

REGION 7 – ADIRONDACK-CHAMPLAIN

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A Nor'easter on 1 March dumped 14" of snow on Ellenburg Depot and a foot on Malone. The cold spell that began 16 February finally broke on 5 March. Scattered snowstorms marked most of the month until a warming trend commenced on the 20th, with Elizabethtown still at 47°F during the evening of a sunny 24 March, and Plattsburgh enjoyed 61° at month's end. Inlet saw March temperatures below freezing on all but one day, with six days below 0°. April began with a flood warning in Hamilton County and similar watches in the other three northeastern counties, only to be followed by one of the loveliest stretches in memory. The sun shone from 7-20 April, when there was afternoon rain, followed by two more sunny, breezy days on 21-22 April. Rain began in the evening of the 22nd and continued over the next two days, leaving the Ausable River flooded. Another half-inch 27 April brought a flood warning to the East Branch Ausable River. May saw a series of cold fronts move across the Region and settle off the Atlantic coast, pumping back more rain. Inlet and the central Adirondacks awoke to eight mornings with frost, the last a 28° dawn on 19 May. After a final rainy spell, some sun shone on 30 April, and the last day of the season was sunny and warm.

On sunny, windy 21 May, Bill Krueger found a medium-sized shorebird on the Gravelle and Laurin farms at the Chazy Rivers. As large as a Lesser Yellowlegs in the vicinity, but browner, the bird exhibited upperparts that had a scalloped, rather than spotted, appearance. The dark gray bill, shorter and stouter than the Lesser's, was slightly decurved. The smallish head and upper neck were darker

than the back, with lower throat, breast and flanks splotched black on white. The bird's feathers were edged in buff or off-white; some of the feather centers were black, but those on the back were brown. In the one brief flight that Krueger observed with binoculars there were no conspicuous markings on the upperwings, the underwings were white and there was extensive white on the rump. Legs were orange. This **Reeve** fed quite actively by walking and pecking, up to its belly in water most of the time. On cloudy 23 May, Krueger found the rarity still on the Laurin farm. This provides a third Regional record, an immature Ruff having been seen on the Laurin farm in September 1994, and a bird with a white ruff was found at the mouth of the Ausable River in June 1995.

The spring bird banding station on the grounds of the Crown Point State Historic Site celebrated the 30th consecutive season of banding 6-23 May. Operated by the Crown Point Banding Association, through an agreement with NYS OPR&HP and the Historic Site Manager, the station banded 536 birds of 51 species by the time the nets were closed, bringing the total since 1976 to 12,572 birds of some 96 species. The 30th anniversary was a "Champlain Connections" feature on Channel 5 WPTZ Plattsburgh as the first segment of a Vermont Audubon video on the Champlain Birding Trail, was recorded for a WRPI college radio and video production, and was described in articles in *Adirondack Life*, *Valley News* and *Times of Ti*. The Historic Site staff constructed a roofed framework of clear cedar to hold four colored panels describing the 30 years of banding and the birds of the Historic Site, and OPR&HP published a 2nd edition of the *Birds of Crown Point State Historic Site* checklist. The staff also reclaimed the old "Bobolink Field" to the south, where not only Bobolinks but also Eastern Meadowlarks and Savannah Sparrows were found in May. And the 2004 hawthorn reclamation at the banding station continues to encourage Brown Thrashers, Yellow Warblers, Field Sparrows and other birds of low thickets. Over 300 visitors included schoolchildren, who released nearly a hundred birds and received a Polaroid photo and certificate from the CPBA. The old record of 33 Blue Jays banded in 2000 was demolished by a heavy return flight that resulted in 89 banded. [See *The Kingbird* 55:1 for accounts of the heavy Fall 2004 southbound Blue Jay flights in Regions 3, 5, 6, 9 and 10.] A late "Yellow" Palm Warbler on 10 May was only the second in 30 years, the other 46 banded between 1976-2004 all the later-migrant "Western" Palm Warblers. Historic Site Manager Thomas Hughes and his fine staff are to be commended for their many efforts on behalf of the birds of Crown Point SHS.

In spite of the two-week stretch of fair weather in April, migration was generally accepted to be both late and light, affected largely by the series of cold fronts and rain that marked most of May. What impact those conditions might have upon nesting success remains to be seen, but observers noted that Tree Swallows were late in getting started and reduced in numbers in some areas. In spite of less than ideal conditions for both birds and birders, a total of 207 species was reported, short of the 1997 record of 219 but the same as 2004. In addition to the **Reeve**, notable rarities included a **Eurasian Wigeon** on the Gravelle farm at Chazy Rivers on 15 April, two **Sandhill Cranes** at Tupper Lake 17 May, **Red-bellied Woodpecker** reported from both Long Lake 26 April-13 May and Crown Point State Historic Site 22 May and a singing male **Clay-colored Sparrow** in Jay

27-30 May. Perhaps the most interesting was a bird at Joan Kogut's Vermontville feeder in Franklin County on 7 May believed to be a "**Sooty**" **Fox Sparrow**. The description is consistent with the *unalaschensis* group: a large, dark gray/blackish brown sparrow with breast very heavily streaked, almost blotchy, otherwise similar in size and behavior to our usual "Red" Fox Sparrow. [See *Birding* 31:6, pp. 508-17, "Species Limits in the Fox Sparrow."]

CONTRIBUTORS

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ABBREVIATIONS

AMR – Akwesasne Mohawk Reserve; AP – Ausable Pt WMA; BB – Bloomingdale Bog; BTS – Browns Tract Stream; CH – Cumberland Head; CP – Crown Pt SHS; CR – Chazy Rivers; FB – Ferd's Bog; IL – Indian L; LA – L Alice WMA; LL – Long L; LP – L Placid; NP – Noblewood Pk; PtF – Pt au Fer; PtR – Pt au Roche SP; SL – Saranac L; SPB – Spring Pd Bog; TL – Tupper L; WM – Wickham Marsh GMA; WRS – Webb Royce Swamp.

WHISTLING-DUCKS – VULTURES

Brant: arr 75+ CH 14 May (BK) and 40 Rouses Pt same date (DP); 100 FB 15 May (GL); max 200 CP 23 May (GL,JP,ET).

EURASIAN WIGEON: CR 15 Apr (BK,CM), 6th Reg record, all in CLIN.

Am. Wigeon: arr AMR 7 Apr (HW).

N. Shoveler: pr arr AMR 6 Apr (HW), early FRAN; 4 in a different pool AMR 7 Apr.

N. Pintail: arr 12 AMR 5 Apr (HW), only report.

Green-winged Teal: arr 6 Little TL 6 Apr (JC,RY), early HAMI; AMR 7 Apr (HW).

Ring-necked Duck: max 100+ AP 7 Apr (J&RH).

Greater Scaup: arr 6 AMR 6 Apr (HW); pr Westport 9-16 Apr (MDM); NP 16 Apr (J&PT).

Bufflehead: last CP 9 May (GL,JP,RW).

Com. Goldeneye: CP to 9 May (GL,JP,RW).

Barrow's Goldeneye: CH 10 Apr (BK,CM), always a good find.

Red-breasted Merganser: CH, CP, NP, Plattsburgh, Westport, WM, a good showing.

Spruce Grouse: m N Jay Rd 29 Mar (PO), new ESSE location; m Spring Pd Bog 20 May (GJ).

Red-necked Grebe: arr 2 NP 9 Apr; Pt Douglas 23 Apr; max 12 NP 1 May (MDM).

Double-crested Cormorant: arr ESSE 9 Apr (MDM); 225 with 6 nests CP 20 May (RP); yellow-color-banded from Four Brothers 2002-04 at NP 29 May (MDM).

Great Egret: arr Chapman Rd, Ft Covington 5 Apr (HW), early FRAN & Reg; 2 there 8 Apr; PtR 19 Apr (CoM); L Durant 21 Apr (M&WM), early HAMI; L Simond 8 May (CD,BF); NP 27 May (MDM); a fine showing.

Black-crowned Night-Heron: arr PtR 13 May (BK,CM).

Turkey Vulture: max 20 in kettle over His Majesty's Fort at CP 21 May (GL,JP).

HAWKS—ALCIDS

Bald Eagle: max 4 Inlet feeder 14 Mar (GL), feeding on road-killed deer & beaver carcasses; blue-color-banded imm from NYS at CP 21 May (GL); numerous other reports.

Sharp-shinned Hawk: imm m banded CP 16 May (J&SP), netted while in pursuit of fortunate ad m Indigo Bunting.

Red-tailed Hawk: apparent "Krider's" Carpenter Flats CLIN 23 Apr (DR).

Golden Eagle: ad Jay 16&21 Mar; imm Jay 15 Apr (PO); LL 18 May (JC).

Merlin: Ausable Forks, Jay, LP, Newcomb, Oseetah L, Wilcox Dock, now typical.

Peregrine Falcon: pr Willsboro eyrie 5 Mar (MDM); Elizabethtown eyrie early Mar (ET); pr Jay eyrie 15 Mar (PO); pr Keene eyrie 20 Mar (ET); CP 9 May (JP).

Virginia Rail: WM & WRS 23 Apr (MDM), early ESSE; LA 3 May (J&RH); CH 8 May (BK); Ray Brook 23 May

(TD); L Durant 29 May (M&WM); nice finds.

Sora: WRS 1 May (MDM), early ESSE; CH 9 May (BK); excellent finds.

Com. Moorhen: arr CR 29 May (BK,CM).

Am. Coot: arr CR 31 May (BK,CM).

SANDHILL CRANE: 2 TL 17 May (BJ, AR), 2nd FRAN & 6th Reg record.

Black-bellied Plover: CR 21 & 31 May (BK,CM), only reports.

Semipalmated Plover: arr 2 CR 11 May (BK,CM); NP 28 May (MDM); max 10 CR 29 May (BK).

Greater Yellowlegs: arr CR 2 May; max 10 CR 29 May (BK); 1-4 SL high school 22-24 May (TD).

Lesser Yellowlegs: arr 2 CR 9 May; max 5 CR 20 May (BK,CM); 5 SL high school 24 May (TD).

Solitary Sandpiper: SL 16-30 Apr (TD,RH); LA 13 May (KJ); NP 28 May (MDM).

Semipalmated Sandpiper: arr 3 CR 29 May (BK).

Dunlin: arr 3 CR 15 May; max 15 CR 29 May (BK).

REEVE: CR on Gravelle & Laurin farms 21&23 May (BK); 3rd CLIN & Reg record.

Little Gull: imm CR 31 May (BK,CM), 2nd CLIN spring record.

Caspian Tern: arr 2 NP 1 May (MDM), early ESSE; max to 6 NP 7-30 May, suggests nesting on Four Brothers; 2 CR 11 May (BK,CM).

Com. Tern: arr CR 16 May (J&RH).

Black Tern: arr CR 2 May, early CLIN; max 5 PtF 10 May (BK); 4 Catfish Bay CLIN 14 May (DP); PtF 16 May (J&RH); encouraging.

PIGEONS—WOODPECKERS

Black-billed Cuckoo: singing m arr CP 15 May (J&SP); Olano Rd CLIN 20 May (BK).

E. Screech-Owl: calling CP 7 May (GL), only report.

Com. Nighthawk: arr IL 28 May (M&WM); IL 31 May (DS).

Whip-poor-will: arr Pt Kent 30 Mar (DR), ties ESSE & Reg arrival; Pt Kent 16 Apr; CP 11-12 May (GL,J&SP).

RED-BELLIED WOODPECKER: LL 26 Apr-13 May (JM), 2nd HAMI record; CP 22 May (GL), 10th ESSE record.

Am. Three-toed Woodpecker: FB 10-21 Apr (DD, RG, WL, JN), but other sites needed.

Black-backed Woodpecker: m Morrisonville 30 Apr (JM), unexpected; other reports from Constable Pd, FB, IL, LL, as expected.

FLYCATCHERS – WAXWINGS

Yellow-bellied Flycatcher: Moose R Plains 11 May (BG), extremely early; other reports BB, FB, Giant Mt, SL.

Willow Flycatcher: arr Banker Rd CLIN 31 May (BK, CM).

N. Shrike: Raquette L 7 Mar (GL); Chateaugay daily to 23 Mar (MH); Wadhams 9 Apr (LL); last Raquette Pt FRAN 12 Apr (HW).

Yellow-throated Vireo: arr PtF 11 May (BK, CM); singing m NP 15 May (MDM).

Philadelphia Vireo: arr PtF 25 May (J&RH), only report.

Gray Jay: BB, BTS, FB, SPB, usual areas.

Blue Jay: max 89 banded CP 9-23 May (GH, JP), old record 33 in 2000.

Am. Crow: 30 Inlet feeder early Mar (GL).

Com. Raven: 4 Inlet feeder early Mar (GL); nest Jay 16 Mar (PO); nest Mt Baker Apr (LL); pr gathering nesting materials Valcour I L Champlain 19 Mar (HD).

Horned Lark: max 50 Pardy Rd CLIN 13 Mar (BK).

Boreal Chickadee: BB, FB, Giant Mt, Helldiver Pd, Jay, LL, where expected.

Tufted Titmouse: max 5 Keeseville feeder Mar (JL); also Carpenters Flats, CP, Elizabethtown, Jay, New Russia, Pt

Kent, WM, and undoubtedly elsewhere as range expansion continues.

Carolina Wren: Plattsburgh feeder 1 Mar (CM); singing m remained New Russia feeder to late Mar (ET); singing m NP 15 May (MDM), as expansion also continues.

Blue-gray Gnatcatcher: arr Jay 15 May (PO).

Hermit Thrush: LL 7 Apr (JC), early HAMI.

N. Mockingbird: Peru 22 Apr-1 May (EF), only report.

European Starling: arr Inlet 19 Mar (GL) & Chilson 20 Mar (LC).

Am. Pipit: arr 75 SL high school 12 May (TD).

Bohemian Waxwing: max 600 Everett Orchards, Peru 8 Mar (ET), previously present for several wks (EF), 2nd highest NYS, new CLIN & Reg max; 50 Jay early Mar (NW); 100 daily Chateaugay to 23 Mar (MH), eating crabapples; excellent numbers.

WARBLERS

Golden-winged Warbler: 2 singing m Essex & Westport 28 May; singing m Willsboro 30 May (MDM); perhaps not so scarce if sought for.

Orange-crowned Warbler: Akey Rd 22 May (CM, CM Jr.), late CLIN & a great find.

Cape May Warbler: Plattsburgh yard 20 May (J&RH), only report.

Palm Warbler: “Yellow” Elizabethtown 8 Apr (LC), record early ESSE & Reg, breaking 51-yr arrival record; “Yellow” Sabattis Bog 17 Apr (JC), early HAMI; “Yellow” Barnum Bog, Paul Smiths 20 Apr (BM), early FRAN; “Yellow” BB 22 Apr (JN) & 16&26 May (BG); late transient “Yellow” CP 10 May (JP), 2nd banded in 30 yrs, other 46 banded all the later-migrant “Western” Palm; “Yellow” max 15 on small portion of 100A bog near Shingle Shanty Brook HAMI late May (TS).

Blackpoll Warbler: arr Blue Mt 16 May (JC); CP 20 May (RP); Plattsburgh 27&31 May (EF); Giant Mt 28 May (DD); NP 28 May (MDM); a mix of local nesters & transients.

N. Waterthrush: Silver L Bog 1 May (BK,CM), early CLIN.

Wilson's Warbler: arr SL 13 May (RH); Peru 31 May (E&HF).

TANAGERS – WEAVERS

E. Towhee: arr Pt Kent 18 Apr (DR); New Russia 7 May (ET).

CLAY-COLORED SPARROW: singing m Stickney Bridge Rd, Jay 27 May (L&PO, NW); still present 30 May (MDM).

Vesper Sparrow: arr Jay 6 Apr (PO); max 3 Peru 17 Apr (EF); IL 21 Apr (M&WM), rare in HAMI.

FOX SPARROW: “Red” arr Jay 7 Apr (PO); Sabattis 8 Apr (JC); Pt Kent 9 Apr (DR); Akey Rd CLIN 14 Apr (CM Jr); Lewis 18-24 Apr (SP); a strong Apr showing; apparent “Sooty” Vermontville feeder 7 May (JK), description consistent with *unalaschcensis* group.

Lincoln's Sparrow: max 5 banded CP 16-20 May (GH,JP).

Swamp Sparrow: arr BTS & Raquette L 7 Apr (GL), early HAMI & Reg; Essex Station 16 Apr (MDM); Paul Smiths 19 Apr (BM), early FRAN.

Lapland Longspur: Pardy Rd CLIN 13 Mar (BK), only report.

Rose-breasted Grosbeak: 2 2nd-yr m with yellow breasts Newcomb early May (ED), apparent xanthochroism.

Rusty Blackbird: arr LL 31 Mar (JC); 2 Chubb R 11 Apr (BM); transient Peru 21 Apr (CH).

Pine Grosbeak: last AP 3 Apr (CM).

Purple Finch: banded York, SC, 9 Jan 2004, struck window & died Lewis 26 Apr (SP).

House Finch: arr Inlet 12-13 Mar (GL); leucistic bird with white head returned for 3rd yr CH 12 Mar (NO).

Red Crossbill: max 200+ Follensby Clear Pd 6 Mar (CD), feeding in pines; BB 12 Apr (JC); 2 IL 21 Apr (M&WM); NP 15 May (MDM); 3 BB 26 May (BG); promising.

Com. Redpoll: max 120 LP 25 Mar (LM); Inlet 4 Apr (GL); Jay 7 Apr (PO).

Pine Siskin: “green” morph LL 13 Mar; nesting LL 25 Mar (JC); feeding yg Inlet feeder (GL).

Am. Goldfinch: 100 Jay 20 Mar (PO) & LP 29 Mar (LM); max 173 banded CP 7-22 May (GH,JP).

Evening Grosbeak: max 16 New Russia 28 Mar (ET) as local nesters returned.

