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REGION 3—FINGER LAKES

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Following a record cold winter, spring 2015 continued cold in March, warmed to normal in April, and continued the warming trend to produce a warmer than normal May. The average low temperature in March in Ithaca was 18° F, 5° less than normal. The average high that month was 35°, 7° colder than normal. The

average low in April was normal at 34° and the average high was 55°, just one degree below normal. May had an average low of 50°, 6° above normal. The average high was 74°, 7° above normal.

In spite of the cold beginning of the season, migrating species of waterfowl staged earlier than normal arrivals. Several waterfowl species had high maximum counts: Cackling Goose, Trumpeter Swan, Gadwall, Mallard, Green-winged Teal, Common and Red-breasted Mergansers, Common Loon, Pied-billed and Horned Grebes, and Double-crested Cormorants. Unfortunately, the rigors of winter left the carcasses of many geese, swans, and ducks on the Region's lakes. An Eared Grebe was again present in Aurora Bay, Cayuga Lake.

American Bittern and Green Heron arrived earlier than usual. The maximum count of 20 Black-crowned Night-Herons was high for spring. A Glossy Ibis appeared at Montezuma National Wildlife Refuge for a few days in May.

Ospreys arrived on time this year. Individual Black Vultures passed through Ithaca in late March. The counts of 120 Turkey Vultures over Ithaca and 33 Bald Eagles at Montezuma NWR were Regional highs for spring.

Virginia Rail and Common Gallinule both arrived earlier than normal. Maximum counts for Virginia Rail at Queen Catharine Marsh and for Common Gallinule and Sandhill Crane at Montezuma NWR were all high.

Shorebirds generally arrived late or within a few days of average. A Whimbrel showed up at Montezuma NWR and stayed long enough for several birders to observe it. A few days later, a rare-in-spring American Golden-Plover appeared at Montezuma. Shorebirds with high maximum counts included 600 Semipalmated Plovers, 121 Greater Yellowlegs, 3000 Dunlin, 3000 Least Sandpipers, 546 Semipalmated Sandpipers, 31 Wilson's Snipe, and five Wilson's Phalaropes, all at Montezuma NWR.

Caspian and Common Terns arrived quite early as they did the previous year. Black Tern arrived late. Rare gulls in the Region were four Little Gulls on Cayuga Lake and a Thayer's Gull at the compost piles near Reynolds State Game Farm.

Cuckoos were present in good numbers, and the 11 found together in Northeast Ithaca was an unusually high count. The count of four Snowy Owls in early April in the Town of Seneca Falls was remarkable. Detection of two migrating Eastern Whip-poor-wills in Tompkins County in May gives hope that the species might someday return as breeders. Five cool days in late April may have been responsible for the late arrival of Chimney Swifts. Merlins were again nesting in the Ithaca area.

While pewees and phoebes arrived a little late, empids generally arrived early. Blue-headed and Warbling Vireos arrived early, but Yellow-throated and Red-eyed arrivals were about normal. Jay McGowan and Livia Santana found a White-eyed Vireo at Montezuma NWR. Estimates of 2,000 American Crows, 50 Northern Rough-winged Swallows, and 60 Purple Martins were all high spring counts for the Region. All swallow species arrived early.

House and Marsh Wrens arrived late, perhaps because of the late April cold spell that appeared to delay the Chimney Swifts. Ruby-crowned Kinglets arrived late. Thrushes arrived on normal dates after the cold snap. Gray Catbirds, due to arrive during the cold snap, also arrived late. Bob McGuire reported the only Bohemian Waxwing. A few Lapland Longspurs were found in two locations in southern Cayuga County on 8 March.

Early arriving warblers were Blackburnian, Blackpoll, Black-and-white, and Mourning. Late arriving warblers were Black-throated Green, Pine, Palm, and Ovenbird, all species with normal arrival dates in April. This season produced high counts for Black-and-white, Pine, and Black-throated Green Warblers.

Chipping, Savannah, and White-crowned Sparrows were early. Rose-breasted Grosbeaks and Eastern Towhees were late. Bobolinks and Baltimore Orioles were late. The count of 2700 Brown-headed Cowbirds in Queen Catharine Marsh was high. Rarities for the season included Clay-colored Sparrows at Cornell and at Knox-Marcellus Marsh, a Yellow-headed Blackbird in the Town of Springport, White-winged Crossbill in the Town of Enfield, and Evening Grosbeaks in the Town of Dryden and in Breesport.

CONTRIBUTORS

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ABBREVIATIONS

ABB – Aurora Bay Boathouse, CAYU; AHB – Aurora High Banks, CAYU; CayL – Cayuga L; CLSP – Cayuga L SP; CMP – Clute Memorial P, Watkins Glen, SCHU; CU – Cornell University; ESP – East Shore P, TOMP; FH – Frontenac Harbor, CAYU; FLNF – Finger Lake National Forest, SCHU/SENE; FLT – Finger Lakes Trail; HO – Hawthorn Orchard, TOMP; HP – Harris P, CAYU; HHSF – Hammond Hill SF, TOMP; HTWMA – Hi Tor WMA, YATE; ITA – Ithaca Tompkins Airport; IYC – Ithaca Yacht Club, TOMP; JW – Jetty Woods, TOMP; KMM – Knox-Marcellus Marsh, SENE; LPBP – Lindsay-Parsons Biodiversity Preserve, TOMP; McIP – McIlroy Preserve, CAYU; MHSF – Michigan Hollow SF, TOMP; MNWR – Montezuma NWR; MtP – Mt Pleasant, TOMP; MyPt – Myers Pt; OP – Ontario Pathways, ONTA; PerW – Personius Woods, CHEM; QCM – Queen Catharine Marsh, SCHU; RHPP – Roy H. Park Preserve, TOMP; RSGF – Reynolds State Game Farm, TOMP; SPt – Salt Pt, TOMP; SaM – Savannah Mucklands SENE; SapW – Sapsucker Woods, TOMP; SFDF – Seneca Farm Days Fairgrounds, SENE; SHP – Seneca Harbor P; SHSF – Shindagin Hollow SF, TOMP; SLSP – Seneca L SP, Geneva, ONTA; StP – Stewart P, TOMP; TC – T Caroline, TOMP; TD – T Dryden, TOMP; TG – T Genoa, CAYU; TH – T Hector, SCHU; THSF – Texas Hollow SF, SCHU; TI – T Ithaca, TOMP; TLa – T Lansing, TOMP; TLe – T Ledyard, CAYU; TO – T Ovid, SENE; TS – T Seneca, ONTA; TV – T Veteran, CHEM.

WHISTLING-DUCKS - VULTURES

Snow Goose: arr 280 CayL TOMP 10 Mar; max 50,000 ne CayL CAYU 21 Mar; last CayL SENE 19 Apr thru, late.
Ross's Goose: arr & max 2 SLSP, Bluegrass Lane Natural Area TOMP 24 Mar; last SaM 2 Apr.
Brant: arr Ithaca 12 May; max & last 76 MNWR 16 May, early dep.
Cackling Goose: arr 4 SapW, MyPt 13 Mar; max 7 LPBP 25 Mar (B&ACF), high; last MtP 10 Apr.
Mute Swan: max 14 CayL 23 Mar (CN); last MNWR 2 May.
Trumpeter Swan: max 14 MNWR 4 Apr (EBa), high.
Tundra Swan: max 350 ne CayL CAYU 30 Mar; last Herman Road Wetlands TOMP 29 Apr.
Wood Duck: max 70 MNWR 3 May.
Gadwall: max 350 MNWR 19 Apr (JMc), high.
EURASIAN WIGEON (R3): arr CayL 29 Mar (TJ); last MNWR 30 May (ECh), late.
Am. Wigeon: max 463 MNWR 7 Apr.
Am. Black Duck: max 400 MyPt.
Mallard: max 4000 MyPt 3 Mar (JMc), high.
N. Shoveler: arr 2 MyPt 10 Mar; max 400 MNWR 27 Mar; last MNWR 13 May.
N. Pintail: max 500 SaM 2 Apr.

Green-winged Teal: max 250 SaM 12 Apr (DNi), high.
Canvasback: max 1,000 HP 5 Apr.
Redhead: max 4,250 AHB 7 Mar.
Ring-necked Duck: max 603 MNWR 7.
Greater Scaup: max 700 ABB 14 Mar; last 8 MNWR 7 May.
Lesser Scaup: max 400 ABB 14 Mar; last MNWR 29 May.
Surf Scoter: max 4 MyPt 21-26 Mar; last CayL CAYU 2 May.
White-winged Scoter: max 18 AHB 7Mar; last 2 MyPt 27 Apr.
Black Scoter: arr ABB 14 Mar (JMc, LSa), early; last SPt 3 May.
Long-tailed Duck: max 30 CLSP 19 Apr; last StP 29 Apr.
Bufflehead: max 250 StP 7 Apr; last CayL TOMP 26 May.
Com. Goldeneye: max 225 Wyers Pt SENE 13 Mar; last MNWR 9 May.
Hooded Merganser: max 125 QCM 3 Apr.
Com. Merganser: max 1200 IYC (JMc), high.
Red-breasted Merganser: max 219 CayL SENE 20 Apr (KRö), high; last 3 SPt 26 May.
Ruddy Duck: max 140 MNWR 19 Apr.
Ruffed Grouse: 12 THSF 17 May (ID,AJ), high.
Red-throated Loon: max 6 IYC 8 Mar; last HP 28 Apr.

Com. Loon: max 129 MtP 11 Apr (JeBa, CW), high.

Pied-billed Grebe: max 29 MNWR 15 May.

Horned Grebe: max 104 MyPt 17 Apr (JMc, LSA), high; last ESP 14 May.

Red-necked Grebe: max 34 CayL SENE 19 Apr; last MyPt, SPt 3 May.

EARED GREBE (R3): last Aurora Bay CAYU 29 Mar.

Double-crested Cormorant: max 500 CayL CAYU 16 May (JMc, LSA), high.

Great Blue Heron: 89 MNWR 15 May.

Great Egret: arr HTWMA 25 Mar; max 6 MNWR 25-31 May.

Black-crowned Night-Heron: arr 18 KMM 16 Apr; max 20 KMM 2 May (PB), high.

GLOSSY IBIS (R3): MNWR 24-27 May (mob).

BLACK VULTURE (R3): arr Ithaca 23 Mar (RSw, GM); CU 25 Mar (BV, LSe).

Turkey Vulture: max 120 Ithaca 1 Apr (TL), high.

HAWKS - LARIDS

Osprey: max 10 MNWR 17 May.

Golden Eagle: arr T Horseheads CHEM 11 Mar; last NE Ithaca 30 Apr.

N. Harrier: max 3 TLE 21 Apr, SaM 11 Apr, and NE Ithaca 30 Apr, low.

Sharp-shinned Hawk: max 8 NE Ithaca 20 Apr.

Bald Eagle: max 33 MNWR 7 Apr (IBA), high.

Broad-winged Hawk: arr T Erin CHEM, 3 MtP, TD 10 Apr; max 20 NE Ithaca 30 Apr.

Red-tailed Hawk: max 46 RSGF 6 Mar.

Rough-legged Hawk: max 7 TH SCHU 29 Mar; last T Junius SENE 23 Apr.

Virginia Rail: max 12 QCM 28 May (ID), high.

Com. Gallinule: max 50 MNWR 3 May (OG, TR), high.

Am. Coot: 240 SHP 2 Mar.

Sandhill Crane: arr SaM 18 Mar; max 10 MNWR 22 May (JO), high.

Black-bellied Plover: max 42 MNWR 21 May.

AM. GOLDEN-PLOVER (R3): arr MNWR 25 May (mob), only report.

Semipalmated Plover: max 600 MNWR 25 May (TLen), high.

Killdeer: arr CMP, CU, Ithaca 9 Mar, late; max 30 MNWR 16 May.

Spotted Sandpiper: max 16 MNWR 15 May.

Solitary Sandpiper: max 15 MNWR 16 May.

Greater Yellowlegs: max 121 SaM 16 Apr (AGu), high.

Lesser Yellowlegs: max 185 MNWR 8 May (JMc, LSA).

Upland Sandpiper: arr SFDF 15 Apr; max 3 SFDF 26 Apr.

WHIMBREL (R3): MNWR 25 May (mob), only report.

Ruddy Turnstone: arr MNWR 24 May; max 11 MNWR 28 May.

Dunlin: arr 4 SaM 12 Apr; max 3000 MNWR 24 May (DNu), high.

Least Sandpiper: max 3000 MNWR 17 May (DSh, MTe), high.

White-rumped Sandpiper: arr 2 MNWR 16 May; max 17 MNWR 25 May.

Pectoral Sandpiper: max 8 MNWR 12 May; last 2 MNWR 25 May.

Semipalmated Sandpiper: max 546 MNWR (DSh, MT), high.

Short-billed Sandpiper: arr MNWR 15 May; max 20 MNWR 17 May.

Wilson's Snipe: max 31 TD TOMP 14 Apr (BW), high.

Am. Woodcock: max 7 Willard WMA 14 Apr; max 7 ITA 9 May.

Wilson's Phalarope: arr 4 MNWR 24 May; max 5 MNWR 25 May (TL, JMc, LSA), high.

Bonaparte's Gull: arr Canandaigua L ONTA 16 Mar; max 700 CayL SENE 19 Apr.

LITTLE GULL (R3): 4 CayL SENE 19 Apr (JMc, LSA), high.

Ring-billed Gull: max 2400 SHP 11 Mar.

Herring Gull: max 1800 IYC 2 Mar.

THAYER'S GULL: RSGF 26 Mar (TL), only report.

Iceland Gull: max 3 RSGF 20 Mar (JMc), high; last JW 3 May, (JMc, LSA), late.

Lesser Black-backed Gull: max 9 ESP 5 Apr (JMc, LSA), high; last RSGF 27 May.

Glaucous Gull: max 2 CayL SENE 4 Mar, RSGF 21-27 Mar, MyPt 20 Mar, TLa 5 Apr; last MyPt 12 Apr.

Great Black-backed Gull: max 155 IYC 2 Mar.

Caspian Tern: max 20 MNWR 26 Apr, 6 May, SaM 19 Apr.

Black Tern: arr 15 MNWR 7 May; max 46 KMM 26 May (DNu), high.

Com. Tern: max 66 FH 13 May.

Forster's Tern: arr Lakefront P ONTA 11 Apr; max 9 FH 9 May.

PIGEONS - PARROTS

Yellow-billed Cuckoo: arr T Manchester ONTA & TO 10 May; max 3 LPBP 23 May, MNWR 31 May.
Black-billed Cuckoo: max 11 NE Ithaca 18 May (JMc), high.
Snowy Owl: max 4 T Seneca Falls SENE 2 Apr (DKe), high; last Finger Lakes Regional Airport SENE 10 Apr.
Barred Owl: max 3 SHSF 23 Apr (SDz, JMc), high.
Short-eared Owl: last TH & 2 MNWR 3 Apr.
Com. Nighthawk: max 6 Ithaca 16 May.
E. Whip-poor-will: TC 2 May (SKE); TD 12 May (JFi), only reports.
Chimney Swift: arr Ithaca 29 Apr (BBar, BCl), late; max 25 CU 27 May.
Ruby-throated Hummingbird: max 5 TC 17 May.
Red-headed Woodpecker: arr MNWR 8 May; max 2 MNWR 17 May thru.
Yellow-bellied Sapsucker: max 12 SHSF 23 Apr.
N. Flicker: max 17 TD 13 Apr (JeBa, JGe, BS, CW), high.
Pileated Woodpecker: max 5 THSF 17 May (AJ, ID), high.
Am. Kestrel: max 3 TH 3 Apr & MtP 13 Apr, low.
Merlin: nesting in C and TI.
Peregrine Falcon: max and last 2 MNWR 21 May (JAK), late.

FLYCATCHERS - WAXWINGS

E. Wood-Pewee: max 13 THSF 17 May (AJ, ID), high.
Yellow-bellied Flycatcher: arr HO 12 May (JMc), early.
Acadian Flycatcher: arr MHSF 12 May.
Alder Flycatcher: max 7 THSF 17 May.
Willow Flycatcher: max 8 MNWR 16–23 May.
Least Flycatcher: max 17 THSF 17 May.
Great Crested Flycatcher: max 9 SapW 15 May & McIP 23 May.
N. Shrike: last ITA 6 Apr.
WHITE-EYED VIREO (R3): MNWR 19 Apr (JMc, LSa), only report.
Philadelphia Vireo: arr OP T Phelps ONTA 8 May; max 4 HO 12 May; last FLT TH, Durland Preserve TOMP 22 May.
Red-eyed Vireo: max 52 THSF 17 May (AH, ID), high.
Am. Crow: max 2,000 Caroline 16 Mar (LAvL), high.

N. Rough-winged Swallow: max 50 LPBP 25 Apr (SDa, JGK, AM), high.
Purple Martin: max 60 MNWR 8 May (JMc, LSa), high.
Tree Swallow: max 1000 MNWR 17 Apr.
Bank Swallow: max 95 TD 21 May.
Barn Swallow: max 120 TSMP 3 May.
Cliff Swallow: max 16 Fitch's Bridge Fishing Access CHEM 7 May.
Winter Wren: arr TO 4 Apr; max 4 THSF 17 May.
Blue-gray Gnatcatcher: max 14 MNWR 8 May.
Ruby-crowned Kinglet: max 17 SapW 26 Apr; last RHPP 22 May.
Veery: max 21 THSF 17 May (AJ, ID), high.
Gray-cheeked Thrush: arr TLa (JMc) & TD (JFi) 9 May, early; max 2 NE Ithaca 18 May; last MyPt 28 May.
Swainson's Thrush: max 30 NE Ithaca 21 May.
Wood Thrush: max 31 THSF 17 May.
Am. Pipit: arr 3 TD 13 Mar; max 110 TLa 29 Mar; last MNWR 28 May.
BOHEMIAN WAXWING (R3): TD 14 Mar (BoMc), only report.

LONGSPURS - WARBLERS

Lapland Longspur: 4 TG 8 Mar (mob); 3TL8 Mar (MG); only reports.
Snow Bunting: max 150 TG 8 Mar; last T Groton TOMP 5 Apr.
Ovenbird: max 75 FLT STEU (DD), high.
Worm-eating Warbler: arr LPBP 14 May.
Louisiana Waterthrush: arr T Newfield TOMP 13 Apr.
N. Waterthrush: max 5 SapW 6 May & McIP 31 May.
Blue-winged Warbler: arr SapW, Six Mile Cree 1 May; max 14 EcoVillage TOMP 9 May.
GOLDEN-WINGED WARBLER (R3): PerW 4 May (JGi), only report.
"Lawrence's" Warbler): LPBP 9 May thru (mob), only reports.
Black-and-white Warbler: max 12 LPBP (B & ACfr, NY), high.
Prothonotary Warbler: MNWR 11 May thru (JT, JBr, JPo).
Tennessee Warbler: max 30 HO 12 May; last FLNF & TLa & 2 TC.
Orange-crowned Warbler: MNWR 3 May; last TD 23 May.
Nashville Warbler: max 8 TO 5 May, RHPP 9 May, HHSF 10 May.
Com. Yellowthroat: max 42 THSF.

Hooded Warbler: arr TO 5 May; max 5 FLT SCHU, TLa 24 May, LPBP 25 May.
Am. Redstart: arr C Ithaca (JAb), 2 JW 2 May (SKr), early; max 29 THSF 17 May.
Cape May Warbler: max 13 HO 12 May; last NE Ithaca 25 May.
Cerulean Warbler: arr 2 MNWR 4 May; max 5 Mud Lock CAYU 8 May.
N. Parula: max 8 HO 16 May; last TC 21 May.
Bay-breasted Warbler: max 12 HO 12 May; last MHSF 18 May.
Blackburnian Warbler: max 12 HHSF 11 May.
Yellow Warbler: max 26 MNWR 23 May.
Black-throated Blue Warbler: max 9 SHSF 5 May.
Palm Warbler: max 10 SapW 5 May; last OP 18 May.
Pine Warbler: arr Sullivanville Dam CHEM 11 Apr; max 10 Gleason Meadows CHEM 2 May (ECI), high.
Yellow-rumped Warbler: arr 2 SapW 9 Apr; max 110 SapW 4 May.
Prairie Warbler: arr PerW 2 May; max 11 LPBP 9 May.
Black-throated Green Warbler: max 35 FLT STEU 11 May (DD), high.
Canada Warbler: max 5 HHSF 10-11 May, T Danby TOMP 17 May.
Wilson's Warbler: max 3 HO 10 May.

TOWHEES - WEAVERS

E. Towhee: max 15 Bare Hill WMA YATE 15 May.
Am. Tree Sparrow: max 50 TS 2 Mar (DKi), high; last SHSF 26 Apr.
CLAY-COLORED SPARROW (R3): CU 4-27 May (mob); KMM 31 May (mob); only reports.

Field Sparrow: arr V Lansing 27 Mar; max 11 LPBP 10 May.
Vesper Sparrow: max 5 TI 12 Apr.
Savannah Sparrow: max 14 TI 12 Apr.
Grasshopper Sparrow: arr TL 8 May; max 3 TL 9 May.
Fox Sparrow: arr TV 22 Mar; max 7 LPBP 11 Apr; last Riley Tree Farm CAYU 28 Apr.
Song Sparrow: max 76 TI.
White-crowned Sparrow: max 12 C Ithaca 7 May, Sperr Memorial P CHEM 14 May; last TD 21 May.
Scarlet Tanager: max 12 THSF 17 May.
Rose-breasted Grosbeak: max 10 TD 10 May.
Indigo Bunting: max 10 LPBP 23 May.
Bobolink: max 25 SFDF 9 May.
Red-winged Blackbird: arr 4 TS 6 Mar, late; max 24,390 QCM 25 Mar.
E. Meadowlark: arr MyPt 13 Mar; max 20 TD 11 Apr.
YELLOW-HEADED BLACKBIRD: T Springport CAYU 13 Apr (JMc, LSa), only report.
Rusty Blackbird: arr RSGF 14 Mar, late; max 161 SaM 16 Apr; last MNWR 16 May.
Com. Grackle: arr TI 7 Mar; max 81,300 QCM 25 Mar.
Brown-headed Cowbird: arr 15 SHP & 4 TH 10 Mar; max 2700 QCM 25 Mar (ID), high.
Orchard Oriole: arr T Erwin STEU 29 Apr; max 3 MyPt 8 May.
Purple Finch: max 12 T Big Flats CHEM 3 May.
WHITE-WINGED CROSSBILL (R3): T Enfield TOMP 7-12 Mar (GG), only report.
Com. Redpoll: max 87 TD; last TV 18 Apr.
Pine Siskin: max 47 SapW Rd TOMP.
EVENING GROSBEAK (R3): TD 13-14 Apr (MWeb); Breesport CHEM 6 May (WBI), only reports.