

REGION 7 ADIRONDACKCHAMPLAIN

John M.C. Peterson
Discovery Farm, RR 1, Box 230,
Elizabethtown, NY 12932-9721

Although the season began with 5 inches of wet snow at Tupper Lake on 1 March, the Region reached 53° with rain showers on 4 March (the day Rochester was buried by the 2-foot snowstorm). A cold front arrived 8 March, with Tupper Lake -11°. The next day Saranac Lake was -23°, and it remained the coldest spot in the nation for the third straight day on the 10th, with -17°. By month's end, temperatures reached the fifties, with 59° at Plattsburgh on 29 March.

April saw 1/4 inch of rain on the 3rd, some rain and hail on the 8th, a trace of rain in showers on the 17th, and sun and hail on the 19th, but was mainly sunny, breezy, and dry. By month's end, this was the third driest April ever, with just 0.73 inch of rain. The former record of 0.6 inch was set in 1896. By 30 April, temperatures reached 68°.

The drought continued into May, with Plattsburgh a hazy, muggy 80° on 6 May. Showers and rain 8-9 May grounded migrant waves at Crown Point peninsula, but sun and north winds then prevailed for four days, followed by four more days of sun with south winds, before the last rainfall on 19 May. The rest of the month was sunny and warm, with Lake Champlain at about 96 ft., due to just 2.40 inches of precipitation. Annual precipitation was only 9.99 inches compared with an 11.56 inches norm. Memorial Day tied the temperature record, with a blistering 90°, as the Crown Point banding station closed after 24 days of operation.

A total of 785 birds of 60 species plus a hybrid was banded and released at Crown Point State Historic Site. On 8 May, a **Blue-winged Warbler** was banded, only the third in the 24-year history of the station. The best day was 9 May, when rains grounded migrants and 140 birds were banded. Variety was good that day, too, with ten species of warblers netted, including a first-ever "**Brewster's**" Warbler and 102 Yellow-rumped Warblers. Despite this promising start, banders were stymied by the sunny days and starry nights, and even the rainfall on 19 May failed to produce a meaningful fallout. Although we finished with the fourth best season for both species and numbers, this was partly a result of our extended stay and was far short of the record 70 species and 1,706 birds of 1996. Still, 16 warbler species were banded plus the hybrid "Brewster's," and the total included a Prairie Warbler on 18 May. Also, a Dark-eyed Junco on 23 May was new to the station, bringing the all-time list to 91 species.

Other noteworthy species seen or heard, but not banded, at the historic site include: a drake Surf Scoter, sky-dancing Osprey, migrant Bald Eagles, Peregrine Falcon, Wild Turkey, Eastern Screech-Owl, Great Horned Owl, Northern Saw-whet Owl, Whip-poor-will, male **Red-bellied Woodpecker**, nesting Common Ravens, Tufted Titmouse, Blue-gray Gnatcatchers, singing male **Clay-colored Sparrow**, and two singing subadult male **Orchard Orioles**. There were 44 returns of eight species banded at Crown Point in past years, with five birds now at least six years, 11 months old: a Gray Catbird, two Brown Thrashers, and two American Goldfinches.

Regionally, a total of 201 species was reported, down from last spring's 206 and the 1997 record 219. Early arrivals included Virginia Rail at Lake Alice 22 April, Chimney Swift over downtown Plattsburgh 9 April, and a

male Rosebreasted Grosbeak seen at Owls Head, FRAN, by Anne Hungerford on 23 March, an early arrival for New York State.

In addition to the Crown Point rarities, the always exciting Chazy River lands produced a drake **Eurasian Wigeon** and an **Arctic Tern**, Essex had a **Barn Owl**, and the **Varied Thrush** at Saranac lingered into April. Uncommon warblers included an early Orange-crowned at Ausable Point, a singing male Prairie at Saranac Lake the same day that another was banded at Crown Point, and a Connecticut on French Settlement Road. Certainly the most interesting was the **bilateral gynandromorph Common Yellowthroat** banded and photographed by Gordon Howard and Mike Peterson at Crown Point 27 May; early the next morning Peterson watched the warbler, male on the right side and female on the left, as it sang. A full article and photos will appear in the next *Kingbird*.

High Peaks Audubon Society, Inc. has published the completely revised Third Edition of *Birds of Essex County, New York* (1999), by the late Geoffrey Carleton, edited by John M.C. Peterson. The new book lists 310 species, of which 190 breed or have bred. It contains all county records through 30 April, 1999. Copies are available from HPAS, RR 1, Box 230, Elizabethtown, NY 12932-9721 for \$10.50, postpaid.

CONTRIBUTORS

Ethel Baker, Thomas Barber, Helen & Robert Booth, Mary Buehler, Blanche Conkley, Dean Cook, J.C. Cribbs, Charlie Delehanty, John David Delehanty, Marian Delehanty, Julia Denning, Thomas Dudones, Joseph Gentles, Robert Grosek, Jackie & Robert Hagar, Judy & Roger Heintz, Gordon Howard, Anne Hungerford, Paul Kelly, Hal Klein, Russ Koch, Bill Krueger, Daphne Kutzer, Gary Lee, Richard MacDonald, Theodore Mack, Brian McAllister, Charles Mitchell, Daniel Nickerson, Sean O'Brien, Nancy Olsen, John & Susan Peterson, William Peterson, Jeff Sherman, John & Patricia Thaxton, Donald Timmons, Susan Turner, William Watson, Robert Wei, Gary Worthington.

ABBREVIATIONS

AP Ausable Point WMA; CP - Crown Point State Historic Site; CR Chazy Riverlands; FB - Ferd's Bog; MRRR Moose River Recreational Area; RB Riley Brook outlet; SB Sabattis Bog; SLB Silver Lake Bog; TL Tupper Lake; WRS Webb Royce Swamp.

LOONS-DUCKS

Pied-billed Grebe: CR, L Alice, Ticonderoga ferry all 9 Apr; AP 22 Apr, a fair showing.
Red-necked Grebe: 3 L Flower, ESSE 18 Apr (RH); 2 Raquette R same date (CD).
Double-crested Cormorant: 10 Auger Pd 15 May (GH), unusual inland.
Turkey Vulture: 4 Tupper L chased Bald Eagle from deer carcass on ice (CD).
Snow Goose: arr Cumberland Head 20 Mar; 3,000 thru 3 May; 6 on 30 May (BK).
Canada "Richardson's" Goose: CR 12 Apr 3 May (BK).
Canada Goose: 4 nests Four Brothers, Isl. "C" 8 May (RM); daily flocks migrating n. CP 2531 May (JP et al.).
Brant: flock CP 9 May (GL), heard 9 p.m.
Gadwall: max 7 CR 9 Apr (WW); pr CR 23 Apr (NO); 2 drakes, hen CP 12 May (GH,JP,RW); drake CP 16 May (TB), strong showing.
EURASIAN WIGEON: drake CR 913 Apr (J&RH,BK,HK,GW,WW).
Am. Wigeon: arr CR 4 Apr (NO); 2 drakes Coll Bay 9 Apr (JP, J&PT); max 32 CR 9 Apr (WW).
N. Shoveler: arr CR 4 Apr (NO); CR and max 4 Westport 9 Apr (WW).
N. Pintail: drake arr CL 27 Mar (J&PT); max 7 CR 9 Apr (WW).
Green-winged Teal: max 96 CR 9 Apr (WW), high number.
Ring-necked Duck: many reports AP, Essex, L Alice, Putnam Pd, Ti ferry; max 125 TL 2 Apr (CD).
Greater Scaup: 13 Raquette Pd 22 Apr (CD), only report.
Lesser Scaup: arr CR and Moriah 9 Apr; Raquette Pd 16 Apr.
Surf Scoter: drake Bulwagga Bay late Apr to 10 May (GL,JP).
Red-breasted Merganser: 2 Willsboro 9 Apr (WW); TL park 7 May (TD), rarely reported.

HAWKS-ALCIDS

Osprey: male sky dancing CP 2130 May (TB,JP,J&PT).
Bald Eagle: 6 TL 11 Mar, feeding on deer carcass on ice; max 9 TL 21 Mar (CD); 4

migrant imm CP 1130 May (JP); singles AP, CH,CR, Inlet, and TL.
Red-shouldered Hawk: imm CP 30 May (JP,JT), late northbound migrant.
Merlin: male TL 1124 Apr (CD,RH), seen chasing Mourning Doves at feeder.
Peregrine Falcon: ad Willsboro eyrie 18 Mar (JC,JP), where pr overwintered; Wilmington eyrie 27 Mar (RH); sightings near CP Bridge 10, 28, and 30 May (GH,GL,KM,JP,JT) suggest new nesting site.
Spruce Grouse: Uncas Rd 31 May (RG), always a good find.
Wild Turkey: max 65 Westport 4 Apr (JG).
Virginia Rail: max 9 RB 4 May (BK,HK).
Am. Coot: Westport 10 Mar (RH) to 9 Apr (WW).
Black-bellied Plover: full alt plumage CR 22 May (BK).
Semipalmated Sandpiper: max 24 CR 22 May (BK).
Dunlin: CR 28 Apr (BK), early.
Shortbilled Dowitcher: arr 5 CR 20 May, max 9 CR 27 May (BK).
Am. Woodcock: came out of springhole in HAMI snowbank 23 Mar (GL).
Bonaparte's Gull: max 50 CR 27 May (BK).
Ring-billed Gull: 14,979 nests Four Bros Isl "C" 8 May; 156 ads banded with aluminum & yellow color bands (HPAS, NYC DEP).
ARCTIC TERN: alternate plumaged ad CR 10 May (BK), new species for Region 7.

PIGEONS-WOODPECKERS

BARN OWL: Essex 9 Apr (JP,J&PT)20 Apr (fide JS), rare here.
Short-eared Owl: 2 CR 27 Mar (J&PT), a known site, but still a good sighting.
Whip-poor-will: CP 9 May (GL,JP); Ticonderoga 19 May (DC); CP 28 May (PT), typical of nonAtlas reports.
Chimney Swift: arr Plattsburgh 9 Apr (J&RH), early.
RED-BELLIED WOODPECKER: male CP 18 May (TB,JP), only 3rd ESSE record, with last previous report in 1990.

Three-toed Woodpecker: female FB 30 May (RG), a good find.

Black-backed Woodpecker: pr at SLB nesthole 9 May (RH); nest with young SLB 31 May (BK,CM).

FLYCATCHERS-WAXWINGS

Yellow-bellied Flycatcher: arr FB 31 May (RG).

Gray Jay: FB, McCauley Pd, MRRA, SB; usual sites.

Am. Crow: 42 fed on beaver carcasses Inlet 2030 Mar (GL).

Com. Raven: 11 fed on beaver carcasses Inlet 2030 Mar (GL).

Horned Lark: 2 *E.a. alpestris* Chazy 9 Apr (WW).

Boreal Chickadee: BB, FB, MRRA; usual sites.

Tufted Titmouse: pr Elizabethtown thru (JP); Plattsburgh 1 May (H&RB); CP 23 May (JT), typical.

Gray-cheeked Thrush: Dannemora 2 May; Point au Fer 8 May (J&RH).

Bicknell's Thrush: SLB 31 May (BK,CM), based only on plumage.

VARIED THRUSH: Saranac to 6 Apr (BC), where present from 21 Jan.

N. Mockingbird: SL 30 Apr (TD); CP 2427 May (GH,KM,JP,DT); Cedar R gate 27 May (GL), excellent find in HAMI.

WARBLERS

BLUE-WINGED WARBLER: banded CP 8 May (GL,JP,J&PT), 3rd ESSE record.

"BREWSTER'S" WARBLER: banded CP 9 May (GL,JP), 1st Reg. record.

Orange-crowned Warbler: arr AP 2223 Apr (J&RH,BK), early.

Yellow-rumped Warbler: 213 banded CP, a good flight.

Prairie Warbler: 2nd yr male banded CP 18 May (TB,DN,JP); singing male SLHS pd 18 May (TD), rarely reported.

Palm Warbler: arr CLIN 22 Apr (J&RH); "Western" banded CP 12 May (GH,JP).

Connecticut Warbler: French Settlement Rd, CLIN 1 May (J&RH).

COM. YELLOWTHROAT: bilateral

gynandromorph (1 side male, 1. side female) banded CP 27 May (GH,JPphotographed); seen singing 28 May (JP).

TANAGERS-WEAVERS

E. Towhee: male banded CP 16 May (GH,JP), only report.

Am. Tree Sparrow: 2 Marcy Bk, 1/2 mi above Marcy Dam 15 Mar (J&PT), unusual this high up.

CLAY-COLORED SPARROW: singing male CP 11 May (GL,RM,JP,RW), present 6 am 8 pm.

Savannah Sparrow: 10 banded CP; max 11 TL mun pk 22 Apr (CD).

Grasshopper Sparrow: arr Morrisonville 29 May (J&RH); former PAFB 21 May (BK).

Dark-eyed Junco: banded CP 23 May, 1st banded CP.

Rose-breasted Grosbeak: male Owls Head feeder 23 Mar (AH), state record early date.

ORCHARD ORIOLE: subad singing male CP 2731 May (GH,KM,JP,J&PT); 2nd subad male present 30 May, based upon songs.

Red Crossbill: feeding on HAMI cone crop (GL); 3 Lake Placid 10 May (JD), only reports.

White-winged Crossbill: feeding on cones HAMI (GL), only report.

Pine Siskin: arr Elizabethtown 22 Mar, Keene Valley 24 Mar, after near absence in winter.

Am. Goldfinch: remained abundant; 182 banded CP May.

Evening Grosbeak: 1525 daily Inlet feeder Mar (GL); arr 3 Keene 16 Mar (J&PT) and Elizabethtown 21 Mar (JP), after winter's near absence.