

REGION 6 – ST. LAWRENCE

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March of 2001 was cloudy and cold and the snow just kept on falling. The average temperature for the Region was 4°F below the norm. Precipitation was between 2" and 4" above normal, resulting in snowfall totals of 20" in the St. Lawrence River Valley, 30" in Watertown, 40" in the Tug Hill and 60" in the Adirondacks. April began with sunny skies and temperatures in the sixties. Large flocks of Song Sparrows, Red-winged Blackbirds and Common Grackles appeared, along with other migrants that usually appear in March, such as Eastern Phoebe, Golden-crowned Kinglet and Eastern Meadowlark. The jet stream dropped into the south, creating a movement of several low pressure areas preceded by strong south winds. This created a tremendous pulse of migration before each low pressure surge. April arrivals were on time, and many of the early May migrants came during the last week of April. The first two weeks of May were cloudy and cool with intermittent rainfall. Vireos and warblers were hard to find at normal migration areas. As the weather warmed in late May, no more large migratory waves were observed. Most observers felt that the passerine flight occurred on the earlier strong winds. Although rainfall was slightly below normal for the season, water levels for the St. Lawrence River and Lake Ontario were at seasonal norms for the period due to the melt of the deep snow pack.

The Great Blue Heron rookery on Ironsides Island in the St. Lawrence River, Town of Alexandria, Jefferson County, which was totally disrupted by predators last season, was reoccupied by 30 adults by 11 April. However, the disruption occurred again and all the herons left the island. Animal predation is suspected once again. This large colony, which contained as many as 900 nests 10 years ago, has been in decline over several years as the nest trees have fallen. Biologists who are studying this problem feel that the existence of this very large colony may be over as the birds disperse to smaller colonies. The increase in beaver ponds in the last decade has helped to start many small Great Blue Heron colonies in the Region.

The migration of Snow Geese was one of the more dramatic events of the season. Gerry Smith reported a count of 22,000 foraging in the fields along Routes 177 and 193 in the Towns of Adams and Henderson, Jefferson County, on 3 April. On the same date, Lee Harper counted over 14,000 Snow Geese in the St. Lawrence River at Massena. This event occurred during the first strong south wind of the spring. A Turkey Vulture nest with one egg was located in the Adirondack Park at Higley Flow State Park, St. Lawrence County, on 30 April, a very early date.

The sighting of a pair of adult Golden Eagles performing an aerial display, including talon claspings, over Fort Drum on 27 May was cause for wondering what this pair was doing far from the historic Adirondack breeding areas for this species. Since they were not seen again over the next several days, it was assumed they were migrants.

A **Lewis's Woodpecker**, discovered by Jeff Bolsinger in Fort Drum, was a new species for Region 6.

The massive invasion of White-winged Crossbills and Pine Siskins into the Adirondacks and Tug Hill, which began in February, brought several reports of breeding even before snow melt. This is the largest incursion in several years.

Other rarities included: Red-necked Grebe, Surf Scoter, Black Scoter, Whimbrel, Worm-eating Warbler and Orchard Oriole.

CONTRIBUTORS

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ABBREVIATIONS

CI – Collins Landing SLR at the Thousand Islands Bridge T Orleans JEFF; CV – T Cape Vincent JEFF; ED – Eldorado Beach T Ellisburg & T Henderson JEFF; FD – Fort Drum JEFF; FIL – Fisher's Landing T Orleans JEFF; HFSP – Higley Flow SP T Colton STLA; KC – Kelsey Creek T Watertown JEFF; PIPt – Pillar Pt T Hounsfield JEFF; PRWMA – Perch Ri WMA T Orleans JEFF; PtPen – Pt Peninsula T Lyme JEFF; RMPD – Robert Moses Power Dam T Massena STLA; SH – Sackets Harbor T Hounsfield JEFF; SLR – St. Lawrence Ri; THen – T Henderson JEFF; TLou – T Louisville STLA; TMor – T Morristown STLA; TPhil – T Philadelphia JEFF; TPot – T Potsdam STLA; TTher – T Theresa JEFF; ULLWMA – Upper & Lower L WMA T Canton STLA; WHWMA – Wilson Hill WMA TLou STLA; WI – Wellesley I T Orleans JEFF.

LOONS – DUCKS

Com. Loon: arr ULLWMA 10 Apr.

Horned Grebe: arr Blackstone Bay TMor 7 Apr. (TL).

Pied-billed Grebe: arr TPot 13 Apr; max 6 ULLWMA 20 Apr.

Red-necked Grebe: 7 ULLWMA 20 Apr.

Great Blue Heron: arr ULLWMA 2 Mar, total desertion of rookery on Ironsides I by late Apr.

Am. Bittern: arr 5 ULLWMA 17Apr; max 8 ULLWMA 23 Apr.

Turkey Vulture: arr 5 CV 18 Mar; nest with single egg HFSP 30 Apr, early (JM).

Snow Goose: 22,000 THen, T Adams

JEFF 5 Apr; 14,000 SLR T Massena 5 Apr.

Mute Swan: arr PtPen 24 Mar.

Wood Duck: arr PtPen 26 Mar.

Gadwall: arr TPot 5 Apr.

Am. Wigeon: arr SH 27 Mar.

Am. Black Duck: arr PtPen 24 Mar.

Mallard: arr TPot 26 Mar.

Mallard x Black Duck hybrid: TPot 26 Mar(SC).

Blue-winged Teal: arr SLR TLou 2 Apr.

N. Shoveler: arr T Depeyster STLA 8 Apr.

N. Pintail: arr PtPen 24 Mar.

Green-winged Teal: arr Blackstone Bay TMor 24 Mar.

Redhead: arr TPot 29 Apr.
Ring-necked Duck: arr Pt Pen 24 Mar.
Greater Scaup: arr PtPen 24 Mar.
Lesser Scaup: ULLWMA 20 Apr.
Black Scoter: 3 ULLWMA 30 Apr.
Surf Scoter: pair ULLWMA 30 Apr.

HAWKS – ALCIDS

Osprey: arr pair ULLWMA 11 Apr.
Bald Eagle: singles TPot, PRWMA thru; many seen flying north along L Ontario shores Apr & May.
N. Harrier: arr PtPen 24 Mar.
Sharp-shinned Hawk: 3 singles TLou, TPot, KC.
Cooper's Hawk: singles KC, TLou.
N. Goshawk: imm PtPen 26 Mar; ad TLou 27 May.
Red-shouldered Hawk: arr KC 20 Mar; pair Red L TTher 14 Apr.
Broad-winged Hawk: arr ULLWMA 14 Apr.
Red-tailed Hawk: active nest KC.
Golden Eagle: pair ad over FD 29 May (MS), engaging aerial display, including talon grasping and rolling.
Rough-legged Hawk: TCV 1 Mar; 2 PtPen 1 Mar; ULLWMA 6 Apr.
Am. Kestrel: arr PtPen 24 Mar; many reports from JEFF.
Wild Turkey: tom stalked by a coyote, led the coyote away, then returned to the harem with no losses TPot (SC).
Virginia Rail: arr ULLWMA 30 Apr.
Killdeer: arr PtPen 24 Mar.
Black-bellied Plover: 2 Black Pd ED 23 May (MS).
WHIMBREL: Black Pd ED 23 May.
Greater Yellowlegs: arr T Rutland JEFF 16 Apr.
Lesser Yellowlegs: arr T Rutland JEFF 16 Apr.
Solitary Sandpiper: arr PRWMA 7 May.
Spotted Sandpiper: arr PRWMA 7 May.
Least Sandpiper: arr PRWMA 7 May.
Upland Sandpiper: arr TPhil 24 Apr.
Com. Snipe: arr ULLWMA 6 Apr.

Am. Woodcock:: arr Barnes Corners 18 Mar, still 3' of snow on the level.
Caspian Tern: arr PRWMA 27 Apr.
Black Tern: arr 22 ULLWMA 17 May.

DOVES – WOODPECKERS

Black-billed Cuckoo: arr T Brownville JEFF 5 May.
Snowy Owl: T Orleans JEFF 7 Mar; PtPen 24 Mar.
Barred Owl: reports from TPot, FD, T Adams TTher JEFF.
Com. Nighthawk: T Canton STLA 28 May.
Whip-poor-will: arr TTher 30 Apr.
Chimney Swift: arr TTher 20 Apr.
LEWIS'S WOODPECKER: ad FD on Rt 3, 3 miles n of Great Bend 1-3 May (NYSARC!, JB), first record for Reg 6.
Red-headed Woodpecker: 4 FD 2 May.
Black-backed Woodpecker: FD 27 May.
N. Flicker: arr PtPen 24 Mar.

FLYCATCHERS – WAXWINGS

E. Wood Pewee: arr KC 7 May.
Alder Flycatcher: arr TLou 25 May.
Willow Flycatcher: arr T Brownville JEFF 5 May, very early.
Least Flycatcher: arr TLou 2 May.
E. Phoebe: arr TTher 3 Apr, late.
Great Crested Flycatcher: arr ULLWMA 2 May.
E. Kingbird: arr pair TPot 24 Apr, early.
N. Shrike: T Massena 5 Mar; ULLWMA 26 Mar.
Yellow Throated Vireo: arr TTher 26 May.
Blue-headed Vireo: arr TTher 30 Apr.
Warbling Vireo: arr TPot 2 May.
Philadelphia Vireo: arr TPot 6 May, early.
Red-eyed Vireo: arr TLou 7 May.
Horned Lark: arr TPot 25 Mar.
Purple Martin: arr FIL 10 Apr.
Tree Swallow: arr 3 TLou 3 Apr.
N. Rough-winged Swallow: arr PIpt 30 Apr

Bank swallow: arr TPot 30 Apr.
Cliff Swallow: arr RMPD 2 May.
Barn Swallow: arr TPot 12 Apr.
House Wren: arr TTher 26 Apr.
Winter Wren: arr TTher 26 Apr.
Golden-crowned Kinglet: arr ULLWMA 8 Mar.
Ruby-crowned Kinglet: arr TPot 24 Apr.
Blue-gray Gnatcatcher: pair Red L TTher 20 May.
E. Bluebird: arr 30 Mar.
Veery: arr T Pitcairn STLA 6 May.
Swainson's Thrush: arr TLou 16 May.
Hermit Thrush: arr TTher 14 Apr.
Wood Thrush: arr TLou 3 May.
N. Mockingbird: TTher 4Apr.
Brown Thrasher: arr TPot, TLou 26 Apr.
Cedar Waxwing: arr TLou 8 Mar; large flocks mid-Apr.

WARBLERS

Blue-winged Warbler: arr TTher 9 May.
Golden-winged Warbler: arr TTher 3 May.
Tennessee Warbler: arr TLou 10 May.
Nashville Warbler: arr 2 May.
N. Parula: arr TTher 27 Apr.
Yellow Warbler: arr TPot 2 May.
Chestnut-sided Warbler: arr T Watertown 4 May.
Magnolia Warbler: arr TLou 13May.
Cape May Warbler: arr TLou 27 May, only report.
Black-throated Blue Warbler: arr TLou 3 May.
Yellow-rumped Warbler: arr PtPen 2 May.
Black-throated Green Warbler: arr TTher 30 Apr.
Blackburnian Warbler: arr TLou 9 May.
Pine Warbler: arr 18 TLou 18 Apr.
Palm Warbler: arr TLou 10 May.
Bay-breasted Warbler: arr TLou 15 May.
Blackpoll Warbler: arr TTher 24 May.

Cerulean Warbler: arr Hard Flats Rd TTher 16 May.
Black-and-white Warbler: arr TTher 27 Apr.
Am. Redstart: arr TMas 2 May.
WORM-EATING WARBLER: ULLWMA.
Ovenbird: arr TLou 3 May.
Mourning Warbler: arr pair TLou 31 May.
N. Waterthrush: arr TTher 30 Apr.
Com. Yellowthroat: arr TPot, TLou 13 May.
Wilson's Warbler: arr TLou 16 May.
Canada Warbler: arr TLou 20 May

TANAGERS – WEAVERS

Scarlet Tanager: arr TTher 7 May.
E. Towhee: arr TTher 27 Apr.
Am. Tree Sparrow: last 3 ULLWMA 20 Apr.
Chipping Sparrow: arr TLou 23 Apr.
Field Sparrow: arr TTher 27 Apr.
Vesper Sparrow: 2 FD 27 May.
Savannah Sparrow: arr TLou 30 Apr.
Grasshopper Sparrow: arr FD 3 May.
Henslow's Sparrow: arr T Orleans JEFF 30 Apr.
Song Sparrow: arr TLou 6 Apr.
White-throated Sparrow: arr TLou 15 Apr.
White-crowned Sparrow: arr T Massena 3 May.
Snow Bunting: last 300 Co Rt 63 T Watertown 28 Mar.
Rose-breasted Grosbeak: arr TLou 6 May
Indigo Bunting: arr TTher 16 May.
Bobolink: arr TLou 9 May.
Red-winged Blackbird: arr TLou 4 Apr.
E. Meadowlark: arr PtPen 24 Mar.
Com. Grackle: arr KC 16 Mar.
ORCHARD ORIOLE: female TLou 29 May.
Baltimore Oriole: arr ULLWMA 2 May.
Purple Finch: arr TLou 15 Mar.
White-winged Crossbill: widespread irruption into all towns of the Adirondack

Park in STLA and continuing into higher regions of the Tug Hill in LEWI; numerous reports of flocks feeding along roads and yg being fed as early as 20 Mar.

Pine Siskin: large flocks in Adirondacks and Tug Hill with White-winged

Crossbills; several breeding confirmations in the Adirondacks; individuals at feeders in the lowlands of JEFF as well.

Evening Grosbeak: 4 TLou 20 Apr.

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