

REGION 5—ONEIDA LAKE BASIN

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The season was warmer than average and precipitation was near normal, but the 1.6" of snow was one of the lowest totals ever recorded for spring. Oneida Lake ice-out was on 10 April, with varying amounts of open water after 30 March. Record high temperatures in late April brought a good hawk flight plus many early arrivals, while the chilly and wet weather in the latter half of May seemed to disperse migrants. Many higher elevations had a hard frost as late as 31 May.

The March average temperature of 35.3° F was 1.7° above normal, and the 3.8" precipitation was 0.78" above normal. April had an average temperature of 48.2°, 2.9° above normal and 2.31" of precipitation, 1.08" below normal. The May averages were 57.5°, 0.4° above normal and 3.53" of precipitation, 0.14" above normal.

The Snow Goose migration was what has become routine, with eight days of a thousand plus moving by Derby Hill and many seen in the Port Byron mucklands. Trumpeter Swans were seen at several locations, and there was at least one nesting attempt. High counts of Northern Pintail, Ring-necked Duck, and Lesser Scaup were recorded, but Blue-winged Teal continued to be very scarce. Canvasback, Redhead, and Ruddy Duck were seen. The latter three species are typically more abundant to our west. Rarities for the season were one Ross's Goose with the passing Snow Geese at Derby Hill, two separate reports of Cackling Geese, Eurasian Wigeon at the Great Swamp Conservancy, and a male Harlequin Duck in the Nine Mile Point area of Lake Ontario, likely the same bird seen over the winter.

The nine Red-throated Loons for the season were more than we usually see in the spring. Oneida Lake was an important stopover for Common Loons. Few Least Bitterns had been found by the end of the season, while we had the usual wandering Great Egrets plus one Cattle Egret. A Yellow-crowned Night-Heron was one of two rare species found on the same day at Peter Scott Swamp, and the single observer gave a careful description distinguishing it from other herons. The night-heron was not seen again but two King Rails found nearby were heard by many birders through May and on occasion one was seen flying short distances in the swamp. The species had last been reported in the Region in 1992.

Turkey Vulture numbers continued to rise and new daily and season highs were reached this year. The lone Black Vulture came on 13 May, an unusual time of year, since most are seen with the peak Turkey Vulture migration in late March or early April. The best hawk flight came with a surge of southern air on 25 April, when over 6,000 Broad-winged Hawks were seen in one hour. May was a poor month for hawks, with north and west winds on many days and rain accompanying the infrequent days with south winds. Two Swainson's Hawks

were seen at Derby Hill along with four western Red-tailed Hawks. Peregrine Falcons were again nesting at Utica and Syracuse.

Sandhill Crane sightings increased again this year. Shorebird sightings were limited by high water levels on lakes and most reports were of birds in flooded fields or migrating along Oneida Lake. The Whimbrel flight was the best on record for spring and most of them were low-flying birds seen in unsettled, rainy weather. Young Iceland, Glaucous, and Lesser Black-backed Gulls continued well into the season, and a Little Gull was a migrant along Oneida Lake. Individual Forster's Terns at Derby Hill and Fair Haven were good spring finds.

After the big irruption over the winter, a few Snowy Owls lingered well into May. Only two migrant Long-eared Owls were found along Lake Ontario, while the two Northern Saw-whet Owls were found in likely breeding habitat. No Short-eared Owls were seen. Common Nighthawk numbers were up mostly due to an increase in observation time in the evening. By the end of the season there had only been one report of a migrant Red-headed Woodpecker and none had been found at recent breeding locations. Cuckoo numbers were down coinciding with the decline of the forest tent caterpillar irruption.

The first wave of neotropical migrants came on 25 and 26 April on record warm days. Migration continued at a typically staggered pace up to 16 May, but afterwards north and west winds delayed or dispersed birds. Warbler migration was moderate without noteworthy numbers of many species, and some of the later arrivals such as Blackpoll, Mourning, Wilson's and Canada were all poorly reported. There was an increase in Bay-breasted and Cape May Warbler sightings and Golden-winged Warbler seems to be hanging on at breeding sites. Matt Perry mentioned that breeding Louisiana Waterthrush seems to be in decline. We found one Orange-crowned Warbler, and a pair of Prothonotary Warblers was present in Three Mile Bay WMA but proved to be more elusive than in former years. Late spring migrants, Olive-sided Flycatcher, Yellow-bellied Flycatcher, Philadelphia Vireo, and Gray-cheeked Thrush, were all seen in small numbers. The only Sedge Wren and Clay-colored Sparrow were migrants along Lake Ontario. Sparrow migration as a whole was generally lackluster. Orchard Oriole has increased both as a migrant and at several breeding locations that have been monitored for the past few years. A big wave of blackbirds moved along the rivers and swamps from the Onondaga Lake Outlet to the Town of Schroepfel on 21-22 March. By checking photographs Tom Carrolan got the best estimate of the numbers with over a half million icterids leaving the area near the Seneca River, almost all of them Common Grackles.

Small numbers of Red and White-winged Crossbills remained in the southern highlands of Onondaga and Madison Counties. White-winged Crossbills were also noted in the Adirondacks and occasionally at spruce cones at lower elevations. There was a strong Common Redpoll migration in March, but few migrant Purple Finches were reported. Pine Siskins moved through the Region over much of the season with some staying to nest. Most departed within days of fledging young.

For the season there was a total of 245 species seen, four above the average for the past 10 years. Highlights were Ross's Goose, Eurasian Wigeon, Harlequin Duck, Cattle Egret, **Yellow-crowned Night-Heron**, Black Vulture, Swainson's Hawk, **King Rail**, Whimbrel, Little Gull, Forster's Tern, Sedge Wren, Orange-crowned Warbler, and Clay-colored Sparrow.

DERBY HILL HAWK MIGRATION TOTALS

<u>Species</u>	<u>Arrival</u>	<u>Max</u>	<u>Max Date</u>	<u>Total</u>
Turkey Vulture	5 Mar	2671	2 Apr	13250
Osprey	25 Mar	32	25, 27 Apr	392
Bald Eagle	25 Feb	23	9 May	313
No. Harrier	26 Feb	56	1 Apr	446
Sharp-sh. Hawk	10 Mar	326	24 Apr	2851
Cooper's Hawk	5 Mar	56	25 Mar	426
No. Goshawk	10 Mar	3	14 Mar	21
Red-sh. Hawk	7 Mar	112	27 Mar	508
Broad-wng. Hawk	13 Apr	9368	25 Apr	16453
Red-tailed Hawk	25 Feb	672	2 Apr	4555
Rough-lgd. Hawk	25 Feb	37	11 Apr	310
Golden Eagle	5 Mar	8	25 Mar	41
Am. Kestrel	10 Mar	31	3 Apr	253
Merlin	14 Mar	4	14 Apr	24
Peregrine Falcon	6 Mar	2	4 dates	15
<u>Total, inc. unid.</u>				<u>40150</u>

CONTRIBUTORS

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ABBREVIATIONS

Bvllc – Baldwinsville; CM – Clay Marsh; DH – Derby Hill; FH – Fair Haven, Little Sodus Bay and vicinity; GSC – Great Swamp Conservancy, n. MADI; HI – Howland Island WMA; LOL – Lake Ontario Littoral; NMP – Nine Mile Point, T's Scriba and New Haven; OneiL – Oneida Lake; OnonL – Onondaga Lake;

SCH – T Schroepel; SFNS – Spring Farm Nature Sanctuary, Kirkland; Skan – Skaneateles; SL – T's Sullivan & Lenox mucklands; SPd – Sandy Pond OSWE; SR – Split Rock, T Onondaga; SSSP – Selkirk Shores SP; Syr – Syracuse; TR – Three Rivers WMA; VB – Van Buren; WH – Whiskey Hollow, T Van Buren; WM – West Monroe.

WHISTLING-DUCKS - VULTURES

Snow Goose: max 50,000 Port Byron 8 Mar; 21,000 DH 19 Mar; 4000 Delta L 15 Mar, where formerly rare.
ROSS'S GOOSE: DH 27 Mar (KW).
Brant: arr OneIL 10 May; max 1940 OneIL 12 May.
Cackling Goose: 2 SCH 15 Mar (KM); SL 22 Mar (TSh).
Mute Swan: max 20 FH 14 May.
Trumpeter Swan: 2 SCH 18 Mar; 2 Volney after 14 Mar; 2 Hannibal 19 Mar.
Tundra Swan: max 8 DH 19 Mar.
Wood Duck: max 40 OneIL 9 Apr.
Gadwall: max 18 Brewerton 22 Mar.
EURASIAN WIGEON: GSC 29 Mar (TS).
Am. Wigeon: max 100 SPd 21 Mar.
Am. Black Duck: max 65 SCH 24 Mar.
Blue-winged Teal: max 6 SCH 9 Apr.
N. Shoveler: max 8 GSC 9 Apr & 8 SCH 14 Apr.
N. Pintail: max 970 SCH 24 Mar.
Green-winged Teal: max 85 SCH 4 Apr.
Canvasback: max 4 Brewerton 22 Mar.
Redhead: max 11 FH 3 Mar.
Ring-necked Duck: max 1000 SPd 21 Mar.
Greater Scaup: max 460 Brewerton 22 Mar.
Lesser Scaup: 800-1100 per day Three Mile Bay OneIL 10-30 Apr.
Harlequin Duck: NMP thru 18 Apr.
Surf Scoter: arr 3 Minoa 18 Apr; max 17 OneIL 29 Apr.
White-winged Scoter: 54 LOL 3 Mar; max 114 OneIL 12 May.
Black Scoter: Fulton 19 Apr, only report.
Long-tailed Duck: 19 Weaver L HERK 27 Apr, high for small lake; max 200 Oswego 3 May.
Bufflehead: max 65 Brewerton 22 Mar.
Com. Goldeneye: max 185 Brewerton 22 Mar.
Hooded Merganser: max 26 Brewerton 24 Mar.
Com. Merganser: max 211 OnonL 20 Mar.
Red-breasted Merganser: max 148 OneIL 17 Apr.
Ruddy Duck: max 5 OnonL 20 Mar; 3 Lakeport 22 Mar; 2 Minoa 18 Apr.
Red-throated Loon: max 3 OneIL 9 Apr; 9 total for season.

Com. Loon: max 215 OneIL 28 Apr.
Pied-billed Grebe: max 6 Volney 13 May.
Horned Grebe: max 8 OneIL 10 Apr.
Red-necked Grebe: max 18 OneIL 10 Apr.
Double-crested Cormorant: arr DH 2 Apr.
Am. Bittern: max 3 per day CM, SCH & WM.
Least Bittern: Mexico Pt 13 May; CM 16 May; Utica Marsh 20 May.
Great Blue Heron: max 26 DH 6 Apr.
Great Egret: max 3 SCH 19 May; 12 for season.
Cattle Egret: VB 31 May (fide JB).
Green Heron: max 13 CM 16 May.
YELLOW-CROWNED NIGHT-HERON: SCH 16 May (BF! NYSARC), fourth spring record.

HAWKS - ALCIDS

Black Vulture: DH 13 May.
SWAINSON'S HAWK: DH 24 Apr & 6 May (KW, NYSARC).
Red-tailed Hawk: rufous-morph DH 2, 24 Apr; dark-morph DH 5, 23 Apr.
Golden Eagle: SCH 24 Mar; Erieville 23 Apr; 3 reports near DH.
Peregrine Falcon: OneIL 19 May; nesting Utica & Syr.
KING RAIL: 2 SCH after 16 May (MSc, MM, mob, NYSARC).
Com. Moorhen: max 22 Volney 13 May.
Am. Coot: 2 Bvll 7 Mar; 2 GSC 24 Apr; 2 Volney after 3 May.
Sandhill Crane: 3 Palermo 21 Apr; 3 New Haven 21 Apr; 28 for season DH, record numbers.
Black-bellied Plover: arr & max 2 OneIL 15 May; SCH 23 May.
Semipalmated Plover: max 9 SCH 23 May.
Solitary Sandpiper: max 13 Skan 1 May.
Greater Yellowlegs: max 6 SL 7 Apr.
Lesser Yellowlegs: max 4 W Eaton 6 May.
Upland Sandpiper: arr Fulton & DH 19 Apr.
Whimbrel: OnonL 16 May; max 71 OneIL 27 May; 95 total 15-27 May, record spring numbers.
Ruddy Turnstone: 2 FH 22, 26 May.
Sanderling: FH 16 May, only report.
Semipalmated Sandpiper: arr SCH 16 May.
Least Sandpiper: max 130 SCH 16 May.

Pectoral Sandpiper: max 5 Lysander 18 Apr.
Dunlin: FH 5 Apr, basic; max 76 OneiL 22 May.
Short-billed Dowitcher: Spd 20 May, only report.
Wilson's Snipe: max 50 SCH 11 Apr.
Bonaparte's Gull: max 245 OneiL 20 Apr.
Little Gull: ad OneiL 28 Apr.
Iceland Gull: 1-2 SL to 9 Apr; MADI landfill 30 Mar.
Lesser Black-backed Gull: SL 8 Apr; Skan 17 Apr; 2 OnonL 23 Apr; last OnonL 27 Apr.
Glaucous Gull: OnonL 13 Mar, 27 Apr; SL 8 Apr; last Bville 11 May.
Great Black-backed Gull: max 225 OnonL 20 Mar.
Caspian Tern: max 107 FH May.
Forster's Tern: DH 24 Apr; FH 14 May.
Black Tern: max 7 Salmon R 13 May.

PIGEONS - WOODPECKERS

Yellow-billed Cuckoo: arr 12 May, several sites; max 2 per day.
Black-billed Cuckoo: max 3 per day.
Snowy Owl: Salisbury 2 Apr; Skan 12 Apr; New Haven 20 May; OneiL 22 May.
Long-eared Owl: singles NMP 18 & 22 Apr.
N. Saw-whet Owl: Salisbury 4 Mar; Williamstown 16 May.
Com. Nighthawk: max 20 DH 27 May.
Whip-poor-will: arr Sterling 29 Apr, max 4 Constantia 16 May.
Ruby-throated Hummingbird: max 75 DH 16 May.
Red-headed Woodpecker: DH 9 May, only report.
Yellow-bellied Sapsucker: max 16 NMP 18 Apr.
N. Flicker: max 320 DH 25 Apr; arr Adks 29 Mar.

FLYCATCHERS - WAXWINGS

Olive-sided Flycatcher: Erieville 13 May; Camden 30 May.
E. Wood-Pewee: max 6 WH 26 May.
Yellow-bellied Flycatcher: Constantia 17 May; DH 19 May; SFNS 21 May.
Acadian Flycatcher: arr WH 14 May; Camillus 26 May.
Alder Flycatcher: max 6 Redfield 30 May.
Willow Flycatcher: max 6 SCH 23 May.
Least Flycatcher: max 13 NMP 16 May.
E. Phoebe: max 12 DH 2 Apr.
Great Crested Flycatcher: arr 26 Apr widespread.
E. Kingbird: max 30 DH 16 May.
N. Shrike: 4 reports, last DH 21 Apr.

Warbling Vireo: 13 OnonL 30 Apr, big early count.
Philadelphia Vireo: arr DH 6 May; HI 22 May, only reports.
Blue Jay: max 7000 DH 19 May.
Am. Crow: max 680 DH 16 Mar.
Fish Crow: DH 6 Apr; N Syr 29 Apr; Hannibal 22 May.
Com. Raven: max 12 Big Moose 26 Mar; Skan 7 May; found on L Ontario plain thru season.
Horned Lark: max 30 VB 15 Apr.
Purple Martin: max 30 Salmon R 13 May.
Brown Creeper: max 30 DH 22 Apr.
Winter Wren: arr Clinton 1 Apr.
Sedge Wren: LOL 5 May, only report.
Marsh Wren: max 17 CM 16 May.
Golden-crowned Kinglet: max 34 NMP 14 Apr.
Ruby-crowned Kinglet: DH 20 Mar, early (KW); max 50 NMP 25 Apr.
Blue-gray Gnatcatcher: max 9 WM 11 May.
Gray-cheeked Thrush: DH 16 May; SFNS 21 May; NMP 23 May.
Swainson's Thrush: max 8 NMP 16 May.
Hermit Thrush: max 19 NMP 18 Apr.
Wood Thrush: max 20 CM 16 May.
Brown Thrasher: max 5 per day LOL.
Am. Pipit: arr DH 8 Mar; max 50 VB 15 Apr.
Cedar Waxwing: max 1800 DH 27 May.

WARBLERS

Blue-winged Warbler: arr SFNS 27 Apr; 3 "Brewster's" reported.
Golden-winged Warbler: migrant DH 13 May; males on territory 6 sites.
Tennessee Warbler: max 16 NMP 16 May.
Orange-crowned Warbler: NMP 16 May (KM).
Nashville Warbler: max 12 NMP 8 May.
N. Parula: max 5 NMP 8 May.
Cape May Warbler: 3 NMP 8 May; max 10 NMP 13 May.
Yellow-rumped Warbler: max 65 NMP 8 May.
Black-throated Green Warbler: max 30 Scriba 13 May.
Pine Warbler: arr Old Forge 1 Apr, at suet feeder.
Prairie Warbler: Tully after 21 May, only report.
Palm Warbler: max 20 DH 30 Apr.
Bay-breasted Warbler: max 10 NMP 16 May.
Cerulean Warbler: arr NMP 13 May; max 5 WM 16 May.
Prothonotary Warbler: arr Three Mile Bay WMA 9 May.
N. Waterthrush: max 6 Labrador Hollow 2 May.

Louisiana Waterthrush: arr Pompey 15 Apr.
Hooded Warbler: arr 3 May; max 8 Sterling
16 May.
Wilson's Warbler: max 2 per day, few reports.

TANAGERS - WEAVERS

Am. Tree Sparrow: last Skan 19 Apr.
Clay-colored Sparrow: DH 7 May, only
report.
Field Sparrow: arr 3 SR 3 Apr.
Vesper Sparrow: max 6 DH 10 Apr.
Grasshopper Sparrow: arr Hastings 30 Apr.
Fox Sparrow: arr W Winfield 25 Mar; max 20
SR 3 Apr; last NMP 21 Apr.
Lincoln's Sparrow: max 4 DH 18 May.
Swamp Sparrow: arr 5 Apr.
White-throated Sparrow: max 80 NMP 8
May.
White-crowned Sparrow: DH 16-28 Mar & 2
TR 16 Mar, wintering birds.
Dark-eyed Junco: max 60 NMP 22 Apr.
Lapland Longspur: Port Byron 8 Mar, only
report.
Snow Bunting: last 4 DH 27 Mar.

Rose-breasted Grosbeak: max 12 NMP 8
May.
Indigo Bunting: max 20 DH 12 May.
Rusty Blackbird: max 190 SCH 22 Mar, last
NMP 15 May.
Com. Grackle: max 500,000 Lysander 22 Mar.
Orchard Oriole: arr Pompey 25 Apr, early;
max 4 Green L SP 9 May; 13 for season.
Baltimore Oriole: max 150 DH 13 May.
Purple Finch: max 30 DH 20 Apr.
Red Crossbill: max 10 Fabius 15 May; 2
Camden 30 May.
White-winged Crossbill: max 25 Fabius 13
Mar; 20 Green L SP 10 Apr.
Com. Redpoll: max 490 DH 17 Mar; last
Camden 19 Apr.
Pine Siskin: max 1510 DH 20 Apr; fledglings
noted in mid-May.
Evening Grosbeak: 2 DeRuyter 7 Mar;
Camden 5 Apr; 2 DH 25 Apr.

Corrigendum: *Kingbird* 58(3):275 – Derby
Hill Hawk Migration Total should be “46,028”
instead of “62,992”.