

REGION 7—ADIRONDACK-CHAMPLAIN

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Precipitation for March was heaviest along the border between Franklin and Clinton Counties where it averaged 4-5". Surrounding this was an area which averaged 3-4". Most of Hamilton County and the High Peaks Region were in the 3-4" zone as well. The Champlain Valley and the southern end of Franklin County got only 2-3". Temperatures for the month in most of Region 7 departed from the norm by 1-3°. The exceptions were the High Peaks Region which remained near normal and the eastern half of Franklin County plus an area that included Plattsburgh which were 3-5° above normal.

April was a wet month with some areas in each of the Region's four counties getting more than 7" of precipitation. In each case these areas were in the middle of larger areas where the rainfall totaled 6-7", which in turn were imbedded in areas of 5-6" rainfall totals. Only western Franklin and northern Hamilton Counties and the Champlain Valley got less than 5" of rain. Overall, April's temperatures were near normal. Only the High Peaks Region was 1-3° colder, and northern Franklin County

292

along with the Plattsburgh area were 1-3° warmer.

Temperatures in May averaged 3-5° above the norm almost everywhere in Region 7. However, western Hamilton County, eastern Franklin County, and the Plattsburgh area averaged 3-5° above normal. Rainfall totals increased in Region 7 from south to north. The southern portions of Essex and Hamilton Counties averaged 2-3". This increased to 3-4" in the remainder of those counties. The Champlain Valley averaged 4-5" of precipitation as did most of Franklin County and the northwest section of Clinton County. An average of 5-7" the middle of Franklin County was the wettest for the Region.

Once again Lake Champlain did not freeze over entirely this year. The presence of at least some open water allowed some hardier waterfowl to linger throughout the winter and into the spring. In early March the open areas off Essex County and Ausable Point continued to contract, concentrating these birds even further. North of Ausable Point the ice sheet was solid from Valcour Island to Rouses Point except for a channel of open water maintained by the Cumberland Head Ferry. In mid-March warmer temperatures and strong winds opened the lake to the ferry. By the third week of March the lake was open to Isle la Motte and completely ice free by 1 April.

The level of Lake Champlain at the start of the spring quarter was just over 96' and it stayed there for the first week of March. By 12 March it had risen about 0.7' in what was the beginning of a stepwise process of rises followed by a flat stretch and repeat. By 28 March it had leveled off again at 98.3'. Then it jumped again to 98.9' by 11 April and peaked at 99.4' on 25 April. Flood stage of 100' was not reached at any time. However, there was enough seasonal flooding of the fields of the Chazy Riverlands to attract long-legged waders like Great Blue Heron, Great Egret, and Glossy Ibis. A nearly linear decline continued from the peak to 97.8' to mid-May. The lake ended the season at 97.5'. At these levels the mud flats of the Chazy Riverlands were not exposed, and shorebird sightings were few and far between. Black-bellied Plover and Semipalmated Plover, both normally seen in spring, were not reported at all.

One of the two **Tufted Ducks** present in the winter season lingered to mid-March. **Sandhill Crane** made a strong showing this season. Once again it bred at its Tupper Lake site. It was also seen at five other locations, in some cases more than once. Three **Glossy Ibis** were reported in mid-April at Chazy Riverlands. They were accompanied by a fourth *Plegadis* species which appeared intriguing for a Glossy x White-faced Ibis hybrid.

A silent **Nelson's Sparrow** was found on 31 May at Ausable Marsh WMA. Its race was not determined. Despite large amounts of suitable habitat, this species has been scarce and difficult to detect in Region 7, with most records coming from northern Clinton County's Kings Bay area where vast, cattail fringed farm fields meet the Lake Champlain shoreline. In the summer of 2002, during the second breeding bird atlas period, a singing Nelson's in northern Clinton County was heard seven days apart allowing for the designation as a probable breeder. Its dull coloration suggested it belonged to the *subvirgata* subspecies. This would be consistent with most of the records in the St Lawrence River in Canada near Trois Rivières, some 85 miles north of Chazy.

For the third year in a row, a **Clay-colored Sparrow** was found in Essex County in the Champlain Valley. Like the prior sightings, a lone individual was found singing
The Kingbird 2022 September; 72 (3)

in suitable habitat. There are no confirmed historic breeding records of this species in Region 7. It has been listed as a probable breeder in both the first and second breeding bird atlas periods and seems to be following the same trend for this current, third atlas. **Grasshopper Sparrow** was also detected for a third consecutive year with reports from Essex and Clinton County. It's important to consider that prior to 2020, there was only one eBird record of this species in Region 7 (6 June 2014, Ticonderoga, G. Chapin). In the mid-1990s, the Plattsburgh Airforce Base hosted a substantial population, however, change in land use resulted in their disappearance and the species essentially became a sought out regional rarity. The persistence of Grasshopper Sparrow and other associated species of grassland birds in Region 7 is solely dependent on privately owned and managed hayfield operations. While certainly a rare breeder, there's hope that this species is under-detected given their secretive habits and lack of observer coverage within inaccessible large swaths of private land containing suitable habitat.

After a good showing in the Adirondack portions of the Region this past winter, Red Crossbill was confirmed breeding in around 20 Atlas blocks this season, and White-winged in five.

The rarity highlight of the season came from a mist net at Crown Point State Historic Site. On 13 May, and during its 47th consecutive spring in operation, the Crown Point bird banding station caught a **Yellow-breasted Chat**. There are no prior eBird records of this species in Region 7. However, "Birdlife of the Adirondack Park" (Beehler, 1978) refers to this species as occasional in spring in the Champlain District and cites two records from Geoffrey Carleton: Crown Point, May 1954 and Ticonderoga, 25 May 1957.

Although scarce, **Orchard Oriole** has been reported annually since 2014. Otherwise, eBird records show no prior observations. All but one of the records comes from the Champlain Valley region, mostly from Crown Point State Historic Site. Old, printed compilations for each of the four counties in Region 7 show only two previous reports, both in Essex County, one in 1979 and the other in 1993.

CONTRIBUTORS

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ABBREVIATIONS

AM – Ausable Marsh; **AP** – Ausable Pt; **BRR** – Bull Rock Rd; **Chur** – Churubusco; **CPSHS** – Crown Pt State Historic Site, **EPd** – Ensign Pd; **FCov** – Fort Covington; **HBO** – Hoisington Brook Outlet; **NP** – Noblewood P; **PaR** – Pardy Rd; **PH** – Port Henry; **PL** – Piseco L; **PO** – Plattsburgh Oval; **PS** – Paul Smiths; **SL** – Saranac L; **TI** – Ticonderoga; **TMT** – Tomany Mt; **WB** – Whallon Bay; **WBR** – Whallons Bay Rd; **WPt** – Willsboro Pt; **WRS** – Webb Royce Swamp. **Co-CF**, **-CN**, **-FL**, **-FY**, **-ON** – Atlas breeding codes.

Snow Goose: 10,000 Point Au Roche SP 13 Mar (TV).

Cackling Goose: PaR 21 Mar (DB).

Wood Duck: arr Lower La Chute Ri 10 Mar (EIG).

Blue-winged Teal: arr AP 3 Apr (DR).

Northern Shoveler: 5 FCov 16 Apr (SR).

Gadwall: 9 PaR 20 Mar (SR).

American Wigeon: 29 AM 17 Mar (GC).

American Black Duck: 178 PaR 20 Mar (SR).

Northern Pintail: 7 AP 11 Mar (DR).

Green-winged Teal: arr PH 7 Mar (SR).

Canvasback: CPSHS 19 Mar (CV).

Redhead: 10 Essex Ferry Dock 15 Mar (JS).

Ring-necked Duck: 100 AP 10 Mar (OS).

TUFTED DUCK (R7): Port Kent 9-15 Mar (m. ob.).

Greater Scaup: 180 Port Kent 10 Mar (OS).

Lesser Scaup: 42 Port Kent 15 Mar (JB).

White-winged Scoter: 3 NP 11 Apr (SR); 11 PL 26 Apr (GD).

Long-tailed Duck: Stony Pt 8 Apr (SyR).

Bufflehead: 70 AP 10 Mar (OS).

Common Goldeneye: 600 AP 10 Mar (OS).

Barrow's Goldeneye: CPSHS 19 Mar (JDE); HBO 30 Mar (StR).

Common x Barrow's Goldeneye: WPt 3 Apr (DHR).

Hooded Merganser: 6 AP 17 Mar (OS).

Common Merganser: 100 CPSHS 20 Mar (m. ob.).

Red-breasted Merganser: 8 WB 9 Apr (DHR).

Wild Turkey: max 42 Gabriels 18 Mar (EG).

Pied-billed Grebe: SL 24 Mar (BMc).

Horned Grebe: 4 Port Kent 15 Mar (JS).

Red-necked Grebe: 8 PL 16 Apr (JC).

Yellow-billed Cuckoo: arr TI 13 May (Gl&MCh).

Black-billed Cuckoo: arr BRR 14 May (Gl&MCh).

Common Nighthawk: arr 3 Chur 9 May (SI).

Eastern Whip-poor-will: arr FCov 7 May (TD).

Chimney Swift: arr, PH 6 May (SR).

Ruby-throated Hummingbird: arr BRR 3 May (Gl&MCh).

Virginia Rail: arr 2 EPd 11 May (SR), late arrival date.

Sora: arr Chur 2 May (SI).

Common Gallinule: arr AP 21 May (BK).

Sandhill Crane: arr TI 29 Mar (LJ); Tupper L 30 May (BM), Co-FL; PaR 13 Apr (SR); FCov 18 & 26 Apr (JJ); PS 24 Apr (NM).

Killdeer: 2 NP 17 Mar (GC).

Semipalmated Plover: arr HBO 2 May (DHR).

Dunlin: arr Kings Bay 12 May (SR).

Least Sandpiper: arr 5 PaR 12 May (SR).

Pectoral Sandpiper: arr PaR 13 Apr (SR).

Short-billed Dowitcher: arr 5 Chazy Riverlands 16 May (BK).

American Woodcock: arr AP 11 Mar (DR).

Wilson's Snipe: arr 13 PaR Apr (SR).

Spotted Sandpiper: arr Indian L 16 Apr (JC).

Solitary Sandpiper: arr Speculator 5 May (JCb).

Lesser Yellowlegs: arr PaR 6 Apr (SR).

Greater Yellowlegs: arr Chazy Riverlands 12 Apr (BK).

Bonaparte's Gull: 91 PaR 8 Apr (DHR, SR).

Iceland Gull: PaR 13 Apr (SR).

Glaucous Gull: PO 16 Mar (SR), continuing.

Great Black-backed Gull: 3 AP 21 Mar (AB).

Herring x Great Black-backed Gull: NP 11 Apr & 2 May (SR, DHR, ph).

Caspian Tern: arr, Bulwagga Bay 27 Mar (SR); max, 56 NP 11 Apr (SR).

Black Tern: arr 3 FCov 10 May (MB, BM).

Common Tern: arr Bulwagga Bay 27 Apr (SR).

Red-throated Loon: PL 16 Apr (JC), rare in spring.

Common Loon: max 21 Cole Bay 23 Apr (SR).

Double-crested Cormorant: max 575 CPSHS 30 Apr (SR).

American Bittern: arr Essex Co. 11 Apr (JP); Hamilton Co. 11 April (GD).

Least Bittern: arr EPd 18 May (SR).

Great Blue Heron: arr Wilcox Dock 20 Mar (JJ).

Great Egret: arr AP 31 Mar (JB), early.

Green Heron: arr Angier Hill Rd, Essex 2 May (DHR).

Black-crowned Night-Heron: AM 27 May (KMc).

Glossy Ibis: 3 Chazy Riverlands 16-19 Apr (Mma, TF, ph), *intro*.

Glossy/White-faced Ibis: Chazy Riverlands 16 Apr (Mma, ph), *intro*.

Black Vulture: 7 TI 10 Mar (SR).

Osprey: 8 AP 26 Apr (KA).

Golden Eagle: 2 Sabbatis Bog 13 Mar (JW); TI 2 Apr (Gl&MCh); Meacham L 10 Apr (CV).

Northern Harrier: Ellenburg Depot 19 May (SI), Co-CF.

Sharp-shinned Hawk: 2 Keene Valley 28 May (NR).

Northern Goshawk: Newcomb 11 Mar (SR).

Bald Eagle: 3 Meacham L 23 Apr (ED); Owl's Head 13 May (JT), Co-ON.

Red-shouldered Hawk: BRR 7 Mar (Gl&MCh).

Broad-winged Hawk: Santa Clara 17 Apr (JSa).

Red-tailed Hawk: 2 WB 20 Mar (SR).

Rough-legged Hawk: WBR 2 May (DHR), late.

Eastern Screech Owl: WPt 8 Apr (DHR).

Great Horned Owl: 2 Keene 5 May (MD).

Barred Owl: 2 LCI 21 Apr (NM).

Short-eared Owl: Essex 20 Apr (DHR).

Northern Saw-whet Owl: Paradox 10 Mar (EIG).

Belted Kingfisher: 2 Oliver Pd 12 Apr (EID).

Red-bellied Woodpecker: 2 AM 14 Apr (WA).

Yellow-bellied Sapsucker: 6 Chur 10 May (SI).

Black-backed Woodpecker: 2 PS 10 May (SI).

Northern Flicker: 3 WBR 24 Apr (CV).

Pileated Woodpecker: 2 Keese Mill 1 May (NM).

American Kestrel: 4 Chur 11 May (SI), Co-CF.

Merlin: 2 Vermontville 9 May (BM).

Peregrine Falcon: 2 Pyramid L 8 apr (EIG).

Great Crested Flycatcher: arr, PS 4 May (NM).

Eastern Kingbird: arr BRR 5 May (Gl&MCh).

Olive-sided Flycatcher: arr Tmt 13 May (CK).

Eastern Wood-Pewee: arr PH 13 May (SR).

Yellow-bellied Flycatcher: EPd 18 May (SR).

Alder Flycatcher: arr Poke-O-Moonshine Mt 13 May (TD).

Willow Flycatcher: arr AM 14 May (KJ).

Least Flycatcher: arr Glenview Pres 25 Apr (DW).

Eastern Phoebe: arr PH 20 Mar (SR).

Yellow-throated Vireo: arr TI 19 May (SR).

Blue-headed Vireo: arr TI 18 Apr (Gl&MCh).

Philadelphia Vireo: 2 Chapel Pd 28 May (JCI).

Warbling Vireo: arr AP 3 May (SR).

Red-eyed Vireo: arr Chesterfield 3 May (TD).

Northern Shrike: Vermontville 8 APR (MB).

Canada Jay: Bloomingdale Bog 18 May (WA), Co-FY.

Fish Crow: 2 TI 24 Apr (GC); max. 8 NP 2 May (DHR).

Common Raven: 7 Rogers Rock 17 May (Gl&MCh).

Boreal Chickadee: 10 Newcomb 17 Mar (DM).

Tufted Titmouse: 4 AP 12 May (WA).

Horned Lark: 2 Chazy 16 Mar (SR).

Bank Swallow: arr 4 Chur 10 May (SI).

Tree Swallow: arr CPSHS 20 Mar (JS).
Northern Rough-winged Swallow: arr WB 24 Apr (WS).
Purple Martin: arr Pardy Rd 13 Apr (NKS).
Barn Swallow: arr 2 Tupper L 13 Apr (GD).
Cliff Swallow: arr 18 WB 9 May (DHR).

Ruby-crowned Kinglet: arr 8 Pyramid L 14 Apr (ELG).
Golden-crowned Kinglet: 8 AP 14 Apr (WA).

Bohemian Waxwing: 20 SL 13 Mar (ML).
Cedar Waxwing: 19 Bloomingdale Bog 31 May (BMc).

Red-breasted Nuthatch: 6 FB 23 May (LM), Co-FY.

Blue-gray Gnatcatcher: arr Oxbow L 16 Apr (JC).

House Wren: arr SL 3 May (DP).
Winter Wren: 4 Connerly Pd 11 May (Gl&MCh).
Sedge Wren: Chur 18 May (SI); Ellenburg Depot 19 May (SI).
Marsh Wren: arr Chur 2 May (SI).
Carolina Wren: 2 CH 22 Mar (NO).

Gray Catbird: 12 Chur 15 May (NO).
Brown Thrasher: Breed Hill Rd, Essex 4 Apr (SR).
Northern Mockingbird: 2 PO 6 Apr (SR).

Veery: arr PS 30 Apr (LS).
Bicknell's Thrush: arr Whiteface Mt 22 May (DS).
Swainson's Thrush: arr Vermontville 9 May (BM).
Hermit Thrush: arr TI 2 Apr (Gl&MCh).
Wood Thrush: arr CPSHS 8 May (BMc).

American Pipit: arr 15 Gabriels 18 Mar (NM); Lake Placid 10 May (AB).

Evening Grosbeak: 10 Blue Mt Road 26 Mar (DH).
Purple Finch: EPd 11 May (SR), Co-CN.
Red Crossbill: 6 EPd 1 May (SR), Co-FL; confirmed breeding in approx. 20 Atlas blocks..
White-winged Crossbill: confirmed breeding in 5 Atlas blocks; Keese Mill 1 May (NM), last.
Pine Siskin: 6 TMt 15 May (CK), Co-FL.

Snow Bunting: 2 Newcomb 18 Mar (AC); 2 AL 12 Apr (GD), late.

Grasshopper Sparrow: Chur 16 May (SI); max 6 WBR 24 May (DHR, ph); *intro*.

Chipping Sparrow: arr Bulwagga Bay 23 Mar (SR).

Clay-colored Sparrow: WBR 24 Mar (DHR); *intro*.

Field Sparrow: arr Lake Placid 9 Apr (DH).

Fox Sparrow: arr PS 19 Mar (LS); 10 PS 24 Apr (CV).

American Tree Sparrow: Cumberland Head 26 Apr (NO).

Dark-eyed Junco: 13 Malone 22 Apr (BJ).

White-crowned Sparrow: arr PH 3 May (SR).

Vesper Sparrow: arr Lake Placid 9 Apr (DH); 17 Tupper L 14 Apr (GC), high count.

Nelson's Sparrow: AM 31 May (SR); *intro*.

Savannah Sparrow: arr Lake Placid 9 Apr (DH).

Lincoln's Sparrow: arr SL 8 May (AB); 2 TMt 15 May (CK), Co-CN.

Swamp Sparrow: arr AM 13 Apr (SR).

Eastern Towhee: arr WPt 8 Mar (DHR), early.

Yellow-breasted Chat: CPSHS 13 May (Banding Station, ph); *intro*.

Bobolink: arr, SL 30 Apr (LS).

Eastern Meadowlark: arr WBR 20 Mar (m. ob.).

Orchard Oriole: PL 10 May (CK).

Baltimore Oriole: arr Chazy 3 May (CB).

Rusty Blackbird: AM 13 Apr (SR).

Ovenbird: arr Swede Mt 3 May (Gl&MCh).

Louisiana Waterthrush: arr Riley Brook 30 Apr (Gl&MCh).

Northern Waterthrush: arr CPSHS 30 Apr (SR).

Golden-winged Warbler: 2 WRS 16 May (SR), Co-CN.

Blue-winged Warbler: arr WRS 12 May (JB).

Black and White Warbler: arr AP 25 APR (KA).

Tennessee Warbler: arr AM 12 May (WA).

Nashville Warbler: arr CPSHS 25 Apr (SF).

Mourning Warbler: arr Art Farm Trail 16 May (SR).

Common Yellowthroat: arr Duane 29 Apr (GG).

American Redstart: arr WPt 6 May (OS).

Cape May Warbler: arr Piseco 9 May (CK).

Northern Parula: arr PS 29 Apr (LS).

Magnolia Warbler: arr 7th Lake trail 5 May (GL).

Bay-breasted Warbler: arr PL 11 May (CK).

Blackburnian Warbler: arr CPSHS 9 May (KA).

Yellow Warbler: arr Gabriels 26 Apr (NM).

Chestnut-sided Warbler: arr Trout Ri 10 May (MB).

Blackpoll Warbler: arr Jockybush L Trail 9 May (KS).

Black-throated Blue Warbler: arr WPt 6 May (OS).

Palm Warbler: arr Sabattis Bog 14 Apr (GD).

Pine Warbler: arr NP 14 Apr (OS).

Yellow-rumped Warbler: 12 PS 12 May (DP).

Prairie Warbler: Mount Defiance 28 May (SR).

Black-throated Green Warbler: arr PL 26 Apr (GD).

Canada Warbler: arr 4 TMt 13 May (CK).

Wilson's Warbler: arr NP 13 May (DHR).

Scarlet Tanager: arr Chesterfield 3 May (TD).

Rose-breasted Grosbeak: arr Essex 2 May (DVO).

Indigo Bunting: arr AM 12 May (SR)