

REGION 7 — ADIRONDACK-CHAMPLAIN

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Spring was late in arriving, and the season began with -6°F at Inlet on 2 Mar and snowstorm number 15 on 3 Mar. There was still 20 inches of snow on the Lang Road when hawk watching began at Coot Hill on 2 Apr, and hawk watchers were still skiing and snowshoeing to the summit a week later, following 8 to 10 inches of snow on 7 Apr. The weather began to break on 15 Apr, a clear day in the 70's. As the snowpack in the High Peaks melted, Lake Champlain continued to rise, reaching 101.36 feet by 22 Apr, just short of the record set the previous year on 28 Apr. Much of early May was cold and rainy. Thermometers finally reached 81°F at Plattsburgh on 30 May and 82°F at Inlet the following day.

The bird banding station at Crown Point State Historic Site was in operation for 11 days, from 6 to 16 May. A total of 250 birds of 37 different species was banded and released. Two Northern Saw-whet Owl were new to both the station and the Historic Site. There were returns of 19 individuals of six different species banded at Crown Point in previous years. Oldest was an American Goldfinch banded 12 May 1990 which returned 14 May, aged at least 4 years, 11 months.

During an annular eclipse of the sun on 10 May, there was no significant variation in the number of species/hour recorded in the vicinity of the banding station between 4 AM and 3 PM. Interestingly, the Wood Thrush that began singing at 4 AM and continued until just after 1 PM stopped singing at the height of the eclipse. Bird song in general did seem to drop off as the cold, eerie light developed. And the temperature certainly dropped, from 65°F at 11:55 AM to 52°F at 1:35 PM! The most noteworthy avian event, perhaps brought on by a hatch of insects that emerged with the dropping temperatures, was a highly active mixed flock of about 40 swallows of all five species at the tip of the peninsula at the height of the eclipse.

The recent nesting records of *Merlin* and *Wilson's Phalarope* continued into 1994. A pair of *Merlin* at the Morrisonville, CLIN, home of Ellwood Meyers 15-28 Apr were engaged in courtship behavior and copulation. Meanwhile, Pat Tarkowski found a *Merlin* pair behind her office on the east side of Mirror Lake, Lake Placid, ESSE, in late April. She heard and saw them almost daily through May hanging around a tall, spindly Norway spruce. They were also seen by Greenleaf Chase, Bob Hagar, and Pat Taber. This site is just 1/3 mile north of the 1993 nest on the Lake Placid Club golf course, and may be the same pair. Also apparent returnees were the *Wilson's Phalarope* at Lauren's Farm, CLIN.

Candy Hess and Bill Krueger discovered a female on 10 May, last seen with a male by Krueger 15 May; the male phalarope remained through May and was also seen by Charlie Mitchell and Lang Stevenson.

At 10:30 AM on the overcast morning of Sunday, 8 May, with a cold, light north-northwest wind blowing off Lake Champlain, Mike Peterson and Dean Spaulding watched with awe, and almost disbelief, as a large bird appeared over the walls of Amherst's British fort and cruised westward across the tip of the peninsula before disappearing. Believed by both observers to be a *Yellow-nosed Albatross*, details will be provided to NYSARC.

A total of 205 species was reported, down from 216 in 1993, but respectable, given the cold spring and delayed migration. A Red-throated Loon was a first ESSE spring record. There were also several birds new to the Region. Vermonter Judy Peterson reported two *Forster's Tern* under the Crown Point Bridge in early April and they were later seen by Cargill and Hall on 9 Apr. Even more unexpected to Bob Hagar was the *Fish Crow* seen and heard giving the short and weak, nasal "carr" call in Saranac Lake, ESSE, at 1 PM on 7 Apr. Several American Crow were cawing in the same white pines, the snow beneath still two feet deep. Despite the delayed migration, there were good warbler reports, including several Regional rarities, including *Blue-winged Warbler*, Orange-crowned Warbler, *Cerulean Warbler*, and Louisiana Waterthrush.

Seldom birded in the past, Plattsburgh AFB is now under base closure orders. Mark Gretch worked there this season for the NYS Natural Heritage Program, and he thinks he has found the largest colony, or at least the greatest concentration, of Grasshopper Sparrow in the Region. On 19 May he had a maximum of nine singing along a 2 mile stretch of grasslands bordering the runway. On 24 May, he located six. Ellwood Meyers observed Grasshopper Sparrows there between 1986 and 1992 while he was stationed there, and the species was not found when the base was surveyed for the breeding bird atlas. Crowded into this thin patch or strip of short-grass habitat are tremendous numbers of grassland birds, including Horned Lark, Vesper Sparrow, and Savannah Sparrow. Future plans for the base range from an air-freight hub to an RV park.

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Abbreviations: CL - Chazy Landing; CH - Coot Hill; CPT - Crown Point State Historic Site; GF - Gravelle Farm; LF - Lauren Farm; TL - Tupper Lake.

Spring reports. *Red-throated Loon*: one in an open lead under the CPT Bridge 9 Apr (JP, DS, RW), last seen 14 Apr (DC, TH). **Com. Loon**: used platform Limekiln L, but something broke up first nest. **Horned Grebe**: max 30 Westport 23 Apr (JP, DS); nine socked in by fog Raquette Pd 26 Apr (CD). **Red-necked Grebe**: 14 socked in Raquette Pd 26 Apr; four Treadwell Bay 3 May. **Yellow-nosed Albatross**: *intro.* **Double-crested Cormorant**: TL 27 Apr, uncommon inland. **Great Blue Heron**: 18 nests Webb Royce Swamp 23 Apr. **Great Egret**: Plattsburgh 19 Apr; Hogansburg 26 Apr; L Alice 3 May, increasingly common. **Cattle Egret**: two Beekmantown 28 Apr; Peru 29 Apr; two Pt au Roche 3 May, may originate in Young I, VT, colony. **Snow Goose**: neck-collared "Greater" Cumberland Head 6 Apr banded near Pierreville, Quebec, 22 Apr 1987 was hatched in 1985 or earlier and was at least 8 years, 10 months old! **Brant**: max 250+ CPT 16 May (GL, J&SP). **Green-winged Teal**: arr Saranac R mouth 8 Mar (BK), early. **N. Pintail**: two GF 14 May (MG); three CL 29 May (BK, LS), late, possible breeders. **Gadwall**: one-eight GF 14-18 May (MG); five CL 29 May (BK, LS), possible breeders. **Am. Wigeon**: max nine GF 14 May (MG); two CL 29 May (BK, LS), possible breeders. **Surf Scoter**: pair Essex 2 May (A&CS). **Barrow's Goldeneye**: drake Cumberland Head ferry dock 25 Mar (BK), becoming more frequent. **Red-breasted Merganser**: pair Raquette Pd 7 Apr, one there 26 Apr; pair Westport, drake Bulwagga Bay 23 Apr; hen Bulwagga Bay 15 May, late.

Osprey: arr CPT 31 Mar, where a male was displaying near nest platform in May. **Bald Eagle**: at least ten birds reported across the Region. **N. Harrier**: max 12 Whallonsburgh 10 Apr (DS). **Rough-legged Hawk**: max six Whallonsburgh 26 Mar (JP, DS). **Golden Eagle**: Route 22 Beekmantown 29 May (HK), late. **Merlin**: *intro.*; arr Wadhams 30 Mar (DS). **Peregrine Falcon**: local CH during Apr; 4 other reports from vicinity of known nest sites. **Gyr Falcon**: gray bird lingered at Saranac R mouth to 25 Mar (BK, RM, mobs). **Gray Partridge**: two s Little Chazy R 24 Mar (CH), only report. **Ring-necked Pheasant**: TL feeder 28 Apr, only report. **Am. Coot**: Cumberland Head ferry 8 Mar (BK), early, lake still frozen. **Black-bellied Plover**: arr LF 10 May (CH, BK), early. **American Golden-Plover**: arr GF 14 May (MG). **Semipalmated Plover**: max 4 CL 29 May (BK, LS). **Greater Yellowlegs**: Essex Station marsh 2 May; max seven GF 14 May (MG). **Solitary Sandpiper**: Essex Station marsh 27 Apr (AL, DS). **Ruddy Turnstone**: max three LF 27 May (BK).

Dunlin: LF 13-29 May; max nine there 27 May (BK). **Wilson's Phalarope:** *intro.* **Bonaparte's Gull:** arr six Cumberland Head ferry 29 Apr (HW); Cheever yard 14 May (GC), a good find. **Great Black-backed Gull:** nine Barber Pd ESSE 11 Apr (JPDS), good numbers inland, but attracted by nearby ESSE landfill. **Com. Tern:** two GF 14 May; two CL 29 May. **Forster's Tern:** *intro.* **Black Tern:** two-four near GF, LF, and nearby WMA 13-29 May, when ad observed mate-feeding another; three Rouses Pt 15 May.

N. Saw-whet Owl: *intro.*; five other reports Mar-Apr. **Whip-poor-will:** Plattsburgh AFB and Ticonderoga. **Black-backed Woodpecker:** Brown's Tract Ponds 7 Mar.

Horned Lark: *intro.*; two TL 20 Apr (CD), where rare. **N. Rough-winged Swallow:** two Westport 23 Apr (JPDS), early ESSE arrival. **Gray Jay:** Helldiver Pd 8 Mar, family with 2 sooty y there 26 May (GL); other reports from Brown's Tract Ponds, Ferd's Bog, Inlet to Sagamore during May. **Blue Jay:** 20 at TL feeder 9 May, winter max was six. **Am. Crow:** *intro.* **Fish Crow:** *intro.* **Tufted Titmouse:** near Elizabethtown 14 Apr. **Marsh Wren:** arr Carpenter's Flats 28 Apr (BK), early. **Blue-gray Gnatcatcher:** CPT from 7 May, only location. **N. Mockingbird:** Wadhams arr 24 Apr; two banded CPT. **Am. Pipit:** max 35 TL 14 May; 13 Chazy 18 May (BK); good numbers in spring. **Bohemian Waxwing:** seven different locations CLIN and ESSE; max 60 Wadhams 8 Mar (DS); last Plattsburgh 28 Apr (CM), an excellent showing.

Philadelphia Vireo: max three singing males Sanford L ESSE 29 May (FG, WL). **Blue-winged Warbler:** singing male L Alice 26 May (WK), first for CLIN. **Orange-crowned Warbler:** arr Plattsburgh 3 May (J&RH), one Newcomb 12 May (AS), Keene Valley 14 May (A&LS, ASt). **N. Parula:** transient banded CPT. **Pine Warbler:** arr Ruger Woods 16 Apr (HK); reports from five other locations, a good showing. **Palm Warbler:** four (Western) banded CPT 10-16 May; two TL and three Paul Smiths 14 May. **Cerulean Warbler:** along the Hull's Fall Road outside Keene Valley 14 May (LS, ASt). **Louisiana Waterthrush:** one along Dry Mill Creek CLIN 31 May (HK, BK), at n limit of range.

Rufous-sided Towhee: arr Hogsburg 6 Apr; Westport 17 Apr; CPT 6-16 May; CLIN 14 May, better than average showing. **Am. Tree Sparrow:** banded Elizabethtown 3 May, late. **Vesper Sparrow:** *intro.*; arr Wadhams 26 Mar (JP, DS), early. **Savannah Sparrow:** *intro.* **Grasshopper Sparrow:** *intro.* **Fox Sparrow:** reports from five locations; last Newcomb 14 May (JM), record late for ESSE. **White-throated Sparrow:** one of 14 netted Elizabethtown 3 May was banded 9 days earlier near Stahlstown, PA, by K. C. Parkes. **White-crowned Sparrow:** last 2,400 feet elevation of Porter Mt 27 May (WL), another late ESSE record. **Snow Bunting:** Sixth L 5 Mar, only report. **Rusty Blackbird:** Ausable Pt 7 May, only report. **Pine Grosbeak:** last CLIN 25 Mar (HK). **Purple Finch:** Wadhams 23 Apr, and increasingly frequent thereafter. **House Finch:** Inlet feeder 9 Apr, where

still unusual. **Com. Redpoll:** remained abundant at feeders, max 200 Inlet 3 Apr, last there 26 Apr (GL); last TL 28 Apr (CD). **Hoary Redpoll:** reliable reports/photos from four feeders, including one-three Elizabethtown 1-17 Mar (two banded 12 Mar, JP); one Keene 19-21 Mar (J&PT); one-two Wadhams 22 Mar-6 Apr (DS); last Plattsburgh 11 Apr (CM). **Pine Siskin:** max 20 Westport 25 Apr; 8 TL 28 Apr; migrants banded CPt May. **Am. Goldfinch:** four near Elizabethtown 28 Mar; max 30 Westport 25 Apr; 109 migrants banded Elizabethtown and CPt 27 Apr-15 May (JP); *intro.* **Evening Grosbeak:** nine returned near Elizabethtown 24 Mar; max 23 TL 28 Mar, with transients and breeding birds arriving through May.

Exotic: Chukar: one that seemed quite tame at a Wilmington, ESSE, feeder with Ruffed Grouse 2-3 Apr (Joanne Duncan, ph); none known to have been released in the Wilmington area (*fide* NYS DEC office at Ray Brook).

Addenda: Snow Goose: CLIN 12 Sep 1993 (MG), early NYS arrival. Another eight Greater Snow Geese whose neck collars were read at Point au Roche CLIN between 28 Oct-2 Dec 1993 were females banded near Bylot Island, District of Franklin, NWT, in Jul 1991 and in Aug 1992 and 1993. **Golden Eagle:** belated word that the HAMI pair nested for about 5 years after last known report, and probably during the Atlas period (*fide* GL). **Laughing Gull::** imm Crown Point Bridge and State Historic Site early Aug 1993 (Wayne Scott, mob); 5 Aug 1993 (TH), first record for ESSE, Adirondack Park, and the Adirondack-Champlain Region. **Am. Goldfinch:** one banded near Elizabethtown 22 Feb 1993 found dead at Waveland, Mississippi, 27 Jan 1994.

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