

REGION 5 - ONEIDA LAKE BASIN

PAUL A. DEBENEDICTIS

What a strange spring! The chill of February lingered into early March, when the season awoke to warmer dryer weather which had planners deeply worried about a severe drought in late April. May showed them! Three periods of heavy rain just exceeded the average for the month and had flooded all of spots local that observers found for shorebirding before there was any shorebirding to be done! Cool weather in late April and early May held the foliage back a little, but it evidently retarded the birds as well, because the season got off to a slow start.

Everyone recognized it had been a dull winter. Sometimes such winters are followed by good flights of hawks and winter finches during the spring. That didn't happen this spring, except possibly for Purple Finch, whose numbers peaked late Feb-early March and then declined to currently expected numbers. Black-capped Chickadee, which were more numerous than usual on Ben Burt's feeder survey, remained so in March but gave no indication of an April return migration. Almost no migrating Red-breasted Nuthatch were reported. The single Com. Redpoll on 25 Mar and a total of four Evening Grosbeak 8 Apr and 9 May at Derby Hill is no return flight! Almost no finches were reported any where else, yet Pine Siskin nested between Old Forge and Eagle Bay, where Gary Lee found fledglings on 15 May.

The raptor flight was mixed. All three accipiters, Broad-winged and Rough-legged Hawk and Am. Kestrel were scarce, no shrikes of either species were reported, but Turkey Vulture, Bald Eagle and Merlin set record highs passing Derby Hill this spring. A N. Harrier nest found near Jamesville and a Red-shouldered Hawk nest in Highland Forest during May were the first Onondaga Co. nests recorded in years. Unhappily, an active Osprey tree nest near Beaver Lake fell during the early May storm and the pair disappeared. Another pair was reputed to be nesting in Three Rivers Game Management area but no other details were submitted.

Waterbird numbers were generally poor but the variety was impressive. Heron observations were enriched by multiple Great Egrets, a Snowy Egret and the first **Glossy Ibis** here in three springs. Waterfowl were late arriving, low in numbers and left early but included Greater White-fronted and **Ross' Goose**, European Wigeon and a Black Scoter, seldom reported in spring. Shorebirds literally would have been a washout had not the few spots with suitable habitat produced **Black-necked Stilt**, **Willet** and **Stilt Sandpiper**. Gulls and terns provided little excitement but Black Tern was reported more widely though sparsely than usual.

Landbirding was mixed. About the only expected species missed was Philadelphia Vireo, but almost none of the almost annually found rarities like Orange-crowned and Prairie Warbler was reported either. Early arriving species were somewhat late, but from mid March on arrival dates were unexceptional. However, almost everyone's individual reports were dominated by late arrival dates. Someone, somewhere found an on-time arrival and the list filled in

satisfactorily from the combined effort of everyone. There were no reports of impressive numbers, although second-hand reports suggest that good numbers of migrants were packed along the south shore of Lake Ontario in mid May; they definitely weren't inland at this time. Numbers of Hermit Thrush and Fox Sparrow were better than in many recent springs. The best of the rarities were a Kentucky Warbler and a **Yellow-headed Blackbird**.

A total of 220 species plus one hybrid was reported, about 15 less than average, which reflects the absence of lesser rarities more than the lack of great rarities or the absence of expected species. The best birds of the season were the Black-necked Stilt and Yellow-headed Blackbird, which remained put long enough to be seen by most of the active birders in the Region, while the "beast" of the season were the "here today, gone today" Ross' Goose seen by just a single observer (who even had seen the species previously in New York! [That's envy, folks!]).

Contributors: Sue Adair, Chad Covey, Kate Coyle, Dorothy Crumb, Paul DeBenedictis, Robert L. Evans, Gene Huggins, Mary A. Koenike, Gary N. Lee, Robert E. Long, Belle Peebles, Robert L. Post, William Purcell, Margaret S. Rusk, Jeanne Ryan, Gerald A. Smith

Abbreviations: Adk arr - Adirondacks arrival; BBFS - Ben Burt feeder survey; DH - Derby Hill, OSWE; FH - Fairhaven, Little Sodus Bay and vicinity, CAYU; LOL - Lake Ontario littoral, OSWE; NPT - northern Pompey township; NS - Noyes Sanctuary, OSWE; SPd - Sandy Pond, OSWE; SSSP - Selkirk Shores SP; StMC - Saint Mary's Cemetery, Dewitt, ONON; SVB - Sylvan and Verona Beach, ONEI; Syr - Syracuse.

LOONS-DUCKS: Red-throated Loon: one Oswego to 5 Mar; one DH 12 Apr. Com. Loon: Adk arr Old Forge 27 Apr; max about 15. Horned Grebe: arr Brewerton 19 Mar, max 15 Otisco L 20 Apr; last Beaver L 26 Apr. Red-necked Grebe: six in three reports 10-26 Apr. Double-crested Cormorant: at least 50 birds on Wontry Island, Oneida L, certainly nesting but no nest count available. Least Bittern: arr Dewitt Marsh 30 Apr, at least four there mid May; reported three other sites. Great Blue Heron: Adk arr Fourth L 4 Apr. Great Egret: two Beaver L 29 Mar, one DH 22-28 Apr, another 14 May, one Snake Swamp 9 May, three SSSP 29 Apr. Snowy Egret: one SSSP 16-18 Apr. Green-backed Heron: scarce. Black-crowned Night-Heron: arr 7 May. **Glossy Ibis**: one Navarino, ONON, 7-8 Apr (mob). Tundra Swan: about six reports 19 Mar-8 Apr, max 27 Bridgeport 20 Mar. Greater White-fronted Goose: ad Beaver L 24 Apr (KM, ph). Snow Goose: reported 19 Mar-21 Apr, most regularly at Beaver L where max 37 on 4 Apr. **Ross' Goose**: two Pennelville 28 Mar (DWC, NYSARC), Regional first. Brant: only report 55 Toad H 20 May. Canada Goose: arr ca 5 Mar, max 13500 Beaver L 15 Mar. Green-winged Teal: overwintered Syr. N. Pintail: overwintered Syr. N. Shoveler: arr Brewerton 19 Mar, max six DH 28 Mar, last Beaver L 29 Apr. **Eurasian Wigeon**: male Poolsbrook 25 Apr (MSR, JR). Am. Wigeon: arr NPT 17 Mar. Canvasback: arr Brewerton 15 Mar, max 86 Beaver L 18 Mar, last there 29 Apr. Ring-necked Duck: arr Brewerton 15 Mar, max 270 there 18 Mar, last Beaver L 29 Apr. Greater Scaup: last Toad H 30 Apr. Lesser Scaup: last Oswego 21 May. Oldsquaw: last Tuscarora L 29 Apr. Black Scoter: one Oswego 20 Mar, unusual in spring. White-winged Scoter: last Oswego 22 Mar. Com. Goldeneye: last Toad H 14 Apr. Bufflehead: last Beaver L 13 May. Hooded Merganser: last migrants ca 10 Apr. Com. Merganser: last Beaver L 15 May. Red-breasted Merganser: last Otisco L 10 May. Ruddy Duck: Beaver L 27 Mar-11 May, max 27 on 16 Apr.

HAWKS-ALCIDS: Derby Hill Hawk Migration Totals

Species	Arrival	Max -	Date	Last	90% Date Range*	Total
Turkey Vulture	14 Mar	1038 -	5 Apr	29 May	2 Mar - 6 May	3575
Osprey	28 Mar	50 -	5 May	29 May	12 Apr - 23 May	389
Bald Eagle	13 Mar	5 - 2 dates		29 May	14 Mar - 25 May	49
Northern Harrier	4 Mar	99 -	4 Apr	30 May	15 Mar - 15 May	812
Sharp-shinned Hawk	14 Mar	516 -	5 May	30 May	4 Apr - 19 May	2667
Cooper's Hawk	2 Mar	46 -	5 Apr	20 May	14 Mar - 4 May	410
Northern Goshawk	8 Mar	5 -	14 Mar	14 May	9 Mar - 12 May	27
Red-shouldered Hawk	8 Mar	169 -	27 Mar	20 May	14 Mar - 6 Apr	595
Broad-winged Hawk	14 Apr	4261 -	4 May	30 May	23 Apr - 5 May	10988
Red-tailed Hawk	28 Feb	1056 -	27 Mar	30 May	13 Mar - 4 May	7436
Rough-legged Hawk	8 Mar	40 -	14 Mar	6 May	13 Mar - 1 May	248
Golden Eagle	13 Mar	6 -	27 Mar	14 May	13 Mar - 14 May	26
American Kestrel	14 Mar	58 -	28 Mar	26 May	13 Mar - 5 May	306
Merlin	28 Mar	5 - 2 dates		5 May	4 Apr - 5 May	23

Total (including unidentified)

27599

Turkey Vulture: arr Otisco L 2 Mar; set record high for max and for season DH; broken egg found T Brookfield 15 May; one Old Forge 28 May is in Adirondacks. Osprey: *intro*. N. Harrier: *intro*. Red-shouldered Hawk: *intro*. Peregrine Falcon: near Big Moose 29 May, only report. Ring-necked Pheasant: very few reports. Am. Coot: very scarce. Semipalmated Plover: only one report. **Black-necked Stilt**: one near Beaver L 20-22 May (SA, mob, ph, NYSARC), Regional first. **Willet**: seven SVB 7 May (BP, mob, ph!), probably w race by plumage. Upland Sandpiper: arr W Monroe 27 Apr. Ruddy Turnstone: arr SPd 18 May. Semipalmated Sandpiper: arr n ONON 20 May. White-rumped Sandpiper: one LSB 20 May (MSR). Dunlin: arr SPd 18 May. **Stilt Sandpiper**: ad near Beaver L 15 Apr (SA!). Bonaparte's Gull: arr Brewerton 1 Apr. Iceland Gull: last DH 23 Mar. **Thayer's Gull**: one Oswego 5 Mar (MSR). Black Tern: scarce but reported from six sites.

PIGEONS-WOODPECKERS: Yellow-billed Cuckoo: arr Pompey 22 May. Snowy Owl: last Syr Airport 10 Mar. Long-eared Owl: one NS 15 May. Short-eared Owl: one DH 13 Apr. Com. Nighthawk: scarce. Whip-poor-will: arr W Monroe 3 May, max there six. Ruby-throated Hummingbird: one early report 23 Apr. Red-headed Woodpecker: only two reports. Yellow-bellied Sapsucker: max five StMC, last 9 May. N. Flicker: arr ca 6 Apr.

FLYCATCHERS-STARLING: Olive-sided Flycatcher: no migrants reported. Yellow-bellied Flycatcher: no migrants reported. Tree Swallow: max 2500 Beaver L 24 Apr. Bank Swallow: scarce. Blue Jay: few migrants reported. **Fish Crow**: New York Mills early Apr (Gary Webb in BBFS). Am. Crow: DH totals not reported. Com. Raven: five DH 27 Mar-5 May, record for season there. Black-capped Chickadee: numbers up Mar BBFS but few migrants reported. Red-breasted Nuthatch: almost no migrants reported. Carolina Wren: reported Syr, Oneida, Biddlecomb, Toad H but none certainly nesting. Winter Wren: migrants 28 Mar-12 May, numbers unexceptional; Adk arr LimeKiln L 29 Mar. Golden-crowned Kinglet: arr StMC 28 Mar, max 70 NS 15 Apr. Ruby-crowned Kinglet: max 45 NS 28 Apr, last SPd 18 May. N. Mockingbird: to five/day Syr. Cedar Waxwing: one report 7 Mar, then none until 29 Apr.

VIREOS-WARBLED: Blue-winged Warbler: arr Nelson May 6. Golden-winged Warbler: arr Camillus 13 May. "Brewster's Warbler": two reported. Yellow-rumped Warbler: arr DH 15 Apr; Adk arr Old Forge 27 Apr. Pine Warbler: arr StMC 16 Apr. Palm Warbler: reported 28 Apr-17 May. Cerulean Warbler: arr Camillus 18 May, few reported. Louisiana Waterthrush: record early arr Pratt's Falls Co P 5 Apr (DWC); migrant NPT 15 May. Kentucky Warbler: one StMC 15 May (mob). Mourning Warbler: arr Mexico Pt 15 May. Hooded Warbler: arr LOL 18 May.

TANAGERS-WEAVERS: Rose-breasted Grosbeak: Adk arr LimeKiln L 15 May. Indigo Bunting: few reported. Rufous-sided Towhee: Adk arr Old Forge 4 May. Am. Tree Sparrow: last 4 May. Field Sparrow: arr Pine Plains 24 Mar. Vesper Sparrow: only three reports.

Grasshopper Sparrow: only one report. Henslow's Sparrow: only report W Monroe 20 May. Fox Sparrow: arr 18 Mar, max 16 StMc and 15 NPT 18 Apr. Song Sparrow: arr Syr 5 Mar. Lincoln's Sparrow: only one reported. Swamp Sparrow: arr Peter Scott Swamp 2 Apr. Lapland Longspur: 60 DH 11-12 Apr. Red-winged Blackbird: arr Syr 6 Mar. **Yellow-headed Blackbird**: male Chittenango 17-25 Apr (mob, ph). E. Meadowlark: arr Erieville 17 Mar. Rusty Blackbird: arr Peter Scott Swamp 25 Mar. Com. Grackle: arr Syr 4 Mar. Brown-headed Cowbird: arr 11 Mar. Orchard Oriole: males Oswego 15 May, LSB 20-21 May. Purple Finch: most reports during March. White-winged Crossbill: Booneville 1 May. Com. Redpoll: *intro*. Pine Siskin: last NPT 16 May; *intro*. Evening Grosbeak: *intro*, max six Pratt's Falls 29 Apr.

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[Mr. Gene Huggins will become Region 5 Editor effective the 1989 summer reporting season. Reports should be sent to him at 1065 Westmoreland Ave., Syracuse NY, 13210.]

REGION 6 - ST. LAWRENCE

KENNETH L. CROWELL

This was a cool dry spring. Both temperature and precipitation for March and April were below normal, a trend which continued into May. The first week of March was cold with six inches of snow falling on 12 Mar. Red-winged Blackbirds arrived with the next mild weather on March 10 in Jefferson Co. and on 15 Mar in St. Lawrence Co. I was away in April, and spring waited for my return. The "early birds" seemed a few days late in the Canton area. Killdeer, E. Phoebe, Com. Grackle and Song Sparrow all arrived 20-27 March. We watched an Am. Woodcock peenting in a partially frozen roadside ditch on 27 Mar. Notable movements included large flocks of Com. Grackle in Massena on 14 Mar, flocks of mixed blackbirds in Canton 4-5 Apr and numbers of Dark-eyed Junco in Henderson on 6 Apr. Arrivals of long-distance migrants were telescoped into the balmy days of mid May. "Spot-breasted" thrushes and Rose-breasted Grosbeak appeared first, followed by Great-crested Flycatcher, Red-eyed Vireo and Ovenbird, then Am. Redstart and Scarlet Tanager. As usual, Blackpoll and Bay-breasted Warblers brought up the rear. The median arrival date for 24 species of flycatchers, thrushes and warblers was 12 May.

Were two reports of Com. Loon from Wilson Hill of migrants, immatures, or breeders escaping the effects of acid rain in the Adirondacks? Numbers were reported up for Osprey in St. Lawrence County. Lee Chamberlaine reports the most Turkey Vulture ever in Henderson. Peter O'Shea reports frequent sightings of Ruffed Grouse feeding on aspen catkins, for which it was a good year. E. Phoebe was reported up. It is a good year for E. Bluebird with four of 35 boxes occupied in the Canton area in mid May. Four out of five major contributors