

REGION 4—SUSQUEHANNA

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March was snowy across the Region and April was one of the wettest on record. Overall, the spring period was exceptionally wet, breaking records at many reporting stations. Temperatures were normal to slightly above normal. Due to very poor back-to-back cone crop years and the very wet spring, the cone crop in Central New York was assessed as excellent for the upcoming year. I rated it as the best Central NY cone crop since 2000. White ash, beech, and other deciduous tree species appear to be producing bumper crops as well.

The first goose flights occurred as usual during early March, and ducks followed on subsequent warm fronts. The spring hawk watches east of Otsego Lake yielded much lower numbers this year than last year. Some thought the low numbers were because of wet, unseasonable weather dispersing the birds across a wider area. Returning breeding **Merlins** were noted in some small cities and villages but were also missing from a few reliable areas where they've been reported in recent years; again, this might have been because of the wet spring. Waders and marsh birds were very well represented: Common Moorhen, Upland Sandpiper, Great Egret, **Cattle Egret**, American Bittern, and Least Bittern. Perhaps the two best birds for the Region this spring were the **Eared Grebe** seen by Chris Wood at Whitney Point Reservoir and a presumed **White Ibis** seen in a field in Cortland by Pam Stark. A NYSARC report has apparently been submitted for the ibis and, if accepted, would likely be a County first.

Common Raven continues to increase as a breeder throughout the area. A pair nested again this year at Lime Hollow Nature Center less than half a mile from the city limits of Cortland; 3-4 young were banded. **Swainson's Thrushes** were heard on nesting grounds in late May in the Pharsalia area. Other than in Delaware County along the edges of the Catskills, the Pharsalia area is the only place in Region 4 where Swainson's Thrush can be found nesting. Many typically more northern breeding warblers can also be heard regularly in the Pharsalia area, along with Northern Goshawk, Red-shouldered Hawk, Broad-winged Hawk, Common Raven, both crossbills, Pine Siskin, and other northern specialties such as White-throated Sparrow. **Type 1 Red Crossbills** were heard singing at a few Chenango County locations in late June.

This year, migration seemed sluggish, with some species seeming to be late, but then the floodgates opened and an interesting mix of late and early migrants were seen on the same day on 26 April. Between 25-28 April, record early dates were reported for Northern Parula, Cape May Warbler, Ovenbird, and Indigo Bunting. **Yellow-throated Warbler** was seen again at Chenango Valley SP, but it didn't seem to stick around this year. **Cerulean Warblers** were again observed on territory at the south end of Skaneateles Lake. Three of the best songbird finds for the spring were **Kentucky Warbler**, **Prothonotary Warbler**

(Wildwood Nature Preserve), and **Orchard Oriole**.

It was a big redpoll year, with several area feeders reporting 100+ Common Redpolls. As is typical with large redpoll invasions, a few scattered **Hoary Redpolls** and **“Greater”** Common Redpolls were noted mixed in the flocks. Redpolls seemed to linger well into April. There was a noticeable return flight of Pine Siskins across the area in April into mid May. It was a decent Evening Grosbeak year, with a few small flocks of 5-50 lingering into mid April at high elevation areas in Chenango and Cortland counties.

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ABBREVIATIONS

BCC – Binghamton Country Club; BHL – Buck Horn Lake, OTSE; Bing – Binghamton; BPD – Boland Pond; BUNP – Binghamton University Nature Preserve; Cort – T of Cortland; CVSP – Chenango Valley SP; FHNC – Finch Hollow Nature Center; GP – Greenwood Park, BROO; LHNC – Lime Hollow

Nature Center; ML – Mirror Lake, TIOG; NuH – Nuthatch Hollow, BROO; OtL – Otsego Lake, OTSE; PharsWMA – Pharsalia Wildlife Management Area; RivR – River Rd., Endwell, BROO; SkanL – Skaneateles Lake; UL – Upper Lisle; WCM – West Corners Marsh, BROO; WPR – Whitney Point Reservoir, BROO.

WHISTLING-DUCKS – VULTURES

Snow Goose: sev flocks early Mar.

Brant: “loose V” Chenango Valley 25 Apr; 2 WPR May 21.

Wood Duck: a few overwintered River Rd Endwell and elsewhere; arr Bpd and Tioga Airport 12 Mar; max 25 River Rd Endwell 19 Mar.

Gadwall: arr Hillcrest Pits 3 Mar.

Am. Wigeon: few overwintered; arr 3 Bpd 12 Mar; max 20 Chenango bridge 13 Mar; 2 LHNC 5 May.

Am. Black Duck: dozens of reports; numerous until early April; 1 Bpd and Brick Pond Trails TIOG into May.

Blue-winged Teal: arr River Rd Endwell 19 Mar; pair Bpd late Apr.

N. Shoveler: arr Rte 12a and Chenango Bridge 13 Mar.

N. Pintail: arr 1 BROO 5 Mar; max 20 TIOG 7 Mar.

Green-winged Teal: arr BROO 6 Mar; max 31 CHEN 27 Mar; several reports.

Canvasback: no reports.

Redhead: rep Hillcrest Pits & Bpd Mar.

Ring-necked Duck: arr 2 Bing 5 Mar; max 45 Bpd 2 Apr; last end of Apr.

Greater Scaup: BROO 26 Apr; only report, late.

Lesser Scaup: arr BROO 20 Mar; few reports.

Long-tailed Duck: 2 Otsego Lake 16 Apr.

WHITE-WINGED-SCOTER (R4): one Quaker Lake 20 Apr (AL).

Bufflehead: sev reports, no big numbers.

Com. Goldeneye: few reports.

Hooded Merganser: many reports; breeding at many beaver ponds scattered thru Region.

Com. Merganser: max 20 Bpd 13 Mar; breeding along rivers and larger ponds/lakes.

Red-breasted Merganser: 10 WPR 6 Apr.

Ruddy Duck: 4 TIOG 21 Mar.

Com. Loon: 12 WPR 6 Apr.

Pied-billed Grebe: pair breeding Bpd; 6 reports.

Horned Grebe: arr Chenango Bridge 13 Mar; max 32 WPR 6 Apr.

Red-necked Grebe: BROO 17 Apr.

EARED GREBE (R4): WPR 6 Apr (CW).

Double-crested Cormorant: arr BROO Mar 21; max WPR 6 Apr; sev May reports; breeding in area yet?

Am. Bittern: arr 2 LHNC 22 Apr; BUNP 28 Apr.

LEAST BITTERN (R4): BUNP 28 Apr (DH). Great Egret: a few reports; unusual in Reg 4 in Spring, but becoming more common.

CATTLE EGRET (R4): Murphy’s Gravel Pit 16 May (mob).

Green Heron: arr BROO 26 Apr.

WHITE IBIS: Cort 11 May (PS, NYSARC), likely 1st CORT record if accepted by NYSARC.

Turkey Vulture: many reports.

HAWKS – ALCIDS

Osprey: arr West River Rd CORT 5 Mar (JB); very early report for upstate.

Bald Eagle: much fewer migrating eagles at hawkwatch sites east of Otsego Lake Mar; nesting numbers stable or still increasing along SusqR, TioR, and other areas.

N. Harrier: 9 reports.

Sharp-shinned Hawk: appears stable, but hard to find due to nesting in remote forested areas.

Cooper’s Hawk: becoming a common city/village nester.

N. Goshawk: pr nesting Heiberg SUNY-ESF Forest CORT Apr; pr North Rd Phar Mar.

Red-shouldered Hawk: arr BROO, OSTE, CORT, CHEN 10-25 Mar; sev prs thru Reg, well established in state lands in sev counties.

Broad-winged Hawk: arr BROO 17 Apr; also well established in many state forests throughout Region.

Rough-legged Hawk: few rep; last Marathon 2 Apr.

Golden Eagle: much fewer migrating eagles at hawkwatch sites east of Otsego Lake Mar.

Am. Kestrel: few wintering; influx end Mar; still fairly well established as a breeder despite lower wintering numbers.

Merlin: usual prs not seen Binghamton, & Cooperstown Apr; pr Cortland; other sightings away from cities.

Peregrine Falcon: breeding pr Binghamton Mar.

Virginia Rail: arr BROO 17 Apr.

Sora: arr Bpd 1 May, early.

COMMON MOORHEN (R4): LHNC 29 May (WG).

Am. Coot: Brick Pond Trail thru May.

Semipalmated Plover: arr & max 10 Murphy's 16 May.

Killdeer: arr beginning Mar.

Spotted Sandpiper: arr WPR 10 Apr.

Solitary Sandpiper: arr BROO 23 Apr; max 11 Murphy's 16 May; 10+ rep.

Greater Yellowlegs: arr Bpd Anson Rd/TIOG airport 4 Apr; 7 rep.

Lesser Yellowlegs: arr BROO 23 Apr; max 4 Murphy's 16 May; 10 rep.

Least Sandpiper: arr BROO 3 May; max 30 Murphy's 16 May; sev other rep.

UPLAND SANPIPER (R4): OTSE 7 May (GC).

Semipalmated Sandpiper: arr BROO 5 May; max 8 WPR 27 May.

SHORT-BILLED DOWITCHER (R4): BROO 4 May (DW).

Wilson's Snipe: arr CHEN 2 Apr; few reports.

Am. Woodcock: arr BROO 12 Mar.

Bonaparte's Gull: arr & max 17 River Rd 14 Apr.

PIGEONS – WOODPECKERS

Red-bellied Woodpecker: well established in all areas except higher elevations of DELA and CHEN.

Yellow-bellied Sapsucker: arr BROO 4 April.

Yellow-billed Cuckoo: arr Richford 17 May; numbers reduced from recent big tent caterpillar years.

Black-billed Cuckoo: arr Richford 13 May; numbers reduced from recent big tent caterpillar years.

Barred Owl: few reports, underreported.

COMMON NIGHTHAWK (R4): DELA 21 May (RP).

Chimney Swift: BROO 30 Apr.

Ruby-throated Hummingbird: arr BROO 1 May.

FLYCATCHERS - WAXWINGS

E. Wood-Pewee: arr BROO 9 May; increasing rep after 20 May.

Alder Flycatcher: arr Aqua Terra TIOG 15 May; increasing rep after 20 May.

Willow Flycatcher: arr Murphy's 12 May.

Least Flycatcher: arr Murphy's 5 May.

E. Phoebe: arr River Walk BROO 26 Mar.

Great-crested Flycatcher: arr CVSP 3 May; several rep after 7 May.

E. Kingbird: arr BROO 25 Apr; increasing rep after 5 May.

N. Shrike: no reports.

Yellow-throated Vireo: arr CVSP 1 May; increasing rep after 10 May.

Blue-headed Vireo: arr Wolfe Park BROO 22 Apr; increasing rep after 1 May.

Warbling Vireo: arr Parsons Rd 1 May.

Red-eyed Vireo: arr DELA 25 April, early.

Fish Crow: breeding Endwell, Binghamton, Owego, Vestal, & Union.

Com. Raven: res in high elevation loc; nested again LHNC within half mile of city limits of Cortland; widespread and increasing resident throughout and expanding into lower elevations.

Purple Martin: DELA 23 May.

N. Rough-winged Swallow: arr River Rd Endwell 10 Apr.

Tree Swallow: arr TIOG 31 Mar; "big numbers" ~1 Apr; max 104 Brick Pd West Trail 15 Apr.

Bank Swallow: arr BROO 26 Apr.

Cliff Swallow: arr Murphy's 3 May; ~8 nests Preble CORT June; ~4 nests Port Watson Bridge CORT June.

Barn Swallow: arr Bpd 9 Apr.

Tufted Titmouse: inc nester along many river valleys of Region <1500'; cont to expand up to 1800-2100'; less common CHEN & DELA.

Red-breasted Nuthatch: widespread in high elevation state forests.

Brown Creeper: widespread scattered rep thru Apr.

Carolina Wren: nesting along many of the major river valleys in Region and smaller ravines <1300ft; less common CHEN & DELA.

Marsh Wren: Bpd 30 Apr, where nesting.

House Wren: arr CVSP 24 Apr.

Winter Wren: arr TIO 9 Apr; fairly common after mid Apr in state forests.

Golden-crowned Kinglet: uncommon early Apr; inc later in high elevation spruce plantations & larger hemlock forests.

Ruby-crowned Kinglet: arr CVSP 1 9 Apr.

Blue-gray Gnatcatcher: arr DELA 29 Apr.

E. Bluebird: sev rep Mar; inc after March.

Veery: arr TIOG 29 Apr; increasing reports after 5 May.

Swainson's Thrush: breeders returned to Phars WMA late May.

Hermit Thrush: arr Richford 13 Apr.

Wood Thrush: arr TIOG 29 Apr; widespread 10 May thru.

Gray Catbird: 2 arr TIOG 26 Apr.

N. Mockingbird: "few" overwintering birds Owego, Bing, & Cort; arr April; numbers better CORT.

Brown Thrasher: arr CORT 5 Apr; inc rep late Apr.

Am. Pipit: few reports mid Apr-early May.

LONGSPURS – WARBLERS

Snow Bunting: few CORT early Mar; last mid Mar.

Blue-winged Warbler: arr TIOG 29 Apr; widespread, many rep.

Tennessee Warbler: arr BROO 3 May; max 15 BROO 15 May; inc over spring.
Nashville Warbler: arr Richford 30 Apr; many reports after 2 May.
N. Parula: arr BROO 26 Apr, Reg record early; 10 rep.
Yellow Warbler: arr BROO 26 Apr; max 6 Johnson City 27 Apr.
Chestnut-sided Warbler: arr River Rd Endwell 26 Apr.
Magnolia Warbler: arr BROO 26Apr.
Cape May Warbler: arr BROO 28 Apr, Reg record early; 5 rep.
Black-throated Blue Warbler: arr BROO 26 Apr.
Yellow-rumped Warbler: arr Aqua Terra 17 Apr.
Black-throated Green Warbler: arr CVSP 24 Apr.
Blackburnian Warbler: arr CORT 2 May; sev rep 2 May.
YELLOW-THROATED WARBLER (R4): CVSP 24 APR (BK), seems to appear at CVSP every few years.
Pine Warbler: arr CVSP 9 Apr; inc number loc.
Prairie Warbler: arr Endicott 29 Apr.
Palm Warbler: arr Bing 18 April; few rep.
Bay-breasted Warbler: BROO 12 May; 5 reports.
Blackpoll Warbler: arr TIOG & CORT 13 May; 25 rep.
CERULEAN WARBLER (R4): arr BROO 12 May (CW); max 3 SkanL May (MY).
Black-and-white Warbler: arr BROO 26 April; few rep.
Am. Redstart: arr Parsons Rd 1 May.
PROTHONOTARY WARBLER (R4): Wildwood Nature Reserve 13 May (NM).
Ovenbird: arr BROO 26 Apr, Reg record early; inc 2 May.
N. Waterthrush: arr CVSP 2 May; 6 rep.
Louisiana Waterthrush: arr BROO 20 Apr; many rep Apr thru.
KENTUCKY WARBLER (R4): BROO 5 May (DW).
Mourning Warbler: arr W. Burlington 7 May; max 3 Scott 20 May.
Com. Yellowthroat: arr DELA 25 Apr.
Hooded Warbler: arr BROO 10 May; scarce breeder in Reg except for CORT; territorial bird two years in a row OTSE where its rare.
WILSON'S WARBLER (R4): arr BROO 13 May; 2 rep.
Canada Warbler: arr TIOG 4 May; few reports.

TOWHEES - WEAVERS

E. Towhee: arr BROO 19 Apr; many rep 20 Apr thru.
Am. Tree Sparrow: last CORT early Apr.
Chipping Sparrow: arr WPR 6 Apr.
Field Sparrow: arr TIOG 12 Apr; many rep 16 Apr thru.
Savannah Sparrow: arr BROO 13 Apr.
Fox Sparrow: arr BROO 21 Mar; sev rep thru mid Apr.
Song Sparrow: arr BPD7 Mar; max 20 BPD 25 Mar.
Lincoln's Sparrow: no reports.
Swamp Sparrow: arr UL 10 Apr.
White-throated Sparrow: overwintered in small numbers at sev loc.
White-crowned Sparrow: arr Smithboro TIOG 15 Apr; last mid May.
Scarlet Tanager: arr BROO 28 Apr.
Rose-breasted Grosbeak: arr BROO 28 Apr; sev loc after 2 May.
Indigo Bunting: arr BROO 25 Apr, Reg record early; many after 10 May.
Bobolink: arr Knapp Hill Rd 24 Apr; inc mid May thru.
E. Meadowlark: arr TIOG 21 Apr; inc early Apr.
Rusty Blackbird: arr mid Mar; few reports Apr, no big numbers.
 Baltimore Oriole: arr Bing 28 Apr.
ORCHARD ORIOLE (R4): BROO 14 May (DN).
Purple Finch: arr few Mar; inc 10 Apr; widespread breeding behavior May above 1000'.
White-winged Crossbill: male at feeder Cort 4 Apr; flyover TIOG 3 May.
RED CROSSBILL (R4): few CHEN May (MY); very bad cone crop this past year, but upcoming year's cone crop looks to be excellent.
Com. Redpoll: max 400 Treadwell Mar 30; good numbers across much of the central section of Reg into early Apr; last CORT 16 Apr.
"GREATER" COMMON REDPOLL (R4): like with Hoary Redpoll, a few were mixed in here and there.
HOARY REDPOLL (R4): max 3 Scott 4 Mar (MY); a few others including BROO (NM).
Pine Siskin: few lingerers Mar, small, widespread return flight Apr-early May; max 43 BROO 16 Apr.
Am. Goldfinch: 20-40+ across Region Mar-Apr, average numbers.
Evening Grosbeak: few small flocks of 5-50 high elevations CHEN & CORT thru mid Apr.