

REGION 4 — SUSQUEHANNA

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Birders had few complaints about 1995's spring weather. Following a mild winter with minimum snow, March entered, stayed and left like the proverbial lamb. According to Harold Hollis, U.S. National Weather Service observer at Cooperstown, the month was 3.5°F warmer and 1.38 inches dryer than normal. Not so April, which was 3.0° colder than average. Binghamton posted a record low temperature reading of 14°F on 5 Apr after overnight snow squalls. Another storm on 8 Apr dropped four inches of slushy snow on the city. Precipitation for the month, however, was only a half inch over average. Clouds prevailed at least part of many days in May, but 5 May was the only rainy day and 29 May had the only damaging storm. Temperatures for the month were a hair below average. However, May rainfall was down 1.47 inches from normal. It all added up to a three month precipitation deficit of 3.37 inches at Cooperstown. "We just missed listing in the top ten driest springs of the century," said Hollis.

Negative effects of the aridity may appear in the summer report, but for spring migration, the weather was perfect. Rivers and streams were mostly open from the beginning of the season. Runoff was light and flooding was minimal. Lakes and ponds opened early. With such excellent conditions for water birds, it is not surprising that we had high counts, record early arrivals for Green Heron and American Bittern, and late departures for Redhead and Surf Scoter. Record numbers of Snow Goose were reported as well as the first Brant in 11 years. The 22 species of duck ties our best record and includes above average numbers of

Redhead and Lesser Scaup. Few migrating raptors were seen, but several Rough-legged Hawk remained until mid April. Cooper's Hawk, Red-shouldered Hawk and Northern Goshawk were among the species reported nesting. Excellent numbers of Common Moorhen and American Coot were a surprise, as was the total of nine shorebird species.

Passerine migration continued the excitement as some very early arrivals introduced a long, leisurely season. Yellow Warbler arrived a month ahead of normal. In all, 14 species of warblers were found in the Region during April. For other families, notable early arrivals included Eastern Kingbird, Blue-gray Gnatcatcher, Solitary Vireo and Rose-breasted Grosbeak. We hit a lull in early May. Storms in the south may have stalled migration. But by 12 May, the latecomers began appearing in force. This set up spectacular conditions for BROO, OTSE and TIOG North American Migration Counts the next day. Some of the high maxima in the species accounts may be attributed to this explosion of new arrivals. Marie Petuh, at Greenwood Park for the BROO count, noted, "Blue-gray Gnatcatchers were everywhere. They must have just arrived." Multiple Northern Parula were found; one a season has been good in recent years. The Delaware-Otsego Audubon Society ran their 27th annual May Big Day Count a week later and achieved a new record of 136 species. This mass effort is also reflected in the species accounts. Migration excitement persisted to the end of the period, concluding with a rare *Kentucky Warbler*. Other spring rarities were two Regional firsts, *Clay-colored Sparrow* and *LeConte's Sparrow*, plus Sedge Wren, White-eyed Vireo and Orange-crowned Sparrow. Also rare, at least in recent years, were Great Egret, Snowy Egret, Common Tern, Black Tern and Yellow-breasted Chat. Missed species included Red-necked Grebe, Upland Sandpiper, Yellow-bellied Flycatcher, Gray-cheeked Thrush, Philadelphia Vireo, Snow Bunting, Pine Grosbeak, both crossbills, and Com. Redpoll. All expected species of grassland sparrows were scarce but reported. Our record spring total of 204 species tied last year's tally.

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Abbreviations: BoPd - Boland Pond, BROO; CVSP - Chenango Valley

State Park; DOASMBDC - Delaware-Otsego Audubon Society May Big Day Count, May 20. DP - Dorchester Park, BROO; FHNC - Finch Hollow Nature Center; HCPLC - Hartwick College Pine Lake Campus, DELA; NAMC - North American Migration Count, May 13; OPM - Oneonta, Portlandville, Milford; OnRes - Oneonta Reservoir; OtsL - Otsego Lake; REEC - Rogers Environmental Education Center, Norwich; UL - Upper Lisle; WPt - Whitney Point (and Reservoir).

Spring reports: **Com. Loon:** arr three OnRes 4 Apr (CV); max 11 OtsL 21 May (MM); 10 DP 8 Apr (T&NT); nine Echo L Greene 20 Apr (DS), high counts. **Pied-billed Grebe:** arr TiOG and BROO 18 Mar; 12 reports Apr, max six UL 8 Apr; three reports May; record high count. **Horned Grebe:** arr OnRes 4 Apr; four BROO 17 Apr (HM, BB, GK), only reports. **Double-crested Cormorant:** max 20 WPt 23 Apr (AL); eight other reports 10 Apr-21 May, record high count. **Am. Bittern:** singles UL 26 Mar (JH) and 19 May (JSh), possibly same bird; BoPd 15 Apr (BG); Greene 15 May (BB); DOASMBDC 20 May, best count since 1983. **Great Blue Heron:** max 24 Otego rookery 28 Mar; one at BROO nest site 13 Mar (HM); 24 flying together over FHNC 4 Apr. **Great Egret:** Vestal 19 May (JSh), unusual. **Snowy Egret:** Endicott 10 May (*fide* JS), only third spring report since 1979. **Green Heron:** record early arr W Burlington OTSE 23 Mar (TS); four scattered reports Apr, nine in May, high count. **Black-crowned Night-Heron:** WPR 26 May (AL), often missed. **Snow Goose:** max 1600 flying in continuous flocks for about 15 minutes UL 27 Mar (ES); 350 W Burlington same day; six other reports 15 Mar-4 Apr, record high numbers. **Brant:** 80-100 Knapp Road BROO 19 Mar (JH), first spring since 1984. **Canada Goose:** max 1800 BROO 12 Mar; many nesting pairs. **Wood Duck:** max 18 UL 1 Apr; hen with nine y OPM 7 May, first of three successful breeding reports. **Green-winged Teal:** 15 reports, max eight 16 Mar-20 May, high count. **Am. Black Duck:** max 120 BoPd 1 Apr; good counts to 20 May. **N. Pintail:** five reports, max two 19 Mar-8 Apr. **Blue-winged Teal:** max: seven UL 8 Apr and BoPd 15 Apr; six other reports, last three on NAMCs. **N. Shoveler:** pair REEC several days mid Apr; one T Preston 13 Apr, only reports. **Gadwall:** arr three Binghamton 19 Mar (TS); three reports UL 20 Mar-15 Apr, max two, always scarce. **Am. Wigeon:** max ten at two BROO sites 17, 20 Mar; seven other reports to 29 Apr. **Canvasback:** pair BROO 8 Mar (JH); one TiOG 18 Mar (MP), only reports. **Redhead:** arr pair BoPd 12 Apr (WW); two Route 12 BROO 13, 20 Apr (T&NT); one Long Pd Chen 15 Apr (EH); last two BROO NAMC, high count, late. **Ring-necked Duck:** max 40 BROO 24 Mar; 34 Mirror L Owego for two weeks Apr; last two BROO 13 May. **Greater Scaup:** UL 29 Mar, 1 Apr, possibly same bird. **Lesser Scaup:** arr

four DELA 7 Apr (AM); max 17 Crum L 23 Apr (IW), one still there 7 May, missed some years. **Oldsquaw**: ten OnRes 4 Apr (CV), only report. **Surf Scoter**: Susquehanna R Portlandville DOASMBDC, only report, record late. **Com. Goldeneye**: one BROO, several TIOG Mar, scarce. **Bufflehead**: max 20 BROO 17 Apr 16 reports to 4 May. **Hooded Merganser**: arr two BROO 3 Mar; max 20 each three BROO sites 19 Mar; female HCPLC 19 May, probable nester. **Com. Merganser**: max 150 BROO 17 Mar (HM, BB, GK). **Ruddy Duck**: OnRes 4 Apr (CV), first spring since 1982.

Turkey Vulture: arr 1 Mar, record early; many reports, max 12. **Osprey**: max six at three BROO sites 30 Apr (MP); last six on two NAMCs, early departure. **Bald Eagle**: max ten Delaware R Hancock 3 Mar (BG); singles TIOG 10 Mar, BROO 18 Mar. **N. Harrier**: max five TIOG NAMC. **Sharp-shinned Hawk**: twenty widespread reports, max two. **Cooper's Hawk**: "pair all year and nesting" Greene (BB); pair in display flight Endicott March (JS). **N. Goshawk**: singles T Preston 4 Mar, 5-6 Apr (EH); CVSP 15 Mar (JH): pair Crum L May, probably nesting. **Red-shouldered Hawk**: arr Johnson City 4 Mar; pair with three y TIOG (JB), same nest as last year. **Broad-winged Hawk**: arr Norwich and Johnson City 16 Apr. **Am. Kestrel**: max 14 on three NAMCs. **Ring-necked Pheasant**: five March, four Apr reports, max two, good count. **Ruffed Grouse**: max 11 TIOG NAMC. **Wild Turkey**: max 137 W Burlington 2 Mar; many sizable flocks to late Apr. **N. Bobwhite**: Long Pd 15 May. **Virginia Rail**: UL 19 May (JSh), only one. **Com. Moorhen**: max four BoPd 13 May (JH, MP); singles UL 19 May (JSh); Andrews Reserve Bainbridge 21 May (DW); TIOG NAMC, excellent count. **Am. Coot**: OtsL docks to 17 Mar, max 46 (CV, TS); UL 19 Mar-8 Apr (JH, T&NT, MP), first spring since 1991. **Semipalmated Plover**: North Norwich marsh 15 May (EH), first spring since 1987. **Killdeer**: max 49 on three NAMC's. **Greater Yellowlegs**: max five TIOG 19 Apr (C&JB); five May reports to 23 May. **Lesser Yellowlegs**: five reports max two 23 Apr to 26 May, second spring since 1985. **Solitary Sandpiper**: arr CHEN 27 Apr; max eight on two NAMCs. **Spotted Sandpiper**: max 30 Chenango R from Sherburne south 18 May (TS). **Least Sandpiper**: Binghamton 19 May; three Portlandville 23 May, only reports. **Com. Snipe**: four sites, max two, scarce. **Am. Woodcock**: female, three y crossing road Long Pd 26 May (HM). **Bonaparte's Gull**: DP 19 May; DOASMBDC, only reports. **Ring-billed Gull**: max 48 BROO 11 Mar. **Herring Gull**: max six BROO 13 Mar. **Com. Tern**: DP 19 May (JSh), first since 1984. **Black Tern**: singles DP and Murphy's Sand 19 May (JSh), first since 1986.

Black-billed Cuckoo: nine sites after 16 May. **Yellow-billed Cuckoo:** singles BROO 22 May; TIOG 23 May, only reports. **E. Screech-Owl:** singles two BROO sites May. **Great Horned Owl:** max three TIOG NAMC. **Barred Owl:** Triangle and T Preston Mar, Apr; five sightings May, good count. **Long-eared Owl:** found injured BROO, being rehabilitated. **Com. Nighthawk:** singles five sites, scarce. **Chimney Swift:** max 15 on three NAMCs. **Red-headed Woodpecker:** singles Oneonta feeder 19, 20 May (MD), Cush Hill CHEN 20 May, TIOG NAMC, best count since 1985. **Red-bellied Woodpecker:** two BROO reports Mar; four TIOG Apr, May; one CHEN May, good count. **Yellow-bellied Sapsucker:** max 36 on OTSE, TIOG NAMC. **Pileated Woodpecker:** max eight TIOG NAMC, reports increasing.

Olive-sided Flycatcher: singles Adams Farm CHEN 20 May (EH); Crumhorn Mt 28 May, often missed. **E. Wood-Pewee:** 12 reports after 13 May, max three. **Acadian Flycatcher:** one TIOG NAMC, often missed. **Alder Flycatcher:** seven reports after 15 May, max five. **Least Flycatcher:** max 42 on two NAMCs. **Great Crested Flycatcher:** max five OPM 20 May. **Horned Lark:** two OTSE reports Mar, max ten; one Binghamton Airport 19 May, scarce. **Purple Martin:** max 70 Delhi Bird Club 20 May; only three others. **Tree Swallow:** very early arr on nesting site Greene 27 Feb, joined by female more than a month later, and nested (BB). **N. Rough-winged Swallow:** 14 reports, max five CHEN 20 May. **Bank Swallow:** max 97 DOASNAMC. **Cliff Swallow:** max 46 DOAS NAMC. **Barn Swallow:** max 201 on two NAMCs. **Fish Crow:** max six CVSP 13 Mar (HM, BB, GK); two other BROO sites, two TIOG, one CHEN, high count. **Sedge Wren:** UL on 19 May (JSh), last sighting predates 1979, perhaps record early. **Carolina Wren:** eight sites, slow recovery. **Marsh Wren:** arr DOT marsh Vestal 19 May (JSh); one Greene 30 May (BB), often missed. **E. Bluebird:** max 14 each DOAS, TIOG NAMC. **Swainson's Thrush:** two DOASMBDC, only report. **Wood Thrush:** max 74 on two NAMCs. **N. Mockingbird:** max six TIOG NAMC. **Brown Thrasher:** max six TIOG NAMC, continues scarce. **Am. Pipit:** WPt 8 Apr (AL), only report.

White-eyed Vireo: Nuthatch Hollow Vestal 7, 8 May (PB, MP, ES), first spring report since 1980. **Solitary Vireo:** max 14 DOASNAMC. **Yellow-throated Vireo:** ten reports after 4 May, max two. **Blue-winged Warbler:** max 20 TIOG NAMC. **Golden-winged Warbler:** three sites BROO May, two TIOG, high count. **Tennessee Warbler:** two BROO sites, one OTSE, max two, scarce and late arr. **Orange-crowned Warbler:** DOASMBDC, third spring report since 1985. **Nashville Warbler:** max 20 on two NAMCs; six Crumhorn Mt 12 May, high counts. **N. Parula:** four reports 10 birds, max six BoPd (MP JH), best since 1982. **Yellow Warbler:**

two Binghamton area 26 Mar, three others found before 25 Apr, former record early arr. **Chestnut-sided Warbler**: max 56 on three NAMCs. **Magnolia Warbler**: only 11 reports, mostly singles, scarce. **Cape May Warbler**: singles TIOG NAMC and DOASMBDC, scarce. **Black-throated Blue Warbler**: max 39 on two NAMCs. **Yellow-rumped Warbler**: max 116 on three NAMCs. **Black-throated Green Warbler**: max 50 on three NAMCs. **Blackburnian Warbler**: eleven reports after 12 May, max three, good count. **Pine Warbler**: at CHEN feeder 22-26 Apr (EH); singles two BROO sites, good count. **Prairie Warbler**: eight reports after 28 Apr, max five on NAMCs. **Palm Warbler**: only one CHEN 5 May (EH). **Bay-breasted Warbler**: six reports, max two, best since 1988. **Blackpoll Warbler**: seven reports, max three, good numbers. **Cerulean Warbler**: Johnson City 15-31 May (JH), often missed. **Am. Redstart**: max 37 on NAMCs. **N. Waterthrush**: max seven DOASNAMC. **Louisiana Waterthrush**: max five each DOAS, BROO NAMCs. **Kentucky Warbler**: T Preston 29, 30 May (EH), second successive spring but only third in 13 years. **Hooded Warbler**: only one TIOG NAMC. **Wilson's Warbler**: three reports, max three 13-20 May, best since 1986. **Canada Warbler**: max nine on three NAMCs. **Yellow-breasted Chat**: Johnson City 13, 14 May (MP), same area as last fall, first spring reports since 1983.

Scarlet Tanager: max 24 TIOG NAMC, later arr n sector of Region. **Rose-breasted Grosbeak**: max 80 on three NAMCs. **Indigo Bunting**: good numbers after 11 May, four at niger seed feeders. **Rufous-sided Towhee**: max 43 TIOG NAMC. **Clay-colored Sparrow**: at feeder T Preston 15, 16 Apr (EH, DW), first Regional spring report. **Vesper Sparrow**: two singles OTSE, one CHEN, scarce. **Grasshopper Sparrow**: singles TIOG NAMC, DOAS MBDC. **Henslow's Sparrow**: only one Long Pd Forest 26 May, "area managed by DEC for grassland species" (MP). **LeConte's Sparrow**: "singing on a weed stalk back of our barn in alfalfa field" Owego 7 May (JB, NYSARC). **Fox Sparrow**: 18 sites 17 Mar-12 May, max eight, high count. **Lincoln's Sparrow**: only one Johnson City 8 May (JH). **White-crowned Sparrow**: max 35 TIOG NAMC; nine other reports 1-13 May. **E. Meadowlark**: max 36 on NAMCs. **Rusty Blackbird**: max 42 two Broo sites 28 Mar (ES); 14 W Corners Marsh 5 Apr (WW); three singles May, record high count. **Purple Finch**: max 67 on NAMCs. **Pine Siskin**: only one HCPLC 29 Apr (JSm). **Am. Goldfinch** max 340 on NAMCs, high feeder counts through Apr. **Evening Grosbeak**: only two DOASMBDC.

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