

REGION 7 — ADIRONDACK-CHAMPLAIN

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After the relatively mild winter, March appeared to promise an early spring, with temperatures about 50°F on 13 Mar and about 60°F the next day. But the month closed with snow at Paradox on 30 Mar, and early April was cold. A cold front on 4 Apr caused thermometers at Saranac Lake to drop from 40°F to 25°F in just four hours. The next two days it was 13°F at Elizabethtown, warming only to the 30's on 7 Apr. A clear, cool stretch continued to the end of the month, although Plattsburgh reached 54°F on 13 Apr and 52°F on 17 Apr, and the mercury finally touched the 70's briefly on 19 Apr. A warming trend began in May, with Plattsburgh at 62°F on 1 May and 70°F on 9 May. The last frost at Inlet was on 20 May. It remained an extremely dry spring, although a storm the evening of 28 May managed to blow out the wall of a tent at the Crown Point banding station. Observers agreed that this seemed to be a wonderful spring for birds, yet only 192 species were reported, down from 205 last year and 216 in 1993.

In spite of the weather setback in April, there were a number of early arrivals, and nesting began early for a wide range of species. Waterfowl especially seemed to hatch young at a record pace. Early nesting Canada Goose had hatched young by mid May, when they could be seen while skeins were still migrating north. An American Black Duck was also early, and most remarkable was a hen Common Goldeneye that set an early New York State nesting record.

A pair of Osprey at Webb Royce Swamp built the first non-platform nest in the Champlain Valley. The New York State DEC reported Bald Eagle and Peregrine Falcon on eggs during May. A pair of Merlin was reported at a new site in early May, where a displaying Spruce Grouse was seen at the month's end. A pair of Wilson's Phalarope returned to the Chazy Rivers breeding grounds. Winter Wren was nest building a month ahead of the prior New York State early date, and Blue-gray Gnatcatcher wasted no time nesting either. American Robin built two ground nests at Ticonderoga, and (Yellow) Palm Warbler was again on territory at Spring Pond Bog.

Meanwhile, the bumper cone crop continued to attract breeding winter finches into spring. Purple Finch banded near Elizabethtown 10 May had developed brood patches and cloacal protuberances. Red Crossbill was widespread, with reports from Bloomingdale Bog, Copperas Pond, Ferd's Bog, Macomb, and Sabattis Road Bog. Bob Yunick spent two days in March salvaging roadkills in Hami. The specimens were an interesting mix, mostly of the small race *Loxia curvirostra minor* but several in the size range of *L. c. neogaea*. White-winged Crossbill was similarly abundant, and Yunick found a dead juvenile male in late March. Pine Siskin banded Elizabethtown in April and May included birds in breeding condition.

The bird-banding station at Crown Point State Historic Site was in operation for 18 days, from 12-29 May. During this 20th anniversary season, a total of 740 birds of 57 different species were banded and released, with Yellow-bellied Flycatcher and House Finch new to the station. Flycatcher and thrush banding was especially good this spring. The height of warbler migration was 25 May, when ten species were banded. There were returns of 35 individuals of 16 species banded at Crown Point in previous years. The oldest returns were a Great Crested Flycatcher and Yellow Warbler, both aged at least six years, 11 months. A female Red-winged Blackbird banded at Crown Point 14 May 1993 was found dead near Summerville, SC, 23 Feb 1995 when she was at least three years, eight months old.

There were a number of interesting migrants and visitants. A *Ross's Goose* was found among Snow Goose in early April. A *Gyr Falcon* barely persisted into March. *Connecticut Warbler* and *Yellow-throated Warbler* were unexpected visitors to the Region.

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Abbreviations: AFR - Altona Flat Rocks; APt - Ausable Point; ChR - Chazy Rivers; CuH - Cumberland Head; CPTp - Crown Point peninsula; FB - Ferd's Bog, HAMI; TL - Tupper Lake; WRS - Webb Royce Swamp.

Spring reports: **Com. Loon:** arr TL 12 Apr. **Pied-billed Grebe:** max 10 Peru 29 Apr (C&JH); WRS 1-20 May. **Horned Grebe:** arr Peru 13 May. **Red-necked Grebe:** arr two Whallon's Bay 15 Apr. **Double-crested Cormorant:** arr CuH 9 Apr. **Great Blue Heron:** nesting WRS 2 Apr, with 21 nests by 15 Apr. **Cattle Egret:** one Sunmount, TL, 28 Apr (WJ); two there 30 Apr (RH), second FRAN record. **Black-crowned Night-Heron:** two WRS 21 May (RM, JP); four WRS 20 May (MG); CPTp 27 May (DN). **Snow Goose:** first two flocks Saranac Inn 14 Mar, but 25 still heading n CPTp 28 May. **Ross's Goose:** one in thousand Snow Goose feeding between the ChR 3 Apr (BK!). **Canada Goose:** pair with six goslings TL 11 May; pair with five goslings WRS 15 May, early; five skeins migrating n CPTp 28 May. **Wood Duck:** eight ducklings WRS 20 May. **Am. Black Duck:** hen with six ducklings TL 13 May, early. **Green-winged Teal:** arr pair Wadhams 9 Apr (JP, DS); pair WRS 22 Apr-20 May. **N. Pintail:** ChR 18 Mar; pair Wadhams 9 Apr; three WRS 15 Apr-1 May. **N. Shoveler:** two pair Moody Pd 17 Apr (RH); pair Peru 29 Apr (C&JH). **Gadwall:** WRS 16 Apr (MG). **Am. Wigeon:** pair WRS 22 Apr-20 May (JP, MG). **Ring-necked Duck:** max 38 TL 1 Apr; also Bartlett Pd, Upper Saranac L, WRS. **Com. Goldeneye:** hen with brood at Willsboro Point 1 May, New York State record early brood. **Bufflehead:** two arr TL 1 Apr; pair WRS 1 May. **Hooded Merganser:** eight downy y WRS 13 May; six y there 20 May. **Red-breasted Merganser:** three CuH 10 Apr; two pair Peru 29 Apr, 15 Willsboro Pt 2 May, a good showing.

Turkey Vulture: five eating roadkill porcupines at Elizabethtown feeder 16 Apr-4 May (J&SP). **Osprey:** pair WRS 22 Apr, nest building 25 Apr, tree nest located 1 May (MG); five CPTp 23 Apr, 9 May, but did not use platform. **Bald Eagle:** ad Port Kent 13 Mar; ad Whallon's Bay 18 Mar; max four TL, where regular 1 Mar-14 Apr; imm Split Rock Mt 16 Apr; imm CPTp 23 Apr-10 May; imm Owls Head 29 Apr; one FRAN pair hatched a chick 30 May. **Merlin:** pair Spring Pd Bog 7 May (BH), new

site. **Peregrine Falcon**: new nest site, three eggs, Moriah; CPtP 20 Apr; Wilmington 27 Apr; Ft. Ticonderoga 13 May, also seen by Mt Defiance caretaker; apparent local headed s CPtP 21 May. **Gyrffalcon**: last feeding on ice at mouth of Saranac R Plattsburgh 3 Mar (Hal Klein). **Spruce Grouse**: displaying cock with a hen Spring Pd Bog 23 May (DS). **Wild Turkey**: Mountain House, Keene 3 May; tom CPtP 14 May, rather unexpected locations. **Virginia Rail**: L Alice 24 Apr (BK), early; max five there 1 May. **Sora**: arr CLIN 2 May. **Com. Moorhen**: arr CLIN 13 May. **Greater Yellowlegs**: Wilmington 27 Apr; Union Falls Pd 28 Apr; two Bombay 3 May. **Lesser Yellowlegs**: CuH 20 Apr (BK), early; Westport 21 May (RM, MP). **Spotted Sandpiper**: nest with two eggs Westport 21 May. **Upland Sandpiper**: arr Dickinson Center FRAN 13 Mar (HW), record early; ChR 27 Apr (BK). **Least Sandpiper**: two-three Westport 15-21 May. **Dunlin**: arr ChR 23 May (HK, BK, CM), max six there 26 May. **Short-billed Dowitcher**: arr and max 17 ChR 22 May (HK, BK, CM); last 23 May. **Wilson's Phalarope**: male arr ChR breeding grounds 23 May, joined by female 26 May (BK).

Rock Dove: AU banded racing pigeon released on 1-mile training flight North Bay ONEI 14 Mar (NL) killed and eaten by hawks Paradox ESSE the same day (LG-K)! **Black-billed Cuckoo**: pair CPtP 17-29 May (JP). **Short-eared Owl**: max eight ChR 3 Mar, where present 8 Feb-8 Apr. **N. Saw-whet Owl**: West Mt Trail 6 May; Inlet 12 May, only reports. **Com. Nighthawk**: Elizabethtown 4 May (MG); AFR 22 May DSt); 6-8 Bulwagga Bay 26 May (DN, JP); ESSE 25 May (J&PT), a good showing. **Whip-poor-will**: AFR 22 May (DSt); Peru 25 May (J&CH); CPtP 27 May (DN), also encouraging. **Chimney Swift**: max cloud of 225 wheeling over edge of TL village and marsh 8:15 PM 13 May (C&MD); FRAN and Regional record is 500, but this count impressive. **Three-toed Woodpecker**: sharing same tree with Black-backed Woodpecker FB 22 Mar (SK). **Black-backed Woodpecker**: max 3-4 FB 30 Apr; L Placid, Lower Sargent's Pd, and on nest Raquette L; pair at a nest hole Chubb R Swamp 28 Apr.

Yellow-bellied Flycatcher: banded CPtP 24 May (JP). **Willow Flycatcher**: arr Apt 29 May (LS). **"Traill's" Flycatcher**: 14 banded CPtP. **Least Flycatcher**: 16 banded CPtP. **Great Crested Flycatcher**: five banded CPtP. **E. Kingbird**: three banded CPtP. **Horned Lark**: six TL 18 Apr, only report. **Gray Jay**: Saranac Inn feeder 14-15 Mar; other reports from Bloomingdale Bog, Cedar L, FB, Helldiver Pd, Sabattis Road Bog, and Spring Pd Bog. **Com. Raven**: three at cottontail rabbit roadkill provided at Elizabethtown feeder 19 Mar (JP); nest in a hole in the chimney of a Raquette Lake camp fledged three young. **Boreal**

Chickadee: reports from Cedar L, FB, and summit of Phelps Mt. **Tufted Titmouse:** Elizabethtown 17 Apr; APt 7 May. **Brown Creeper:** singing Bloomingdale Bog by 18 Mar. **Winter Wren:** nest building at Lower Sargent's Pd 23 Apr, earliest egg date is 22 May. **Carolina Wren:** Saranac L 20 May (RH), only report. **Ruby-crowned Kinglet:** overwintered Clinton Comm. College, singing there 3 Apr (DSt). **Blue-gray Gnatcatcher:** arr Clinton Comm. College 29 Apr (DSt); WRS 1 May, Bulwagga Bay 9 May; pair finishing a nest CPtP 12 May, banded there 29 May; Ticonderoga 13 May; strong showing. **Veery:** early arr Split Rock 25 Apr (MG). **Swainson's Thrush:** heard vocalizing Keene 15 Apr (RM), compared to "Wild Sounds of the Northwoods" cassette; seven banded CPtP, high total. **Wood Thrush:** 17 banded CPtP, high total. **Am. Robin:** dozen feeding on insect hatch on ice of St. Regis R. 7 Mar (HW); 32 banded CPtP, high total; two ground nests "snuggled into the lawn" and "under the picnic table" Ticonderoga during April and May, third nest "on an old table, next to the cellar door which is under our deck" (JC). **Gray Catbird:** 66 banded CPtP. **N. Mockingbird:** arr Inlet 1 May (GL), where unexpected; CPtP 16 May less surprising. **Am. Pipit:** max 55 TL 13 May (CD), more than usual. **Cedar Waxwing:** record 77 banded CPtP, one with orange tail tip banded there 18 May.

Yellow-throated Vireo: arr AFR 19 May (DSt); Carpenter Flats 29 May (LS). **Philadelphia Vireo:** arr AFR 20 May DSt). **N. Parula:** two-three singing males Silver L Bog CLIN 25 May (BK, CM). **Yellow Warbler:** 44 banded CPtP ties previous record. **Yellow-throated Warbler:** one CPtP in hawthorn close to gnatcatcher nest near Bulwagga Bay 14 May (GL), first ever here. **Prairie Warbler:** banded CPtP 14 May (JP); AFR 20 May (DSt), rare here. **Palm Warbler:** migrant CLIN 5 May; on territory Spring Pond Bog in the Boreal Heritage Preserve 23 May (DS). **Bay-breasted Warbler:** arr CPtP 15 May (JP, DS). **Blackpoll Warbler:** arr CPtP 21 May (J&SP); record 25 banded there 21-27 May. **Mourning Warbler:** three banded CPtP 22-25 May. **Connecticut Warbler** one Wadhams 18 May (DS). **Wilson's Warbler:** arr Wadhams 18 May (DS); five banded CPtP 21-28 May.

N. Cardinal: four banded CPtP, including FL 25 May. **Indigo Bunting:** TL feeder 7 May. **Rufous-sided Towhee:** Inlet feeder 28 Apr (GL); two pair Mt Defiance 18 May (MG); AFR 19 May (DSt); summit Rattlesnake Mt. 27 May (LS), an excellent showing here. **Field Sparrow:** arr Elizabethtown 14 Apr. **Grasshopper Sparrow:** Plattsburgh AFB 8 May (BK), future plans for base are still uncertain. **Lapland Longspur:** last two Reynolds Road CLIN 10 Mar (BK). **E. Meadowlark:** arr ChR 18 Mar (JP). **Rusty Blackbird:** three migrants APt 25 Apr (BK); on territory

Chubb R Swamp 29 Apr (L&PO). **N. Oriole**: 16 banded CPtP, where ad male attacked ad Red-tailed Hawk in flight 28 May. **House Finch**: Inlet 17 Mar (GL), where scarce; *Mycoplasma gallisepticum* conjunctivitis first documented in this Region in bird banded and photographed at Elizabethtown 29 Apr (JP), although a television report suggests it may have appeared earlier in Plattsburgh (JH). **Red Crossbill**: male roadkill with cloacal protuberance, female with brood patch along Routes 8, 10, 28N, and 30 HAMI 4 Mar, max 47 (41 plus six roadkills) there 26 Mar (RY), two size classes present; pair copulating FB 22 Mar (SK); last two s Tupper L 13 May. **White-winged Crossbill**: sightings at Bloomingdale Bog, Forestdale Road CLIN, Hurricane Mt., Lower Sargent's Pd, Sabattis Road, Split Rock Mt.; last at Chubb R Swamp 29 Apr; roadkilled juv (hatchling) male just beginning first prebasic molt along Route 10 T Arietta HAMI 26 Mar (RY). **Com. Redpoll**: one Standish 4 Mar (HK, BK), unexpected, only report of the winter. **Pine Siskin**: 31 banded near Elizabethtown 16 Apr-10 May; max 30 Marcy Dam 20 May (DR). **Am. Goldfinch**: one with right eye diseased banded Elizabethtown 22 Apr (JP); 584 banded Elizabethtown 16 Apr-11 May; 142 banded CPtP 12-28 May. **Evening Grosbeak**: paired at Elizabethtown feeder by 19 Apr; max 30 TL 13 May; two summit Phelps Mt. 20 May (DR), a high elevation at 4,161 ft.

Exotics: **Mute Swan**: last seen APt 9 Mar (BK). **European Goldfinch**: CuH feeder 19 May (RE, BK).

Addendum: **Sharp-shinned Hawk**: second-year female banded near Elizabethtown 8 May 1992 was found dead at Copeland, FL, 16 Dec 1994, aged three years, six months.

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