

REGION 3 - FINGER LAKES

Steve Kelling

732 Old 76 Rd, Berkshire NY 13736

Many wondered if there was a Spring in 1996. While maple syrup producers reveled in their extended season, 3 inches of snow on Mother's Day made the rest of us realize that the season was a long, snowy haul. Winter weather's frigid grip continued through March in the Finger Lakes Region. Average temperatures were 4 degrees below and monthly snowfall was 5 -10 inches above normal, with several significant fronts passing on the 5th, 19th-20th, and the 25th. April 1996 was one of the wettest Aprils ever. The average monthly precipitation was exceeded by 3 inches. Furthermore, temperatures continued their below normal trend. An Easter nor'easter and another significant storm on the 9th and 10th blanketed the area with snow, while flooding and high winds were the main themes throughout the rest of the month. In May temperatures continued below normal and precipitation above normal, but there was a brief glimpse of the warm weather to come from the 19th-21st. This trend continued through the end of the month. Heavy rains brought flooding to areas in the Region on the 9-11th, but the May 12 snowfall of 4 inches was the last straw for many. Fortunately, IT WAS the last snow of a long snow season which began on November 11.

Several patterns of winter bird movements through the Region are becoming evident. This winter brought the biennial influx of winter finches into and through the Region. Specifically, Common Redpoll numbers were only slightly less than those tallied during the invasion year of 1994. Also, substantial numbers of Evening Grosbeak were observed all winter. There were no reports of either species last winter and spring. Interestingly, the last observation dates were similar between 1994 and 1996, with Common Redpoll being April 20 and Evening Grosbeak May 20. There is also some evidence that Red-necked Grebe may be following this same biennial pattern. Although numbers of Red-necked Grebe were not as high as 1994, they were significantly higher than last year.

For the second consecutive year the Mount Pleasant Hawkwatch recorded a substantial flight of Golden Eagles during the second week in March. Also, significant numbers of waterfowl returned to the Region at this time. Large concentrations of diving ducks, specifically Redhead, Canvasback, and both species of scaup, gathered from mid-March until

the end of March on the north end of Cayuga Lake. One observer estimated up to 50,000 diving ducks had congregated on the north end of the lake by the last week in March.

The cold and wet April slowed the annual migration of passerines into the Region. While individual species were recorded at or near their normal arrival dates, numbers were down. It was not until the second week in May that substantial numbers of migrants were recorded. Beginning on May 10, large numbers of passerines were tallied throughout the Region, with numbers of migrants remaining high through the end of the month.

There were numerous rarities observed in the Region. Credit must be given to the observers of these, with almost all rarities being independently confirmed and NYSARC reports written. It is outstanding that individuals make such an effort to inform others for confirmation. It makes the job of this editor much easier. These Regional rarities include: Eared Grebe (biennial), Eurasian Wigeon (annual in Spring), Marbled Godwit (one every 10 years), Laughing Gull (biennial), Little Gull (annual), Bohemian Waxwing (biennial), White-eyed Vireo (one every 5 years), Yellow-throated Warbler (biennial), Yellow-breasted Chat (biennial), Henslow's Sparrow (yearly), Yellow-headed Blackbird (annual) and Hoary Redpoll (every 10 years).

Abbreviations: AB - Aurora and Aurora Bay Cayuga Lake Cayuga Co., BD - Brooktondale Tompkins Co., BH - Bowman Hill, Horseheads Chemung Co., CL - Cayuga Lake, CSP - Cayuga Lake State Park Seneca Co., CV - Chemung Valley, DL - Dryden and Dryden Lake Tompkins Co., EL - Elmira, ENP - Etna Nature Preserve Tompkins Co., GE - Geneva, HH - Horseheads Chemung Co., ICC - Ithaca City Cemetery, IT - Ithaca, KP - Kashong Point Seneca Lake, MNWR - Montezuma National Wildlife Refuge, MWG - Mundy Wildflower Garden, Cornell Plantations, Mt. P - Mount Pleasant, Tompkins Co., MP - Myer's Point Lansing Tompkins Co., NC - Newtown Creek Chemung Co, SP - Stewart Park and Newman Golf Course Ithaca, SW - Sapsucker Woods, Ithaca, TCA - Tompkins Co. Airport, Lansing, TH - Texas Hollow Schuyler Co, QCM - Queen Catharine Marsh, Schuyler Co, WG - Watkins Glen.

Contributors: John Bower, Gladys Birdsall, Jack Brubaker, Chemung Valley Audubon Society, Herb and Chris Cooley, John Confer, Dennis Crouse, Karl David, Stephen Davies, Bill Evans, Eaton Birding Society, Annette Finney, John Fitzpatrick, John Greenley, Chis Hymes, Steve Kelling, George Kloppel, Heather and Scott Mardis, Curtis Marantz, David McDermitt, Kevin McGowan, Tom Nix, Ralph Paonessa, Sandy

Podulka, Ken Rosenberg, Mike Runge, Dave Russel, Marty Schlabach, Sharon Skelly, Robert Snyder, Laura Stenzler, David Suggs, Meena Haribal, Allison and Jeff Wells.

LOONS-WATERFOWL: **Com. Loon:** max 50 MP 13 Apr; 2 KP 31 May. **Horned Grebe:** max 23 MNWR 13 Apr; last SP 26 Apr. **Eared Grebe:** WG 26 Apr (JB). **Red-necked Grebe:** max 24 MP 10 Mar; 5 WG 13 Mar; last DL 24 Apr. **Double-crested Cormorant:** 21 WG 14 Apr; 16 SP 29 Apr. **Am. Bittern:** arr Southport CHEM 21 Apr; one MNWR 27 Apr; 1 QCM 27 Apr. **Least Bittern:** one SW 14 May; one QCM 19 May. **Great Egret:** one SP 20 May. **Green Heron:** arr. DL 20 Apr; scattered over Region after. **Black-crowned Night-Heron:** one QCM 13 Apr; one GE 4 May; one imm. SP 26 May; one Freeville 27 May. **Tundra Swan:** 15 SP 10 Mar; 25 EL 14 Mar. **Snow Goose:** max 5000 (3500 blue morph) MNWR 24 Mar. **Brant:** arr AB 23 May; max 25 MP 24 May. **Canada Goose:** 15,000 Mt.P 14 Mar; 4800 EL 14 Mar. **Wood Duck:** max 55 QCM 29 Mar. **Green-winged Teal:** one SW 15 Mar; max 30 CSP 17 Mar; last SP 8 Apr. **N. Pintail:** max 50 CSP 2 Mar; last DL 4 Apr. **Blue-winged Teal:** arr CL 23 Mar. **N. Shoveler:** last MNWR 18 May. **Eurasian Wigeon:** one (drake) CSP 5-12 Apr (SK, m.ob). **Am. Wigeon:** 100 CL 31 Mar; last MNWR 18 May. **Canvasback:** last CL 31 Mar. **Redhead:** last MNWR 18 May. **Ring-necked Duck:** last SP 29 Apr. **Greater Scaup:** last CL 31 Mar. **Lesser Scaup:** last MNWR 18 May. **Oldsquaw:** arr AB 11 Mar; max 54 DL 14 Apr; last AB 18 May. **Surf Scoter:** one CL 23 Mar; seven WG 30 Apr; last DL 4 May. **B:** arr DL 7 Apr; last DL 12 May. **Com. Goldeneye:** 200 CL 31 Mar. **Bufflehead:** last Eldridge Lake, CV 14 Apr. **Hooded Merganser:** thru; with young SP 29 May. **Com. Merganser:** thru; with young 17 May MP and Lodi. **Red-breasted Merganser:** thru. **Ruddy Duck:** arr MNWR 31 Mar; max 35 SP 14 Apr; last MNWR 18 May.

HAWKS-ALCIDS: **Turkey Vulture:** max 30 MP 14 Apr. **Osprey:** arr MNWR 5 Apr. **Bald Eagle:** one WG 22 Mar; one WG 14 Apr; one Mt. P 15 Apr; one EL 21 Apr; one DL 25 Apr; one EL 2 May; one DL 12 May; two nesting pairs MNWR. **N. Harrier:** one SW 5 Apr; three QCM 13 Apr; two Mt. P 15 Apr. **Sharp-shinned Hawk:** max nine Mt. P 15 Apr. **Cooper's Hawk:** max five Mt. P 15 Apr. **N. Goshawk:** one Ludlowville 9 Apr; one Mt. P 15 Apr; one Enfield 26 Apr. **Red-shouldered Hawk:** one EL 12 Mar; three Mt. P 14 Mar; one Enfield 20 Mar; one Hammond Hill 24 Mar; one Yellow Barn State Forest 30 Mar; one NC 18 May. **Broad-winged Hawk:** arr Mt. P 15 Apr; max 21 Mt. P 21 Apr; 12 EL 22 Apr. **Red-tailed Hawk:**

one (rufous morph) Reynolds Game Farm Dryden, 10 Mar (see winter report); one (all white) Danby 28 Mar- 17 May; max 42 Mt. P 15 Apr. **Rough-legged Hawk**: last Mt. P 21 Apr. **Golden Eagle**: max 11 Mt. P 14 Mar; scattered Mt. P until 21 Apr; one EL 22 April. **Merlin**: one Mt. P 14 Mar; one EL 14 Mar; one downtown IT 20-29 Mar; one EL 20 Apr; one EL 24 Apr; last Hammond Hill TOMP 5 May. **Wild Turkey**: max 70 BD 6 March. **Virginia Rail**: arr DL 21 Apr; one QCM 19 May. **Sora**: arr 29 Apr Lansing; one QCM 19 May. **Com. Moorhen**: arr MNWR 18 Apr. **Am. Coot**: last DL 17 Apr. **Black-bellied Plover**: arr 18 May Savannah Mucklands SENE **Semipalmated Plover**: arr ten MP 10 May; max four MP 24 May. **Greater Yellowlegs**: arr DL 26 Mar. **Lesser Yellowlegs**: arr BD 27 Apr. **Solitary Sandpiper**: arr SW 22 Apr. **Spotted Sandpiper**: arr SP 24 Apr; max 11 MP 9 May. **Upland Sandpiper**: three HH 10 May; one TCA 18 May. **Whimbrel**: one Long Point State Park 22 May (KR). **MAR-BLED GODWIT**: one SP 17-20 May (KM, m.ob., NYSARC). **Ruddy Turnstone**: one MP 10 May; max six MP 28 May. **Sanderling**: arr TCA 18 May. **Semipalmated Sandpiper**: arr MP 25 May; max seven AB 27 May. **Least Sandpiper**: arr MP 5 May. **Dunlin**: arr MP 10 May; eight MNWR 18 May; 150 GE 24 May. **Short-billed Dowitcher**: 12 MNWR 30 May; four (griseus) MP 31 May. **Com. Snipe**: arr SW 31 Mar. **Am. Woodcock**: arr. 16 Mar IT. **Laughing Gull**: one (adult) MP 10-11 May (A. Wells, m.ob., NYSARC). **Little Gull**: one Long Point State Park 24 Apr; one Varick SENE 24-27 Apr; one MP 9 May. **Bonaparte's Gull**: arr MP 13 Apr; max 1200 Varick SENE 26 Apr; last MP 30 May. **Herring Gull**: max 300 SP 20 Mar. **Iceland Gull**: one MNWR 24 Mar; one King Ferry 31 Mar. **Lesser Black-backed Gull**: one (adult) CSP 17 Mar; one MNWR 23 Mar; two (adults) CSP 5 Apr; last MP 13 May. **Glaucous Gull**: one (adult) IT 10 Mar. **Caspian Tern**: arr MP 13 Apr; last MP 24 May. **Com. Tern**: arr MNWR 3 May; max 75 AB 11 May. **Forster's Tern**: two DL 14 Apr; four SP 30 Apr; last AB 11 May. **Black Tern**: arr Canoga 20 Apr; four MNWR 18 May.

PIGEONS-WOODPECKERS: **Black-billed Cuckoo**: arr AB 18 May. **Yellow-billed Cuckoo**: arr W. Danby 24 May. **Long-eared Owl**: one HH CHEM 14 Mar. **Short-eared Owl**: seven Seneca Falls Airport 13 Mar; five King Ferry CAYU 14 Mar; last Canoga 30 Mar. **N. Saw-whet Owl**: one IT 12 Apr. **Com. Nighthawk**: arr SW 14 May; two EL 23 May; max five SP 25 May. **Whip-poor-will**: one Caroline 31 May. **Chimney Swift**: arr EL 20 Apr; arr IT 2 May. **Ruby-throated Hummingbird**: arr IT 8 May. **Belted Kingfisher**: arr DL 17 Apr. **Red-headed Woodpecker**: arr Ringwood Nature Preserve TOMP 15 May.

FLYCATCHERS-STARLINGS: **Olive-sided Flycatcher:** arr DL 19 May. **E. Wood-Pewee:** arr BD 1 May. **Yellow-bellied Flycatcher:** one MWG 15 May; one GE 18 May; last SW 24 May. **Alder Flycatcher:** arr Etna 19 May; max six Connecticut Hill TOMP 23 May. **Willow Flycatcher:** arr TCA 19 May. **Least Flycatcher:** arr IT 30 Apr; max 20 NC 18 May. **E. Phoebe:** arr DL 26 Mar. **Great Crested Flycatcher:** arr Lansing 1 May. **E. Kingbird:** arr DL 21 Apr; max 30 Mark Twain State Park CHEM 11 May. **Horned Lark:** 400 King Ferry 5 Mar; nine Savannah Mucklands SENE 30 May max 200 MP 14 Apr. **N. Rough-winged Swallow:** arr MP 14 Apr. **Cliff Swallow:** arr Canoga 20 Apr; arr EL 11 May. **Barn Swallow:** arr BD 12 Apr. **Fish Crow:** entire period IT; two EL 29 Mar - 14 May (DR). **Com. Raven:** 1 Buttermilk Falls State Park TOMP 2 Mar; one Mt. P 24 Mar; one Caroline 6 Apr; one EL 19-27 Apr; one Gleason Meadows CHEM 5 May; one EL 10 May. **Carolina Wren:** one Buttermilk Falls State Park TOMP 25 Mar; two NC 3 Apr; one SW 26 Apr; one HH 11 May, low numbers. **House Wren:** one Ellis Hollow 31 Mar, early but good description; one Ludlowville 20 Apr. **Winter Wren:** one Mundy Wildflower Garden 2 Mar; one Enfield 26 Apr; one Caroline 20 May; one Buttermilk Falls State Park 30 May; one EL 4 May. **Marsh Wren:** arr MNWR 3 May. **Ruby-crowned Kinglet:** arr Hammond Hill 6 Apr; peak reports 29 Apr; last Etna 8 May. **Blue-gray Gnatcatcher:** arr SP 20 Apr. **Veery:** arr Cornell U 2 May. **Gray-cheeked Thrush:** arr SW 27 May. **Swainson's Thrush:** arr ICC 10 May; peak reports 15-18 May; last SW 27 May. **Hermit Thrush:** one Enfield 1 Apr. **Wood Thrush:** arr DL 29 Apr. **Gray Catbird:** arr IT 29 Apr. **Brown Thrasher:** arr Cayuga Heights 19 Apr; five Newfield TOMP 2 May; two Gleason Meadows CV 5 May; one TH 11 May. **Am. Pipit:** arr Mt. P 17 Mar; max 100 Enfield TOMP 20 Mar; last Mt. P 19 May. **Bohemian Waxwing:** one Phelps 19 May (HC), fair details. **N. Shrike:** last Caroline 10 Apr. **European Starling:** 1,000,000 Tyre 24 Mar.

VIREOS-WARBLED: **White-eyed Vireo:** one BD 15 May (SP, NYSARC). **Solitary Vireo:** arr Krum's Corners 19 Apr. **Yellow-throated Vireo:** arr SP 30 Apr. **Warbling Vireo:** arr DL 3 May. **Philadelphia Vireo:** arr SW 15 May; last Etna 21 May. **Red-eyed Vireo:** arr ICC 10 May. **Blue-winged Warbler:** arr ICC 30 Apr. **Golden-winged Warbler:** arr ICC 8 May; one MWG 10- 13 May; one DL 14 May. **"Lawrence's" Warbler:** one GE 20 May; one Ludlowville 30 May. **Tennessee Warbler:** arr SW 11 May; max five BH 11 May; last SW 24 May, few reports. **Orange-crowned Warbler:** two CV 11 May. **Nashville Warbler:** arr ICC 30 Apr; max 20 BH 20 May. **N. Parula:** arr IT 30 Apr; one TH 11 May; last ENP 22 May.

Yellow Warbler: arr IT 26 Apr. **Chestnut-sided Warbler:** arr IT 30 Apr; ten SW 11 May. **Magnolia Warbler:** arr ICC 2 May. **Cape May Warbler:** arr ICC 4 May; last MWF 15 May. **Black-throated Blue Warbler:** arr DL 26 Apr; three TH 11 May. **Yellow-rumped Warbler:** arr AB 24 Apr; max ten ICC 3 May. **Black-throated Green Warbler:** arr SW 22 Apr; max eight SW 11 May. **Blackburnian Warbler:** arr DL 26 Apr; three TH 11 May; max six BH 11 May. **YELLOW-THROATED WARBLER:** one NC 18 May (DR, NYSARC); one Thomas Rd. Caroline 22 May (JB, NYSARC). **Pine Warbler:** arr IT 11 Apr. **Prairie Warbler:** one QCM 27 Apr; one ICC 30 Apr; three Montour Falls SCHU 27 May. **Palm Warbler:** arr SW 26 Apr; last Cornell U. 15 May. **Bay-breasted Warbler:** arr SW 11 May; last AB 31 May. **Blackpoll Warbler:** arr ENP TOMP 18 May; max eight SP 24 May. **Cerulean Warbler:** arr Ludlowville TOMP 11 May; one EL 17 May; four Ludlowville 18 May; four MNWR 18 May; one Montour Falls SCHU 19 May. **Black-and-white Warbler:** arr Dryden 26 Apr. **Am. Redstart:** arr SW 30 Apr. **Prothonotary Warbler:** one QCM 23-28 May (DC); one SP 26-31 May (J&A W). **Worm-eating Warbler:** one IT 12 May; one SW 14 May; one West Danby 30 May. **Ovenbird:** arr IT 26 Apr. **Northern Waterthrush:** arr BD 23 Apr. **Louisiana Waterthrush:** arr Enfield 26 Apr. **Mourning Warbler:** arr MWG 19 May. **Com. Yellowthroat:** arr IT 26 Apr. **Hooded Warbler:** arr MNWR 18 May; scattered through Region. **Wilson's Warbler:** arr Varna 14 May; last MNWR 25 May. **Canada Warbler:** arr ICC 7 May. **Yellow-breasted Chat:** one Lansing 1 May; one ENP 20 May; one Dryden 20 May; one Howland's Island 19 May; one Seneca Army Depot 29 May.

TANAGERS-WEAVERS: **Scarlet Tanager:** arr ICC 10 May. **Rose-breasted Grosbeak:** arr Danby 28 Apr; 20 SW 11 May. **Indigo Bunting:** arr BD 1 May. **E. Towhee:** arr IT 5 Apr. **Am. Tree Sparrow:** max 22 SW 9 Mar; last SW 25 Apr. **Chipping Sparrow:** arr Danby 23 Apr. **Field Sparrow:** arr IT 2 Apr. **Vesper Sparrow:** arr IT 10 Apr; max four TCA 13 Apr; 12 Big Flats CHEM 14 Apr. **Savannah Sparrow:** max 20 TCA 12 Apr. **Grasshopper Sparrow:** arr AB 6 May; max eight Southport CHEM 11 May. **Henslow's Sparrow:** four Caswell Rd Lansing 19 May; max six Southport CHEM 11 May. **Fox Sparrow:** arr IT 26 March; max six Caroline Tompkins Co. 16 Apr; last Lansing TOMP 22 Apr. **Song Sparrow:** max 40 DL 36 Mar. **Lincoln's Sparrow:** arr EL 4 May; one SW 11 May; last MWG 18 May. **Swamp Sparrow:** arr MNWR 30 Mar; max six Alan Treman Marina IT 29 Apr. **White-throated Sparrow:** arr Danby 21 Apr; max 20 SW 11 May. **White-crowned Sparrow:** arr Trumansburg

TOMP 25 Mar; max 12 and last SW 11 May. **Lapland Longspur**: max five Kings Ferry 5 Mar; last KF 24 Mar. **Snow Bunting**: max 200 Kings Ferry 5 Mar; last KF 9 March. **Bobolink**: arr Interlaken 1 May. **Red-winged Blackbird**: 1,000,000 Tyre SENE 24 Mar (SS). **E. Meadowlark**: arr Mt. P 10 Mar. **Yellow-headed Blackbird**: one Tyre SENE 24 Mar (SS). **Rusty Blackbird**: arr MNWR 17 Mar; max 15 SW 23 Apr; last IT 12 May. **Com. Grackle**: 250,000 Tyre Seneca Co 24 Mar (SS). **Brown-headed Cowbird**: 45,000 Tyre SENE 24 Mar (SS). **Orchard Oriole**: one EL 8 May; one ICC 9 May; two AB 25 May; two Ludlowville TOMP 27 May. **Baltimore Oriole**: arr Caroline TOMP 22 Apr. **Purple Finch**: max ten DL. **Red Crossbill**: 15 Dodge Rd Dryden 21 Mar; seven Summerhill Cayuga Co. 20 Apr. **Common Redpoll**: max 200 Mt. P 1 Mar; last Ellis Hollow TOMP 21 Apr. **Hoary Redpoll**: one Ellis Hollow 17-20 Mar (JF, JC, NYSARC). **Pine Siskin**: arr SW 21 Apr. **Evening Grosbeak**: max 80 Ellis Hollow TOMP; last ENP 20 May. **House Sparrow**: continue to exist.

stk2@cornell.edu