15 species for the entire period, March through May, was slightly lower than the 1980-85 average.

One small pocket of interesting prairie birds has been located near Fredonia in Chautauqua County. Up to three singing male Sedge Wrens after 22 May and five Henslow's Sparrows after 15 May were found in the same field and just down the road, Terry Mosher reported that a pair of Vesper Sparrows had settled down.

It was a good spring for what we used to call the southern herons. Great Egrets arrived on 28 Mar and increased in numbers to 25 by 4 May at Iroquois National Wildlife Refuge. Then Bruce Chilton and Terry Mosher found a subadult **LITTLE BLUE HERON** in Chautauqua County at Sheridan on 9 May, followed by an adult that Jeanine Flory discovered at Pomfret on 18 May. Don Endres found a **SNOWY EGRET** at the Tonawanda Wildlife Management Area on 17 May.

The gypsy moth invasion of Cattaraugus County eased off a bit but there were patches of defoliation in poplars, hawthorns and oaks. In Allegany County they were on the increase as they were in Chautauqua County. Eur. Starlings, Rose-breasted Grosbeaks, Northern Orioles and other species including the two cuckoos, found the small larvae, which started hatching on 7 May, particularly to their liking, according to Tim Baird.

The Buffalo Ornithological Society holds a region-wide survey of birds in mid-Apr. May and Tom Harper summarized highlights of the April count. The highest counts since its inception about 45 years ago were made for: Great Blue Heron 271, Wild Turkey 166, Common Moorhen 4, House Finch 1,268. High counts for the past ten years were: Black-crowned Night-Heron 19, Mute Swan 12, Bufflehead 1,249, Cooper's Hawk 21, Barred Owl 6, Downy Woodpecker 355, Eastern Phoebe 227, White-breasted Nuthatch 313, Winter Wren 20, Golden-crowned Kinglet 525, Eastern Bluebird 120, Hermit Thrush 28, Northern Mockingbird 15. Low counts over the last ten years were: Tundra Swan 26, Common Goldeneye 247 and Cedar Waxwing 35.

Rarities reported this season were: Snowy Egret, Little Blue Heron, Greater White-fronted Goose, King Rail, Sandhill Crane, American Oystercatcher, Laughing Gull, Sedge Wren, Yellow-throated Warbler, Kentucky Warbler, Yellow-headed Blackbird, and Brewer's Blackbird. Also, a possible Mississippi Kite, too distant for positive identification, was reported from Pine Hill, Cattaraugus Co. by Steve Eaton and Tim Baird.

Contributors: Allegany Co. Bird Club, Robert Andrle, Tim Baird, Lois Beck, R. Biss, Buffalo Ornithological Society, Robert Brock, Lou & Doris Burton, Cattaraugus Co. Bird Club, Ed Chandler, Bruce Chilton, Don & Jane Clark, Dick Collins, William D'Anna, David Dister, Stephen & Betty Eaton, Donald Endres, Jeanine Flory, David Gagne, Tom Harper, Jamestown Audubon Society, Tom Jurczak, Walter Klabunde, Clarence Klingensmith, Lake Erie Bird Club, J & M Lewis, Luensman, Terry & Judy Mosher, Vivian & Raymond Pitzrick, Betsy Potter, Fran Rew, Marty Sanden, Art Schaffner, Bob Sundell, Joe Thill.

Abbreviations: AC—April Count; ASP—Allegheny State Park; BWS—Bergeson Wildlife Sanctuary; BOS—Buffalo Ornithological Society; DH—Dunkirk Harbor; INWR—Iroquois National Wildlife Refuge; TFNP—Tifft Farm Nature Preserve; TWMA—Tonawanda Wildlife Management Area; WS—Wildlife Sanctuary.

LOONS-DUCKS: Com. Loon: arr Amity L 4 Apr; max 14 Allegheny Res 27 Apr; last three Allegheny Res 23 May. Horned Grebe: arr 120 Celeron 24 Mar; max 171 INWR 27 Mar. Red-necked Grebe: two Dunkirk Harbor 9 Mar. Double-crested Cormorant: arr Fort Niagara SP 1 Apr. Am. Bittern: arr TFNP and INWR 27 Apr; one BWS 17 May. Black-crowned Night-Heron: arr Times Beach 14 Apr; max 60 Niagara Falls heronry 28 Apr. Tundra Swan: arr Carrollton Twn, Catt 3 Mar, flock calling in passage; max 500 Swamp Rd, Catt, 22 Mar; last W Ellicott 30 Apr. **GREAT WHITE-FRONTED GOOSE:** two INWR 2 Apr (DE). Snow Goose: arr INWR 17 Mar; max four Somerset, Niag 12 Apr. Am. Black Duck: two Cuba Marsh 31 Mar. N. Shoveler: arr Falconer 11 Mar; max 26 INWR 31 Mar. Canvasback: none. Ring-necked Duck: arr INWR 11 Mar; max 287 BWS 25 Mar; 220 INWR 26 Mar, becoming more common as spring and fall migrant. Hooded Merganser: nine y tumbled from box Carrollton Twn, Catt, 10 Mar (SE & BE). Com. Merganser: two to nine Amity L all Apr; two Wellsville 25 Apr; one male and two females Allegheny R near Salamanca 24, 28 and 31 May, suggest nesting.

HAWKS-ALCIDS: Turkey Vulture: arr Java 11 Mar; max 48 Hamburg Apr, still on the increase in Region 1; nest with one egg ASP 5 May (R. Biss). Bald Eagle: single ad INWR, Allegheny Res. and Hamburg; ims from several areas. N. Harrier: 6 localities BOS Mar; five localities BOS Apr; two Cuba Marsh 13 May, female building nest (VP). N. Goshawk: one territorial pair all May, only report of possible nesting (TJ); one Pomfret 29 May (AS, BC). Broad-winged Hawk: arr BOS AC 13 Apr; max 678 Hamburg 26 Apr. **KING RAIL:** one BWS 7 May (DD); one TWMA 17 May (WD, mob), perhaps more widespread than we believe. **SANDHILL CRANE:** one Pendleton Twn, between Lockport and N. Tonawanda, Niag (J & ML). **AM. OYSTERCATCHER:** one Barcelona Harbor, Lake Erie, 22 May (MS!, mob). Upland Sandpiper: arr Kiantone 9 May. White-rumped Sandpiper: arr TFNP 17 May; one Kiantone Twn 24 May. Pectoral Sandpiper: arr Riverside Rd, Kiantone, 18 Mar (DD!); last BWS 10 May. Purple Sandpiper: five Goat I 3 Apr (BP!). Black Tern: one BWS 7 May, only report. Laughing Gull: one DH 9-21 Mar; partially hooded 18th (TM!, mob).

PIGEONS-WOODPECKERS: Black-billed Cuckoo: arr Carrollton Twn 12 May; Pomfret Twn 13 May. Snowy Owl: one Wheatfield 2 Mar. Com. Barn-Owl: one Tonawanda Twn 3 & 13 Apr. Com. Nighthawk: arr one Ellery Twn 17 May; one Olean 17 May. Chimney Swift: arr Westfield, Ripley and Times Beach 26 Apr. Ruby-throated Hummingbird: arr Forest Lawn, Buffalo, 6 May; and Amity L 7 May. Yellow-bellied Sapsucker: arr TFNP 1 Apr.

FLYCATCHERS-STARLINGS: E. Wood Pewee: arr Pomfret and Carrollton Twn 13 May. Acadian Flycatcher: arr Zoar Valley 7 May. Alder Flycatcher: arr Amity Twn 16 May. Willow Flycatcher: arr Pt Gratiot 17 May. Least Flycatcher: arr Amity L 29 Apr. E. Phoebe: arr Alfred 16 Mar; two Pomfret 25 Mar; one Amity L 26 Mar; one Carrollton Twn 26 Mar; one Amity L feeding on sumac 11 Apr. Great Crested Flycatcher: arr Lake Erie SP 28 Apr (T & JM!). E. Kingbird: arr Westfield 27 Apr (DD, mob!). Purple Martin: arr Ripley 14 Apr, one INWR 15 Apr. Tree Swallow: arr 12 INWR and four Amity L 26 Mar. N. Rough-winged Swallow: arr Pinehurst 19 Apr. Bank Swallow: arr two TFNP 26 Apr. Cliff Swallow: arr Pinehurst 26 Apr. Barn Swallow: arr Pinehurst 19 Apr. N. Raven: one Carrollton Twn, Irving Mills 16 Mar (TB). Com. Crow: pair building nest 19 Mar. Tufted Titmouse: nest 8 y Amity L Apr-May (VP). Carolina Wren: one Stockton Twn 13 Apr; one Eden 18-27 Apr; one Silver Creek 30 Apr. Marsh Wren: arr TWMA 10 May; one TFNP 11 May. E. Bluebird: arr Amity L 12 Mar; nine pairs on territory 3 Apr; 22 nesting

pairs Amity and Ward Twns May (VP), production on first nesting poor. Hermit Thrush: one Lake Erie SP 8 Mar, wintering bird; arr TFNP 1 Apr. Wood Thrush: arr Pomfret Twn 30 Apr. Gray Catbird: arr Westfield 19 Apr. N. Mockingbird: one Dunkirk 1 Mar; three Porter Twn 2 Mar. Brown Thrasher: arr Belmont 18 Apr. Water Pipit: arr Somerset Twn 6 Apr; 80 Ripley 12 Apr; max 95 Pomfret Twn 10 May, late. N. Shrike: four localities Mar.

VIREOS-WARBLEDERS: Solitary Vireo: arr BWS and Carrollton Twn 19 Apr. Yellow-throated Vireo: arr INWR 17 May. Warbling Vireo: arr Amity Twn 22 Apr. Philadelphia Vireo: arr INWR 10 May. Red-eyed Vireo: arr Carrollton Twn 6 May. Blue-winged Warbler: arr Amity L 30 Apr (VP!). Golden-winged Warbler: arr three Cold Spring Twn 10 May; one "Brewster's" Warbler: TWMA 17 May; one "Lawrence's" Warbler: Cold Spring 10 May (TM, mob!). Tennessee Warbler: arr Wales 9 May. Orange-crowned Warbler: arr Goat I 15 May. Nashville Warbler: arr Pomfret 27 Apr. N. Parula: arr INWR 11 May. Yellow Warbler: arr Amity Twn 27 Apr. Chestnut-sided Warbler: arr Amity Twn and Goat I 7 May. Magnolia Warbler: arr Forest Lawn Buffalo 6 May. Cape May Warbler: arr TFNP 6 May. Black-throated Blue Warbler: arr TFNP 11 May; one Ward Twn 24 May, very scarce this year in breeding areas. Yellow-rumped Warbler: arr Hamburg Twn 1 Apr. Black-throated Green Warbler: arr Pomfret Twn and Silver Creek 25 Apr. Blackburnian Warbler: arr Carrollton 24 Apr. **YELLOW-THROATED WARBLER:** one Quaker Run, Science L, ASP, after 24 May (WD, RB, mob), where nested 1984. Pine Warbler: arr Farmersville Sta 10 Apr, at feeder; one INWR 20 Apr. Prairie Warbler: arr Amity Twn 14 May; five Carrollton Twn, Chau, 17 May. Palm Warbler: arr Lake Erie SP 28 Apr. Bay-breasted Warbler: arr TFNP 11 May. Blackpoll Warbler: arr INWR 17 May. Cerulean Warbler: arr Goat I 7 May. Am. Redstart: arr two Amity L 29 Apr. Prothonotary Warbler: arr Farmersville Sta 7 May, banded, very early (DC); two INWR 31 May (DE). Ovenbird: arr Amity Twn 29 Apr (VP!). N. Waterthrush: arr TFNP 1 May. Louisiana Waterthrush: arr Carrollton Twn, Catt, 19 Apr; Amity Twn 21 Apr. Kentucky Warbler: one Salamanca Twn 18 May (TB). Mourning Warbler: arr Orchard Park 7 May. Com. Yellowthroat: arr Canadaway Creek Nature Sanctuary 4 May. Hooded Warbler: arr Carrollton Twn, Catt, 7 May. Wilson's Warbler: arr TFNP 15 May. Canada Warbler: one Portland Twn 11 May, only report. Yellow-breasted Chat: one Amity Twn 7-31 May; two Pomfret Twn 24 May.

TANAGERS-WEAVERS: Rose-breasted Grosbeak: arr Pomfret and Amity Twn 14 May. Rufous-sided Towhee: arr Belmont 8 Apr. Chipping Sparrow: arr Pomfret 8 Apr. Vesper Sparrow: arr Amity L 1 Apr; max seven Pomfret Twn 4 Apr; six other reports BOS region. Savannah Sparrow: arr N. Boston 23 Mar. Grasshopper Sparrow: arr Amity L 21 Apr. Fox Sparrow: arr Amity Twn 21 Mar. Lincoln's Sparrow: arr Forest Lawn, Buffalo, 6 May. Bobolink: arr Scio and Pomfret 1 May. **YELLOW-HEADED BLACKBIRD:** one Mayville 11 Apr (Luensman!). **BREWER'S BLACKBIRD:** one Fissell Rd, Kiantone Twn (RS, mob). Orchard Oriole: S. Valley Twn 10-17 May on 1985 territory (TM, mob). Evening Grosbeak: last Belmont 20 May, late.

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REGION 2 – GENESEE

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This spring produced a number of very different highlights. There were very early arrivals, good totals and many unusual species. A few negative trends also