

SPRING ARRIVALS IN SOUTHERN NASSAU CO., NEW YORK

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DeBenedictis (1987) instituted a system for systematically reporting in *The Kingbird* arrival and departure dates for a group of common migratory birds in New York State. As mentioned in that report, much data in Regional reports is biased by several effects: 1) exceptional dates are more likely to be reported, 2) the loss of data from the five day midweek period when most birders cannot birdwatch, 3) the loss of data from 12 day midweek periods when it also rains on a weekend, and 4) the diversity of most reporting Regions. After reading the original article and the subsequent attempts to draw conclusions and inferences from the meaning of these first arrival dates (Spahn, 1987), I decided to add another set of data to the already "confused" situation. I wondered how variable these dates would be if they were gathered from a single small area.

The area where I live and do most of my birding coincides with the center of the Southern Nassau Christmas Count Area. Except for an occasional trip to Jamaica Bay Wildlife Sanctuary, almost all of my data comes from Hempstead Lake State Park, Jones Beach State Park and the large oak trees behind my house. Observations from the latter area serves to minimize the problem of loss of midweek data, but only for land birds which arrive in May. This area is small, covered consistently, includes both "normal" and "exceptional" dates and are gathered by a single observer.

I have a minimum of six records in the years 1980 through 1988 for 55 of the 92 species on the original list. The species not included are: 1) the species which winter on Long Island, 2) those not seen in at least six Springs and 3) those for which data either was missing or which I didn't see in the Spring. My arrival dates are summarized in Table I. They consist of the number of days before or after 1 May, which is listed as zero, that each species arrived in each year. Thus, an arrival date of 20 April appears as -11 and 8 May as +7. Missing dates are left blank.

The average date of first arrival for these 55 species over the last nine years was between 30 April and 7 May, an eight day span centered on 3 May. The mean has a two-sigma deviation of 4.23 days. In English this means that, statistically, there has been no significant difference from one season on Long Island to the next during this time period. If the midweek loss of data is considered, one would expect a bias of 3 days. This is what the data shows and any effects of early or late Springs don't appear in these data. Have our seasons on Long Island

been that uniform over the last nine years? I don't know what this all means, but it surely is interesting that there wasn't any difference between years.

Literature Cited

DeBenedictis, P. 1987. Editorial: Regional Boundaries and Migration Dates. *Kingbird* 37: 9-24.

Spahn, R. 1987. Highlights of the Spring Season. *Kingbird* 37: 133-142.
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Table 1. No. of days $\pm$ from May 1 each year

SPECIES	80	81	82	83	84	85	86	87	88	mean	no. yrs
Eastern Phoebe	-32	-40	-20		-37	-31	-46	-33	-28	-33	8
Pine Warbler	-32	-26		-8		-18	-32		-21	-23	6
Hermit Thrush	-11		-13			-11	-27	-20	-7	-15	6
Yellow-bellied Sapsucker	-18			-8	-16	-31		-12	0	-14	6
Tree Swallow	-32	2	8	0	-23	-18	-32	-12	-14	-13	9
Rufous-sided Towhee	-18	-40				-4	-11	1	-7	-13	6
Palm Warbler	-18	-26	-6	-8	-9	-18	-11		-7	-13	8
Blue-winged Teal		-12	-20	11	-9	-18	-25	-25	2	-12	8
Blue-gray Gnatcatcher	-18	-12	-13	7	-9	-18			-14	-11	7
Barn Swallow	-18	-5	-13	7	-9	-18	-11	-12	0	-9	9
Solitary Vireo	-18	-12	-6	-8	-9	-10	-4	2	-7	-8	9
Chipping Sparrow	-12	-5	-6	0	-9	-10	-11	-12	-7	-8	9
Black-and-white Warbler	-4	-5	-13	-8	-2	-11	-4	2	-7	-6	9
Lesser Yellowlegs	-25	-19	1	0	-9	-3	9		0	-6	8
Brown Thrasher	9	-26		0	5	-10		6	-7	-3	7
House Wren	-25	8	28		5	-4	4	-19	-7	-1	8
Common Tern	2	-5	8	0	-2	-3	-4	1	0	0	9
Ovenbird	2	2	-13	-1	5	-4	10	2	6	1	9
Solitary Sandpiper	-4	-5	15	7	5	-4	-4			1	7
Yellow Warbler	2	7	0	0	-2	-4	3	2	11	2	9
Gray Catbird	3	-1	1			1		2	7	2	6
Northern Parula	2	-1	1	0	5	-10	9	6	11	3	9
Black-throated Green Warbler	10	-1	0	6	5	3	-11	6	7	3	9
Semipalmated Plover	-11	15	8		5	-3	-4	6	7	3	8
Northern Waterthrush	2	2	-6	7	5	-4	16	2		3	8
Least Sandpiper	9	2	1	0	5	8	9	13	-14	4	9
Semipalmated Sandpiper	-4	-12	1	0	-9	15	10	13	20	4	9
Common Yellowthroat	2	15	7	6	5	1	3	-12	11	4	9
Indigo Bunting	17	16	12	6	-1		-9	-12	7	5	8
Scarlet Tanager	2	-1	7	0	5	3	8	6	11	5	9
Chimney Swift	9	9	12	11	9	-3	-4	6	-7	5	9
Yellow-throated Vireo	9	-12	1	14	12			6		5	6
Black-throated Blue Warbler	3		7	7	5	-4	10	6	11	6	8

Table 1. Continued.

Northern Oriole	8	0	1	7	9	1	8	6	11	6	9
Green-backed Heron	2	-5		4	16	-11	9	13	20	6	8
Eastern Kingbird	9	-1	1	11	9	3	14	6	7	7	9
Red-eyed Vireo	2	9	7	11	9	4	8	9	11	8	9
Cape May Warbler	3		12	11	5	8		6	11	8	7
Great Crested Flycatcher	9	9	7	6	9	5	10	6	11	8	9
Spotted Sandpiper	4	24	0	6	12	4	14	2	7	8	9
Wood Thrush	9	9	8	7	5	1	25	2	11	9	9
Chestnut-sided Warbler	5		12	11	5	11	10	9	11	9	8
American Redstart	2	16	7	11	9	11	16	6	7	9	9
Swainson's Thrush	15	16	1	11	5	8	16	6	11	10	9
Nashville Warbler	3		7	7	5	26	13			10	6
Rose-breasted Grosbeak	17	2	12	11	5	4	16	6	21	10	9
Magnolia Warbler	8	24	13	12	9	8	4	9	11	11	9
Veery	9	16	1	11	5	8	16	17	18	11	9
Marsh Wren	-11			27	26	15	3	13	11	12	7
Blackpoll Warbler	17	15	12	11	9	11	16	9	11	12	9
Tennessee Warbler	2	24	7	13	16		16	9	18	13	8
Canada Warbler	9	24	12	13	5	11	21	6	20	13	9
Eastern Wood-Pewee	11	16	12	11	9	15		30	7	14	8
Blackburnian Warbler	13	30	12	11	14	25	10	6	11	15	9
Bay-breasted Warbler	13	24	15	14	16	15	16	13	11	15	9
AVERAGE DATE	-1.1	1.3	3.0	5.8	2.7	-1.1	2.1	2.2	4.2	1.6	9
NO. OF SPECIES	54	48	49	49	51	52	48	49	51	55	

Each group consists of 11 consecutive species.

GROUP #1 AVERAGE	-21.5	-19.0	-10.4	-0.9	-15.1	-17.7	-22.1	-13.9	-9.4	-15.0	
GROUP #2 AVERAGE	-4.5	-4.5	2.2	-0.2	0.1	-5.6	1.3	-1.1	0.7	-1.4	
GROUP #3 AVERAGE	4.4	3.3	4.5	5.7	4.2	1.8	2.8	3.6	5.9	4.1	
GROUP #4 AVERAGE	6.2	8.6	5.6	8.7	8.5	4.1	13.0	6.5	10.7	7.9	
GROUP #5 AVERAGE	8.3	19.4	10.3	12.8	10.8	13.8	13.1	11.8	13.9	12.5	