

REGION 9 — HUDSON-DELAWARE

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Spring 1993 was a season of meteorological extremes. It was the wettest March since 1980, with 6 inches of precipitation by month's end, and significantly colder as well, a -3.5°F departure from the norm. The Blizzard of '93, 12-14 Mar, dumped as much as 2.5 inches of precipitation in some areas of the Region. In the northern portion of the Region, this converted into large amounts of snow. April's continued wet spell swelled streams and rivers over their banks, closing many roads. The snow melt from the previous months blizzard only compounded matters. Then came May, dry and hot! Only 27% of the normal rainfall was reported. The temperature reached the 90°F mark by 11 May. By bird standards the weather was glorious. By birders' standards it was abysmal. Nothing but day after day of clear blue skies and 80 and 90°F temperatures the entire month. There were very few if any weather fronts to interrupt the birds' migration and bring them down to satisfy our birding needs and desires. This spring migration was definitely for the birds only.

Much attention was paid to an area of the Bear Mountain SP in ROCK for its bounty of resident nesters. The area, known by birders as "Doodletown Road," is a forested hillside on the eastern boundary of the park with a paved path leading through it. This area was a private community earlier this century and is now abandoned. Starting in late April, this area was particularly productive, with the primary attractors being up to 25 Hooded, two Kentucky, 15 Cerulean, and several Golden-winged Warblers. Black Vulture was found soaring overhead frequently. Louisiana Waterthrush, American Redstart and Blue-gray Gnatcatcher were abundant. Good numbers of grosbeaks, tanagers, buntings, orioles, vireos, and hummingbirds could be found as well. As the migration progressed, this location proved to be a good migration spot, sometimes providing over 20 species of warbler in one morning. Just a few miles away, at the West Point Military Reservation, both Brewster's and Lawrence's types of Blue-winged X Golden-winged Warbler hybrids could be found with some effort, along with more Hooded, Cerulean and Golden-winged Warblers. To top things off, the sanitary landfill at the adjacent Harriman SP hosted resident pairs of both Common Raven (probably the most southerly location in the state)

and Black Vulture. The potential that both species breed in the vicinity is very high.

Several contributors have noticed an increase in the Wood Duck population in the Region. Perhaps this is an after effect of the advancing rabies epidemic in the Raccoon population. Many observers reported an impressive Yellow-rumped, Pine and Palm Warbler migration in April from throughout the Region. Both Cuckoos were once again reported in minimal numbers. Orchard Oriole made a good showing with numerous reports coming from all counties.

Rarities for the season included some winter holdovers. The last of the previously reported **Lesser Black-backed Gull** was seen last in Rye on 21 Mar, and the previously reported **Barrow's Goldeneye** in Rye stayed until 14 Mar. Several southern spring overshoots, more or less expected to occur in the Region were reported. **Black Vulture**, of which conservatively no less than 13 individuals were reported, was found most often at the ROCK-ORAN border. Reports of singles and small groups were also received from ULST, DUTC, PUTN and interestingly, one from coastal WEST on 18 Apr, where this species rarely strays. A **Prothonotary Warbler** stayed at the Rockefeller SP in WEST. 24-28 Apr and a female **Summer Tanager** was found at the Rye Nature Center on 30 Apr. But the real surprises came from the west. An **American White Pelican** was found at Cornwall Bay ORAN on the evening of 21 May by two fisherman. The following morning it delighted a handful of local birders doing an annual spring big day. Probably one of the most well traveled pelicans in the States' ornithological history, it was undoubtedly the same individual which spent the previous week in the Adirondacks, passing through Region 9 on 21 May only to visit New York City and Long Island beginning on 23 May! A **Brewer's Blackbird** was found on 29 Apr in Pine Plains DUTC by two experienced observers. If accepted, this sighting would be a new DUTC record. A dark morph **Swainson's Hawk** was reported from Hook Mountain on 18 Apr. It is a red letter day when this species is recorded in New York. What is particularly interesting about this sighting is that it is a spring record and of a dark morph. Steve and Linda Taft found a brightly marked male **Dickcissel** at the Stoney Kill Environmental Center DUTC on 1 May, where it remained through 21 May. Finally, two species that may be considered rare or historical nesters in the Region were reported. A **Sedge Wren** was heard calling by several observers at the Marshlands Conservancy in Rye on 28 May, as was a probable **King Rail**, which also was seen there

several times briefly by several different observers for a period in early May. The report stands as probable because of the great difficulty in separating brown Clapper Rail from King Rail when the subject is as uncooperative as this one was. Other interesting species reported included Great Cormorant inland, Eurasian Wigeon, Red-headed Woodpecker, Red Crossbill and Common Redpoll.

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Abbreviations: Bash - Bashakill Marsh, SULL; BCF - Blue Chip Horse Farm, ULST; HMHW - Hook Mountain Hawk Watch, season total; MC - Marshlands Conservancy, Rye, WEST.

Spring reports: **Horned Grebe:** eight Bash 4 Apr. **Red-necked Grebe:** low numbers on Long I Sound; one Rye 6 Mar; four Bash 5 Apr; one DUTC 17 Apr. **AM. WHITE PELICAN:** *intro* (The McDermotts, mob). **Great Cormorant:** 14 Hudson R WEST 19 Mar, two on Hudson R ORAN 30 Apr. **Am. Bittern:** one DUTC 15 May, decreasing in numbers. **Least Bittern:** three DUTC 15 May. **Little Blue Heron:** one Bash 14 May. **Cattle Egret:** one DUTC 15 May. **Glossy Ibis:** one MC during May. **Snow Goose:** blue morph DUTC 3 Apr. **Brant:** bulk of birds migrated 14 and 21 May, 1800 flew up Hudson R ROCK 14 May. **Blue-winged Teal:** arr DUTC 24 Mar. **N. Shoveler:** four DUTC 5 Apr. **Eurasian Wigeon:** drake Bash 4 Apr (AG, JPA, VF, MC), first SULL record; one Rye through mid Mar. **Redhead:** drake MC until 16 Apr. **Oldsquaw:** six Bash and nine Mongaup Res SULL 4 Apr. **White-winged Scoter:** two Mongaup Res 4 Apr; 39 Rye 25 Apr. **Surf Scoter:** one Sylvan I DUTC 11 Apr (CP); one Rye 21 Mar. **BARROW'S GOLDENEYE:** *intro* (TWB, mob). **Hooded Merganser:** nesting confirmed at US Military Academy at West Pt, unprecedented there.

BLACK VULTURE: *intro*. **Turkey Vulture:** 73 HMHW. **Osprey:** two nests Bash; 77 HMHW. **Bald Eagle:** four HMHW. **N. Harrier:** 32 HMHW. **Sharp-shinned Hawk:** 236 HMHW. **Cooper's Hawk:** 25 HMHW. **N. Goshawk:** three HMHW. **Broad-winged Hawk:** arr 22 Mar Rock (PF), very early; 1609 HMHW. **Red-tailed Hawk:** 16 HMHW. **SWAINSON'S HAWK:** *intro* (PF). **Rough-legged Hawk:** max six at Galeville Airport, ULST 2 Mar. **Golden Eagle:** pair DUTC to 7 Mar. **Am. Kestrel:** 392 HMHW. **Merlin:** four HMHW. **Peregrine Falcon:** two HMHW. **N.**

Bobwhite: one MC after 24 May, origin unknown, historical records there only. **Clapper Rail:** max five MC 12 May. **KING RAIL:** *intro* (TWB, AG). **Virginia Rail:** one MC 8 Apr. **Sora:** max two MC 29 May. **Com. Moorhen:** reports from Bash only. **Am. Coot:** one Bash 30 May, late. **Am. Oystercatcher:** arr MC 30 Mar. **Lesser Yellowlegs:** arr Rye 16 Apr. **Solitary Sandpiper:** max 26 DUTC 15 May. **Spotted Sandpiper:** arr across Region 25 Apr. **Upland Sandpiper:** two 16 BCF May. **White-rumped Sandpiper:** max two MC 29-31 May. **Pectoral Sandpiper:** one DUTC 15 May. **Purple Sandpiper:** last Rye 8 May. **Dunlin:** two ROCK Apr 28. **Com. Snipe:** max nine DUTC 19 Apr. **Bonaparte's Gull:** 30 MC 21 Mar. **Laughing Gull:** arr two Rye 8 Apr. **LESSER BLACK-BACKED GULL:** *intro* (TWB). **Com. Tern:** arr MC 3 May. **Least Tern:** arr MC 8 May.

Barn Owl: one flew over Taconic Parkway DUTC 15 May. **Long-eared Owl:** two DUTC 21 Mar. **N. Saw-whet Owl:** one calling SULL 3 Mar; two DUTC 27 Mar. **Ruby-throated Hummingbird:** arr early n WEST 18 Apr. **Red-headed Woodpecker:** singles in yard Amenia DUTC 25 Mar, ROCK 12 Apr, BCF all Spring; pair Poughkeepsie yard in May.

Olive-sided Flycatcher: only report two DUTC 13 May. **Acadian Flycatcher:** several reports as n as DUTC. **E. Phoebe:** arr DUTC 9 Mar. **Purple Martin:** arr ROCK 6 Apr; max 12 at colony DUTC May, another colony with 5 pair reported in DUTC. **Tree Swallow:** arr late SULL 31 Mar, WEST 6 Apr. **Barn Swallow:** arr Bash 4 Apr. **Com. Raven:** *intro*. **SEDGE WREN:** *intro* (AG). **Marsh Wren:** arr MC 2 Apr.

White-eyed Vireo: several reports DUTC in May; one-two Doodletown Road all season. **Philadelphia Vireo:** only report one DUTC 21 May. **Golden-winged Warbler:** numerous reports from ROCK, ORAN and SULL. **Cape May Warbler:** low numbers reported. **Blackburnian Warbler:** one on territory again Arden Valley Road, Harriman SP. **Bay-breasted Warbler:** depressed numbers reported. **Cerulean Warbler:** two DUTC 15 May; *intro*. **PROTHONOTARY WARBLER:** *intro* (mob). **N. Waterthrush:** one on territory at Pt Orange Road ORAN during May. **Kentucky Warbler:** one Yonkers 15 May; *intro*. **Mourning Warbler:** arr 20 May across Region. **Hooded Warbler:** reported from all counties except SULL; *intro*. **Yellow-breasted Chat:** one 13 May; pair MC after late May.

SUMMER TANAGER: *intro* (TWB). **DICKCISSEL:** *intro*. **Snow Bunting:** max 40 DUTC 3 Mar; last DUTC 16 Mar. **Rusty Blackbird:** good numbers reported from Bash 15 Apr. **BREWER'S BLACKBIRD:** *intro* (EDT!, Jack Focht, NYSARC). **Red Crossbill:** singles DUTC 14 Mar, ULST 15 May. **Com. Redpoll:** one DUTC 16 Mar (SG). **Pine Siskin:** one DUTC all month.

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