

REGION 7 - ADIRONDACK-CHAMPLAIN

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The first week of March was mostly sunny, with daytime highs in the 40's. Temperatures then soared to a record 58°F at Saranac Lake on 8 March and then to another record of 66° at Plattsburgh the next day before thunderstorms crashed across the Region. Ellenburg saw 6" of wet sugar snow 12 March, but another warming trend pushed thermometers to 60° at Lake Placid and Ticonderoga by the 22nd. With the barometer falling to 28.95" on 28 March, heavy rains brought the Ausable River to flood stage.

April also began unseasonably warm, reaching 64°F by the 8th, but a cold front arrived late in the day. Winds reached 40 mph and rain gave way to snow. By 9 April the Nor'easter had dumped 18" atop Spruce Hill and 21" on Malone, forcing large flocks of juncos into feeders and robins onto road shoulders. The rain and melting snow pushed the Champlain lake level to 99.66' (just short of the 100-ft. flood stage) by the 10th. More snow on the 11th made this the 2nd snowiest April (~20") on record, with normal just under 5 inches. Saranac Lake dropped to 3° on the 13th, but two days later saw Plattsburgh at 77°, and snowmelt pushed Champlain above the 100-ft. flood stage on the 16th. Newcomb rocked to a 3.7 Richter earthquake on the 20th. By 23 April, following three days of rain, Champlain had pushed over its banks, cresting that day at 101.4'. This wound up as the 4th wettest April on record, with over 5" of precipitation.

The last light snow fell at Keene Valley 2 May, then temperatures soared to a record 88°F at Plattsburgh on 7 May, and the lake dropped below flood level, to 99.97', by the next day. After 1/2" rain on 8 May, thunderstorms brought 3" on 9 May, followed by another 2" on the 10th, and again the lake was above flood stage at 100.16'. The month saw 13 days with rain, which helped ground a good variety of species at the Crown Point banding station, but no major waves of migrants. May precipitation totaled a soggy 6.13", some 3.01" above the normal 3.12", or nearly double the amount expected in a normally rainy month. This brought yearly precipitation to 17.74" or 6.18" above the normal 11.56", as the fourth wettest April was followed by the second wettest May. At season's end, Lake Champlain remained high at 99.86'.

Some winter birds were reluctant to leave. A Northern Shrike at Essex on **26 April** provided a new Essex Co. late departure date. Bohemian Waxwings

tarried until 6 April, when there were flocks of **300** at Cliff Haven and 100 south of Plattsburgh. The last large flock of 110 Common Redpolls was at Keene 20 March, and only 4 Hoary Redpolls were reported during that month from Elizabethtown and Keene. As the invasion waned, the last Common Redpolls were at Elizabethtown 22 April and Tupper Lake 28 April, but one lingered at the Turner feeder in Keene until **15 May**, a new late record for the Region.

Many observers commented on the large numbers of Dark-eyed Juncos during March-April and Fox and White-crowned sparrows during April-May. Junco flocks of 125+ at Tupper Lake on 16 April and 135 at Mineville in late April were reported. Between 1 April-10 May, a total of **535 juncos were banded** at Elizabethtown, with 113 of those done on 16 April. Fox Sparrow arrived at Elizabethtown 1 April and remained at Saranac Lake until 2 May, and reports of 30 individuals at 9 locations only hints at the fall-out. Owls Head had the first White-crowned Sparrow 29 April and Indian Lake the last on 25 May, with reports of 26+ individuals.

The Crown Point banding station on the grounds of the Historic Site was opened for its 25th season from May 12-29. Although individual numbers were low, with 402 birds banded, the rains managed to ground a fair variety of 55 species. Most numerous was Gray Catbird, with 43 banded, and a heavy return flight produced a record 33 Blue Jays. Warbler variety was good, with 15 species netted, including Golden-winged Warbler and **Orange-crowned Warbler** on 22 May. There were 33 returns of 15 species banded at Crown Point in previous years, the oldest an American Goldfinch now seven years 11 months old.

Banders and visitors also assisted Susan Peterson with early Atlas coverage of Block 6287A, in which the only land in NYS is, conveniently, the 360-acre grounds of the State Historic Site and the neighboring DEC campground. A total of 81 breeding species was recorded there during May, with 19 of those Confirmed, including a new colony of Double-crested Cormorants which were on 33 *mainland* nests by month's end. Other noteworthy Atlas birds included American Bittern, Northern Harrier, Merlin, Peregrine Falcon, Whip-poor-will, Golden-winged Warbler, and Orchard Oriole. Banders helped Confirm Warbling Vireo, Black-capped Chickadee, and Common Grackle using the CO-FE code (female with egg in the oviduct).

Regionally, a total of just 181 species was reported, under 200 for the first time in several years, and far short of the record 219 in 1997. Blame it on the rains, which probably kept many observers indoors, especially during the downpours of 8-10 May following the record temperatures on the 7th. Early arrivals included Red-throated Loon at Moriah *31 March*, Pied-billed Grebe on Lincoln Pond *9 March*, an Osprey at Bulwagga Bay *19 March*, and Barn Swallow at Peru *8 April*. Ruby-throated Hummingbirds were exceptionally

early, arriving at Speculator and Hoel Pond 4 May, a new early arrival for Hamilton Co., but a day later than the Franklin Co. record. Other record-early hummingbirds showed up at Elizabethtown 5 May (breaking the old Essex Co. arrival date of 7 May) and at Plattsburgh 6 May (breaking the old Clinton Co. record of 8 May). Three out of 4 counties isn't bad.

Other noteworthy sightings included a hybrid Green-winged Teal x "Eurasian" Teal, showing the field marks of both subspecies, at Ingraham, Golden Eagle at Keene, Merlin at Elizabethtown, **Fish Crow** reported in downtown Plattsburgh by Judy & Roger Heintz, the previously reported pair of **Carolina Wrens** remaining in the same Plattsburgh neighborhood through May, a Blue-winged Warbler on Nashville Road, and another Golden-winged Warbler on Nephew Road (both Clinton Co.). A migrant "Western" Palm Warbler was banded 12 May at Crown Point, while a "**Yellow**" **Palm Warbler** was on territory at Spring Pond Bog on 19 May.

CONTRIBUTORS

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ABBREVIATIONS

AP - Ausable Point WMA; BB - Bloomingdale Bog; CH - Cumberland Head; CP - Crown Point State Historic Site; CR - Chazy Riverlands; FB - Ferd's Bog; SPB - Spring Pond Bog; TL - Tupper Lake.

LOONS-DUCKS

Red-throated Loon: Moriah 31 Mar (TGM), record early Reg. 7.

Pied-billed Grebe: Lincoln Pd 9 Mar (MG), record early Reg. 7.

Horned Grebe: 2 Mud Pd Block 6093C 22 May (EF).

Double-crested Cormorant: arr AP 27 Mar (MH); 5 nests CP 14 May

(GL,JP); 20 nests 20 May (J&SP); 33 nests 27 May (JP), 1st mainland colony L Champlain.

Great Blue Heron: small colony n. Speculator 2 Apr (PK).

Great Egret: Hogansburg 10 Apr (HW).

Snow Goose: arr Chateaugay 5 Mar (MH); max 20,000 CLIN 16 Mar

(DH); many flocks over Spruce Hill
24-25 Mar (J&PT).

Canada Goose: arr CH & CR 9 Mar;
max 2,000 CR 21 Mar (DH); goslings
CP 12 May (GL).

Gadwall: 2 CR 4 Apr (NO)-7 Apr
(MH).

Am. Wigeon: CR 9-29 Mar
(DH,MH,NO).

N. Shoveler: arr Monty Bay 4 Apr
(NO); 2 pr L Alice 24 Apr (EF).

N. Pintail: 14 CR 9 Mar; 35 CR 21
Mar (DH).

**Green-winged Teal x "Eurasian"
Teal** [*carolinensis x crecca*]:

Ingraham, CLIN, 16 Mar (DH), wide
white vertical bar, also white horizon-
tal stripe.

Lesser Scaup: arr 18 Raquette Pd 25
Apr; 10 there 28 Apr (CD).

Oldsquaw: CP Bridge 19 May (VT
RBA).

Bufflehead: last TL 28 Apr (CD).

Com. Goldeneye: 46 TL 8 Apr (CD).

HAWKS-ALCIDS

Osprey: Bulwagga Bay 19 Mar (JP),
record early ESSE.

Bald Eagle: 5 ads TL 5 Mar (CD), on
deer carcass on ice; 1-5 TL to 6 Apr
and regular along L Champlain to late
May; on FRAN nest 7 Apr (CD); imm
Elizabethtown 10 Apr (JP); nest built
Harrietstown, FRAN, 1999 active Apr
2000 (LL,MBW).

Golden Eagle: Keene 28 May
(J&PT).

Merlin: Elizabethtown 29 Apr
(J&SP); female CP 23 May
(GH,KH,KM,JP).

Peregrine Falcon: 3 Willsboro eyrie 9
Mar (JCC,RL); CP 21 May

(JP,DS,J&PT).

Greater Yellowlegs: Keene 5 May
(J&PT).

Lesser Yellowlegs: TL 5 & 17 May
(CD).

Least Sandpiper: 6 TL 16 May; max
25 there 17 May (CD).

Bonaparte's Gull: CR 26 Apr (MH).

Com. Tern: CLIN 11 May (BK).

Black Tern: CLIN 23 May (J&RH).

PIGEONS-WOODPECKERS

Great Horned Owl: nest FRAN Apr
(MM); calling yg CP from 20 May.

Short-eared Owl: Essex Mar (CS).

Whip-poor-will: CP 24 May.

Ruby-throated Hummingbird: arr
Speculator & Hoel Pd 4 May
(PK;CD), record early HAMI and a
day after FRAN record date;
Elizabethtown 5 May (AD), record
early ESSE; Plattsburgh 6 May
(J&RH), record early CLIN.

FLYCATCHERS-WAXWINGS

Yellow-bellied Flycatcher: 3 banded
CP 22-28 May (JP).

"Traill's" Flycatcher: 21 banded CP
16-28 May (JP).

N. Shrike: Essex 26 Apr (RB,CS),
record late ESSE.

Blue Jay: 33 banded CP 13-27 May.

FISH CROW: Plattsburgh 2nd wk
Apr-1st wk May (J&RH).

Boreal Chickadee: Bigelow Rd,
FRAN & SPB 19 May (RM).

Tufted Titmouse: male Elizabethtown
1 Mar-May (JP); male Westport 10
Mar (JP,J&PT); Speculator 4 Apr
(PK); TL 3-10 May (CD).

CAROLINA WREN: pr Plattsburgh

thru May (J&RH,AM,NO,MS).

Winter Wren: arr Inlet 31 Mar (GL), ties HAMI record.

E. Bluebird: female 1,600' Keene 9 Apr (A&ST), in snowstorm.

Am. Robin: many Essex-Westport 10 Mar.

Gray Catbird: 43 banded CP.

Am. Pipit: 4 Lake Placid, 1 Rainbow Lake 29 Apr (TM); 3 TL 16 May (CD).

Bohemian Waxwing: max 300 Cliff Haven, Plattsburgh 6 Apr; 100 Rt 22 s. Plattsburgh same day (EF).

WARBLERS

BLUE-WINGED WARBLER:

Nashville Rd, CLIN 21 May (J&RH), an excellent find here.

Golden-winged Warbler: singing 2nd yr male banded CP 22 May (GH,JP); Nephew Rd, CLIN 27 May (J&RH).

Tennessee Warbler: 10 banded CP 12-17 May (JP), a good season.

ORANGE-CROWNED WARBLER:

AP 15 Apr (J&RH), record early Region 7; 2nd yr female banded CP 22 May (GH, JP), a day short of ESSE and Regional late spring record, an astoundingly long passage.

Cape May Warbler: transients CP 18-27 May.

Yellow-rumped Warbler: arr Inlet 20 Mar (GL); only 20 banded CP, where as many as 694 have been banded in a season.

Palm Warbler: nominate "Western" banded CP 12 May; "Yellow" on territory SPB 19 May.

N. Waterthrush: 7 banded CP 18-27 May.

Mourning Warbler: 2 banded CP 27-28 May (JP).

Wilson's Warbler: CP 25 May (JP,GH,JP), 1 banded same day.

TANAGERS-WEAVERS

Fox Sparrow: arr Elizabethtown 1 Apr (JP) to Saranac Lake 2 May (TM), with at least 30 birds reported, including 6 Lewis & TL and 6 banded Elizabethtown, a strong migration here.

White-crowned Sparrow: arr Owls Head 29 Apr (AH) to Indian Lake 25 May (PK), with at least 26 birds reported, including 10 Keene and 12 banded Elizabethtown & CP.

Snow Bunting: 3 Lake Pleasant 9 Mar (PK); max 30 Ingraham 16 Mar (DH).

Red-winged Blackbird: arr Chateaugay & TL 1 Mar, a welcome harbinger.

Rusty Blackbird: arr 2 Keene 9 Apr (A&ST); 6 Keene Valley 5 May (J&PT), good finds.

Orchard Oriole: subad male CP 14 May (JP).

House Finch: nest CP 13 May behind historic plaque on 19th Cent. limekiln held Brown-headed Cowbird eggs long enough for a Confirmed-NE record; 4 finch nestlings banded 27 May.

White-winged Crossbill: L Clear fish hatchery 19 May (RM), only report.

Com. Redpoll: max 110 Keene 20 Mar (J&PT); Elizabethtown to 22 Apr and TL to 28 Apr; last Keene 15 May (ST), late Regional record.

Hoary Redpoll: 3 Keene feeder Mar

(J&PT); Elizabethtown feeder 13 Mar (JP).

Pine Siskin: returned Elizabethtown 13 Apr; Speculator 3 May; TL 10 May.

Am. Goldfinch: returned Elizabethtown 14 Apr; bird banded Guelph, ON, 9 Apr 99 mist-netted Elizabethtown 7 May (JP).

Evening Grosbeak: max 50 TL 5 Mar (CD).

ADDENDA

Double-crested Cormorant: 7 nests No-name Island, Ticonderoga, ESSE, 1998 (NYS DEC, *fide* Robert Inslerman).

Snowy Owl: Keene 29 Feb 2000 (Harry Schweitzer).

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