

REGION 5 – ONEIDA LAKE BASIN

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March was cool and dry with an average temperature of 30.7° F, 2.9° below normal. There was 1.39" of precipitation, 1.63" below normal, with 28.1" of snow. April was warm and wet, with an average temperature of 48.3°, 3.0° above normal, and 5.71" of rain, 2.32" above normal. May returned to cool and dry with an average temperature of 54.2°, 2.9° below normal, and only 0.6" of rain, 2.79" below normal.

Oneida Lake had started to open by 1 April, but the lake wasn't ice-free until 10 April. Most Adirondack lakes remained frozen until the last week of April. In years when winter hangs on through March, dabbling ducks move through quickly and low numbers are found, as was the case this season. Most diving duck maxima were of wintering birds that lingered into March. Snow Goose numbers were not low, and they were reported across the Region. This would have been very unusual 20 years ago. Uncommon spring waterfowl included a Greater White-fronted Goose at Derby Hill, a King Eider remaining in Oswego through the season and Surf Scoters on Oneida Lake. Ruddy Duck was scarce with only a single report. Several possible Cackling and Ross's geese were birds seen either flying over or in fields at great distances. Details other than size could not be documented, so they are not included in the species account. There were several Great Egrets for the period and a Snowy Egret.

A single Black Vulture was seen at Derby Hill, but otherwise the hawkwatch site recorded the lowest total since standardized counting began in 1979. The first good flight didn't occur until 31 March, and the warm April was plagued with a lack of frontal systems and strong south winds that bring the most hawks. A breeding success was Peregrine Falcons nesting for the second year in Syracuse and hatching four young. A pair of Bald Eagles were expected to nest in Onondaga County this year, but they got off to a slow start and apparently no eggs were laid.

Sandhill Cranes are expected to be seen moving along Lake Ontario, but two reports in good habitat in northwestern Madison County may be an indication that the species is continuing to expand its breeding range. The May shorebird flight was a bit of a disappointment with no rarities noted. Vernal ponds had dried up with the lack of rainfall, the flight at Sandy Pond was mixed and reports from the Oneida Lake islands were few. The birds may have overflowed us during the cool, calm nights and clear days with moderate north winds, or they may have been waiting for favorable weather in June to move northward. There were two Whimbrels, a Ruddy Turnstone and good numbers of White-rumped Sandpipers and Short-billed Dowitchers for the season, but Sanderling and Red Knot were missed and very few Semipalmated Sandpipers were seen. Two Lesser Black-backed Gulls and a Forster's Tern were the unusual larids for the season.

The Long-eared Owl migration reported consisted of one very good day and just a handful of other sightings. There was only one Short-eared Owl reported,

while four Northern Saw-whet Owls included two in May on breeding grounds. Chuck-will's-widow was found for a second Regional record and stayed for about a week. Both Common Nighthawk and Whip-poor-will migrants were reported in higher numbers than most recent years. A tent caterpillar infestation drew good numbers of cuckoos despite the chilly May weather.

Lake breezes off Lake Ontario not only disperses the hawk flight but the land bird migration as well. Lower than usual numbers of many diurnal migrants such as Common Loon, Northern Flicker, Blue Jay, Black-capped Chickadee, White-breasted Nuthatch and blackbirds were recorded at Derby Hill. Tom Salo found Palm Warblers on territory near Keepawa in Herkimer County. The species has not been recorded as a breeder in the Region, mostly due to the fact that possible nesting areas in northern Herkimer County are roadless and difficult to reach. A Bohemian Waxwing and two White-eyed Vireos were good finds for the season. There were several reports each of Olive-sided and Yellow-bellied flycatchers, Philadelphia Vireo and Gray-cheeked Thrush, the late migrants often missed by those who stop birding after the warblers peak.

Warm weather 6-7 April brought early Pine and Yellow-rumped warblers, but other April warblers arrived on schedule. May began slowly with chilly temperatures, and it was not until warm weather on 10 May that the first big wave of warblers arrived. That day also produced a huge flight at Derby Hill, with many warblers, Scarlet Tanagers, Rose-breasted Grosbeaks, Baltimore Orioles and others streaming by. The next warm-up on 14-15 May brought even more birds, including Cape May Warblers, which had been quite scarce in recent years. But the rest of the month was chilly and without remarkable passerine flights.

Gerard Phillips photographed a Harris's Sparrow, which was at Derby Hill feeders, where he also got photos of two of the Gambel's form of White-crowned Sparrow. Several Clay-colored Sparrows were all migrants. The more common sparrows were generally found in low numbers. Small flocks of Purple Finch and Common Redpoll were present through March, and one Hoary Redpoll was seen in Pompey. Pine Siskins were seen through the season, but most moved on quickly. A few Evening Grosbeaks could be found in the southern highlands.

For the season, a total of 242 species was found, about average. Highlights included Greater White-fronted Goose, King Eider, Snowy Egret, Black Vulture, Whimbrel, Forster's Tern, **CHUCK-WILL'S-WIDOW**, White-eyed Vireo, Bohemian Waxwing, Cape May Warbler, Worm-eating Warbler and **Harris's Sparrow**. Once again, no Sedge Wren or Henslow's Sparrow was reported. Other misses included Red-throated Loon, Black-crowned Night-Heron and the phalaropes.

CONTRIBUTORS

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ABBREVIATIONS

Bvllle – Baldwinsville; CM – Clay Marsh; DH – Derby Hill; FH – Fair Haven, Little Sodus Bay and vicinity; Geo – Georgetown; GSC – Great Swamp Conservancy, n. MADI; HIWMA – Howland Island WMA; HVWMA – Happy Valley WMA; LOL – L Ontario Littoral; NMP – Nine Mile Pt, Scriba & New Haven; OneiL – Oneida L; OnonL – Onondaga L; SCH – T Schroepfel; SFNS – Spring Farm Nature Sanctuary, Kirkland; SPd – Sandy Pd; SSSP – Selkirk Shores SP; StMC – St. Mary's Cemetery; SVB – Sylvan and Verona Beaches; Syr – Syracuse; TRWMA – Three Rivers WMA; WH – Whiskey Hollow, T Van Buren; WM – West Monroe.

WHISTLING-DUCKS — VULTURES

Greater White-fronted Goose: DH 29 Mar (GP).
Snow Goose: arr 3 DH 16 Mar; max 50,000 SVB 29 Mar; 25,000 DH 29 Mar; last W Winfield 20 May.
Canada Goose: max 9200 SCH 29 Mar.
Brant: arr & max 46 OneiL 13 May; flight mostly missed.
Mute Swan: pairs FH, SVB, Brewerton.
Tundra Swan: max 15 OneiL 20 Mar.
Wood Duck: max 30 CM 2 May.
Gadwall: max 6 OnonL 26 Mar.
Am. Wigeon: max 19 OnonL 26 Mar & GSC 19 Apr.
Am. Black Duck: max 76 Bridgeport 21 Mar.
Blue-winged Teal: max 6 WM 14 Apr.
N. Shoveler: arr OnonL 26 Mar; max 4 SCH 13 Apr.
N. Pintail: max 38 DH 27 Mar.
Green-winged Teal: max 66 Sullivan 23 Apr.
Canvasback: max 11 OnonL 26 Mar.
Redhead: max 13 OnonL 26 Mar.
Ring-necked Duck: max 220 SSSP 25 Mar.
Greater Scaup: max 540 Oswego 12 Mar.

Lesser Scaup: max 20 Oswego 20 Mar.
King Eider: Oswego thru, record late.
Surf Scoter: Oswego 12 Mar; 3 OneiL 15 May.
White-winged Scoter: max 120 Oswego 12 Mar; 20 SPd 29 May.
Black Scoter: Oswego 20 Mar.
Long-tailed Duck: max 280 Oswego 12 Mar.
Bufflehead: max 40 Scriba 24 Apr.
Com. Goldeneye: max 350 FH 20 Mar.
Hooded Merganser: max 67 SCH 27 Mar.
Com. Merganser: max 650 OnonL 13 Mar.
Red-breasted Merganser: max 80 LOL 6 Apr.
Ruddy Duck: 2 Beaver L 4 May, only report.
Wild Turkey: max 100 Geo 11 Mar.
Com. Loon: arr DH 31 Mar; max 23 OnonL 21 Apr; on eggs Gray L 12 May.
Pied-billed Grebe: max 4 per day.
Horned Grebe: arr LOL 31 Mar; max 3 DH 6 Apr.
Red-necked Grebe: arr DH 5 Apr; max 4 OnonL 9 Apr; last 2 OnonL 21 Apr.

Double-crested Cormorant: arr DH 31 Mar; 108 Bvll 24 Apr, high away from lakes.

Am. Bittern: max 4 WM 9 May.

Least Bittern: arr 2 WM 9 May; Palermo 21 May; CM 21 May.

Great Blue Heron: arr DH 17 Mar.

Great Egret: arr Scriba 1 May; other singles Verona Marsh & GSC.

SNOWY EGRET: Syr 16-23 May (RD, mob).

Green Heron: max 11 CM 21 May.

Black Vulture: DH 26 Apr.

HAWKS-ALCIDS

Derby Hill Hawk Migration Totals:

Species	Arrival	Max	Max Date	Total
Turkey Vulture	7 Mar	1025	29 Mar	6834
Osprey	27 Mar	45	6 May	278
Bald Eagle	5 Mar	15	6 May	137
N. Harrier	7 Mar	105	31 Mar	423
Sharp-shinned Hawk	17 Mar	381	26 Apr	1510
Cooper's Hawk	7 Mar	97	31 Mar	330
N. Goshawk	7 Mar	3	7, 31 Mar	26
Red-shouldered Hawk	17 Mar	88	30 Mar	501
Broad-winged Hawk	16 Apr	2005	25 Apr	8928
Red-tailed Hawk	5 Mar	676	29 Mar	4022
Rough-legged Hawk	7 Mar	79	31 Mar	369
Golden Eagle	7 Mar	11	31 Mar	49
Am. Kestrel	7 Mar	32	31 Mar	158
Merlin	18 Mar	8	26 Apr	29
Peregrine Falcon	9 Apr	1	4 dates	4

Total incl. unidentified and rarities

23,623

Bald Eagle: nest TRWMA started but apparently no eggs, inexperienced birds.

Rough-legged Hawk: last Richland 18 May.

Peregrine Falcon: pair Syr hatched 4 y 17-18 May; SPd 27 May.

Com. Moorhen: max 2 per day.

Am. Coot: Bvll to 23 Mar, only report.

Sandhill Crane: arr DH 31 Mar; 3 DH 7 Apr; Canastota 19 Apr; 2 DH 26 Apr; 2 Chittenango 1 May; DH 11 May; SPd 13 May.

Black-bellied Plover: max 8 SPd 27 May.

Semipalmated Plover: max 42 SPd 27 May.

Greater Yellowlegs: max 12 SCH 8 May.

Lesser Yellowlegs: arr 2 Lysander 18 Mar, early; max 4 Sullivan 8 May & SCH 13 May.

Solitary Sandpiper: max 14 DH 14 May.

Spotted Sandpiper: max 13 LOL 14 May.

Upland Sandpiper: arr Fulton 18 Apr.

Whimbrel: DH 7 May; OneiL 28 May.

Ruddy Turnstone: SPd 28 May.

Semipalmated Sandpiper: max 2 SPd 23 May.

Least Sandpiper: max 38 SPd 27 May.

White-rumped Sandpiper: arr 3 SPd 28 May; max 15 SPd 29 May.

Pectoral Sandpiper: max 15 Sullivan 13 Apr.

Dunlin: arr 6 SPd 9 May; max 42 SPd 27 May.

Short-billed Dowitcher: arr 6 SPd 19 May; max 19 E Syr 24 May.

Wilson's Snipe: max 29 Sullivan 7 Apr.

Bonaparte's Gull: arr 3 OnonL 6 Apr; max 20 DH 12 Apr.

Iceland Gull: last Oswego 5 Mar.
Lesser Black-backed Gull: DH 31 Mar (GP); Van Buren 13 Apr (BH).
Glaucous Gull: last Oswego 3 Mar.
Caspian Tern: max 85 SPd 23 May.
Com. Tern: max 70 Oneil 21 May.
Forster's Tern: SPd 19 May (KM, BP).
Black Tern: max 18 SSSP 21 May.

PIGEONS — WOODPECKERS

Black-billed Cuckoo: max 7 CM 21 May.
Yellow-billed Cuckoo: arr Hannibal 13 May; 8 other reports after 20 May.
Long-eared Owl: arr NMP 31 Mar; max 10 NMP 1 Apr; about 4 other reports.
Short-eared Owl: Van Buren 22 Apr, only report.
N. Saw-whet Owl: Pompey 20 Mar; WH 22 Mar; HVWMA & Constantia 21 May.
Com. Nighthawk: arr LOL 14 May; 10 other reports, more than usual.
CHUCK-WILL'S-WIDOW: WM 21 May thru (KM, BP, CS, mob), second Reg record.
Whip-poor-will: arr LOL 30 Apr; singles Marcellus 15 May & WM 21 May, migrants; max 7 Constantia 21 May, breeders.
Belted Kingfisher: arr DH 27 Mar; Old Forge 5 Apr.
Red-headed Woodpecker: arr Lysander 17 May; Fulton 18 May; Hastings 23 May; HIWMA 30 May.
Red-bellied Woodpecker: several reports W Winfield area as range extension continues.
Yellow-bellied Sapsucker: max 6 NMP 16 Apr.
Black-backed Woodpecker: Big Moose 4 Mar; Third L Creek 11 Mar.
N. Flicker: arr 2 DH 31 Mar; max 122 DH 10 Apr.

FLYCATCHERS — WAXWINGS

Olive-sided Flycatcher: arr Marshall 21 May; SCH 27 May; Labrador Hollow 31 May.
E. Wood-Pewee: max 6 WH 28 May.
Yellow-bellied Flycatcher: StMC 18

May; 2 SPd 27 May.
Acadian Flycatcher: arr WH 21 May.
Willow Flycatcher: max 14 CM 21 May.
E. Kingbird: max 30 DH 10 May.
N. Shrike: 10 reports; last TRWMA 8 Apr.
WHITE-EYED VIREO: Sterling 21 May; HIWMA 26, 30 May.
Yellow-throated Vireo: max 5 Sterling 21 May.
Warbling Vireo: max 19 CM 21 May.
Philadelphia Vireo: arr LOL 7 May; WH 14 May; Marshall 21 May.
Gray Jay: 2 Keepawa 28 May (TS).
Blue Jay: max 2640 DH 10 May.
Am. Crow: max 1500 DH 7 Mar.
Fish Crow: pairs OnonL & Shop city Syr.
Com. Raven: max 3 DH 10 Apr; on territory SSSP in Apr.
Horned Lark: max 110 W Winfield 20 Mar.
Red-breasted Nuthatch: migrants 1 per day when found.
Brown Creeper: max 30 NMP 10 Apr.
House Wren: max 29 LOL 14 May.
Winter Wren: arr & max 4 NMP 6 May.
Marsh Wren: max 22 CM 21 May.
Golden-crowned Kinglet: max 21 NMP 17 Apr.
Ruby-crowned Kinglet: max 24 NMP 17 Apr.
Blue-gray Gnatcatcher: max 10 NMP 14 May.
E. Bluebird: max 20 DH 31 Mar.
Veery: max 13 NMP 15 May.
Gray-cheeked Thrush: arr NMP 14 May; max 4 Oakwood Cemetery Syr 27 May.
Swainson's Thrush: max 6 NMP 15 May.
Hermit Thrush: max 13 NMP 30 Apr.
Wood Thrush: max 31 CM 21 May.
Gray Catbird: Syr 2 Mar (MR), wintered; max 50 CM 21 May.
Am. Pipit: arr 2 DH 21 Mar; max 60 Hastings 16 May; 50 Norway 14 May.
Bohemian Waxwing: Fayetteville 11-12 Mar (JB, mob).

WARBLERS

Golden-winged Warbler: max 3 LOL 14 May; m paired with f Brewster's SFNS 24 May.
Tennessee Warbler: 3 NMP 15 May.
Nashville Warbler: max 15 NMP 15 May.
N. Parula: max 15 NMP 15 May.
Yellow Warbler: max 250 DH 10 May.
Chestnut-sided Warbler: max 25 NMP 15 May.
Magnolia Warbler: max 14 NMP 15 May.
Cape May Warbler: max 8 NMP 15 May.
Black-throated Blue Warbler: max 47 LOL 14 May.
Yellow-rumped Warbler: arr 2 DH 8 Apr; max 650 DH 10 May.
Black-throated Green Warbler: max 20 NMP 15 May.
Blackburnian Warbler: max 25 NMP 15 May.
Pine Warbler: max 10 NMP 16 Apr.
Prairie Warbler: SFNS 11 May; 2 Camillus 15 May; LOL 15 May; HVWMA 17 May; NMP 19 May; Dewitt 25 May.
Palm Warbler: max 40 DH 10 May; 3 m Keepawa HERK 28 May, on territory.
Bay-breasted Warbler: max 9 NMP 15 May.
Blackpoll Warbler: max 7 NMP 15 May.
Cerulean Warbler: arr 2 WH 8 May.
Black-and-white Warbler: max 13 NMP 15 May.
Am. Redstart: max 450 DH 10 May.
Prothonotary Warbler: arr Toad Harbor 10 May.
WORM-EATING WARBLER: SFNS 11 May (MP).
Ovenbird: max 25 LOL 14 May.
Louisiana Waterthrush: arr T Onondaga 15 Apr.
Mourning Warbler: migrants 1-2/day.
Com. Yellowthroat: max 59 CM 21 May.
Hooded Warbler: arr StMC 8 May; max 6/day LOL 14 May thru.

Wilson's Warbler: max 8 NMP 15 May.
Canada Warbler: migrants 1-2/day.

TANAGERS — WEAVERS

Scarlet Tanager: max 25 DH 10 May.
E. Towhee: Bvllle to 6 Mar, winter holdover.
Am. Tree Sparrow: to 75 per day SFNS 1-14 Apr; last 2 SFNS 21 Apr.
Chipping Sparrow: max 48 LOL 14 May.
Clay-colored Sparrow: Skaneateles May; DH 11 May; NMP 19 May.
Field Sparrow: arr Hastings, SFNS 9 Apr.
Vesper Sparrow: max 7 LOL 10 Apr.
Savannah Sparrow: arr DH 13 Mar; max 18 DH 10 Apr; Oakwood Cemetery Syr 27 May, late.
Grasshopper Sparrow: arr Hastings 10 May.
Fox Sparrow: arr widespread 31 Mar; max 16 TRWMA 3 Apr; 13 Durhamville 6 Apr; last 2 LOL 1 May & 1 SFNS 3 May, late.
Song Sparrow: max 60 Sullivan mucklands 3 Apr.
Lincoln's Sparrow: max 8 DH 15 May; last TRWMA 30 May.
Swamp Sparrow: max 38 CM 21 May.
White-throated Sparrow: max 40 DH 27 Apr.
HARRIS'S SPARROW: DH 11 May, second spring record (GP, ph, mob).
White-crowned Sparrow: max 65 LOL 14 May; 2 *gambelli* DH 13 May (GP, ph).
Dark-eyed Junco: max 60 NMP 7 Apr.
Lapland Longspur: 5 singles 11 Mar to 5 Apr.
Snow Bunting: max 25 Geo 11 Mar; last DH 31 Mar.
Rose-breasted Grosbeak: max 160 DH 10 May.
Indigo Bunting: max 5/day after 15 May.
Bobolink: arr 26 Apr, record early; max 750 DH 10 May.
E. Meadowlark: arr 3 Van Buren 20 Mar; max 5/day DH.

Rusty Blackbird: 2 Geo Mar,
winter holdovers; max 250 DH
10 May; last 2 Bolivar 16 May.

Orchard Oriole: DH 10 May;
Marshall 21 May; Cross L 31 May.

Baltimore Oriole: max 600 DH
10 May.

Purple Finch: max 25 Geo 27 Apr.

Com. Redpoll: to 35/day widespread;
last 15 DH 31 Mar.

Hoary Redpoll: Pompey 7-13 Mar (DC,
Mike Resch, NYSARC).

Pine Siskin: 1-4/day thru, but scattered.

Am. Goldfinch: max 800 DH 10 May.

Evening Grosbeak: to 6/day s. MADI &
ONON thru Mar.