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REGION 3—FINGER LAKES

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Spring 2016 was dryer than normal in the Finger Lakes Region, with a warm March, cold April, and normal May. The average low temperature in Ithaca in March was 28° F, 6° above normal. The average high was 51°, 9° above normal. April was only slightly warmer with an average low of 29°, 4° below normal and an average high of 53°, 2° below normal. The average low in May was 44° and the average high was 68°, both 1° above normal. Precipitation in March was 1.36", 1.28" less than normal. There was only 0.2" of snowfall, 11.5" less than normal. April precipitation totaled 2.61", 0.68" less than normal. April snowfall was 5.4", 2.0" more than normal. There was 1.90" of rainfall in May, 1.29" less than normal. Only a trace amount of snow fell during the month, and that was on the late date of 16 May.

The mild winter and the warm month of March allowed waterfowl to pass out of the Region quickly. Consequently, the only late departures among the waterfowl were a lingering Greater White-fronted Goose on Cayuga Lake, a Greater Scaup at Montezuma National Wildlife Refuge (MNWR), and a likely injured Red-throated Loon on Canandaigua Lake. Some of the dabbling duck species passing through the Region occurred in high numbers, particularly Blue-winged and Green-winged Teal and Northern Shoveler. The other species passing through in high numbers were Red-breasted Merganser and Common Loon. Greater White-fronted Goose, Ross's Goose, Cackling Goose, and Eurasian Wigeon are all species that have become regular in recent years and

were all present again this year. Very small numbers of Brant, Surf Scoter, and Black Scoter were reported. The highlight species was a Tufted Duck that was observed for about a week in early March on Canandaigua Lake.

The most exciting wading birds of the season were Snowy Egret and Glossy Ibis. Individual Snowy Egrets appeared in Steuben County and at MNWR in late April. Two more showed up at MNWR in late May. Two Glossy Ibises lingered in the Savannah Mucklands for about a week. Another showed up at MNWR in the middle of May.

The migrant raptor watchers at Sapsucker Woods produced some Regionally good numbers: individual Golden Eagles on three consecutive days in early March, six Red-shouldered Hawks on one day in mid-March, and 45 Broad-winged Hawks and 12 Ospreys on a single day in early May. Elsewhere, Kyle Gage counted 20 Northern Harriers foraging over the wetlands of MNWR.

The status of Sandhill Crane in the Region continues to change. The 7 March arrival date was early and the count of 10 at the end of the season was a seasonal high. Conditions for American Coot were good at MNWR, where observers estimated a seasonal high of 800.

It was an exciting year for shorebird watching. Several species that are more commonly seen in the Region during fall migration made appearances. American Avocets appeared along Canandaigua Lake, unprecedented numbers of “Western” Willets were at several locations, and numerous Long-billed Dowitchers foraged at MNWR in early May. In mid-May, American Golden-Plovers, a Hudsonian Godwit, and Stilt Sandpipers were at MNWR. Another Willet and Sanderlings were on the shores of Canandaigua Lake, and a Wilson’s Phalarope was at MNWR in late May.

Little Gull reports were unusually frequent, with a half dozen scattered from early April through mid-May, including Chemung County’s first record. One Laughing Gull showed up on Cayuga Lake. A Thayer’s Gull visited the compost piles near Reynolds State Game Farm. Possibly the same bird was at Myers Point on Cayuga Lake 12 days later. A count of 33 Lesser Black-backed Gulls at the compost piles was very high for this species. The 124 Common Terns at one location on Cayuga Lake might indicate that this species is making a comeback in the Great Lakes Region. The normally much more common Caspian Tern also had a relatively high count of 54 at MNWR.

Jay McGowan and Brad Walker happened upon an Eastern Whip-poor-will in the road. In addition to the nesting pair at MNWR, Red-headed Woodpeckers were reported from Tompkins and Schuyler Counties. Observers reported high counts of all the other woodpecker species except Downy. Many observers were able to observe the Loggerhead Shrike that lingered for several days in late April near the Ontario-Yates county line.

Several species of passerines that typically arrive in April had early arrivals: Purple Martin, Cliff Swallow, Hermit Thrush, Brown Thrasher, Yellow-rumped Warbler, and Eastern Towhee. Among neotropic migrants, only Lincoln’s Sparrow and Orchard Oriole arrived early.

The only Golden-winged Warbler found this spring was in Northeast Ithaca, but many birders were able to see this bird. The only Prothonotary Warbler away from MNWR was one at Stewart Park in Ithaca. Many observers found the lone Henslow's Sparrow in Tompkins County. Clay-colored Sparrow returned to the Cornell University campus. Another was found in the Town of Dryden. The Western Tanager that spent most of February on the Cornell campus stayed there through 3 April. Logan Kahle and Tim Lenz found the Region's only Red Crossbill at Farley's Point.

CONTRIBUTORS

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ABBREVIATIONS

CanL – Canandaigua L; CCan – City of Canandaigua; CygL – Cayuga L; CU – Cornell University; DryL – Dryden L, TOMP; ED – Elmira Dam, CHEM; FHM – Frontenac Harbor Marina, CAYU; FLNF – Finger Lakes National Forest, SCHU; HHSF – Hammond Hill State Forest, TOMP; HO – Hawthorn Orchard, TOMP; Ith – Ithaca; LF – Lott Farm, SENE; LPBP – Lindsay-Parsons Biodiversity Preserve, TOMP; MH – Michigan Hollow, TOMP; MNWR – Montezuma NWR; MyPt – Myers Pt, TOMP; NE Ith – Northeast Ithaca; OBP – Ontario Beach P, ONTA; RSGF – Reynolds State Game Farm, TOMP; SPtSCH – Salt Pt, SCHU; SSP – Sampson SP; StP – Stewart P, TOMP; SW – Sapsucker Woods, TOMP; TCar – T Caroline; TDry – T Dryden; TGor – T Gorham; TLan – T Lansing; TPh – T Phelps; TSum – T Summerhill.

WHISTLING-DUCKS - VULTURES

Greater White-fronted Goose: max 6 MNWR 11 Mar (GaC), high; TDry 19 Mar; last FHM 29 May (mob), late.

Snow Goose: max 100,000 MNWR 5 Mar; 5 MNWR 30 May.

Ross's Goose: arr Village of Cayuga 6 Mar; 2 CU 9 Mar; TPh 11 Mar; CU 20 Mar (JMc!, LSan).

Snow X Ross's Goose (hybrid): Cayuga Castle CAYU 20 Mar.

Brant: CanL (mob) 1 May; SPtSCH 1 May (mob), only reports.

Cackling Goose: arr 4 Seneca L SP 5 Mar; max 13 SW 7 Mar (JMc, BW!), high; last ED 29 Mar.

Canada Goose: max 7160 CU 9 Mar.

Mute Swan: last Clifton Springs Hospital Pd ONTA 18 May (DSp).

Tundra Swan: max 1000 CygL, T Aurelius 5 Mar; last MNWR 7 May.

Eurasian Wigeon: last MNWR 20 May.

Blue-winged Teal: max 82 MNWR 13 Apr(JO), high.

N. Shoveler: max 400 MNWR 2 Apr (JMc, LSan), high.

N. Pintail: max 5000 Savannah Mucklands SENE 5 Mar.

Green-winged Teal: max 1200 MNWR 27-28 Mar (ID, JI, TL), high.

Redhead: max 13,000 Harris P 13 Mar.

Ring-necked Duck: last CanL, CCan 24 Mar.

TUFTED DUCK: CanL at various locations 5-11 Mar (mob!).

Greater Scaup: last MNWR 24 May (DSH, MT), late.

Lesser Scaup: max 900 Harris P CAYU 13 Mar; last MNWR 27 May; MyPt 27 May (TL!, JMc!).

Ring-necked Duck X scaup (sp.) (hybrid): CygL, Ith 20 Mar-2 May.

Surf Scoter: MNWR 16 Apr (DWA); 4 DryL 19 Apr (mob), only reports.

White-winged Scoter: max 19 Willard Town P SENE 20 May; last 2 CanL, TGor 3 May; CygL, C Ith 3 May.

Black Scoter: CanL 11 Mar (WF), early; CygL 14 May (ID, JNi, JS), only reports.

Long-tailed Duck: arr 9 CU 7 Mar (MG), early; max 59 SPtSCH 4 Apr (ID), high; last 5 OBP 3 May.

Com. Goldeneye: last Mud Lock CAYU 14 May.

Com. Merganser: max 1100 Frontenac P CAYU 5 Mar.

Red-breasted Merganser: max 500 CygL SP 15 Apr (MH), high.
Ruddy Duck: max 150 MNWR 1 Apr.
Red-throated Loon: 28 Perkins Rd Gravel Pits TOMP 4 Apr; last CanL, CCan 27 Apr thru (mob!), late, possibly injured.
Com. Loon: max 255 CygL, T Varick 24 Apr (AL), high.
Horned Grebe: last Emerson P CAYU 27 May; MyPt 27 May.
Red-necked Grebe: last OBP 3 May.
Double-crested Cormorant: max 1000 FHM 18 May (JMc), high.
Am. Bittern: max 3 MNWR 10 Apr (DNU), high.
Least Bittern: arr T Middlesex 4 May (MBr), early; MNWR 20 May (StB), only reports.
Great Egret: arr MNWR 1 Apr; last Freeville 28 May; MNWR 28 May.
SNOWY EGRET (R3): Cohocton R Environmental Easement STEU 21 Apr (JoG!); MNWR 26 Apr (mob!); 2 MNWR 28 May (mob).
Black-crowned Night-Heron: arr StP 17 Apr.
GLOSSY IBIS (R3): 2 Savannah Mucklands 26 Mar-2 Apr (mob); MNWR 14 May (JMc, MMe).

HAWKS - LARIDS

Osprey: arr Addison High School STEU 4 Mar (LY), early; MNWR 17 Mar; max 12 SW 4 May.
Golden Eagle: arr Mt Pleasant TOMP 6 Mar; last Bluegrass Lane Natural Area TOMP 6 May.
N. Harrier: max 20 MNWR 2 Mar (KG), high.
Red-shouldered Hawk: max 6 SW 12 Mar.
Broad-winged Hawk: arr Long Pt SP 16 Apr; CU 16 Apr; Tlan 16 Apr; Bluegrass Lane Natural Area TOMP 16 Apr; max 45 SW 4 May (CF, MaSc, DrW), high; 31 Moakley House TOMP 4 May.
Rough-legged Hawk: last MNWR 7 May (EW), late.
Virginia Rail: max 7 MNWR 20 May.
Am. Coot: max 800 MNWR 10 Apr (JMc, LSan), high.
Sandhill Crane: arr 3 MNWR 7 Mar (DK), early; max 10 MNWR 30 May (JAB), high.
AM. AVOCET (R3): 2 CanL, CCan 1-2 May (mob!).
AM. GOLDEN-PLOVER (R3): 3 MNWR 20 May (mob!), high.
Solitary Sandpiper: last TDry 24 May.
WILLET (R3): CanL, CCan 1 May (mob!); MNWR 1 May (mob!); 5 Sullivanville Dam

CHEM 1 May (mob!), first county record; 8 MyPt 1 May (mob!); CanL, CCan 30 May (DD).
Lesser Yellowlegs: arr 2 MNWR 26 Mar (mob!), early; last MNWR 26 May.
Upland Sandpiper: arr LF 16 Apr; max 3 LF 14 May.
Whimbrel: arr 2 OBP 3 May (BHo!), early; max 12 CanL, CCan 25 May (mob!); last MNWR 28 May (mob!).
HUDSONIAN GODWIT (R3): MNWR 9-12 May (mob!).
Ruddy Turnstone: arr CanL, CCan 2 May (MBr), early; max 10 CanL, CCan 25 May; last CanL, CCan 27 May.
STILT SANDPIPER (R3): MNWR 10 May (mob!); 2-3 MNWR 20-22 May (mob!).
SANDERLING (R3): 12 CanL, CCan 25 May.
Dunlin: arr MNWR 30 Mar; max 210 MNWR 18 May (mob).
Least Sandpiper: arr MNWR 2 Apr (ABu!), early; max 400 MNWR 21 May.
White-rumped Sandpiper: arr MNWR 7 May.
Pectoral Sandpiper: max 40 MNWR 30 Apr; last MNWR 26 May.
Semipalmated Sandpiper: max 80 MNWR 26 May.
Short-billed Dowitcher: arr MNWR 10 May; max 6 MNWR 20 May; last MyPt 25 May.
LONG-BILLED DOWITCHER (R3): 45 MNWR 1 May (JMc!, LSan), high; 5 MNWR 14 May (JMc, BW).
Wilson's Snipe: max 35 Savannah Mucklands SENE 1 Apr (GDa), high; last Bluegrass Lane Natural Area 10 May.
Am. Woodcock: max 5 Tlan 20 Mar; 5 T Ith 30 Apr; 5 SSP 24 May.
WILSON'S PHALAROPE (R3): MNWR 26 May (TL!).
Bonaparte's Gull: StP 18 Mar; max 261 CygL, Tlan 14 Apr.
LITTLE GULL (R3): MyPt 4 Apr (CW!); StP 25 Apr (JMc!); ED 1 May (NG!, TL), first Chemung County record; Long Pt SP 8 May (AL, JMc, NMo); 2 FHM 17-19 May (mob!).
LAUGHING GULL (R3): FHM 29 May (mob!).
Ring-billed Gull: max 6100 SPtSCH 4 Apr (ID), high.
THAYER'S GULL: RSGF 22 Mar (ID!, JMc); MyPt 3 Apr (JMc, LSan).
Iceland Gull: max 6 RSGF 21 Mar (JMc), high; last MNWR 13 Apr; ED 13 Apr.
Lesser Black-backed Gull: max 33 RSGF 22 Mar (JMc), high; last RSGF 28 May.
Glaucous Gull: last StP 26 Apr (JMc), late.

Caspian Tern: max 54 MNWR 30 Apr (TB, ID, ASp), high.
Black Tern: max 27 MNWR 20 May.
Com. Tern: max 124 FHM 17 May (JMc), high.
Forster's Tern: arr DryL 8 Apr (Jay & KMcGo, CW), early; max 8 Wyers Pt SENE; 8 CanL, T Italy; last MyPt 24 May.

PIGEONS - PARROTS

Yellow-billed Cuckoo: arr TSum 14 May; MNWR 14 May; HO 14 May.
Black-billed Cuckoo: max 9 NE Ith 26 May.
Great Horned Owl: max 7 DIL Woods TOMP 4 Mar (LK), high.
Snowy Owl: last T Fayette 20 Mar; Finger Lakes Regional Airport CAYU 20 Mar.
Short-eared Owl: max 5 TPh13 Apr; last 2 TPh 29 Apr.
N. Saw-whet Owl: HHSF 5 Mar; City of Ithaca Cemetery 20 Mar; T Danby 14 May, only reports.
Com. Nighthawk: max 7 TCar 27 May.
E. WHIP-POOR-WILL (R3): T Danby 14 May (JMc, BW).
Chimney Swift: 14 CU 25 Apr; max 50 T Ledyard 8 May; 50 Owasco L Inlet CAYU 8 May.
Belted Kingfisher: max 5 LPBP 28 Apr (AM, WB), high.
RED-HEADED WOODPECKER (R3): Brooktondale 10 May (MGr); 1-2 MNWR 14 May thru (mob); T Hector 21 May (AR).
Red-bellied Woodpecker: max 12 SW 12 May (MWa), high.
Yellow-bellied Sapsucker: max 20 FLNF 16 Apr (JMc, LSan); 20 MH 17 Apr (JMc, LSan), high.
Hairy Woodpecker: max 11 TDry 7 May (BMa), high.
N. Flicker: max 25 FLNF 16 Apr (JMc, LSan), high.
Pileated Woodpecker: max 6 FLNF 16 Apr (JMc, LSan), high.
Merlin: max 3 City of Geneva 11 & 24 Apr (JNo), high.
Peregrine Falcon: last & max 2 MNWR.
Olive-sided Flycatcher: last T Starkey 22 May.
Yellow-bellied Flycatcher: SW 12 May (MWa), early; MNWR 14 May (DK); TCar 20 May (SKe), only reports.
Acadian Flycatcher: arr T Locke 12 May.
Willow Flycatcher: max 14 MNWR 25 May (JAK), high.

FLYCATCHERS - WAXWINGS

LOGGERHEAD SHRIKE: TGor & T Middlesex 24-29 Apr (mob!).
N. Shrike: last T Hopewell 23-29 Mar.
Philadelphia Vireo: arr SW 8 May; TDry 8 May; last MNWR 30 May.
Red-eyed Vireo: max 30 HHSF 21 May.
Fish Crow: max 18 T Seneca Falls 29 Mar.
Purple Martin: arr Finger Lakes Community College ONTA 24 Mar (BroM), early; max 58 MNWR 14 May.
N. Rough-winged Swallow: max 160 Woodville Boat Launch ONTA 27 Apr (EGy, GL), high; 75 MyPt 1 May; 75 Dresden Overlook YATE 2 May.
Cliff Swallow: arr Big Flats Trail CHEM 2 Apr (MPo!), early.
Winter Wren: arr MH 24 Mar.
Gray-cheeked Thrush: arr MH 17 May.
Swainson's Thrush: max 100 NE Ith 26 May.
Hermit Thrush: arr TDry 21 Mar (CW), early; max 16 Danby State Forest TOMP 3 Apr (JMc, LSan), high.
Am. Robin: max 400 TDry 4 Apr (KMcGo).
Brown Thrasher: C Ith 17 Mar (DNu); arr C Ith 1 Apr (WLH), early; max 8 MNWR 9 May (JO), high.
Am. Pipit: arr Sullivanville Dam CHEM 3 Mar; last MNWR 21 May; Elmira Holiday Inn CHEM 21 May.

LONGSPURS - WARBLERS

Lapland Longspur: 10 MNWR 27 Mar (ID, JI, TL); LF 24 Apr (AL, NMo), only reports.
Snow Bunting: DryL 4 Apr (JGe, CW); MNWR 29-30 Apr (DCar!), low and late.
Worm-eating Warbler: LPBP 14-18 May (mob); Ford Hill TOMP 24 May (LK, CW), only reports.
Louisiana Waterthrush: arr Shindagin Hollow State Forest TOMP 2 Apr (JB, CW), early.
GOLDEN-WINGED WARBLER (R3): NE Ith 8 May (mob!).
Blue-winged Warbler: arr 2 TDry 26 Apr.
"Brewster's" Warbler (hybrid): CU 8 May (mob!).
"Lawrence's" Warbler (hybrid): HO 13 May (JGK!); TCar 27 May (TA!).
Golden-winged x Blue-winged Warbler (hybrid): CU 8 May (mob!).
Black-and-white Warbler: arr T Ovid 25 Apr; TCar 25 Apr; Split Pd P YATE 25 Apr; max 10 LPBP 7 May.
PROTHONOTARY WARBLER (R3): 1-2 MNWR 6 May thru (mob); Seneca Trail SENE 16 May (KL!); StP 10 May (JMc!).

Tennessee Warbler: last MNWR 26 May; T Enfield 26 May; TDry 26 May.
Orange-crowned Warbler: arr SSP 30 Apr; last HO 24 May (BMc!), late.
Hooded Warbler: arr CU 4 May.
Am. Redstart: max 22 Louis Agassiz Fuertes Bird Sanctuary TOMP 24 May.
Cape May Warbler: max 5 NE Ith 17 May; last HHSF 28 May (AM, JGK, SDA), late.
Cerulean Warbler: arr MNWR 7 May; max 8 MNWR 21 May.
N. Parula: last Uhl Woods TOMP 27 May.
Bay-breasted Warbler: T Ovid 9 May; last TDry 25 May.
Blackburnian Warbler: max 12 HHSF 7 May.
Black-throated Blue Warbler: max 15 Shindagin Hollow State Forest TOMP 14 May.
Palm Warbler: max 20 SSP 30 Apr; last MNWR 20 May.
Yellow-rumped Warbler: arr Jetty Woods TOMP 13 Mar (TL), early; max 100 Wyers Pt SENE 29 Apr (TL), high.
Prairie Warbler: arr T Lindley 28 Apr; 2 LPBP 28 Apr; C Ith 28 Apr.
Canada Warbler: max 8 HHSF 30 May (KMcGo, LAVL), high.
Wilson's Warbler: last Ithaca Tompkins Airport 27 May; MyPt 27 May; CU 27 May; TLan 27 May.

TOWHEES - WEAVERS

E. Towhee: arr T Hornellsville 19 Mar (NG, GM, TL), early; max 18 Bare Hill Unique Area YATE 21 Apr (KaS), high.
Am. Tree Sparrow: max 40 MNWR 10 Mar; last MNWR 6 May.
Chipping Sparrow: max 33 CU 3May.

CLAY-COLORED SPARROW (R3): CU 6 May thru; TDry 23 May.
Field Sparrow: arr T Hornellsville 19 Mar.
Vesper Sparrow: max 7 Mt Pleasant TOMP 13 Apr (JMc), high.
Savannah Sparrow: T Fayette 5 Mar (NMa, DNe, ST); Ithaca Tompkins Airport 24 Mar (JMc); arr TDry 31 Mar; max 40 RSGF 26 Apr (LK, TL, ST), high.
Grasshopper Sparrow: arr Lake Rd fields CAYU 9 May.
HENSLow'S SPARROW (R3): W King Rd fields TOMP 30 Apr-24 May (mob!).
Fox Sparrow: max 35 TDry 4 Apr, high (SDa); last T Starkey 30 Apr.
Lincoln's Sparrow: arr 2 T Middlesex 27 Apr (EGy, GL!), early; last MyPt 27 May.
Swamp Sparrow: max 46 MNWR 16 Apr (JO), high.
White-throated Sparrow: max 100 TGor 27 Apr (TL), high; last T Ith 28 May.
White-crowned Sparrow: last Arnot Forest SCHU 23 May.
WESTERN TANAGER: CU thru 3 Apr (mob!).
Bobolink: 2 South Hill TOMP 30 Apr.
E. Meadowlark: arr T Tyre 8 Mar.
Rusty Blackbird: max 700 MNWR 1 May (JMc, LSan); last T Hopewell 11 May.
Orchard Oriole: arr SW 27 Apr (Jay & KMcGo, BW), early; max 4 Cass P TOMP 31 May.
House Finch: max 35 SW 2 Mar (TSc), high.
Purple Finch: max 18 TCar 19 Mar.
RED CROSSBILL (R3): Farley's Pt CAYU 20 Mar (LK, TL), only report.
Pine Siskin: max 35 T Prattsburgh 10 Mar.
House Sparrow: max 60 CU 4 Mar (NMa, DNe), high.