

REGION 2 — GENESEE

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Some residents may have expected a mild start to the spring season. Such was not the case. In fact, the early part of the season was fairly difficult on the birds present here. March temperatures were more than 4° below average at 30°F. Temperatures fluctuated throughout the month with low temperatures in the middle of the month and higher temperatures coming at the end of March. Snowfall early in the month caused the closing of area schools and businesses. Totals for March were nearly three times normal. This made birding rather difficult at times, but did cause birds to congregate at area feeders. Measurable precipitation for the month was only slightly above normal at 2.44 inches. April reversed the trend. The average temperature was a degree above normal at 46°F. The middle of the month produced some very unseasonable temperatures when readings reached 80°F. Precipitation was less than half an inch above normal at 3.07 inches. May's mean temperature was about average at 56.6°F. Some warm days early in the month produced some good birding days. May was dry with precipitation totaling 1.24 inches, nearly an inch and a half below normal.

The migration got off to a slow start with the cold and snow at the beginning of March. Many days saw wintry blasts of cold air from the north. Some of the early migrants were delayed. The migration continued to be slow in the first days of April as the cold conditions seemed to persist. Migrants pushed through anyway. By mid month things had picked up a bit. The May migration took an interesting twist this year. The lakeshore, which normally hosts the good early concentrations of May migrants, struggled a bit. Inland locations, within a 2 to 3 miles of the lake, seemed to be more productive. Isolated lakeshore locations had good numbers of migrants, but they were not widespread. Some observers felt that it was one of the better migrations in recent years. This again seemed to depend on the location. As is always the case, there was much variation in abundance and distribution of species during the season.

Loon and grebe totals were off a bit, and Red-throated Loon and Horned Grebe were very scarce. Red-necked Grebe did not appear in as high numbers as they have recently. Double-crested Cormorant numbers were good, but not much higher than last year. High waters around their roosting trees may have had some affect on their abundance or visibility. Herons and egrets were unremarkable. Bitterns,

Green-backed Heron and Black-crowned Night-Heron were scarce, although the latter seemed to arrive early. There were few wanderers, with only scattered reports of Great and Cattle Egret. It was a good spring for Snow Goose, which was reported along Lake Ontario in unprecedented numbers. Observers speculated that the high waters in the Finger Lakes may have driven them in our direction. Spring Brant reports, in May as usual, were normal. Duck numbers were average to below average. The local fishing derbies also seem to push waterfowl farther out on the lake. Diving ducks, such as Oldsquaw and scoters, seemed to stay away from the shore and were spotted by birders who also went fishing. Waterfowl highlights included Greater White-fronted Goose and Eurasian Wigeon.

The highlight of the raptor season was the multiple reports of **Gyr Falcon**, with at least three separate individuals found. The Braddock Bay hawk watch was once again under the direction of Brett Ewald. The total number of raptors recorded for the season was 40,816. Three species had record high counts for the season, including a few birds from June. Turkey Vulture totaled 6585 individuals and Bald Eagle totaled 106. The single **Gyr Falcon** there was a first, so it also set a record high. Bald Eagle also had a record high single day count with 13 on 30 Apr. A **Swainson's Hawk**, a dark morph immature Broad-winged Hawk on 12 May, four "Kriders" Red-tailed Hawk, and an albino Red-tailed Hawk on 5 Apr, a partial albino on 9 Apr, and a dark morph Red-tailed Hawk on 7 Apr were other highlights at the hawk watch. Owl numbers were fairly typical. Good numbers of Long-eared and Northern Saw-whet Owls were recorded at Braddock Bay. The Braddock Bay Owl Banding Project under the direction of Jason Franz banded a site record 72 Long-eared Owl this season. Long-eared and Northern Saw-whet Owls were found presumably nesting in Bergen Swamp late in the season.

Rails seemed typical even with the high waters, but coot and moorhen numbers appeared to be low. A major surprise was the **King Rail** seen and heard at Brush Creek in Hamlin on 31 May. Sandhill Crane reports were back to recent levels this spring with multiple sightings. Shorebird habitat was only marginal. Hogan Point had some good standing waters late in the season and North Hamlin Road also had some habitat, but these were exceptions to the rule. Good totals were recorded for Semipalmated Plover, Solitary Sandpiper, Ruddy Turnstone and Red Knot. Black-bellied Plover, Greater and Lesser Yellowlegs, Upland Sandpiper and Short-billed Dowitcher were scarce. In low but fairly typical numbers were Whimbrel and Western Sandpiper.

Highlights included **Willet**, **Ruff** and early Sanderling and Pectoral Sandpiper. The best shorebird of the season was a **Piping Plover**. Little Gull numbers were good. There were few reports of late white-winged gulls. The only rarity was a Lesser Black-backed Gull. The usual early Caspian and Forster's Terns were seen but numbers were mediocre for most species. Black Terns may have difficulty with the high water levels.

The Wild Turkey success story continues, with good numbers and new sighting locations. Ring-necked Pheasant and Ruffed Grouse totals were down. Common Nighthawk and Whip-poor-will numbers were quite low. Red-headed Woodpecker continues to be of concern. It now seems to go unrecorded as a migrant along the Lake Ontario shore these days. The only reports for the Region come from a few scattered individuals. Cuckoo numbers were low, with Yellow-billed being very scarce. Flycatcher numbers for the most part were stable.

Yellow-bellied Flycatcher numbers seemed to be up a bit and Eastern Kingbird seemed to be down. Acadian Flycatcher was reported from scattered locations around the Region. Purple Martin was late and low in numbers, but the other swallows seemed typical. Kinglet totals seemed good, as did Blue-gray Gnatcatcher. Brown Creeper appeared to be down just a bit. The thrushes were represented by good numbers of Swainson's and Hermit Thrush, but the others continued in low totals. Gray Catbird was reported in good numbers, but Brown Thrasher reports were sparse. Loggerhead Shrike was not reported, but a very late Northern Shrike was a highlight.

White-eyed Vireo reports were up and Philadelphia Vireo reports seemed down. Area observers generally commented that warbler numbers were better this year than last year, but totals continue to be alarmingly low. Species on the down side included Golden-winged, Cape May, and Black-throated Green Warblers, Ovenbird, and Yellow-breasted Chat. Most other warbler totals seemed good, with Pine Warbler more abundant than usual. Recorded in very good numbers were Blue-winged, Yellow, Magnolia, Black-throated Blue, Yellow-rumped, and Bay-breasted Warblers, and American Redstart. Highlight species included Yellow-throated, Prairie, Prothonotary, Kentucky and Connecticut Warblers.

A **Western Tanager** was a highlight. Scarlet Tanager numbers remained low and Rose-breasted Grosbeak numbers also seemed a bit off. Sparrows received a mixed report card. Vesper and Grasshopper

Sparrow reports were only fair. Henslow's Sparrow was scarce. Fox Sparrow arrived late and numbers were down somewhat. Lincoln's Sparrow was numerous and it seemed to persist longer. The general consensus was that both White-throated and White-crowned Sparrows were fewer in number this season. A **Clay-colored Sparrow** was another highlight. A Western Meadowlark at Braddock Bay was a good find. Brewer's Blackbird went unreported for the first time in recent years. Northern Oriole seemed to be down in numbers, while the Orchard Oriole remained very local in distribution. There was no real finch movement, with only a scattering of Pine Siskin reports and one Pine Grosbeak sighting. Where are the Evening Grosbeaks?

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Abbreviations: BB - Braddock Bay; CHP - Cobb's Hill Park; DEP - Durand-Eastman Park, Rochester; DLP - Dewey-Latta Park; HB - Hamlin Beach; IB - Irondequoit Bay; ICW - Island Cottage Woods; PtB Point Breeze, RS - Russell Station; WL - West Lakeshore (Lake Ontario w Rochester).

Spring reports: **Red-throated Loon:** last three off DEP 12 May. **Com. Loon:** arr Greece 8 Mar. **Horned Grebe:** last two HB 9 May. **Red-necked Grebe:** arr Webster 28 Mar, max 35 Hamlin 4 Apr (BS). **Least Bittern:** arr WL 15 May. **Great Egret:** arr BB 8 Apr. **Cattle Egret:** one-two PtB 10, 11, 20 May. **Black-crowned Night-Heron:** arr RS 17 Mar (BM), early. **Greater White-fronted Goose:** one Hamlin 3-4 Apr (MD), one Hamlin 11 Apr (BM). **Snow Goose:** max 715 WL 27 Mar (MD), last PtB 28 May (RMC, FS), late. **N. Pintail:** last BB 29 May. **Eurasian Wigeon:** one Hamlin 6 Apr (MD, SH). **Oldsquaw:** max 300 WL 6 May (PS), good late total. **White-winged Scoter:** max 150 WL 6 May (PS), good late total, last BB 24 May.

Com. Goldeneye: last K 23 May. **Bufflehead:** last Manitou 20 May. **Ruddy Duck:** arr BB 30 Mar.

Turkey Vulture: max 1542 BB 16 Apr; *intro.* **Osprey:** max 64 BB 4 May. **Bald Eagle:** max 13 BB 30 Apr; *intro.* **N. Harrier:** max 143 BB 16 Apr. **Sharp-shinned Hawk:** max 749 BB 30 Apr. **Cooper's Hawk:** max 94 BB 7 Apr. **N. Goshawk:** max 7 BB 19 Apr. **Red-shouldered Hawk:** arr three Manitou 26 Mar, max 196 BB 7 Apr. **Broad-winged Hawk:** max 8092 BB 30 Apr; *intro.* **SWAINSON'S HAWK:** one BB 20 Apr (BE), now almost annual there. **Red-tailed Hawk:** max 404 BB 9 Apr; *intro.* **Rough-legged Hawk:** max 56 BB 28 Apr, last there 11 May. **Golden Eagle:** arr Greece 28 Mar (BM), max seven BB 9 Apr. **Am. Kestrel:** max 305 BB 16 Apr, good total. **Merlin:** max three BB 20, 30 Apr. **Peregrine Falcon:** max two BB 6 May. **GYRFALCON:** gray imm BB 9 Mar (BE); gray ad Hamlin 25 Mar - 5 Apr (mob). **SANDHILL CRANE:** max three BB 19 Apr (JD, EE), other singles in Apr and May. **KING RAIL:** *intro.* **PIPING PLOVER:** one IB 21 Apr (BM, mob). **Lesser Golden-Plover:** two Hamlin 25 Apr (CC), uncommon in spring. **WILLET:** one Hogan Pt 23-24 May (MD, JS, DT, mob). **Upland Sandpiper:** arr three BB 16 Apr. **Whimbrel:** max six Hogan Pt 24 May (RMc, RO'H), unusual in spring. **Ruddy Turnstone:** arr two CH 15 May, max 40 Charlotte 31 May. **Red Knot:** arr Charlotte 31 May, unusual in spring. **Sanderling:** one IB 21 Apr (BM), early and unusual in spring; max 30 Charlotte 31 May (BM), more than usual. **Semipalmated Sandpiper:** max 125 Perinton 29 May, good total. **Western Sandpiper:** arr two Hamlin 12 May; one Hamlin 20-27 May, max four Hamlin 29 May, uncommon in spring. **Least Sandpiper:** max 51 Perinton 27 May. **White-rumped Sandpiper:** max two Hamlin 24 May. **Pectoral Sandpiper:** max 46 Hamlin 16 Apr. **Dunlin:** max 80 Perinton 29 May. **RUFF:** Reeve Perinton 22-23 May (DS, mob). **Short-billed Dowitcher:** max 12 Hamlin 15 May, last one Hamlin 26 May. **Little Gull:** two off DEP 18 Apr (R&SS), several Hamlin Apr, unusual in spring. **Bonaparte's Gull:** arr BB 26 Mar. **Iceland Gull:** one HB 6 Apr. **Lesser Black-backed Gull:** one Ontario Beach Charlotte 20 Apr (BM). **Caspian Tern:** max 60 Sodus Bay 22 May.

Com. Nighthawk. max 28 Greece 28 May. **Whip-poor-will:** arr Webster 30 Apr (JC). **Yellow-bellied Sapsucker:** wintering bird Irondequoit 13-14, 18 Mar (GL); max ten Greece 16 Apr.

Yellow-bellied Flycatcher: max 16 Manitou 28 May. **Acadian Flycatcher:** arr Letchworth SP 23 May. **Horned Lark:** max 500 Mar. **Tree Swallow:** one Greece 12 Mar may have overwintered. **Gray-cheeked Thrush:** arr Greece 10 May; max 11 Manitou 28 May. **Gray Catbird:** wintering bird Mendon 1 Mar. **Am. Pipit:** arr two Greece 23 Mar; max

230 BB 16 Apr (MD), good total; last Charlotte 29 May, late. **N. Shrike:** one WL 6 May (PS), very late.

White-eyed Vireo: singles DLP 14 May (BM), BB 18 May (BE), more than usual. **Philadelphia Vireo:** arr one-two several sites 10 May. **Blue-winged Warbler:** arr several sites 3 May. **Golden-winged Warbler:** arr DLP 3 May. **Blue-winged X Golden-winged Warbler:** Brewster's type ICW 3 May (JL), Oatka P 10 May (CC AC); Lawrence's type Mumford 30 May (RS). **Magnolia Warbler:** max 123 Manitou 24 May. **Blackburnian Warbler:** max 25 Manitou 24 May. **YELLOW-THROATED WARBLER:** one Seneca P 10 May (RS). **Pine Warbler:** wintering bird Pittsford to 22 Mar (T & PS). **Prairie Warbler:** singles Manitou 18, 27-28 May. **Black-and-white Warbler:** max 25 WL 3 May. **Prothonotary Warbler:** one ICW 10 May (JL), another 15 May (mob), uncommon along lakeshore. **Louisiana Waterthrush:** arr ICW 30 Apr. **Kentucky Warbler:** one ICW 8 May (B & BP), uncommon. **Connecticut Warbler:** singles Manitou 23-24 May (mob) and 28 May (EB), Cobb's Hill P 24 May (AW); good spring total. **Yellow-breasted Chat:** arr DLP 22 May.

W. TANAGER: one Cobbs Hill P 9 May (JB). **Am. Tree Sparrow:** last Greece 24 Apr. **CLAY-COLORED SPARROW:** one Manitou 25 May (KG), uncommon but regular. **Snow Bunting:** one Hamlin 3 Apr (CC), late. **E. Meadowlark:** arr BB 29 Mar. **W. Meadowlark:** one Manitou 6 May (RO'H). **Rusty Blackbird:** arr Webster 24 Mar. **Pine Grosbeak** one Parma 25 Mar (RMc, RO'H), only report. **Pine Siskin:** one Springwater 23 Mar; one Greece 30 Mar. **Evening Grosbeak:** one Webster 28 Apr (D&DT), only report.

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