

REGION 10 — MARINE

SEYMOUR SCHIFF AND ALVIN WOLLIN

March started with normal temperatures and monthly rainfall a scant half inch less than the 4.25 inch normal. But that was all that was normal. The temperature slowly rose to the mid fifties in the first week, plunged to 12° on 7 Mar, and then moved steadily upwards by mid month to record three new daily highs including 85° on 12 Mar. The monthly temperature averaged 3.7 degrees above normal. April also had a new high, 90° on 29 Apr, the second of two over 90° days. Precipitation was 1.37 inches above normal, and included two inches of snow on the ground on 7 Apr, which all melted by noon. In spite of this, April's temperature was still 1.1° above normal. Reversing the trend May was 2.3° below normal, reached 80° only on three days during the month and included a new daily low. The rain was 9.10 inches against a normal of 3.76 inches so our April showers were delayed and the temperature reversed.

As in recent spring migrations, there are the continued comments of

fewer birds. These comments are highlighted by the emphasis on a few so called flight days. We used to have migration days which were good and "great days". Now we hope there's a "flight day" when we're out birding. This spring flight days were reported to us as 26 Apr, 8 and 18-20 May.

The most spectacular bird of the season was a **Cave Swallow** of Caribbean race seen with many Cliff Swallows at Jamaica Bay Wildlife Sanctuary on 23 May by Kenn Kaufman, Geoff LeBaron and Susan Drennan. This will be a new NY State record, if accepted by the NYSARC.

Henry Flamm's report from Staten Island included an increasingly interesting list of birds including Glaucous Gull, Chuck-will's-widow at Blue Heron Pond, Worm-eating Warbler, Yellow-breasted Chat, Summer Tanager and nesting Boat-tailed Grackles. The oil spills in the channel were not mentioned. The ultimate effect on the wildlife will probably not be known for some time, although the immediate negative aspects have already appeared in the local press. (To be watched and commented upon).

The Moriches Bay Audubon Society had a big day on 12 May. Four parties saw an aggregate total of 171 species of 15,654 individuals. All groups broke 100 with the highest party count 132. Highlights of the day included King Eider, Black-necked Stilt, local nesting owls consisting of Barn, Eastern Screech-Owl and Great Horned, Red-headed Woodpecker, Chuck-will's-widow, Whip-poor-will, Hooded Warbler, Vesper Sparrow and Grasshopper Sparrow.

The wintering pair of Turkey Vulture reported from eastern Long Island were seen throughout the spring, although mostly as solitary birds after mid March. The last sighting reported to us was 24 May by Gail Ruscica. Others were seen in Nassau Co. in May. Osprey continues its western expansion on Long Island with a new nest at Cow Meadow Park in Freeport. All active Nassau Co. nests known by us appear to be on poles placed in the marshes by town and county conservation personnel. Their efforts have been rewarded and they are to be commended. Peregrine Falcon continues its steady increase, substituting man-made cliffs for natural ones. Within the five boroughs of New York City nine pairs have been noted this spring, four in Manhattan, one in Queens, and two each in Staten Island and Brooklyn. Four nests were active with young at the end of the period, half on bridges and half on office buildings. Although eagles have been reported during all months in the past, most either have been fall wanderers or wintering birds. This

spring there were several scattered sightings of immature Bald Eagle, including one resting in the dunes at Jones Beach.

Notes from JBWR shorebird survey, courtesy of Arthur Morris and Dave Mizrahi, indicate that total shorebirds were slightly below the seven year maximum average. Some individual species comparisons follow: Semipalmated Plover down by half, 1601 Ruddy Turnstone is four times the previous maxima, Semipalmated Sandpiper 69% below the 7-year average maximum. Elsewhere, **Black-necked Stilt** made its appearance with two sightings, one out east at Wainscott Pond on 13 May by John J. Ruscica and the other 31 May from Cow Meadow Park in Freeport by Peter Martin.

On 2 Mar, Paul Gillen reported seeing a feeding melee in Shinnecock Inlet of 1000+ Bonaparte's Gull, 100+ Herring Gull, an adult Basic plumaged Common Black-headed Gull and an Iceland Gull. Patience and some luck are needed to find these rarer gulls attracted to the Bonaparte's Gull flocks. Similar flocks at Jones Inlet contained both Little Gull and Common Black-headed Gull this spring. One of the latter species frequented the West 12th piers in Manhattan in March.

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Abbreviations: APP - Alley Pd Park; BNL - Brookhaven National Laboratory; CRSP - Connetquot River SP; LI - Long Island; HLSP - Hempstead Lake SP; JBWR - Jamaica Bay Wildlife Refuge; JFKWS - John F. Kennedy Wildlife Sanctuary (Tobay); JBch - Jones Beach; JoIn - Jones Inlet; LI - Long Island; MPt - Montauk Point; NB - Napeague Bay; StCh - St. Charles Cemetery; ShIn - Shinnecock Inlet; SI - Staten Island.

LOONS-DUCKS: Red-necked Grebe: one MPt 24 Mar. Eared Grebe: one off Pt Lookout 11 Mar (SW). Sooty Shearwater: seen from shore near Wainscott 13 May. Yellow-crowned Night-Heron: 7 nests Hewlett area (JB). Greater White-fronted Goose: imm near Watermill 3 Mar (TB), ad there 10 Mar (SW). **Ross' Goose**: one near Watermill to 18 Mar (mob). Eurasian Wigeon: one Deep Hole Creek, Mattituck 10 Mar (JR), one JBWR 17 Mar. King Eider: one MPt 13 May. Harlequin Duck: one to two. MPt late Mar, max of 24 JoIn 18-20 Mar with at least 20 seen throughout March; 14 still present 14 Apr. Ruffed Grouse: BNL 5 May (James Osterlung).

HAWKS-ALCIDS: Turkey Vulture: *intro*. Osprey: *intro*. Bald Eagle: imm JBWR 18 Mar, imm Battery P, N.Y.C 6 Apr (SW), imm Whitestone 20 Apr (Art Scopec), imm Floyd Bennet Field 11 May, imm JBch W End 24 May (SS,AW). Peregrine Falcon: *intro*. **Black-necked Stilt**: *intro*. Whimbrel: isolated birds reported along entire s shore LI. Curlew Sandpiper: one in bright Alt plumage and one

changing plumage Sagg Pd 22-26 May (A. Baldelli, mob). Am. Woodcock: 10 displaying along Wantagh Parkway from s Merrick Road to JBCh after dusk 4 Apr (PM). Wilson's Phalarope: one 27-28 Apr JBWR. Com. Black-headed Gull: *intro*. Iceland Gull: *intro*, one JBCh 14 Apr. Lesser Black-backed Gull: one NB 11 Mar. Glaucous Gull: singles NB to 30 Mar, JFKWS 31 Mar, Far Rockaway 11 May. Caspian Tern: one Orient Beach SP 1 Apr, five Moriches Inlet 18 Apr and 24-26 May, ShIn 28 Apr, JoIn 21 May. Black Tern: two JBCh W End 30 Apr (PM), one JBWR 13 May. Razorbill: off Tobay 21 Mar (B. Hines).

PIGEONS-WOODPECKERS: Snowy Owl: singles NB 3 Mar, ShIn to early Mar, JBCh to early Mar, Orient Pt 1 Apr (PG). Short-eared Owl: last wintering bird JBCh W End 1 Apr (PM). Chuck-will's-widow: *intro*; one 1 May Riverhead (JR). Whip-poor-will: CRSP. Red-headed Woodpecker: one BNL 1-12 May (Trina & Henry Halma, JR), one Forest P 12 May, one Pelham Bay P 14 May (DK), one Prospect P 12-19 May.

FLYCATCHERS-STARLING: Olive-sided Flycatcher: one HLSP 19 May, one Forest P 24 May. Yellow-bellied Flycatcher: four Forest P 24 May. Acadian Flycatcher: one Forest P 26 May. **Cave Swallow**: *intro*. Carolina Wren: increased numbers reported by several observers. E. Bluebird: a dozen wintered at CRSP, nesting uncertain as this writing.

VIREOS-WARBLED: Philadelphia Vireo: one Prospect P, one Forest P 12 May, one Yaphank 20 May. Golden-winged Warbler: one APP 7 May. Golden-winged X Blue-winged Warbler: "Brewster's" type at birdbath in Baldwin 28 Apr (EL). Orange-crowned Warbler: one Central P 8 May. Yellow-throated Warbler: one Prospect P 7 Apr (M. Sohmer). Cerulean Warbler: a few including one Central P 29 Apr. Prothonotary Warbler: one APP 2-3 May, one Prospect P 4 May, HLSP 6-8 May (MB, mob), Belmont SP 23 May (JR). Worm-eating Warbler: widespread. **Swainson's Warbler**: one Central P 28 Apr-1 May (Jerry Fiore, mob). Kentucky Warbler: one Forest P 12 May. Mourning Warbler: one Riverdale P 8 May, others 17 May till end of period, Hooded Warbler: several from 28 Apr. Yellow-breasted Chat: several reports.

TANAGERS-WEAVERS: Summer Tanager: uncommon but widespread. Blue Grosbeak: male HLSP 6 May (MB, mob). Lapland Longspur: 22 StCh 11 Mar. Bobolink: two Cow Meadow Park, Freeport 6 May, three JBCh W End 14 May (PM), also 18 same date Riverhead. Boat-tailed Grackle: two male and three female in Great Kills P 22 Apr (John Stonick) to the end of May (HF), nest found 1 June; other reports from JBWR and JFKWS. Purple Finch: a male at HLSP 26 Apr one of few reported; more detail needed on this species for the Region in the spring. Red Crossbill: two StCh 10 Mar. Pine Siskin: one at thistle feeder 27 Apr (BA).

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