

REGION 5—ONEIDA LAKE BASIN

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Overall the spring season was warm and very wet. In March the average temperature was 33.3° F., 0.3° below normal, with 2.86" of precipitation, 0.16" below normal, and a total of 18.5" of snow. The April averages were 49.2°, 3.9° above normal, and 8.53" of precipitation, 5.14" above normal. The May averages were 62.8°, 5.7° above normal, with 3.90" of precipitation, 0.51" above normal. Ice out on Oneida Lake was 21 March and on Fourth Lake 22 April. Northern Herkimer County still had two feet of snow on the ground on 6 April, but then the rains took care of that.

The April rains and resultant high water in wetlands swamped some waterfowl nests, but one year of high water will have little effect on Canada Goose and Mallard populations. Once again, Snow Geese and Canada Geese migrated early, with peak flights in the first half of March. Unusual waterfowl this season were: one Greater White-fronted Goose, several Cackling Goose, and three Eurasian Wigeon. Dabbler migration highlights included many American Wigeon and Northern Pintail in the Howland Island area, large numbers of Green-winged Teal in the mucklands of Madison County, and Eurasian Wigeon at three sites.

Oneida Lake hosted large flocks of Ring-necked Ducks and up to 6,000 scaup, most of which were not separated by species due to distance and time considerations. The Oneida Lakewatch at Phillips Point was conducted for the fifth year, and numbers of White-winged Scoter, Surf Scoter, Long-tailed Duck, and Common Loon were fairly average. A flock of 11 Black Scoters was good by local spring standards, and the usual few Red-throated Loons came past. Region-wide low counts of Hooded Merganser, Red-breasted Merganser, and Ruddy Duck were most likely attributable to observer inattention. The peak flights of both Horned and Red-necked Grebes occurred on the same day at Oneida Lake. Flocks of 12 and 9 Great Egrets along Oneida Lake were unusual, and Black-crowned Night-Heron migrants were seen in Madison County and flying past Derby Hill during twilight hours.

Northerly winds and cold weather over the last two weeks of March came during the peak flight period for Cooper's Hawk and Red-shouldered Hawk at Derby Hill. The hawks migrated, but well inland from Lake Ontario. Turkey Vulture numbers were also reduced by the weather. Both Bald Eagle and Golden Eagle set new seasonal records at Derby Hill. Rare for Derby Hill were two Black Vultures and two Swainson's Hawks; another Black Vulture was seen over Cazenovia late in the season. Most raptors prefer to remain over land and not fly long distances over open water, but by checking radar Tom Carrolan may have found that large numbers of Broad-winged Hawks moved over Lake Ontario and indeed jumped from land as much as 30 miles west of Derby Hill

and the east end of the lake. The hawks could, by that time, see both the eastern and northern shore of the lake. This will require more study in future years.

Sandhill Cranes were back to more normal levels a year after few were seen last year, but there was no sign of crane courtship or even of cranes on the ground. A Piping Plover was found along the sand dunes of eastern Lake Ontario in May for the first spring record in 27 years. The plover was seen again ten days later but not reported afterwards. High water on the lake this year would make nesting difficult, and the beach gets heavy recreational use in the summer. There was a good late flight of Black-bellied Plover, Whimbrel, Ruddy Turnstone, Red Knot, and Dunlin along Oneida Lake, with most of them using the small, open islands south of Constantia for brief rests. A Willet was also found on the islands and another Willet flew by Derby Hill. Red-necked Phalarope was found in a seasonal pond and White-rumped Sandpiper in a muckland. Disappointing were Upland Sandpiper, reported from only two locations, and Short-billed Dowitcher and Pectoral Sandpiper, with only single reports of each.

Iceland Gull was not seen after mid-March, while Lesser Black-backed and Glaucous Gulls lingered into May. An adult Laughing Gull was seen at Fair Haven in late May, a single Little Gull was with migrant Bonaparte's Gulls on Oneida Lake, and Forster's Tern was seen at Brewerton and Derby Hill.

Cuckoo numbers seemed low, likely in response to the decline of tent caterpillars over much of our area. Migrant owls were scarce, with only a single Long-eared Owl reported and two Northern Saw-whet Owls heard in breeding areas. Common Nighthawk was noted at a number of sites in late May but few now breed locally. Eastern Whip-poor-will may have been down slightly in areas north of Oneida Lake. Red-headed Woodpecker reports were slightly encouraging, and a single Black-backed Woodpecker was found in the Old Forge area. Small numbers of Red-bellied Woodpeckers flying past Derby Hill in early May might represent migrants and should be monitored in the future.

Olive-sided and Yellow-bellied Flycatcher and Philadelphia Vireo reports were up over numbers of the past few years. Northern Shrike lingered into April, and a roost of over 40 Fish Crows in Syracuse was especially notable. It seems very likely that the species has expanded beyond the few spots birders have usually looked for them. At Derby Hill, the Black-capped Chickadee movement was good, but a species that often flies with them, White-breasted Nuthatch, was scarce as a migrant. Swainson's Thrush was common in the middle of May, and several Gray-cheeked Thrush were seen along Lake Ontario in late May. A large nocturnal migration over Syracuse was monitored by Lewis Grove and included many Swainson's and Gray-cheeked Thrushes plus one Bicknell's Thrush. Bohemian Waxwing had mostly departed the Region by March, but a flock was present in Oneida County into April. Gray Catbird and Brown Thrasher numbers were consistent with past years, and although a few Northern Mockingbirds were reported outside traditional breeding areas, they don't seem to be advancing their breeding range.

South winds brought the first big wave of neotropical migrants on 26 April and another on 11 May. Generally moderate weather in May meant that there

were migrants on most days as birds were continually moved through. It was a good season for Orange-crowned, Cape May, Prairie and Bay-breasted Warblers; several Prothonotary Warblers flew past Derby Hill; and two Kentucky Warblers and one Connecticut Warbler were seen. Most of the common warblers were seen in good numbers. Tennessee and Blackpoll Warblers were widespread but low counts were reported. Golden-winged Warbler can still be found on territory but often in a sea of Blue-winged Warblers. Acadian Flycatcher was a miss this season.

Migrant sparrows, such as Vesper, Lincoln's, and White-crowned, were reported in low numbers this season. Very early Chipping Sparrow and White-crowned Sparrow had likely wintered locally. Bobolink and Orchard Oriole were early arrivals. There were 11 Orchard Orioles seen passing Derby Hill, and they were reported from at least seven sites including the Mohawk Valley in Herkimer County, where they are still unusual.

No crossbills were reported for the period, not a surprise given the lack of cones. A few Hoary Redpolls were still present early in the season. Northbound Purple Finches and Common Redpolls peaked at Derby Hill in April, and Pine Siskins in May. Evening Grosbeak remained at some feeders well into April, but was quite scarce elsewhere.

For the season, 248 species were reported, 7 more than the most recent 10-year average. Highlights were many and included: Greater White-fronted Goose, Eurasian Wigeon, Black Vulture, Swainson's Hawk, Piping Plover, Willet, Whimbrel, Ruddy Turnstone, Red Knot, Red-necked Phalarope, Laughing Gull, Little Gull, Forster's Tern, Bicknell's Thrush, Prothonotary Warbler, Kentucky Warbler, Connecticut 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	1 Mar	1220	30 Mar	10,467
Osprey	19 Mar	87	27 Apr	364
Bald Eagle	18 Feb	70	27 Apr	609
No. Harrier	18 Feb	70	11 Apr	602
Sharp-sh. Hawk	3 Mar	809	11 Apr	4111
Cooper's Hawk	4 Mar	23	17 Mar	158
No. Goshawk	18 Feb	9	17 Mar	47
Red-sh. Hawk	4 Mar	134	17 Mar	313
Broad-winged Hawk	13 Apr	4901	27 Apr	19,008
Red-tailed Hawk	18 Feb	453	11 Apr	3476
Rough-legged Hawk	18 Feb	32	17 Mar	266
Golden Eagle	4 Mar	26	27 Apr	111
Am. Kestrel	1 Mar	42	27 Apr	262
Merlin	12 Mar	12	13 May	52
Peregrine Falcon	17 Apr	-	-	5
Total, inc. unid.				39,858

CONTRIBUTORS

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ABBREVIATIONS

BL – Beaver Lake Nature Center; Bvll – Baldwinsville; CM – Clay Marsh; DH – Derby Hill; FH – Fair Haven, Little Sodus Bay and vicinity; GLSP – Green Lakes SP; HI – Howland Island WMA; LOL – Lake Ontario Littoral; OneiL – Oneida Lake; OnonL – Onondaga Lake; SB – Sunset Bay Park, T Scriba; SCH – T Schroepfel; SFNS – Spring Farm Nature Sanctuary, Kirkland; Skan – Skaneateles; SL – T's Sullivan & Lenox mucklands; SPd – Sandy Pond; StMC – Saint Mary's Cemetery, Dewitt; Syr – Syracuse; TR – Three Rivers WMA; UM – Utica Marsh; WH – Whiskey Hollow, T Van Buren; WM – West Monroe; WPd – Woodman Pond, Hamilton.

WHISTLING-DUCKS – VULTURES

Greater White-fronted Goose: SCH 12 Mar (KM).

Snow Goose: max 58,300 DH 12 Mar; 31,760 Skan 15 Mar.

Brant: arr OneiL 2 May; max 1382 OneiL 25 May.

Cackling Goose: 2 DH 15, 30 Mar; OneiL 1 May.

Canada Goose: last count of 1000+ 16 Mar.

Mute Swan: max 10 FH 13 Mar.

Trumpeter Swan: 2 Volney after 22 Mar.

Tundra Swan: max 64 SCH 4 Mar.

Wood Duck: max 59 Poland 17 Apr.

Gadwall: max 42 Brewerton 16 Mar.

Eurasian Wigeon: Carncross Salt Pond 26 Mar; TR 4 Apr; OneiL 12 Apr.

Am. Wigeon: max 320 HI 19 Mar.

Am. Black Duck: max 28 Brewerton 3 Mar.

Blue-winged Teal: max 4 per day.

N. Shoveler: max 15 UM 2 Apr.

N. Pintail: max 525 HI 19 Mar.

Green-winged Teal: max 500 SL 25 Mar.

Canvasback: max 6 FH 13 Mar.

Redhead: max 76 OnonL 13 Mar.

Ring-necked Duck: max 370 Bridgeport 31 Mar.

Greater Scaup: 600 per day OneiL 31 Mar to 25 Apr.

Lesser Scaup: max 320 OneiL 18 Mar.

scaup species: to 6000 per day OneiL in Apr.

Surf Scoter: arr OneiL 5 Apr; max 6 OneiL 24 Apr.

White-winged Scoter: max 144 OneiL 14 May.

Black Scoter: max 11 OneiL 21 May.

Long-tailed Duck: max 402 OneiL 5 Apr.

Bufflehead: max 88 Brewerton 16 Mar.

Com. Goldeneye: max 326 OnonL 13 Mar.

Hooded Merganser: 19 Otisco L 26 Mar.

Com. Merganser: max 820 OnonL 19 Mar.

Red-breasted Merganser: max 65 DH 11 Mar.

Ruddy Duck: max 4 per day, no reports from BL.

Red-throated Loon: Oswego 20-23 Mar; OneiL 24 Apr; max 3 WPd 5-7 May.

Com. Loon: max 129 OneiL 21 Apr; 5 prs. Woodhull L 25 May.

Pied-billed Grebe: max 5 Volney 19 Apr.

Horned Grebe: max 76 OneiL 30 Apr.
Red-necked Grebe: max 38 OneiL 30 Apr.
Double-crested Cormorant: max 730 Oswego 6 May.
Am. Bittern: max 5 WM after 1 May.
Least Bittern: 3 SPd 25 May; Weaver L 31 May.
Great Blue Heron: max 52 DH 4 Apr.
Great Egret: arr DH 11 Apr, max 12 OneiL 9 May and 9 OneiL 11 May.
Green Heron: arr 27 Apr; max 7 DH 22 May.
Black-crowned Night-Heron: WPd 22 Apr (RC); 2 DH 27 Apr; DH 22 May.

HAWKS - ALCIDS

Black Vulture: DH 29 Mar, 27 Apr; Cazenovia 25 May.
SWAINSON'S HAWK: DH 22 Apr, 22 May.
Peregrine Falcon: f but no mate Utica thru.
Virginia Rail: arr SCH 10 Apr.
Sora: arr SCH 22 Apr.
Com. Moorhen: arr Volney 19 Apr; max 20 Volney 16 May.
Am. Coot: max 2 Oswego thru 23 Mar.
Sandhill Crane: arr 2 DH 15 Mar; max 7 DH 25 Apr; total 22 DH for season.
Black-bellied Plover: DH 18 Apr (SC, DW), Reg record early; max 58 OneiL 23 May.
Semipalmated Plover: arr SL 8 May; max 30 SL 16 May.
PIPING PLOVER: SPd 10 May (LG, SW, ph) to 21 May (SA, TS), last spring record 1984.
Killdeer: max 67 DH 4 Apr.
Spotted Sandpiper: arr LOL 27 Apr; max 5 per day.
Solitary Sandpiper: arr SL 14 Apr; max 8 SL 4 May.
Greater Yellowlegs: arr Port Byron 19 Mar; max 18 SL 29 Apr.
Willet: OneiL 30 May (DW); DH 31 May (BP).
Lesser Yellowlegs: arr SL 25 Mar; max 22 SL 4 May.
Upland Sandpiper: arr Fulton 22 Apr; 2 Verona 21 May.
Whimbrel: arr 8 OneiL 15 May; max 38 FH 27 May; 33 OneiL 26 May; 11 OneiL 23 May.
Ruddy Turnstone: arr 2 Oswego 15 May; max 45 OneiL 29 May.
Red Knot: 5 OneiL 30 May (KM).
Semipalmated Sandpiper: max 110 OneiL 30 May.
Least Sandpiper: max 100 SL 14 May.
White-rumped Sandpiper: Volney 21 May.
Pectoral Sandpiper: Lysander 17 May, only report.
Dunlin: arr 10 SL 29 Apr; max 255 OneiL 26 May.

Short-billed Dowitcher: max 3 SL 16 May, only report.
Wilson's Snipe: arr SL 28 Mar; max 19 DH 4 Apr.
Am. Woodcock: arr TR 12 Mar; Limekiln L 17 Mar, with 2 foot snow on ground.
RED-NECKED PHALAROPE: m. SL 18-19 May (BP, mob), 3rd Reg spring record.
Bonaparte's Gull: FH 13 Mar; max 171 OneiL 11 Apr.
Little Gull: OneiL 3 May.
LAUGHING GULL (R5): FH 27 May (DW, BP).
Iceland Gull: last FH 10 Mar.
Lesser Black-backed Gull: Bville 5 Mar; SL 2 Apr; FH 10 Mar; Oswego 17 May.
Glaucous Gull: FH 10 Mar; DH 2 Apr; Oswego 17 May.
Caspian Tern: arr 10 Apr; max 294 Oswego 6 May.
Black Tern: arr 3 May; max 6 Salmon R 21 May.
Com. Tern: arr OneiL 21 Apr.
Forster's Tern: 2 Brewerton 17 Apr; 2 DH 18 Apr.

PIGEONS - WOODPECKERS

Yellow-billed Cuckoo: arr LOL 14 May; max 2 per day.
Black-billed Cuckoo: arr BL 9 May; max 4 GLSP 22 May.
Long-eared Owl: DH 9 Apr, only report.
N. Saw-whet Owl: Clinton 13 Mar; Camden 20 May.
Com. Nighthawk: arr Syr 14 May; max 6 DH 21 May.
E. Whip-poor-will: arr Constantia 30 Apr; max 3 per day.
Chimney Swift: arr LOL 26 Apr.
Ruby-throated Hummingbird: arr Bville 1 May; max 47 DH 13 May.
Red-headed Woodpecker: arr DH 8 May; 7 more DH migrants; Lysander 23 May.
Red-bellied Woodpecker: 6-8/day DH early May, possible migrants.
Yellow-bellied Sapsucker: arr GLSP 26 Mar.
Black-backed Woodpecker: Third Lake Creek 25 Mar.
N. Flicker: max 349 DH 26 Apr.

FLYCATCHERS - WAXWINGS

Olive-sided Flycatcher: SFNS 22 May; Hastings 30 May; Altmar 30 May.
E. Wood-Pewee: max 5 SB 29 May.
Yellow-bellied Flycatcher: arr TR 17 May; max 3 FH 27 May.
Alder Flycatcher: arr 13 May, several sites.

Willow Flycatcher: arr UM 12 May; max 16 Clay 21 May.
Least Flycatcher: arr Camden & DH 27 Apr; max 6 DeWitt 11 May.
E. Phoebe: arr North Bay 22 Mar.
Great Crested Flycatcher: arr Skan 27 Apr; max 11 CM 21 May.
E. Kingbird: arr LOL 26 May; max 17 DH 2 May.
N. Shrike: Pulaski 1 Mar; GLSP 25 Mar; Salisbury 2 Apr; last Pulaski 24 Apr.
Yellow-throated Vireo: arr HI 30 Apr.
Blue-headed Vireo: arr Camden 24 Apr.
Warbling Vireo: arr DeWitt 26 Apr; max 10 SPd 12 May.
Philadelphia Vireo: arr Camden 16 May; SB 21 May; WH 29 May.
Red-eyed Vireo: arr DH 9 May.
Blue Jay: max 4670 DH 12 May.
Fish Crow: 4 DH 10 Apr; 48 Oakwood Cem Syr 13 Mar (AW); May reports from 7 sites.
Horned Lark: max 54 Manheim 10 Mar.
Purple Martin: arr WM 1 Apr, early.
Tree Swallow: arr DH 15 Mar; max 1650 Oneil 16 Apr.
N. Rough-winged Swallow: arr DH 11 Apr.
Bank Swallow: arr DH 11 Apr.
Cliff Swallow: arr DH 26 Apr.
Barn Swallow: arr DH 30 Mar, early.
Black-capped Chickadee: max 246 DH 26 Apr.
Brown Creeper: max 7 St MC 17 Apr.
House Wren: arr LOL 25 Apr.
Winter Wren: arr SFNS 26 Mar.
Marsh Wren: arr GLSP 27 Mar.
Blue-gray Gnatcatcher: arr LOL 12 Apr; max 8 Chittenango 5 May.
Ruby-crowned Kinglet: arr Camden 6 Apr; max 35 Camden 26 Apr.
Veery: arr Fabius 30 Apr.
Gray-cheeked Thrush: 50 Syr 19-20 May, night flight; 3 LOL 28 May.
BICKNELL'S THRUSH: Syr 20 May, night flight (LG).
Swainson's Thrush: 200+ Syr 19-20 May, night flight.
Hermit Thrush: arr LOL 5 Apr; max 15/day LOL 20-27 Apr.
Wood Thrush: arr LOL 28 Apr; max 11 HI 10 May.
Am. Robin: max 20,135 DH 4 Apr, late peak flight.
Gray Catbird: arr widespread 26 Apr.
N. Mockingbird: Stratford 18 Mar, north of range.
Brown Thrasher: arr Bville 14 Apr; max 19 GLSP 24 Apr.
Am. Pipit: arr & max 24 Otisco 26 Mar; scarce May.

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Bohemian Waxwing: max and last 25 SFNS 6 Apr.
Cedar Waxwing: max 520 DH 31 May.

LONGSPURS - WARBLERS

Snow Bunting: max and last 800 SCH 13 Mar.
Blue-winged Warbler: arr Camden 27 Apr; max 6 SFNS 11 May.
Golden-winged Warbler: arr Fayetteville 26 Apr.
Tennessee Warbler: arr WM 10 May; max 8 Chittenango 18 May.
Orange-crowned Warbler: 2 DH 14 May; SB 16 May.
Nashville Warbler: arr Fayetteville 26 Apr; 6 TR 11 May.
N. Parula: arr Fayetteville 26 Apr; max 14 StMC 6 May.
Yellow Warbler: arr Hamilton 20 Apr.
Chestnut-sided Warbler: arr Fayetteville 26 Apr (LG, mob), Reg record early; max 12 StMC 6 May.
Magnolia Warbler: arr Navarino 6 May.
Cape May Warbler: arr and max 6 SB 11 May.
Black-throated Blue Warbler: arr widespread 26 Apr; max 30 DH 18 May.
Yellow-rumped Warbler: max 1200 DH 26 Apr.
Black-throated Green Warbler: arr widespread 26 Apr; max 10 Scriba 12 May.
Blackburnian Warbler: arr Camden 28 Apr; max 15 SB 21 May.
Pine Warbler: arr Constantia 19 Mar.
Prairie Warbler: arr DH 27 Apr; 4 other reports, all migrants. 1 Apr; max 7 per day LOL.
Bay-breasted Warbler: arr Syr 29 Apr (JMcG), Reg record early; max 15 SB 21 May.
Blackpoll Warbler: arr Bville 11 May; max 7 GLSP 21 May.
Cerulean Warbler: arr HI 30 Apr; max 12 HI 10 May.
Black-and-white Warbler: arr widespread 26 Apr; max 8 StMC 6 May.
Am. Redstart: arr Camden 2 May; max 67 DH 19 May.
Prothonotary Warbler: migrants DH 26 Apr, 14, 18 May (TC); arr WM 17 May.
Ovenbird: arr Camden 26 Apr (RL), Reg record early.
N. Waterthrush: arr Skan 24 Apr; max 6 DeWitt 11 May.
Louisiana Waterthrush: arr Pratt's Falls 14 Apr; 2 Manheim 31 May, rarely reported HERK.
KENTUCKY WARBLER (R5): Caznovia 21-22 May (JR) and Clinton 24-25 May (MP).
CONNECTICUT WARBLER (R5): Bville 13 May (JB).
Mourning Warbler: arr TR 2 May, early.

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Com. Yellowthroat: arr widespread 26 Apr.

Hooded Warbler: arr SFNS 8 May; max 8 per day LOL.

Wilson's Warbler: arr Skan 10 May; max 3 DH 21 May.

Canada Warbler: arr LOL 11 May.

TOWHEES - WEAVER

E. Towhee: arr LOL 9 Apr; max 24 GLSP 24 Apr; Old Forge 22 Apr, unusual.

Am. Tree Sparrow: max 40 Durhamville 23 Mar; last Hamilton 7 May.

Chipping Sparrow: Earlville 15 Mar (KJ!), likely wintered; arr Skan 7 Apr; max 145 DH 12 May.

Clay-colored Sparrow: SFNS 2, 20 May; GLSP 22 May; DH 23 May.

Field Sparrow: arr GLSP 9 Apr.

Vesper Sparrow: arr LOL 9 Apr, max 3 per day LOL.

Savannah Sparrow: arr LOL 7 Apr.

Grasshopper Sparrow: arr Hastings 30 Apr; 2 Split Rock 8 May; max 3 Richland 20 May.

Fox Sparrow: arr 20 Mar; max 5 per day to 18 Apr; last W Winfield 28 Apr.

Lincoln's Sparrow: max 4/day LOL 10-21 May.

Swamp Sparrow: arr WM 7 Apr.

White-throated Sparrow: max 60 Camden 26 Apr.

White-crowned Sparrow: DH after 1 Mar, likely wintered; arr widespread 27 Apr; max 14 SB 14 May.

Dark-eyed Junco: max 70 Salisbury 19 Apr.

Scarlet Tanager: arr Bville 30 Apr (JB), Reg record early; max 58 LOL 12 May.

Rose-breasted Grosbeak: arr 26 Apr; max 31 DH 12 May.

Indigo Bunting: arr 5 May.

Bobolink: arr DH 26 Apr (SC), Reg record early; max 137 DH 12 May.

E. Meadowlark: arr 16 Mar.

Rusty Blackbird: 2 Tully 3 Mar; max 500 CM 29 Apr.

Orchard Oriole: arr Camden 26 Apr; max 6 DH 14 May; Kast Bridge 31 May, unusual.

Baltimore Oriole: arr widespread 26 Apr; max 438 DH 12 May.

Purple Finch: max 240 DH 20 Apr.

Com. Redpoll: max 440 DH 4 Apr; last Georgetown 5 May.

Hoary Redpoll: max 2 Erieville 30 Mar; last DH 9 Apr.

Pine Siskin: max 730 DH 13 May.

Am. Goldfinch: max 450 DH 13 May.

Evening Grosbeak: max 15 Erieville 3 Apr; last Camden 3 May.