

REGION 7 - ADIRONDACK-CHAMPLAIN

JOHN M. C. PETERSON

A few northern rarities, good species variety, and a relatively early migration marked the spring 1991, with a total of 185 species noted across the four northeastern counties. Although the season began on a warm note, reality returned in the form of an ice storm on 4 Mar. By mid month, there had only been 40 inches of seasonal snowfall at lower elevations, and the month closed with wind gusts of 50+ mph on 28 Mar. April began clear and cool with a warming trend that kept pushing Plattsburgh thermometers upward to a balmy 61° on 4 Apr, an unseasonal 68° on 6 Apr, and a downright hot 81° on 7 Apr, bringing in the first waves of early arrivals. Mid April returned to cool, rainy, and often windy days, with the end of the month clear and warm. For the second year, nine warbler species arrived during April. Early May was marked by showers, but the rest of the month was an exceedingly pleasant contrast to last year, marred only by a cold front that hit like a freight at 3 PM on the afternoon of 17 May. Within moments, the temperature at the Crown Point bird banding station plunged from 79° to 38°, as winds shifted abruptly from the south to north. Except for an inch of rain overnight 26-27 May and afternoon thunderstorms on 30 May, the month was quite dry.

The bird banding station at Crown Point State Historic Site was in operation for 11 days between 10 and 20 May. A total of 310 individual birds of 47 species were banded and released. This was the third best year for variety since 1976, just behind 49 species banded last year and the record 53 species in 1989. Two new species were banded, **Orange-crowned Warbler** and Scarlet Tanager, bringing the all time list for the past 16 years to 82 species. Migrants pushed through early and rapidly, with the greatest numbers on 12 May (70 birds) and 13 May (76 birds). There were returns of 17 individuals of ten different species banded on Crown Point peninsula in previous years. Other avian highlights at Crown Point included small flocks of migrating Double-crested Cormorant, 17 Great Blue Heron thermalling together over the tip of the peninsula about 7 PM on 13 May, Bald and Golden Eagles, two Peregrine Falcon (one cruising right up the net lane), and at least *three* singing male Golden-winged Warbler, certainly a Regional maximum, on 12 May, the same hot morning that the aforementioned **Orange-crowned Warbler** was banded and released.

Northern owls made brief, yet exciting, appearances. On 18 Mar, Charlcie Delehanty spotted a **Northern Hawk Owl** perched on the topmost branch of a small tree in the Tupper Marsh. Charlcie reports, "It was crow-sized, had a slender barred tail, white on the sides of the head, yellow beak, and wagged its tail." A crow harassed it briefly and the owl-like head could be seen as it turned. Later, as she searched for the bird on the flow with Bob Hagar, a high, clear whistle was repeated twice, but the bird had flown. This hawk owl was in the same area of the marsh where Charlcie watched one for several days around 29 March 1979. Meanwhile, the **Great Gray Owl** that appeared at the feeder of Henry and Sylvia Kurtenbach north of Elizabethtown on 29 Jan continued to make sporadic visits through 1 Mar.

Another productive feeding station was one kept stocked with copious amounts of suet by Ray Fadden at the Six Nations Indian Museum near Onchiota, FRAN, where Ray reports his visitors included Turkey Vulture, Bald Eagle, Sharp-shinned Hawk, Northern Goshawk, Red-shouldered Hawk, Red-tailed Hawk, and 150 Common Raven.

On a non-avian note, the NYS Department of Environmental Conservation has begun work on an atlas of reptiles and amphibians in the state, and the help of volunteers is sought. Instead of a 5-km block system like that used in the breeding birds atlas, the "herptile" atlas will simply record species by County, Town, and Year. Mapping is being done by Town. Instructions and survey forms are available Regionally from this editor, or elsewhere from Alvin Breisch [Wildlife Resource Center, NYS DEC, Delmar, NY 12054]. We encourage your participation in this project to map our salamanders, frogs and toads, turtles, lizards, and snakes.

Observers: Merry Baker, Dirck & Mary Benson, John Brown, Dean Cook, Charlcie Delehanty, William Endicott, Elizabeth & Holland Fitts, Greg Furness, Robert Hagar, Candy & John Hess, Gordon Howard, Mary Humiston, Anne Hungerford, Selma Isil, Elsbeth Johnson, Henry & Sylvia Kurtenbach, Karl Krauss, Gary Lee, Theodore Mack, Mark Manske, Ray Master, Mary Lou Morgan, Fon & Joan Mullady, Bryce, Keith & Megan Murphy, John & Susan Peterson, David Rutkowski, Sylvia Siarkowski, Les Schmarder, Don Spada, Hollis White.

Abbreviations: BB - Bulwagga Bay; CPP - Crown Point peninsula; MRRA - Moose River Recreation Area; MVL - Mountain View Lake.

LOONS-DUCKS: Pied-billed Grebe: arr Ausable Pt 30 Mar; Saranac L 18 Apr (RH), unexpected. Red-necked Grebe: arr four BB 13 Apr to two BB 2 May. Double-crested Cormorant: *intro*. Great Blue Heron: *intro*; 29 nests Schroon L

heronry, four nests Webb Royce Swamp heronry (D&JM). **Tundra Swan:** migrating n with Canada Geese n L George ESSE 11 Mar (DS). Snow Goose: arr Inlet 16 Mar, max 200+ Owls Head 17 Mar, 200 Tupper L 28 Mar. Mallard: wild pair feeding on corn on ground under feeding station above Tupper Marsh 20 Apr-6 May. Gadwall: one BB 18 Apr. Am. Wigeon: arr Ausable Pt 27 Mar. Canvasback: arr Ausable Pt 27 Mar. Ring-necked Duck: 12 arr Tupper L 25 Mar, max 50 Ausable Pt 30 Mar. Gr. Scaup: arr eight Ausable Pt 30 Mar. Lesser Scaup: arr Ausable Pt 27 Mar. White-winged Scoter: Heart Bay, L George, 26 May (DC), uncommon in spring. Com. Goldeneye: CPP 19 May, late unless nesting.

HAWKS-ALCIDS: Turkey Vulture: *intro*, arr Wickham Marsh 27 Mar. Osprey: nesting Ausable Pt platform and on power pole at Abnake L near Indian L. Bald Eagle: ad Rt 458 Paul Smiths 2 Mar; ad Cheever 7 Mar; *seven* upper Saranac L 12 Mar; one Raquette Pd 16-17 Mar; two ad Tupper Marsh 18 Mar; ad Raquette Pd 19 Mar; ad & subad wheeling and touching in the sky, ad chasing gulls, Tupper L; ad Cheever 20 Mar; two ad & imm Tupper L 25 Mar; *five* ad FRAN nest sites 28 Mar; two other ad Paul Smiths 28 Mar; ad Raquette R, Axton 31 Mar; ad Rt 458 Paul Smiths early Apr; ad BB 1 Apr; ad Tupper L 1-2 Apr; imm Tupper L 3-4 Apr; ad Deer R Flow 3 Apr; two ad Schroon L 28 Apr; imm CPP 19 May; a spectacular showing! N. Harrier: arr Owls Head 20 Mar. Sharp-shinned Hawk: *intro*. Red-shouldered Hawk: *intro*. Cooper's Hawk: ad Elizabethtown feeder 10 Apr. N. Goshawk: *intro*. Red-shouldered Hawk: *intro*, copulating MVL 19 Apr. Red-tailed Hawk: *intro*. Golden Eagle: *intro*, two Mt Aetna CLIN 16 Apr (CH); subad T Moira FRAN 11 May (MM). Am. Kestrel: arr four ESSE 30 Mar. Peregrine Falcon: arr pair Wilmington Notch 15 Mar (RH), pair copulating there 30 Mar (JB,TM); three apparent transients near Elizabethtown 9 Apr (LS); migrants CPP 11 and 18 May, *intro*. Wild Turkey: two hens feeding on corn in Tupper L yard 1-26 Mar. Bonaparte's Gull: BB 8-19 May. Great Black-backed Gull: only one sighted between Essex-Ausable Pt 30 Mar, but max 20 Port Henry 25 Mar (GC), high count.

PIGEONS-WOODPECKERS: N. Hawk Owl: *intro*. Great Gray Owl: *intro*. N. Saw-whet Owl: tooting New Russia 30 Mar (SI). Whip-poor-will: arr New Russia 30 Mar; late arr Heart Bay, L George, 7 May. Three-toed Woodpecker: Ferd's Bog 31 May. Black-backed Woodpecker: Ferd's Bog 31 May, only reports of these boreal species.

FLYCATCHERS-STARLING: Yellow-bellied Flycatcher: arr Wakely Pd 20 May. Gray Jay: four MRRA 6 Mar; Browns Tract Pds 8 May; two Osgood R 18 May; Ferd's Bog 24 May; a good showing. Com. Raven: *intro*. Boreal Chickadee: Brown's Tract 20 May; MRRA 23 May, Ferd's Bog 24 May, representative. Tufted Titmouse: banded Elizabethtown 8 Apr; max two singing males CPP 14 May; New Russia 18 May, an unexpected location. **Carolina Wren:** arr Port Henry 29 Apr (GC), early record. Winter Wren: arr Limekiln L HAMI 31 Mar, early. **Sedge Wren:** wet part of Peru CLIN field after 24 May (E&HF), rarely reported. N. Mockingbird: CPP usual, but Chateaugay suet feeder 24 Apr-3 May unusual. Bohemian Waxwing: last flock Wickham Marsh 27 Mar (RH). Cedar Waxwing: arr CPP 19 May. N. Shrike: last chasing chickadee Elizabethtown-Wadhams Road 30 Mar. Shrike (sp.): CLIN 6 Apr. **Loggerhead Shrike:** migrant Mineville 7 Apr (GF).

VIREOS-WARBLEDERS: Philadelphia Vireo: banded CPP 12 May. Golden-winged Warbler: *intro*. **Orange-crowned Warbler:** *intro*. Palm Warbler: "Yellow" arr New Russia 5 May (SI); "Western" six banded CPP 11-12 May. Louisiana Waterthrush: Ironville 19 May only report.

TANAGERS-WEAVERS: Indigo Bunting: eating sunflower seed Tupper L feeder 16-17 May. Fox Sparrow: arr Elizabethtown 7 Apr; last Tupper L 11 Apr. Lincoln's Sparrow: max five banded CPP 12-17 May; singing male Peru after 27 May (E&HF). Swamp Sparrow: arr Ausable Pt 30 Mar. Dark-eyed Junco: arr Elizabethtown 26 Mar; max 75 Tupper L 11 Apr. Snow Bunting: northbound Inlet 2-3 Mar. Red-winged Blackbird: arr Newcomb 5 Mar (RM). Rusty Blackbird: migrant Chateaugay 27 Mar; resident Center Pd ESSE 13 May. Brown-headed Cowbird: record 21 banded CPP. N. Oriole: record 14 banded CPP 11-18 May. Purple Finch: first migrant Paul Smiths 30 Mar. House Finch: migrant males Elizabethtown 2 Mar, 27 Mar, 5 Apr; transient Owls Head 9 Apr suggestive of northbound movement. Red Crossbill: four fresh roadkills Bombay FRAN 15 Mar (HW); pair feeding on Scotch and White Pine and Norway Spruce cones MVL 18 Apr, heard since. Com. Redpoll: one Hogansburg 12 Mar only report. Pine Siskin: Saranac L 25 Apr, only report. Evening Grosbeak: max 32 Elizabethtown 5 Apr; two migrating CPP 5:45 AM 14 May; a few breeding birds at feeders and in hamlets.

Exotics: Cockatiel: frequenting tall evergreens and flying about in Owls Head FRAN all afternoon 6 Apr; next and last sighting was over fields on Teboville Road, 3 mi n Owls Head 24 Apr (JT).

Corrigenda: Gray-cheeked Thrush and Pine Warbler in fall '90 report (*Kingbird* 41(1):55) were at Moriah, a/k/a Cheever, not Chilson.

Discovery Farm, RD 1, Elizabethtown, New York 12932