

REGION 5 — ONEIDA LAKE BASIN

GENE HUGGINS

It was a very eventful spring, with one of the worst blizzards of the century and widespread flooding in the Region. In mid March, the Blizzard of '93 brought 42.9 inches of snow over a three day period to the Syracuse area. Snow accumulation for the entire season was 191.1 inches, enabling Syracuse to establish a record for the second year in a row. The last snowfall to occur was on 23 Apr, with 1.5 inches in Syracuse and 18 inches in Old Forge. Populations of Tree Swallow, Song Sparrow and Dark-eyed Junco were hard hit by the latter storm, especially in the Adirondacks. Total precipitation for the period was 3.19 inches above normal, with April the fourth wettest on record. A combination of excessive rainfall and melt from the March blizzard produced floods throughout the Region. At the end of April, access to Scott Swamp and the western shore of Oneida Lake was completely cutoff by flooded roads. The beach at Sandy Pond was inundated by the rising waters of Lake Ontario. Fortunately, the month of May brought back fairly normal weather patterns to dry out the area and let observers know that spring was truly here.

The persistence of winter delayed the beginning of the waterfowl migration for almost a month. In fact, the Blizzard of '93 may have curtailed the movement of Horned Grebe through the Region, considering only two were reported. Despite a slow start, record high

seasonal counts were noted for both Snow Goose and Brant and a Regional maximum was set for Bufflehead. In mid May a substantial number of White-winged Scoter were sighted on Oneida Lake by Bill Purcell. Unfortunately, population levels for Northern Pintail, Blue-winged Teal and American Wigeon were down markedly, with no more than 35 per day. Other highlights include Common Loon using a man-made platform on Grey Lake to lay its eggs on 22 May and a Barrow's Goldeneye for the first spring record in 16 years.

This was a memorable season for raptors at Derby Hill. A strange immature sea eagle at Derby Hill on 24 Apr was thought to be New York's first **White-tailed Eagle**. It was an exciting day for over one hundred observers to see it and compare notes. Other interesting observations include **Black Vulture** and a record high seasonal count for both Red-shouldered and Red-tailed Hawks. Two reports of **Swainson's Hawk** at the end of April rounded out this spring's observations. Osprey resumed their nesting activity at Moss Lake and at the Salmon River Reservoir. Despite continued nest construction at Clay Marsh, no further attempts at nesting were observed from this site, established a year ago.

Extensive flooding along major waterways provided no habitat for early shorebirds. At the end of the season, twelve species were seen along smaller creeks and farm ponds in the Towns of Lysander ONON and Schroeppeel OSWE. Moderate numbers of Semipalmated Sandpiper and Dunlin were noted along Six Mile Creek near Biddlecum Road on 29 May. The Region's second spring report for Little Gull was accompanied by two reports of Lesser Black-backed Gull, the latter having been seen for the second consecutive year. Several pairs of Caspian Terns were observed on the gravel roof of the Hewitt Union Building, SUNY at Oswego, actively involved in courtship display with the possibility of nesting nearby. A similar assemblage of Ring-billed Gull on a warehouse roof in urban Syracuse, where they were also present last summer, did not lead to nesting.

Members of the flycatcher family continue to be scarce, with E. Phoebe showing the highest maximum of 21 per day. Few Olive-sided and Yellow-bellied Flycatchers were noted, with the latter species still migrating at Labrador Pond on 28 May. Daily maxima of Tree Swallow and Barn Swallow were up slightly from the previous spring, but Purple Martin showed a further decline of no more than 30 along the shore of Oneida Lake. A very poor flight of both kinglets suggested a high mortality from the effects of the March blizzard further south. Thrushes

fared no better, with only Wood Thrush indicating populations above 30 a day. Observers in the Region reported 31 species of warblers along with two hybrids. The more unusual of the Blue-winged X Golden-winged Warbler was Lawrence's type found in two separate localities in ONON. A Kentucky Warbler found in St. Mary's Cemetery was the first Regional record in three years. Good flight days were 30 Apr to 6 May, with an excellent migration along the Lake Ontario littoral 15 May. Especially disturbing were the one to five per day maxima for Northern Parula, Cape May, Blackpoll and Wilson's Warblers. Moderate populations of 100-300 birds were found for Yellow, Yellow-rumped Warblers and American Redstart. In early April, a significant number of Song Sparrows were noted in the Town of Scriba, along with daily highs for both Vesper and Fox Sparrows. Later, a Clay-colored Sparrow and a **Le Conte's Sparrow** were located. Both White-throated and White-crowned Sparrows were way down with no more than 35 per day. At least four separate sightings of Yellow-headed Blackbird were noted, with three in one day, all possibly of a single bird migrating north. The severe winter conditions of early March essentially precluded any major movement of Rusty Blackbird. Among finches, White-winged Crossbill persisted until late March at Boylston and there were widely scattered reports of Pine Siskin.

A total of 229 species plus one color morph and two hybrids were reported with **Black Vulture**, **White-tailed Eagle**, **Swainson's Hawk**, Lesser Black-Backed Gull, **Le Conte's Sparrow** and Yellow-headed Blackbird the best of the great rarities. Other notable species included Snowy Egret, Little Blue Heron, Barrow's Goldeneye, Little Gull, Kentucky Warbler, Yellow-breasted Chat and Clay-colored Sparrow. A special thanks to Dorothy Crumb, Gary Lee and Marge Rusk for their contributions to the introduction of this report. This is my last Region 5 report. The new Region 5 Editors are Dorothy Crumb and Jim Throckmorton. Reports should be submitted to Dorothy at 3983 Gates Road, Jamesville, New York 13078.

Contributors: Sue Adair, Sue Boettger, Ned Brinkley, Lee B. Chamberlaine, Dorothy W. Crumb, Paul DeBenedictis, Bob Dorrance, Robert L. Evans, Craig Fosdick, William T. Gruenbaum, Gene Huggins, Betty Hughes, Mary Alice Koeneke, Gary Lee, Robert Long, David Nash, Bill Purcell, Margaret S. Rusk, Gerald Smith, Maureen Staloff, Jim Throckmorton, Ken Zoller.

Abbreviations: Adks - Adirondacks; DH - Derby Hill, OSWE; LSB -

Little Sodus Bay, Fairhaven, and vicinity, CAYU; LOL - Lake Ontario littoral, OSWE; OnonL - Onondaga Lake; SPd - Sandy Pond, OSWE; SSSP - Selkirk Shores State Park, OSWE; StMC - St. Mary's Cemetery, Dewitt, ONON; TRWMA - Three Rivers Wildlife Management Area, ONON.

Spring reports: **Red-throated Loon:** one Oswego H 12 May. **Com. Loon:** arr LOL 4 Apr; max 58 there 8 May; last OnonL 26 May, *intro*. **Pied-billed Grebe:** arr Minetto OSWE 21 Mar; max five DH 10 Apr; 17 reports. **Horned Grebe:** one in Alt plumage Toad H 9 May. **Red-necked Grebe:** max 12 Beaver L 26 Apr, three Toad H 25 Apr. **Double-crested Cormorant:** arr Oswego H 4 Apr; max 2600 LOL 16 May. **Am. Bittern:** max five Toad H 15 May; 14 reports. **Least Bittern:** one Clay Marsh 8-26 May, only report. **Great Blue Heron:** max 30 CAYU, OSWE 4 Apr. **Great Egret:** one DH 7 Apr. **Snowy Egret:** singles Oswego 6 May, T Schroeppel 9 May. **Little Blue Heron:** ad W Monroe OSWE 17-18 Apr. **Green-backed Heron:** max six Clay Marsh 5 May. **Black-crowned Night-Heron:** arr DH 8 Apr; max 14 LOL 30 Apr; one Rome 24 May. **Tundra Swan:** one OnonL 24 Mar. **Snow Goose:** arr DH, Howland's I 27 Mar; max 3265 LOL 4 Apr; last Beaver L 18 Apr; 12 reports of blue morph. **Brant:** arr T Schroeppel 26 Apr; max and last 2400 Toad H 15 May. **Canada Goose:** max 8000 CAYU and OSWE 4 Apr. **Wood Duck:** max 50 W Winfield 15 May. **Green-winged Teal:** max 24 Toad H 25 Apr; last there 30 Apr. **Am. Black Duck:** max 97 LOL 28 Mar. **N. Pintail:** max 32 LOL 27 Mar; last Cicero 27 May. **Blue-winged Teal:** max ten Toad H 25 Apr; last OSWE 15 May. **N. Shoveler:** arr OnonL 20 Mar; max five Clay 14 Apr; last Toad H 30 Apr. **Gadwall:** max 18 OnonL 20 Mar. **Am. Wigeon:** arr Phoenix 21 Mar; max 31 LOL 28 Mar; last two TRWMA 15 May. **Canvasback:** arr Oswego H 3 Mar; max and last 12 Brewerton 4 Apr; 31 reports. **Redhead:** arr Oswego H 1 Mar; max 12 LSB 4 Apr; last SSSP 18 Apr. **Ring-necked Duck:** arr Phoenix 21 Mar; max 502 LOL 28 Mar; last Toad H 30 Apr. **Greater Scaup:** max 800 LOL 4 Apr; last Beaver L 26 Apr. **Lesser Scaup:** max 100 LSB 4 Apr; last Oneida L 27 Apr. **Oldsquaw:** max 29 Toad H, SSSP 18 Apr; last LOL 8 May. **White-winged Scoter:** arr Brewerton 2 Apr; max and last 180 Toad H 15 May. **Com. Goldeneye:** max 300 LOL 4 Apr; last Toad H 27 Apr. **Barrow's Goldeneye:** male LSB 26 Apr (BH, ph). **Bufflehead:** record max 762 Oneida L 27 Apr (MSR); last SSSP 15 May. **Hooded Merganser:** arr LOL 27 Mar; max 49 there 28 Mar. **Com. Merganser:** max 241 Oswego R and harbor 6 Mar; last DH 26 May. **Red-breasted Merganser:** max 203 LOL 12 May; last SSSP 15 May. **Ruddy Duck:** two Beaver L 10-18 Apr, two SSSP 28 Apr.

Derby Hill Hawk migration totals:

Species	Arrival	Max- Date	Last 90%	Date Range	Total
Turkey Vulture	19 Mar	762- 4 Apr	5 May	4 Apr-28 Apr	4784
Osprey	5 Apr	93- 3 May	22 May	15 Apr-10 May	528
Bald Eagle	19 Mar	7-29 Apr	21 May	25 Mar-10 May	46
Northern Harrier	7 Mar	53- 9 Apr	22 May	31 Mar- 3 May	520
Sharp-shinned Hawk	7 Mar	416- 3 May	25 May	7 Apr- 5 May	3744
Cooper ' s Hawk	10 Mar	83- 5 Apr1	1 May	25 Mar- 1 May	411
Northern Goshawk	7 Mar	7-2 dates	4 May	21 Mar-28 Apr	73
Red-shouldered Hawk	19 Mar	722- 5 Apr	3 May	30 Mar- 9Apr	1523
Broad-winged Hawk	15 Apr	4377-29 Apr	22 May	20 Apr- 1 May	20941
Red-tailed Hawk	4 Mar	1068- 5 Apr	22 May	22 Mar-29 Apr	9672
Rough-legged Hawk	4 Mar	48- 9 Apr1	1 May	28 Mar-28 Apr	257
Golden Eagle	18 Mar	4- 3 Mar	5 May	22 Mar- 1 May	32
American Kestrel	16 Mar	63-15 Apr	21 May	1 Apr-11 May	296
Merlin	31 Mar	2-3 dates	5 May		13
Peregrine Falcon	1 May		3 May		2
Total(including unidentified)					42906

BLACK VULTURE: single DH 26, 28-30 Mar (mob). **Turkey Vulture:** arr W Winfield 11 Mar, Moss L Adks 24 Apr. **Osprey:** *intro*. **Bald Eagle:** three Phoenix 1-21 Mar; singles Oswego 19 Mar, Holland Patent 20 Apr, Big Moose L 2 1 May. **WHITE-TAILED EAGLE:** *intro* (NB, GS, ph, NYSARC). **N. Harrier:** one carrying nesting material Toad H 18 Apr. **Red-shouldered Hawk:** nine T Sterling 3 Apr, three T Boylston 30 May; two T New Haven 27 Mar; singles T Hannibal 8 May, Wood's L Adks 23 May; *intro*. **SWAINSON'S HAWK:** two DH 28 Apr. **Red-tailed Hawk:** *intro*. **Merlin:** two SUNY Oswego 1 May; singles Onondaga P Syracuse 5 Mar, SUNY Oswego 15, 20 Apr. **Peregrine Falcon:** singles T Hannibal 3 Apr, T Richland 6 Apr. **Ring-necked Pheasant:** 14 reports. **Wild Turkey:** max 63 s HERK 5 Mar. **Virginia Rail:** three Clay Marsh 11 May. **Sora:** three Clay Marsh 1 2 May, five reports. **Com. Moorhen:** max seven T Richland 8 May. **Am. Coot:** five reports. **Semipalmated Plover:** ten Biddlecum Road OSWE 24 May; last there 29 May. **Killdeer:** max 100 LOL 27 Mar. **Greater Yellowlegs:** max 27 Biddlecum Road 18 Apr; last W Winfield 22 May. **Lesser Yellowlegs:** five Biddlecum Road 25 Apr; last there 16 May. **Solitary Sandpiper:** max two per day, last Biddlecum Road 24 May. **Spotted Sandpiper:** max eight OSWE 15 May. **Upland Sandpiper:** arr Holland Patent 30 Apr; three T Schroepel

1 May. **Ruddy Turnstone**: two Biddlecum Road 29 May. **Semipalmated Sandpiper**: max and last 56 Biddlecum Road 29 May. **Least Sandpiper**: seven Lysander 10 May; last Fabius 30 May. **Pectoral Sandpiper**: one Lysander 11,12 Apr; max and last three Biddlecum Road 18 Apr. **Dunlin**: arr Rome 17 May; max and last 210 Biddlecum Road 29 May. **Com. Snipe**: arr Elbridge 7 Mar, record early (JT). **Am. Woodcock**: max four Constantia 10 May. **Little Gull**: two ad LSB 18 Apr (PDeB!). **Bonaparte's Gull**: arr LOL 17 Apr; max 150 there 18 Apr; last Oswego H 23 Apr. **Ring-billed Gull**: *intro*. **Lesser Black-Backed Gull**: singles SUNY Oswego 23 Apr (CF), OnonL 5 May (DN). **Caspian Tern**: max 22 LOL 16 May, *intro*. **Com. Tern**: max 26 Oneida L 2 May. **Black Tern**: eight reports.

Mourning Dove: max 50 LOL 27 Mar. **Black-billed Cuckoo**: six reports. **E. Screech-Owl**: singles Lafayette 12 Mar, OSWE 15 May. **Snowy Owl**: last DH 5 Apr. **Barred Owl**: six reports. **N. Saw-whet Owl**: one T Webb Adks 23 May. **Com. Nighthawk**: max three Syracuse 21 May, eight reports. **Whip-poor-will**: arr Hinckley 7 May; max six T Constantia 10 May. **Chimney Swift**: max 35 Oswego 7 May. **Ruby-throated Hummingbird**: arr Fourth L Adks 1 May; five Labrador Hollow 30 May. **Red-headed Woodpecker**: two Shore Oaks Road OSWE 8 May. **Yellow-bellied Sapsucker**: seven T Webb 23 May. **N. Flicker**: max 71 migrating DH 24 Apr.

Olive-sided Flycatcher: two T Webb 23 May, three reports. **E. Wood-Pewee**: max 11 Pratt's Falls 22 May. **Yellow-bellied Flycatcher**: arr StMC 8 May, six reports. **Willow Flycatcher**: max 15 Clay Marsh 26 May. **Least Flycatcher**: max 18 T Sandy Creek 8 May. **E. Phoebe**: max 21 T Sandy Creek 8 May. **Great Crested Flycatcher**: ten OSWE 15 May. **E. Kingbird**: ten OSWE 15 May. **Purple Martin**: max 27 Toad H 15 May. **Tree Swallow**: max 610 Clay Marsh 3 May. **N. Rough-winged Swallow**: max 24 Clay Marsh 8 May. **Bank Swallow**: max 100 Rome 9 May. **Cliff Swallow**: max 35 OSWE 15 May. **Barn Swallow**: max 200 OSWE 15 May. **Blue Jay**: max 211 LOL 8 May. **Am. Crow**: max 800 LOL 27 Mar. **Carolina Wren**: eight widespread reports. **House Wren**: max 18 T Sandy Creek 8 May. **Winter Wren**: arr Labrador Pd ONON 9 Apr, Adks 25 Apr. **Marsh Wren**: max 25 Clay Marsh 11 May. **Golden-crowned Kinglet**: max 50 StMC 19 Apr. **Ruby-crowned Kinglet**: max 42 LOL 1 May; last SSSP 26 May. **Blue-gray Gnatcatcher**: four OSWE 15 May. **E. Bluebird**: seven LOL 8 May. **Gray-cheeked Thrush**: two Rome 17 May, one StMC 19 May. **Swainson's Thrush**: max two per day, last StMC 28 May. **Hermit Thrush**: max 30

SUNY Oswego 16 Apr. **Wood Thrush**: max 35 OSWE 15 May. **Gray Catbird**: max 50 OSWE 15 May. **Brown Thrasher**: five SPd 5 May. **Am. Pipit**: arr DH 25 Mar; max and last five Sterling 15 May. **Cedar Waxwing**: max 140 ONON, OSWE 20 Mar. **N. Shrike**: last T Clay 24 Mar.

Solitary Vireo: arr Adks 8 May; max 14 T Webb 23 May. **Yellow-throated Vireo**: max 15 OSWE 15 May. **Warbling Vireo**: max 35 T Sandy Creek 8 May. **Philadelphia Vireo**: arr StMC 3 May; last there 24 May; nine reports. **Red-eyed Vireo**: max 34 Pratt's Falls 22 May. **Blue-winged Warbler**: arr T Richland and Labrador Pd 8 May; max seven Pompey Hollow 30 May. **Golden-winged Warbler**: arr T Scriba 8 May; 12 reports. **Blue-winged X Golden-winged Warbler**: three reports Brewster's type; Lawrence's type Clay Marsh 7 May, TRWMA 11, 18 May. **Tennessee Warbler**: max 35 OSWE 15 May; last StMC 28 May. **Orange-crowned Warbler**: singles DH 1 May, LOL 8 May, Oswego 9 May, Toad H 9 May. **Nashville Warbler**: max 11 Little John 8 May, last LOL 15 May. **N. Parula**: five OSWE 15 May. **Yellow Warbler**: max 180 T Sandy Creek 8 May. **Chestnut-sided Warbler**: max 21 T Webb 23 May. **Magnolia Warbler**: max 40 LOL 15 May. **Cape May Warbler**: max three LOL 8, 15 May; last DH 16 May; 14 reports. **Black-throated Blue Warbler**: max 25 OSWE 15 May; last StMC 28 May. **Yellow-rumped Warbler**: arr Snake Swamp 17 Apr; max 300 OSWE 15 May; last StMC 18 May. **Black-throated Green Warbler**: max 16 T Parish 8 May. **Blackburnian Warbler**: max 15 OSWE 15 May. **Pine Warbler**: max five OSWE 15 May; 21 reports. **Prairie Warbler**: arr StMC 29 Apr, seven reports. **Palm Warbler**: max 13 SUNY at Oswego 3 May; last LOL 15 May. **Bay-breasted Warbler**: max 15 OSWE 15 May; last StMC 28 May. **Blackpoll Warbler**: three SPd 19 May; last Syracuse 30 May. **Cerulean Warbler**: arr Toad H 4 May; four Fairdale OSWE 8 May. **Black-and-white Warbler**: max 15 OSWE 15 May. **Am. Redstart**: arr Adks 9 May; max 100 OSWE 15 May. **Ovenbird**: max 44 Happy Valley OSWE 8 May. **Louisiana Waterthrush**: arr Pompey 27 Apr. **Kentucky Warbler**: one StMC 11 May. **Hooded Warbler**: arr Oren Gulf ONON 3 May; max eight OSWE 15 May. **Wilson's Warbler**: five OSWE 15 May; last DH 29 May. **Yellow-breasted Chat**: one SUNY Oswego 20, 21 May.

Scarlet Tanager: max 15 OSWE 15 May. **Rose-breasted Grosbeak**: arr Adks 6 May; max 30 OSWE 15 May. **Indigo Bunting**: nine Pompey 23 May. **Rufous-sided Towhee**: max 14 OSWE 15 May. **Am. Tree Sparrow**: last T Onondaga 2 May, late. **Chipping Sparrow**: max 85 OSWE 15 May. **Clay-colored Sparrow**: one T Scriba 1 May (SA!), eleventh Regional record. **Field Sparrow**: arr Tully 10 Apr; max 15 OSWE 15 May. **Vesper Sparrow**: max 25 T Scriba 10 Apr. **Savannah Sparrow**: max 18 OSWE 15

May. **Grasshopper Sparrow**: arr Hastings 4 May; max three Pompey 9 May; 13 reports. **LE CONTE'S SPARROW**: one SUNY at Oswego 28 Apr (CF!), second Regional record. **Fox Sparrow**: arr Pompey 3 Apr; eight T Scriba 10 Apr; last StMC 25 Apr. **Song Sparrow**: max 230 Nine Mile Pt 10 Apr. **Lincoln's Sparrow**: max eight T Webb 23 May. **Swamp Sparrow**: arr Clay Marsh 31 Mar; max 38 there 12 May. **White-crowned Sparrow**: max 26 LOL 9 May; last Holland Patent 28 May. **Lapland Longspur**: last T Fenner MADI 7 Mar. **Snow Bunting**: last LOL 4 May. **Bobolink**: max 75 OSWE 15 May. **Red-winged Blackbird**: arr T Camillus 4 Mar. **E. Meadowlark**: arr Delphi Falls ONON 24 Mar; max 35 LOL 8 May. **Yellow-headed Blackbird**: singles Delphi Falls 24 Mar, Baldwinsville 27 Mar, T Schroepfel 27 Mar, *intro*. **Rusty Blackbird**: arr Clay Marsh 31 Mar; max 67 Nine Mile Pt 10 Apr; last Clay Marsh 5 May. **Com. Grackle**: arr Holland Patent 9 Mar. **N. Oriole**: max 18 LOL 8 May. **Purple Finch**: max 40 Beaver L 23 Mar. **White-winged Crossbill**: max 100 Boylston OSWE 10 Mar; last there 25 Mar. **Pine Siskin**: arr Pompey 29 Mar; max six SUNY Oswego 1 May; last StMC 9 May. **Am. Goldfinch**: max 124 Pompey and Jamesville 20 May. **Evening Grosbeak**: max 12 Boylston 20 Mar, 18 reports.

Corrigendum: Vol 42(2): the following line was omitted from the bottom of p 109:

Meadowlark: ten reports. **Rusty Blackbird**: one Dewitt 14 Dec to 3 Jan.
Com. Grackle:

1065 Westmoreland Ave., Syracuse, New York 13210