

REGION 10 - MARINE

SEYMOUR SCHIFF AND ALVIN WOLLIN

There have been years when the winter weather extended through spring into the summer. Then there was no spring because it was cold. This year also was a year without a normal spring, but this time it was hot and summer came early. March and April were both a mere 3°+ above normal. April was the fifth warmest on record, but May was the all time warmest at 6.2° above the norm. Precipitation was above normal in March, average for April and slightly below normal in May. On the whole it was not too much different from most years, just *warm*. The milder weather may or may not have affected the migrants. However, with the exception of very early Pine Warbler on 3, 8 and 9 Mar, land birds did not appear to be moving early in the Region this spring. Possibly the early migrants had overflowed the Region and, hence, had not been seen. Many observers reported few birds, so this is not out of the question. As usual, the peak of the migration appeared to be 8-9 May. There were satisfactory, but not extraordinary lists, for those out on "big days," but total numbers of many species were low. The question remains: Did the warm weather move the birds through our area quickly and at night, are the birds migrating further inland this year for the same reason, or are there just progressively fewer birds each spring?

All was not negative. We are seeing a change in distribution patterns for some birds and some spectacular overshoots of migrants. For starters there was the first New York state record of a **Reddish Egret**. This bird was seen at Jamaica Bay Wildlife Refuge on 18 May by Steve Walter, Bob Kurtz, Drew Panko, Tom Burke, *et al.*, on 22 May by John Bull, and on 26 May by Rich Kelly, John Ruscica, *et al.* For those who went to search for the egret, there was the consolation prize of a **White-faced Ibis** which also appeared on the refuge at the same time. This latter bird was seen on May 13 by Arthur Morris, on May 18 by Guy Tudor, and May 31 by John Fritz and numerous others.

Another great find was a **White-winged Tern** in a group of terns seen about 6:00 PM off Cedar Beach on 12 May by Tony Lauro. This is also a first report for New York State. Other notable finds included a **Mississippi Kite** in first Alternate plumage found by Joseph DeConstanzo and Timothy Male at Great Gull Island on 25 May. This bird was being mobbed by the island's nesting terns. It flew off to the

north before more observers could be notified. To this list we can add a **Sandhill Crane** seen on eastern Long Island by Tony Tierno on 26 Apr; the wintering **Black-billed Magpie** at Montauk which stayed at least till 3 Mar; two **Black-necked Stilt** found at Mecox Bay on 16 May by Tony Lauro and seen 18 May by Rich Kelly, John Fritz and others; and a **Northern Wheatear** at Montauk seen 4 May by Gloria Kuhn. Only a few birders saw any of the above. For the majority of us who didn't connect, the spring was at best just average.

The consensus of contributor reports is that the warbler migration was best on 8 May. As noted above, quantities were low. There was the usual scattering of the rarer species, seen mostly in New York City parks and Jamaica Bay, including Yellow-throated Warbler, Cerulean Warbler, Prothonotary Warbler, Worm-eating Warbler, Kentucky Warbler, Mourning Warbler, Hooded Warbler and Yellow-breasted Chat.

Raptors are the bright spots in the Region. Both Osprey and Peregrine Falcon continue to flourish. George Rowsom sent a note on Osprey arrivals at Orient, part of which is quoted here. "They have arrived in Orient on March 16th for the past 10 years. [This year] March 7—one seen at Silver Lake, Greenport... March 13—Two adult males on nests on causeway in Orient." To the west on the south shore, Osprey are again at the nests occupied last year. There are nine pairs of Peregrine Falcon within the confines of New York city per NYCAERIES (Saul Frank, Ed.). As of the end of the reporting period, eggs had been laid in six nests, hatched in five and fledged in three. Peregrines were seen throughout the Region during the period. The phenomenon of predators living on New York buildings and eating the pigeons was sufficiently newsworthy to rate space in at least two articles in the *New York Times*. The "misbegotten nature lovers" have been complaining about the poor pigeons.

There were several reports of possible breeding for species at localities beyond the boundaries listed in the *Atlas of Breeding Birds of New York State*. Mary Laura Lamont noted a singing Least Flycatcher on her property in Riverhead from 21 May through 11 Jun; nesting was not confirmed as of this report. This is east of any block where nesting was confirmed. A Warbling Vireo nested at Hempstead Lake State Park this year and another was reported from Queens, both west of previously reported Long Island blocks where nesting was confirmed.

The large Common Tern colony in front of the Jones Beach West End #1 parking lot was abandoned this year. The significance of this move is not yet known, as we don't know whether the birds moved to the West End, to bay islands or just left the area. However, apparently they did not move to the colony at Cedar Beach nor to other areas to the east.

On 23 May there were very strong onshore winds all day at Staten Island. Henry Flamm reported seeing an unidentified shearwater from Midland Beach, where any such species is unusual. The Federation/Great South Bay Audubon sponsored pelagic trip out of Montauk on 19 May yielded 29 Common Loon, 9 Northern Fulmar, one Sooty Shearwater, one Manx Shearwater, 63 Wilson's Storm-Petrel, 44 Northern Gannet, 2 Red-necked Phalarope, 5 Red Phalarope, 4 Black-legged Kittiwake, 3 Roseate Tern and about 100 Common Tern (NYRBA).

Contributors: Bob Adamo, Howard Bolston, John Bull, Thomas W. Burke, Ralph Cioffi, James Clinton, Sr., Richard DePietio, Henry F. Flamm, John Fritz, Ken Fuestel; Paul H. Gillen, Robert Kurtz, Anthony J. Lauro, Emanuel Levine, Peter Martin, Arthur Morris, Herbert H. Roth, George H. Rowsom, John J. Ruscica, Seymour Schiff, Lore J. Schore, Steve Walter, Alvin Wolin.

Abbreviations: CP - Central Park; CB - Cedar Beach; FP - Forest Park; JBWR - Jamaica Bay Wildlife Refuge; JFKWS - John F. Kennedy Wildlife Sanctuary (Tobay); JBch - Jones Beach; LI - Long Island; MeB - Mecox Bay; MPt - Montauk Point; Mutn - Muttontown Preserve; NYRBA - New York Rare Bird Alert; PP - Prospect Park; RMSP - Robert Moses State Park; ShIn - Shinnecock Inlet; SI - Staten Island.

LOONS-DUCKS: Sooty Shearwater: *intro*. Manx Shearwater: *intro*. Wilson's Storm-Petrel: *intro*. Northern Gannet: good numbers in w LI Sound. Am. Bittern: one CP 24 Mar (NYRBA). Least Bittern: pair E Pd JBWR 21 May (JR, Bob Hines, Elsa L/Hommedien). **Reddish Egret**: *intro* (NYSARC). Glossy Ibis: 250 W Pd JBWR 12 Apr (JR). **White-faced Ibis**: *intro*. Canada Goose: pair nested on an Osprey platform at Caumsett SP. Wood Duck: male landed in the water by the W End JBch Coast Guard Station before flying off to the west 24 Mar (MOB), unusual in salt water. Green-winged Teal: one (Eurasian Race) JFKWS 16 Apr (Bob Hines) and 28 Apr JBWR (Bob Kurtz). Eurasian Wigeon: male Deep Hole Creek, Mattituck 5 Mar (JR). King Eider: 18 MPt 1 Mar (NYRBA). Harlequin Duck: two LI sound at E Marion 7 Mar (PG), three male, five female PL 9 Mar (JR), two Orient Pt early Mar (NYRBA). Com. Merganser: female W Pd JBWR for the month of May.

HAWKS-ALCIDS: Turkey Vulture: singles Westhampton Beach 4 Mar (PG), JBch 8 Mar (Steve Dempsey), Center Moriches 25 Mar (Julius & Celia Hastings), Jamesport 3 Apr (PG), Mutn 8 Apr (Allen Lindberg), SI 12 May (HF); increasing on LI. **Mississippi Kite**: *intro*. Sharp-shinned Hawk: a few reported during the

migration period. Cooper's Hawk: a few reported during the migration period. N. Goshawk: one PP late Mar (NYRBA). Merlin: a few reported during the migration period. Peregrine Falcon: *intro*. Ruffed Grouse: along Rt 104, Quogue 6 May (BA,JR). Virginia Rail: one eastern LI 11 May (JC). Sora: one landed on a third floor balcony, stayed four hours, Park Slope, Brooklyn 5 May (NYRBA). **Sandhill Crane**: *intro*. Lesser Golden-Plover: ad Alt JBWR 6 May (BA,JR), one JBWR 13-18 May (NYRBA). Am. Oystercatcher: chick at W End JBCh 18 May (PM). **Black-necked Stilt**: *intro*. Willet: a number calling JBCh 24 Mar, early by about three weeks (SS,AW). Upland Sandpiper: one Van Cortlandt P, Bronx 7 May (NYRBA). Whimbrel: one JBWR 11 May, two ShIn 16 May (NYRBA). Com. Black-headed Gull: one in Alt plumage MeB 23 Apr (PG), one Princess Bay, SI (Paul Buckley). Iceland Gull: ad ShIn 7 Mar (JR), one first year imm ShIn 16-17 Mar JR), one Totten Pd 30 Apr (Sam Yeaton). Lesser Black-backed Gull: one Glen Cove to 22 Apr (RC). Glaucous Gull: one Breezy Pt 16 Mar (NYRBA). Gull-billed Tern: one CB 12 May (AL). Caspian Tern: one MeB 4 Apr (PG), 10 Apr, two MeB 23 Apr (PG), one Oak Beach 18 May (NYRBA), one MeB 18 (mob) and 30 May (JR). Com. Tern: first report JFKWS 4 Apr (PM); *intro*. Forster's Tern: one MeB 16 May, one JBWR 18 May (NYRBA). **White-winged Tern**: *intro* (NYSARC). Black Tern: one 12 May, two Fire I Inlet 13 May (NYRBA). Razorbill: two MPt 3 Mar (NYRBA).

PIGEONS-WOODPECKERS: Barn Owl: one in ZB area 30 Apr (PM). Great Horned Owl: reported Mutn and Wellwyn; a nest with one y Peconic 10 Mar (JR). Snowy Owl: one Overlook Beach 9 Mar (JR). Long-eared Owl: one CP to 20 Mar (NYRBA). Short-eared Owl: one Floyd Bennett Field 16 Mar, JBWR 6 Apr (NYRBA). N. Saw-whet Owl: one JFKWS 1 Apr (PM), one Mutn 8 Apr (Bill Paterson). Chuck-will's-widow: one Riverhead 30 Apr (JR), 11 May (JC). Whip-poor-will: 13 North fork LI 11 May (JC). Red-headed Woodpecker: two CP to 24 Mar (NYRBA), one FP 12 May (NYRBA). Red-bellied Woodpecker: a pair built a nest in PP 20-21 May, only to be evicted by European Starlings (RD).

FLYCATCHERS-STARLING: Acadian Flycatcher: one FP 18 May, one CP 23 May (NYRBA). Willow Flycatcher: reported more than usual this year, either more pairs breeding or being reported more. Least Flycatcher: *intro*. Bank Swallow: a colony of 40 birds in a bank along the sound in Shoreham Beach (JR). **Black-billed Magpie**: *intro*. N. Wheatear: *intro*. E. Bluebird: four pair Mutn late Mar through Apr (Allen Lindberg, mob). N. Shrike: one Hither Hills SP to 31 Mar (NYRBA). Loggerhead Shrike: one W End JBCh 31 Mar (SW).

VIREOS-WARBLED: Philadelphia Vireo: one CP 13 May (NYRBA). Blue-winged X Golden-winged Warbler: one "Brewster's" singing Blue-winged Warbler song Hempstead L SP 4 May (EL,SS,AW, mob). Mourning Warbler: fewer reported this Spring.

TANAGERS-WEAVERS: Summer Tanager: one W End JBCh 26 Apr (EL); other reports from parks in all New York boroughs except SI (NYRBA). Blue Grosbeak: 2 RMSP 27 Apr to 2 May; one W End JBCh 28 Apr to 7 May; one CP 11

May; one FP 18 May; (MOB); more reports than usual. Grasshopper Sparrow: one E Hampton Airport 29 May (JF), others out east north shore, none at the Hempstead Plains Preserve. Fox Sparrow: few seen and fewer reported. Bobolink: several e LI, one W End JBch 24 May (PM), 26 e LI 11 May (JC). Rusty Blackbird: 25 Shu Swamp 7 Apr (NYRBA), other reports to mid Apr. Boat-tailed Grackle: concentrations continue at JBWR (65 seen on 10 Apr), CB, along the Meadowbrook Parkway; four seen at Cow Meadow, Freeport 19 Apr. Orchard Oriole: pair nesting near Crab Meadow (HB). Purple Finch: few reports. Evening Grosbeak: one CP 29 Apr (NYRBA).

EXOTICS: Black-hooded Parakeet: 20 Beechhurst 20 Mar (Carol Waters). Monk Parakeet: 14 Rockville Centre 17 Apr (AW)

603 Mead Terrace, S. Hempstead, New York 11550