

REGION 2 - GENESEE

KEVIN C. GRIFFITH

The spring season started on a frigid note with early March temperatures at 30° and below. Things improved of course, but at the end of the month the average was still a full degree below normal at 32.3°. Precipitation was the opposite, over an inch above average at 3.69 inches. April's temperature didn't show much improvement. The average of 42.1° was nearly four degrees below normal. April was the driest month of the season with a total of 1.62 inches, about 60% of normal. May's precipitation made up for that with a total of 5.99 inches, more than twice normal. Temperatures continued on the cool side with an average of 56.3°. An unexpected snowfall also added to the variety of May.

The rain and cold may have been responsible for the generally late arrivals of a number of species. The snow and rain created undesirable birding conditions, but sometimes also improved birding by grounding migrating birds. Notable was a March ice storm that grounded waterfowl. During this period any available location contained waterfowl and these concentrations were high in numbers. Contrarily, the weather made hawk watching difficult. Good conditions for hawk movement were inconsistent and this is reflected in the poor totals this season.

Loon and grebe totals were generally low. Red-throated Loon seemed to be down considerably. Red-necked Grebes were present, but only one large concentration materialized along the west lake shore. Two sightings of **Am. White Pelican** were the first here in the last few years. Herons and egrets showed no real surprises, but Great Egrets were relatively easy to find and peaked at eight at Braddock's Bay on 20 Apr. The waterfowl concentrations of March failed to keep up the overall season total, but there were some definite highlights. The first Regional **Ross' Goose** was seen by Robert and Susan Spahn on 2 Apr (details to Genesee Ornithological Society and NYSARC). Tundra Swan totals were excellent, a flock of 50 Snow Geese on the west lake shore on 3 Apr was noteworthy, and Redhead peaked at 4000 on Canadaigua Lake on 4 Mar. Another top waterfowl rarity was a cooperative **Eurasian Wigeon** at Irondequoit Bay that apparently arrived with the large waterfowl fallout in March.

The hawkwatch at Braddock Bay and this year at Sodus Bay was a bit lackluster. There were few massive flight days. Eagle totals were good and three Peregrine Falcons were sighted on two separate days. Highlights included **Black Vulture** and **Swainson's Hawk**. Eight **Sandhill Crane** at Braddock Bay on 27 Apr was amazing for the Region. Shorebirds were generally late and few in number. A group of 25 Sanderlings at Charlotte on 26 May, a very good count for spring, was the only highlight. Gulls turned out to be one of the more interesting

groups of the spring. Bonaparte's Gull numbers were very good, and rarities included **Laughing Gull**, Franklin's Gull, Little Gull and **Com. Black-headed Gull**. Terns were represented by the usual species and a good spring total for Caspian Tern.

Migrant owls were a little tougher to find than usual and tended to be late. A total of 113 owls were banded at the Braddock Bay Raptor Research Owl Banding Project. Common Nighthawk was scarce. After its high totals last fall a better spring flight was anticipated.

The passerine migration was mixed. As usual there were some good days and some bad days. The rain produced some good grounding conditions and there were a few days where numbers were good. 18-20 May were super days at the Kaiser-Manitou Beach Banding Station with a 500+ day on 20 May. Elizabeth Brooks stated that the birds were literally dripping off the trees. Overall, however, migrants seemed to be down in numbers. Flycatchers were noticeably scarce with poor totals of Olive-sided. Red-breasted Nuthatch and Brown Creeper seemed to be present in smaller numbers than usual. House Wrens continued to be reported in reduced numbers, and Sedge Wrens remained consistent with only one report. Kinglets were in fairly good supply during the season. Their numbers along the lake shore seemed stable relative to recent years. Thrushes were scarce early in the season but increased somewhat late in May. Cedar Waxwings were difficult to find early in the season but increased to expected totals by its end. Loggerhead Shrike reports continued to be few and far between.

While vireo numbers were generally down, Philadelphia Vireo was fairly easy to find during a two to three day stretch of May. Warblers followed the same trend: good numbers were reported on a few days but the overall totals were off again. The banding station recorded good numbers of Yellow, Magnolia, Bay-breasted, Wilson's and Canada Warblers. Cape May and Cerulean Warbler and N. Parula were noticeably scarce. Highlights included **Yellow-throated**, Prothonotary, Worm-eating, Kentucky and Connecticut Warblers, and Orange-crowned Warblers were reported more frequently than usual.

Rose-breasted Grosbeak and Indigo Bunting showed up at feeders in unprecedented numbers during the May snow storm. Sparrow totals were mediocre. Grasshopper and Henslow's Sparrows continued to be few in number with only a couple of strongholds left. Migrant sparrows like Lincoln's and White-throated were very scarce. White-crowned Sparrow seemed to be more abundant at times than the White-throated. Clay-colored Sparrow was the highlight for this group. A late female Yellow-headed Blackbird in Greece on 13 May was the most unusual icterid reported. Finches continued to be nearly nonexistent from earlier in the year. Pine Siskin and Evening Grosbeak numbers were way down from recent years, but this was to be expected with the kind of finch year we've had.

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Abbreviations: BB - Braddock Bay; DEP - Durand Eastman Park, Rochester; IB - Irondequoit Bay; ICW - Island Cottage Woods; LSP - Letchworth State Park; MB - Manitou Beach; PtB - Pt. Breeze; WL - west lake shore (L Ontario).

LOONS-DUCKS: Red-throated Loon: arr Charlotte 11 Mar; last Parma 14 May. Com. Loon: arr singles MB, BB 26 Mar. Red-necked Grebe: max 215 WL 6 Apr, only large concentration. **Am. White Pelican**: one Canadaigua L 7-8 May (fide EB), one Parma 9 May (FN,CC). Double-crested Cormorant: max 74 BB 28 May. Least Bittern: arr Greece 20 May. Great Egret: *intro*. Cattle Egret: one BB 9 May, two BB 12 May, uncommon. Black-crowned Night-Heron: arr two Greece 30 Apr. Tundra Swan: max 300 BB 19 Mar, last BB 25 May, very late. Mute Swan: one BB 13 Apr-31 May, continuing to spread? Greater White-fronted Goose: on BB 27 Mar (MD,FN), three BB 9 Apr (FN), uncommon but regular in recent years. Snow Goose: *intro* (DM). **Ross' Goose**: *intro*. Brant: one Greece 25 May, uncommon in spring. N. Pintail: max 450 WL 18 Mar. N. Shoveler: arr two BB 13 Mar. Eurasian Wigeon: male IB 18-23 Mar (DS, mob). Redhead: *intro*. Ring-necked Duck: max 300 WL 24 Mar. Hooded Merganser: max 300 WL 19 Mar.

HAWKS-ALCIDS: **Black Vulture**: singles Webster 13 Apr (D&DT), PtB 19 May (WL), BB 24 May (FN), great spring total, becoming regular. Bald Eagle: max five BB 27 Mar, 4 Apr, 20 May. N. Harrier: max 82 BB 4 Apr. Sharp-shinned Hawk: max 1251 BB 5 May. Cooper's Hawk: max 144 BB 4 Apr. N. Goshawk: max three BB 15 Mar, 27 Mar. Red-shouldered Hawk: max 507 BB 27 Mar. Broad-winged Hawk: max 8465 Sodus 26 Apr. **Swainson's Hawk**: singles BB 27 May (FN, RS) and 30 May (FN). Red-tailed Hawk: max 1117 BB 27 Mar. Rough-legged Hawk: max 85 BB 19 Apr. Golden Eagle: max three BB 24 Apr and 3 May. American Kestrel: max 152 BB 38 Mar. Merlin: max six BB 30 Apr. Peregrine Falcon: max three BB 30 Apr and 4 May. Wild Turkey: three BB 8 May, unusual along the lake shore but increasing. **Sandhill Crane**: *intro*. Upland Sandpiper: arr Hamlin 30 Apr. Whimbrel: three Charlotte 26 May (P&JS), only report. Sanderling: *intro*. Semipalmated Sandpiper: max 75 Kuckville 30 May. **Western Sandpiper**: max 25 PtB 26 May (WL), very good number for spring. White-rumped Sandpiper: one Kuckville 20 May, only report. Dunlin: arr two Hamlin 14 May. Wilson's Phalarope: female PtB 19 May (WL), only report. **Laughing Gull**: ad Charlotte 26 May (P&JS). Franklin's Gull: one BB 23 May (FN). Little Gull: two ad BB 3 Apr (FN), uncommon in spring. **Com. Black-headed Gull**: one PtB 8 May (WL), excellent spring report. Bonaparte's Gull: max 62 BB 30 May. Iceland Gull: one IB 1-15 Mar, one BB 30 Apr, one BB 22-31 May. Glaucous Gull: one Russell Station 13 Mar, one BB 22-26 Mar, one BB 15 Apr, poor year for white-winged gulls. Forster's Tern: arr BB 6 May.

PIGEONS-WOODPECKERS: Yellow-billed Cuckoo: arr ICW 26 May. Long-eared Owl: three BB 14 Mar. N. Saw-whet Owl: arr one MB 10 Mar; singles Greece 20 May (ST) and BB 22 May (FN), late. Whip-poor-will: arr ICW 30 Apr, few reports.

FLYCATCHERS-STARLINGS: Acadian Flycatcher: arr one Bergen Swamp 20 May. **Fish Crow**: one BB 6 Apr (FN), one Greece 7 May (KG), possibly the same individual, reports continue to increase. **Com. Raven**: one BB 27 Mar (FN), one South Bristol 5 Apr (JCz), good potential habitat for this species. Gray-cheeked Thrush: max eight ICW 26 May. **Loggerhead Shrike**: singles BB 23 Mar, Hamlin 23 Mar, BB 6 Apr, MB 8 Apr, all in the same general area and possibly the same bird.

VIREOS-WARBLED: Philadelphia Vireo: arr one MB 5 May. Blue-winged Warbler: arr one ICW 5 May. Golden-winged Warbler: arr one Several 13 May. Orange-crowned Warbler: nine reports May 16-25. **Yellow-throated Warbler**: one Greece 13 May (NM), one ICW 22 May (CC), 2nd and 3rd reports this year. Prairie Warbler: arr Genesee Country Museum Nature Center 18-20 May. Cerulean Warbler: arr Mendon 15 May. Prothonotary Warbler: one Parma 14 May (R&SS), one ICW 14 May (MD), unusual along the lake shore. Worm-eating Warbler: one DEP 6 May, one MB 13 May, one Brighton Town Park 14 May, one ICW 29 May, good spring total. Louisiana Waterthrush: arr LSP 6 May, late. Kentucky Warbler: singles Rochester 5 May (found dead), Brighton Town P 13 May, Cobb's Hill 18 May, Genesee Country Museum 18 May; good spring total. Connecticut Warbler: one Webster 5 May (D&DT), one ICW 26 May (mob). Hooded Warbler: arr one DEP 6 May, one LSP 6 May. Yellow-breasted Chat: arr one MB 19 May.

TANAGERS-WEAVERS: Clay-colored Sparrow: singles MB 13 May (RS, MD), BB 13 May (FN) and ICW 18 May (P&JS). Grasshopper Sparrow: arr WL 20 May. Henslow's Sparrow: arr Nations Road 20 May. Fox Sparrow: last Webster 3 May. Yellow-headed Blackbird: *intro* (FN). Rusty Blackbird: arr six BB 13 Mar. Orchard Oriole: arr ICW 9 May (PM), away from expected location. Common Redpoll: last two Mendon 7 Mar (PW).

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REGION 3 - FINGER LAKES

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The 1989 Spring Season was average or below in temperature, while precipitation was normal to above normal. There was no indication of drought in the Finger Lakes Region. The first three weeks of March were cooler and drier than normal, and most of March's precipitation fell during the last eight days of the month. A strong warm front 15 Mar brought record high temperatures and brisk southerly winds, but was followed by two cold fronts on 18 and 21 Mar which moved in a northeasterly direction across the state. These two systems brought brisk winds, freezing temperatures, and up to eight inches of snow to the Finger Lakes Region. Following these fronts, peak numbers of Mallard, Am. Black Duck, Gadwall, Pintail, Am. Wigeon, and Hooded and Com. Mergansers were at Montezuma National Wildlife Refuge on 22 Mar. The period from 15-25 Mar was the peak for waterfowl, with highest numbers at MNWR, followed by Waneta Lake, Seneca Lake and nearby Queen Catherine Marsh. The Elmira area and Corning Pond had comparable waterfowl species variety, although fewer numbers of individual birds, as expected.

Most of this Season's unusual reports were of water birds seen along the Region's lakeshores during March. Most of these unusual sightings were made by more than one individual, making errors in identification unlikely. A Red-