

REGION 9 — HUDSON-DELAWARE

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March 1994 came in like a pride of hungry lions that had designs on devouring our month's end lamb! During the first week of the month, a two day storm deposited from 5 to 12 inches of snow over the Region. Winter was not done with us yet! Another winter storm hit on 10 Mar. In WEST, there was a major flooding problem because storm drains were still jammed with ice. The monthly low temperature was 4°F on 1 Mar and the monthly high was 67°F on 24 Mar. Winter's grip had begun to slip. While the opening of ponds and lakes in the southern end of the Region began in earnest in early March, water bodies in SULL and ULST

did not really show signs of thaw until late March. Early April brought a few bad storms through the Region, with high winds and rain, but at this point it wasn't anything we couldn't handle. Then at the end of April, 89 glorious degrees on 27 Apr! Yahoo! The Region experienced about a week of incredible sunshine and heat! May brought some below normal temperatures, but nothing severe. Precipitation levels were about normal.

A total of 246 species was reported this season. Well represented were herons with nine species, waterfowl 30 species, hawks 16 species, rails with four species, and warblers at 34 species. American Oystercatcher arrived at Rye on 3 Apr, and could be seen almost daily roosting and feeding on offshore islands. Solitary Sandpiper was noted in higher than usual numbers this spring, perhaps because of the excess water from an ample spring runoff. A total of 34 were counted in DUTC on a 14 May spring census. Of continued interest this spring as last were the reports of calling Northern Saw-whet Owl in SULL. It is even rumored that a nest was found at the Bashakill, but so far this has not been documented. Has Northern Saw-whet Owl always been this numerous and vocal but perhaps previously overlooked in the Region? Of added interest is that an apparently recently fledged, downy bird was found at Vassar College in n DUTC in late May. The youngster was found in a weakened condition on a rooftop and was brought to the Hudson Valley Raptor Center for treatment, where it is doing just fine. How far could this bird have flown?

Doodletown Road in Bear Mountain SP, ROCK, produced some excellent spring flights. Great numbers of hummingbirds, flycatchers, thrushes, vireos, warblers, and tanagers were enjoyed by many birders. The local breeding species such as Hooded, Cerulean and Kentucky Warbler were present in the highest numbers ever recorded, as evidenced by an impressive one day count of 31, 26 and 4, respectively. Golden-winged Warbler made a better showing than last year with one to three found at many of the traditional locales. Several Blue-winged x Golden-winged Warbler hybrids were found as well.

As of 31 Mar, flocks of Common Redpoll numbering 200 or more individuals were reported in the northern tier of the Region. Common Redpoll in greatly reduced numbers were observed visiting bird feeders in the company of Chipping Sparrow as late as mid April. Considering

their scarcity this winter, relatively large flocks of Pine Siskin, numbering 40 individuals or more, were reported as late as 26 May in SULL. Evening Grosbeak was being reported in small scattered flocks across the Region through late March and even as late as 21 May in SULL and ULST. It will not be surprising to see reports of these winter finches during the summer period at this rate.

The list of highlight species includes some of the more expected spring overshoots and, not surprisingly, some winter holdovers. A Barrow's Goldeneye was reported and the on again, off again drake Eurasian Wigeon was seen this time by Frank Bonanno and Vince Plogar on 23 & 24 Mar at Rockland L SP. Nine reports totaling 14 Black Vulture were received; a breakdown may reveal a slight possibility of multiple reports of the same birds. The previously reported Lesser Black-backed Gull from Haverstraw Bay, ROCK, was last reported on 8 Apr by Ed Treacy. The two at Rye were last reported by Tom Burke on 10 Mar and 16 Apr. Two Yellow-throated Warbler were reported. The previously reported male Dickcissel which frequented Tom Burke's Rye feeder off and on this winter popped up yet again on 27 Mar. A pair of Dickcissel was reported from a Hurleyville, SULL, farm with correct habitat for two days in late May (*vide* Valerie Freer). Unfortunately despite searching, the birds were not relocated by experienced birders to confirm the identification of this rare potential breeder.

The list of unexpected rarities is impressive, but not overwhelming. The best include *American White Pelican*, *Tricolored Heron*, *King Rail*, *Stilt Sandpiper*, *Connecticut Warbler*, and the "Ipswich" race of Savannah Sparrow. According to Hunter Pollack, the over wintering *Boreal Chickadee* at his Patterson, PUTN, feeder remained through 27 Apr. A single *Bohemian Waxwing* was identified in a flock of Cedar Waxing in DUTC on 1 Apr (*vide* Jim Key). Finally, the Region's first *Boat-tailed Grackle* was observed at the Marshlands Conservancy in Rye on 9 Apr by Tom Burke. The bird, a male, was observed feeding on the brackish mud flats, flying and calling for 20 minutes. Other species deserving of honorable mention include Little Blue Heron, Golden Eagle, Long-eared Owl, Red-headed Woodpecker, and Common Raven.

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Abbreviations: Bash - Bashkill Marsh; DTR - Doodletown Road, Rock; EGR - Edith G. Read Sanctuary, Rye, WEST; MC - Marshlands Conservancy, Rye; RTWBCSC - Ralph T. Waterman Bird Club Spring Census, DUTC, May 14.

Spring reports: **Com. Loon:** six EGR 28 Apr. **Red-throated Loon:** 16 EGR 7 Apr. **Horned Grebe:** 14 EGR 28 Apr. **Red-necked Grebe:** two Piermont Pier ROCK 5-14 Mar; four Hillview Res Yonkers late Mar, one Bash through 12 Apr, 25 EGR 15 Apr, 19 EGR 28 Apr, one DUTC 15-18 Apr. **Am. White Pelican:** one Hudson R at Roundout Creek ULST 11 Apr (NYSDEC biologist Richard Popp), DUTC side of Hudson R 11-12 May (RTWBC, mob). **Great Cormorant:** 18 EGR 12 Mar, last there 14 May. **Double-crested Cormorant:** 110 EGR 28 Apr. **Am. Bittern:** one ULST 3 Apr, one ROCK and two DUTC 14 Apr, one Rye 17 Apr, two Bash mid May; good showing. **Least Bittern:** several Bash in May. **Great Blue Heron:** 37 active nests in two colonies DUTC. **Little Blue Heron:** one n DUTC 28 Apr; imm MC 25 May. **Tricolored Heron:** ad Tivoli Bay n DUTC 14 Apr (Mark DeDea), first record for DUTC. **Cattle Egret:** one s WEST 14 Apr. **Yellow-crowned Night-Heron:** one MC 14 May. **Glossy Ibis:** arr Rye 9 Apr, max 13 Rye 11 May. **Brant:** thousands migrated up Hudson R. evening of 20 May **Blue-winged Teal:** arr WEST 26 Mar. **N. Shoveler:** one DUTC 17 Mar, uncommon. **Eurasian Wigeon:** *intro.* **Redhead:** one Rye 2 Mar. **Greater Scaup:** 2000+ Rye 5 Mar. **Lesser Scaup:** 170 Rye 5 Mar. **Oldsquaw:** max 247 EGR 15 Apr. **White-winged Scoter:** max 142 EGR 15 Apr, 57 on 30 Apr. **Com. Goldeneye:** 35 Rye 13 Mar. **Barrow's Goldeneye:** drake Hudson R ULST 26 Mar (Jim & Mary Key).

Black Vulture: three n DUTC late Feb (DF), two n WEST 5 Mar (JPA), one n DUTC 13 Mar (MJK), two DUTC 14 Apr (DF,MY), two DUTC 20 Apr (RTWBC trip), one Bear Mountain 21 Apr (EDT), one Doodletown all of May (mob), one 6 1/2 station Sanctuary ORAN 13 May. **Rough-legged Hawk:** one Rye 19 Mar. **Golden Eagle:** two Stissing Mt n DUTC 9 Mar, last date; one Bear Mountain ROCK 21 Apr. **Merlin:** ten plus reports of migrants. **Peregrine Falcon:** migrant s WEST 15 Apr. **N. Bobwhite:** one n SULL 21 Apr; one RTWBCSC, uncommon. **Clapper Rail:** one MC 21

Apr. *King Rail*: one Bash 5 May (Geoff LeBaron), heard calling at least two weeks later. *Virginia Rail*: well reported Bash. *Sora*: two RTWBCSC; one Bash 14 May. *Am. Oystercatcher*: intro. *Ruddy Turnstone*: 20 EGR 12 Mar. *Solitary Sandpiper*: intro. *Upland Sandpiper*: arr Blue Chip Farms ULST late Apr. *Purple Sandpiper*: 30+ EGR 26 Mar. *Semipalmated Sandpiper*: 300+ MC 13 May. *White-rumped Sandpiper*: arr two MC 9 May, max six MC 25 May (TWB). *Pectoral Sandpiper*: two MC 9 May; two DUTC 14 May. *Stilt Sandpiper*: one MC 19 May (TWB, Bob Schreiber), exceptional in spring. *Am. Woodcock*: nine MC 20 Mar. *Laughing Gull*: arr EGR 16 Apr, five there 30 Apr. *Bonaparte's Gull*: two EGR 26 Mar. *Lesser Black-backed Gull*: intro.

Long-eared Owl: one SULL 30 Apr. *N. Saw-whet Owl*: intro. *Whip-poor-will*: two n DUTC 24 Apr. *Red-headed Woodpecker*: one at SULL feeder through early spring; one at ROCK feeder 28 Apr only.

Olive-sided Flycatcher: max five DTR 15 May. *Yellow-bellied Flycatcher*: one DTR 15 May. *Acadian Flycatcher*: one RTWBCSC. *Alder Flycatcher*: three RTWBCSC; one n SULL 13 May. *Willow Flycatcher*: three MC 25 May. *Least Flycatcher*: 45 RTWBCSC. *Purple Martin*: two EGR 17 Apr; Colony of up to eight DUTC. *Bank Swallow*: 283 RTWBCSC. *Com. Raven*: one ROCK 30 Mar; xix RTWBCSC; one DTR ROCK 4 May. *Boreal Chickadee*: intro. *Carolina Wren*: numbers very reduced from severe winter. *Marsh Wren*: one heard Bash 8-14 May, rare there. *Ruby-crowned Kinglet*: one RTWBCSC. *Gray-cheeked Thrush*: Bicknell's Rye Nature Center 18 May. *Bohemian Waxwing*: intro.

Philadelphia Vireo: one n ROCK 27 Apr, early; two Bash 14 May, one DUTC 14 May. *Golden-winged Warbler*: intro. *Blue-winged X Golden-winged Warbler*: "Brewster's" type DRR during May; several "Lawrence's" type from expected hot spots such as the Bash and one DTR. *Yellow-throated Warbler*: Rye Nature Center 15 Apr (Tom Burke); one near the Ashokan Res T Olive ULST 22 May (Maevae Mauer, Al Brayton). *Cerulean Warbler*: intro. *Kentucky Warbler*: intro. *Connecticut Warbler*: one singing Great Swamp in Pawling DUTC 19 May (Sibyll Gilbert, mob). *Mourning Warbler*: two Rye Nature Center 18 & 24 May; one n SULL 17 May. *Hooded Warbler*: seven RTWBCSC. *Yellow-breasted Chat*: arr MC 7 May.

Dickcissel: intro. *Am. Tree Sparrow*: last DUTC 15 Apr. *Vesper Sparrow*: one RTWBCSC. *Savannah Sparrow*: one *Ipswich* race EGR 26 Mar (TWB). *Sharp-tailed Sparrow*: singles MC beginning late Apr. *Seaside Sparrow*: singles MC also beginning late Apr. *Fox Sparrow*: last DUTC 14 May. *Snow Bunting*: 200+ s DUTC 19 Mar. *Boat-tailed Grackle*:

intro. **Rusty Blackbird:** low numbers reported. **Orchard Oriole:** well reported throughout Region. **Com. Redpoll:** *intro.* **Pine Siskin:** *intro.* **Evening Grosbeak:** *intro.*

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