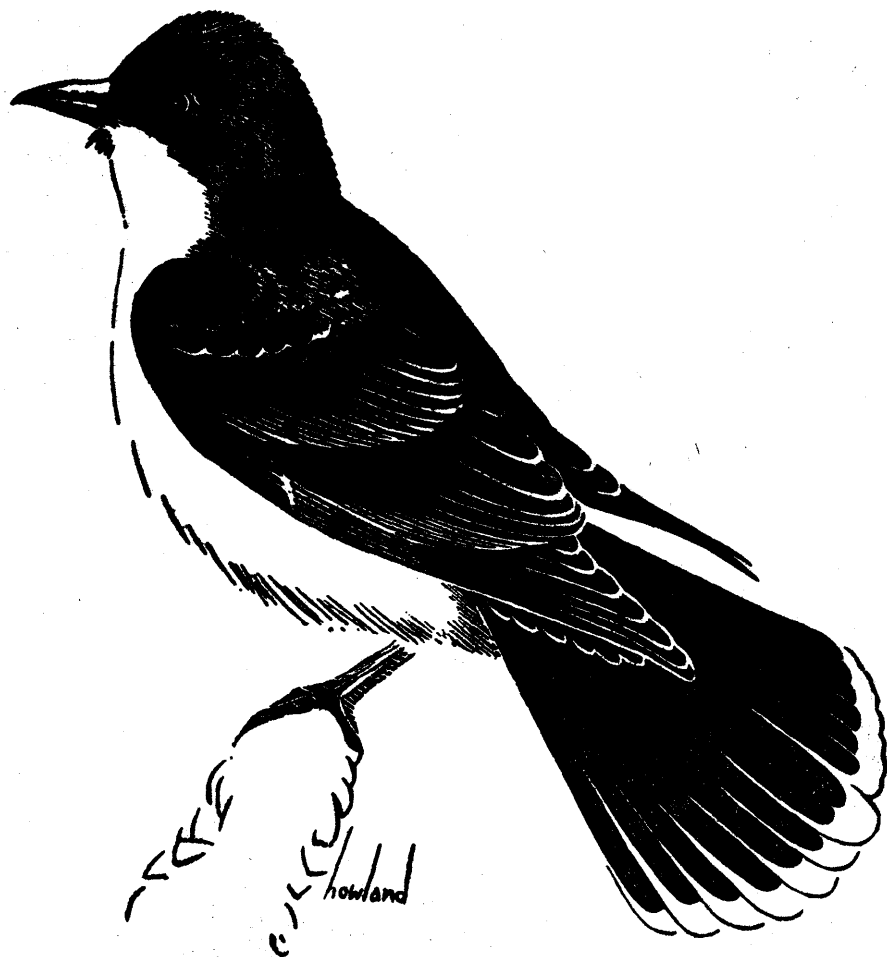


# The KINGBIRD



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FEDERATION OF NEW YORK STATE BIRD CLUBS



# The KINGBIRD

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*Editor* — GERALD R. RISING

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## SOME COMMENTS ON SCIENTIFIC COLLECTING

PETER PAUL KELLOGG

As one who loves and reveres nature; as President of the Federation of New York State Bird Clubs; as Professor of Ornithology and Biological Acoustics at Cornell University and as a Director of the Laboratory of Ornithology at Cornell, I would like to go on record as recognizing the value and importance of scientific collection of birds. I further believe that it is tremendously important that scholars continue to be permitted to collect birds in connection with specific studies, and that unless this is possible Ornithology will lose much of its prestige as a science.

It is regrettable that in the past many collections have been made with no more scientific purpose than goes into a collection of match boxes or miniature ivory elephants. While such collections of birds in the hands of scholars may have some value, depending on the accuracy and extent of the accompanying data, I believe that such collecting no longer serves any high scientific or educational importance and should be prohibited. Laws to accomplish this are already on the books.

Many of us are honestly opposed to seeing any animal killed unnecessarily. To many, any killing is an unpleasant business and I believe this is a very natural reaction of man. Most of us will admit, however, that sometimes killing is necessary. We need food. Sometimes we need to protect ourselves against aggressive or destructive animals or even against other men. Ornithologists are coming, more and more, to appreciate that much more can be learned from a living animal than from a dead one; but there are still, and probably always will be, problems which can be solved only by additional collecting.

Unfortunately some collectors of birds have not been very considerate of the very natural opposition or revulsion of most people to unnecessary killing. Even when collecting is fully justified and authorized, it should be carried out with every effort made not to offend the natural sensitivity of the layman. Killing, one might say, is never a pretty thing. When necessary it should be carried out quietly. There is no room for, and no reputable institution or ornithologist will tolerate, the individual who, drunk with the power granted him by the Federal and State governments to collect birds for scientific purposes, flaunts this authority as a means of self-aggrandizement before as many people as possible. Such individuals, though fortunately they are not common, have done ornithology a great disservice and brought justifiable criticism on themselves and the institutions they claim to represent. I believe we should all work towards the extirpation from our ranks of this show-off who collects birds primarily to attract attention to himself.

In my opinion, general collecting can no longer be justified. By this I mean the type of collecting carried out by a professional who hopes to sell the material, or by the amateur or student who apparently feels that he must justify his trips afield by bringing back some specimens. Sometimes an attempt is made to justify such collecting as training for students. Every year tens of thousands if not millions of songbirds are killed or die naturally where they could be picked up and turned over to scientific institutions. Modern freezing techniques would make such "collections" a very effective

project for any amateur ornithological group. In 1954 the New Jersey Audubon Society collected and turned over to Cornell over 400 specimens picked up dead on Cape May during the fall migration. In the same year over 300 specimens were found dead and sent into Cornell from all over New York State. These 700 plus specimens were secured with a minimum of time and cost and many of them were made up as excellent museum specimens. Others were made up as skeletons.

To give an idea of the cost of collecting in the usual manner, consider an example. In 1955 Cornell sponsored an expedition to the midwest. This expedition was carefully supervised and staffed with graduates and undergraduates especially selected for their ability in the field and carefully trained in techniques. In collecting 1027 specimens, the average per man per day was under four birds. Even with volunteer student help, the cost of each bird must have been well over one dollar. It should be pointed out that this average was low because the collectors were selective as to the species taken, but even with higher averages taken in general collecting, the true cost of a specimen is probably well over two dollars. Based on cost alone, general collecting should not be indulged in unless it is shown that full advantage is taken of all available birds accidentally killed or found dead. This source of bird specimens has barely been tapped.

The confusion which exists today in the two kinds of Alder Flycatchers well illustrates the need for specimens which cannot be supplied by existing collections. In museums today there are perhaps not more than 25 birds of known song type. Most previous collectors referred a specimen to one type or the other depending on where the bird was taken. Now we know that in some localities at least, both birds breed in the same areas but apparently do not hybridize. Additional collecting of birds of known song type is absolutely essential if this problem is to be understood. The solution of this one problem may do much to advance our understanding of factors which prevent birds which to us appear almost identical from interbreeding.

In conclusion, it appears that there are many and important reasons why scientific collections should continue to grow, but I for one do not want to have songbirds needlessly killed even though it can be shown that the number of birds collected will have no harmful effect on the population as a whole. I hope that the member clubs of the Federation and the individual members will join in taking an objective, humanitarian and scientific attitude toward collecting, backing laws which permit true scientific collecting when it is absolutely necessary for scholarly or educational purposes, but being ever on guard to prevent abuses under the guise that shooting birds is in itself scientific.

It has been a long up-hill fight to secure for birds the protection which they enjoy today and much would be lost were we to deny the scientific ornithologist material which he honestly needs for his studies. The collectors among us must remember too that they have a very real responsibility in this matter. They must conduct themselves in a manner becoming to true scientists, avoiding either the fact or the appearance of abusing their privileges; and the collectors must further realize that the layman has the right to know why a bird which he wishes to observe has been or is to be shot and carried off by the collector.

Laboratory of Ornithology, Cornell University, Ithaca.

## THE JANUARY WATERFOWL COUNT: II

GERALD R. RISING

The second annual New York State waterfowl census has been recorded (see Tables I and II) and the results are gratifying. A comparison of the 1956 results with those of 1955 forms the basis for this satisfaction: 222,408 birds counted to 189,324; 39 species to 36; 268 observers to 231; and 655 party hours in the field to 550. Although the results of the years are certainly not enough to establish a basis for making sweeping conclusions about waterfowl populations, the 1955 and 1956 results certainly provide some interesting information which may give an indication of both the usefulness of the count and its shortcomings. (For the 1955 summaries and an outline of count procedure see Rising, 1955, *Kingbird* 5 (2): 34-36.)

At the outset it is important to establish that the count is already mature. Estimates of regional coverage by the regional chairmen and the pattern of close comparison in totals with the conservation department aerial census indicate that the results are valid, the information comparable. A personal estimate of our present coverage is over 90%; that is, we could have counted less than 10% more birds. Future years will probably show a 5% improvement with the count steady at that level. Although the effect of this factor should be considered, its influence appears to be minor.

On the other hand the difference in totals from 1955 to 1956 points out the fact that weather exerts an all-important influence on the count. Neglect of this single factor would make the statistics meaningless. On the 1956 count it may very well be more striking than on any other for some time. For the first time in at least a decade birders were faced with extensive areas of Lake Ontario frozen. Calm weather just before the census period of January 14-22, left still water, and ice formed from a quarter to three-quarters of a mile off-shore. By the second weekend fortunately some of this ice was broken by wave action and observation was more satisfactory. At the same time the Adirondack-Champlain region suffered through a 28 day period preceding the count during which the average temperature was  $-2^{\circ}$  F. This cold, making its effect felt statewide, forced many dabblers farther south, but brought from the north over 40,000 more divers than in 1955.

Whereas the increase in diving ducks should be welcomed, the decrease in dabblers and specifically the 30% decrease in Black Duck numbers should not. There is some evidence to indicate that the Black Duck population has suffered and that the smaller numbers are not entirely due to a further retreat from the inordinate cold. At the same time these heavily hunted ducks showed this decline, other dabblers as well as geese and swans held their own. Conservationists may wish to keep this difference in mind in the future. There is already some feeling that care is no longer being exercised in controlling the seasons despite such reductions in numbers of some species (see Bellrose and Scott, 1955, *Wilson Bulletin* 67 (4): 310-312.) It has already been decided to retain the lengthened waterfowl season for 1956.

Five species were observed on the 1956 count which were not tabulated in 1955: Snow Goose, Blue-winged Teal, Tufted Duck, Barrow's Golden-eye, and Common Eider. Harlequin Duck and King Eider, reported in 1955, did not occur in 1956. The Tufted Duck, a close relative of our Scaup indigen-

TABLE I — SPECIES TOTALS BY REGION

REGION	I	II	III	IV	V	VI	VII	VIII	IX	X	Totals
Common Loon			4		1		18			75	98
Red-throated Loon										34	34
Red-necked Grebe					1					2	3
Horned Grebe			169		91	3	43		2	1384	1692
Pied-billed Grebe	2		26	1	1	1			4	67	102
Mute Swan					2					408	410
Whistling Swan										1	1
Canada Goose			16							1578	1594
Brant										4233	4233
Snow Goose										1	1
Mallard	733	23	136	515	93	4		103	124	3393	5124
Black Duck	1808	247	307	169	300	59	67	778	594	15882	20211
Gadwall	1									139	140
Pintail	25									126	151
Green-winged Teal								1		70	71
Blue-winged Teal										1	1
European Widgeon										2	2
Baldpate										1492	1492
Shoveller										39	39
Wood Duck					2					1	3
Redhead	272	11	2149		9	378		1	1	111	2932
Ring-necked Duck	1				6		1		175	264	447
Canvasback	15196	9	1123		907	21			99	4347	21702
Greater Scaup Duck*	4379	1062	9402		1994	6123	12	2	3	83341	106318
Lesser Scaup Duck*			38		10					226	274
Tufted Duck										1	1
American Golden-eye	4938	1377	213	5	983	3518	400	161	77	4683	16355
Barrow's Golden-eye								1		1	1
Bufflehead	336	7	15		16	63	13			928	1378
Old-squaw	5017	131	21		55	61				2224	7509
Common Eider										3	3
White-winged Scoter	14	38				5		2		8865	8924
Surf Scoter										1126	1126
American Scoter										322	322
Ruddy Duck	2		4				1		2	164	173
Hooded Merganser	8	1	2	3	3			1	15	198	231
American Merganser	2810	333	673	376	3161	190	200	170	810	648	9371
Red-br. Merganser	74	145	1		106	3		40		2530	2899
Coot	3		294		1					519	817
Unidentified	439	39	2039	1	192	1035	1		53	2424**	6223**
<b>TOTALS</b>	<b>36058</b>	<b>3423</b>	<b>16632</b>	<b>1070</b>	<b>7934</b>	<b>11464</b>	<b>756</b>	<b>1260</b>	<b>1959</b>	<b>141852</b>	<b>222408</b>

\*Unspecified scaup ducks are included in the Greater Scaup totals.

\*\*Region 10 unidentified includes 2300 scoters, 1 eider.

TABLE II — TOTAL COMPARISONS\*\*

REGION	I	II	III	IV	V	VI	VII	VIII	IX	X	Totals
Loons and Grebes	2	*	199	1	94	4	61	*	6	1562	1929
	4	7	766	2	6	1	*		17	1196	1999
Swans and Geese			16		2					6221	6239
			162	*						27415	27577
	1		13				*		2	4575	4591
Dabblers	2567	270	443	784	395	63	67	882	718	21145	27234
	2320	11	3210	*	100	700	79	1802	573	35962	44757
	664	172	2480	344	795	47	*	2020	1484	27515	35521
Divers (exc. those listed below)	30139	2597	12961	5	3980	10164	426	165	355	96125	156911
	20775	1932	28099	*	1242	14480	1205	10	6	83031	150780
	17738	2808	10499		3516	1902	*	54	1005	75193	112715
Eider, Scoters and Ruddy Ducks	16	38	4				5	1	2	12781	12849
	54	15	31	*	12					7713	7825
	189	9			1		*		5	14742	14946
Mergansers	2892	479	676	379	3270	193	200	211	825	3376	12501
	3350	380	418	*	445	2093	182	192	150	2254	9464
	5027	954	311	194	3027	11	*	217	692	3865	14298
Coot	3		294		1					519	817
				*						200	200
	5	30	1081		4		*		58	637	1815
<b>TOTALS</b>	<b>36058</b>	<b>3423</b>	<b>16632</b>	<b>1070</b>	<b>7934</b>	<b>11464</b>	<b>756</b>	<b>1260</b>	<b>1959</b>	<b>141852</b>	<b>222408</b>
	26499	2338	31920	*	1799	17273	1466	2004	729	147390	230418
	23964	4009	15480	540	7377	2174	*	2291	3306	130183	189324

\*\*Read groups as follows: top line: 1956 Federation total  
middle line: 1956 aerial total  
bottom line: 1955 Federation total

\*Region VII was not censused in 1955; the aerial count does not include loons and grebes; and does not cover Region IV

ous to Europe, is a new North American visitant. Although it may be that the bird is a game farm or zoo escape, the fact that the same species was reported earlier in the winter from Ontario, Canada lends credence to the possibility that the bird is a true straggler. The Barrow's Golden-eye, while not quite the celebrity, was the first species reported upstate in two years which was not also reported on Long Island. It was seen in the Albany area. Other interesting records include two Wood Ducks and two Mute Swans in the Syracuse area, a continuing increase of Canvasbacks in the Niagara River.

Again with the cooperation of Dirck Benson of the New York State Conservation Department, we were given the data from the aerial duck count. Regional chairmen examined the results of the aerial census and compared these results with their own in many specific areas. One obvious reason for differences is the fact that the counts were not taken at the same time. The date span for the aerial count is wider, and even in cases where the counts were close the aerial count is taken during the week, the Federation count usually on a weekend. The 4% overall difference is again a credit to both counts, much of this difference due to inadequate Federation coverage in the Finger Lakes Region. On the other hand some regional editors were quite skeptical of the aerial totals in areas closely checked from the ground.

Credit for the success of this census must be even more widely distributed this year. To each field worker must go a share of this credit, but even more than they the regional chairmen deserve special note for their untiring efforts.

72 Allen's Creek Road, Rochester 18.

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## EXCERPTS FROM THE MINUTES OF THE FEDERATION COUNCIL MEETING

Pleasantville, New York, May 11, 1956

Dr. Dernel Every of the Saw Mill River Audubon Society welcomed the Federation of New York State Bird Clubs to Pleasantville. The ninth annual council meeting was then called to order, president Peter Paul Kellogg presiding, 22 delegates representing 16 clubs present.

### *Committees*

**Bibliography Committee:** All serial publications containing references to New York State birds have been listed and cross referencing will begin soon. All clubs have been requested to send in a bibliography of publications of their group, and individuals are invited to call attention to articles which they feel the committee has missed.

**Conservation Committee:** A study is to be initiated into the subject of protection of the Kingfisher. The council went on record supporting the Erie County Federation of Sportsmen's Clubs in their efforts to enact a law protecting all hawks and owls. The law was originally sponsored by the Buffalo Audubon Society. The council also recorded opposition to legislature permitting sale of detached parcels of forest preserve land in the bills' present form.

Constitution and By-Laws Committee: The new constitution and by-laws necessary for incorporation were adopted. The council also approved the name Federation of New York State Bird Clubs, Inc. for the club, adopted the Laboratory of Ornithology, Cornell University, Ithaca as headquarters, and authorized the president to enlarge the constitution and by-laws committee. The newly designated members are Esley Hallenbeck, Byron Hipple and James Merritt.

Membership Committee: 34 new members since the previous council meeting were officially recognized. The Onondaga Audubon Society was commended for activity in enlisting members.

State Book Committee: Committee projects were enumerated: dividing the state into reporting areas, establishing criteria for records and standards for attendance and frequency of occurrence, designing a species questionnaire, outlining the general format for the book and the plan for each species, compiling a mailing list and starting a bibliography, considering financing, starting an ecological survey, proposing editorial and advisory committees, and searching for an editor.

#### *Financial*

The treasurer's report was given for 1955 by the treasurer for that period, H. Everest Clements.

Cash on hand (January 1, 1955) -----	\$ 577.78
Receipts -----	1,256.12
Expenditures -----	\$1,076.98

Cash on Hand (January 1, 1956) -----	\$ 756.92
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In addition the permanent fund contained \$737.41. The auditing committee's report recommending acceptance of the records was approved.

Budget Committee: The budget for 1956 was approved. It provided \$50.00 president; \$10.00 vice-president; \$40.00 corresponding secretary; \$100.00 treasurer; \$60.00 conservation committee; \$800.00 Kingbird; \$50.00 bibliography committee; \$50.00 constitution and by-laws committee; \$10.00 membership committee; \$10.00 publications and research committee; \$25.00 state book committee; \$10.00 miscellaneous; total expenses \$1230.00.

#### *1957 Officers and Meeting*

An amended slate of officers was elected, as follows: president, Albert W. Fudge, 326 Larchmont Road, Elmira; vice-president, Robert S. Arbib, 231 Lena Avenue, Freeport; corresponding secretary, Elizabeth A. Feldhusen, 5 Catherine Street, Saratoga Springs; recording secretary, Mrs. Edward C. Ulrich, 193 LaSalle Avenue, Buffalo; treasurer, Allan S. Klonick, 901 Sibley Tower Building, Rochester.

Dr. Minnie B. Scotland of the Schenectady Bird Club invited the Federation to hold the 1957 meeting in Schenectady.

Appointed to the auditing committee for 1957 were: Reginald G. Hartwell, chairman, and Harold D. Mitchell. Appointed to the nominating committee for 1957 were: Alvin G. Whitney, chairman, Eugene Eisenmann, and Audrey L. Wrede. The president was authorized to appoint a committee to consider the problem of selecting a state bird. He named Winston W. Brockner to head this committee.



The council went on record thanking the three host clubs, Bedford Audubon Society, Saw Mill River Audubon Society and Scarsdale Audubon Society.

Elizabeth A. Feldhusen, Saratoga Springs.

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Bull, John L. Jr. Proposed breeding bird survey. *Linnaean News-letter* 9(4):1-2.

Carr, Wilbur P. Cooper's Hawks. *Kingbird* 5:30-31.

Christmas counts for 1954.

Locality	Compiler
Atlantic Ocean off N. Y. and N. J. -----	Gilbert Cant
Brooklyn -----	E. J. Whelen
Central Suffolk Co., L. I. -----	Gilbert S. Raynor
Montauk, L. I. -----	N. R. Boyajian
Northern Nassau Co., L. I. -----	P. D. Skaar
Quogue to Watermill, L. I. -----	LeRoy Wilcox
Smithtown, L. I. -----	Robert Ralston
Southern Nassau Co., L. I. -----	Robert S. Arbib, Jr.
Western Long Island -----	Not stated
Bear Mountain—Harriman State Park -----	John Orth
Binghamton -----	L. E. Bemont
Bronx-Westchester Region -----	John Bull
Buffalo -----	Fred T. Hall
Conesus Lake -----	Harry Van Beurden

Cortland	-----	Harold H. Axtell
Deposit	-----	S. S. Wilson, Jr.
Elmira	-----	Mary Welles
Fort Plain	-----	Douglas Ayres, Jr.
Geneva	-----	Not stated
Gouverneur	-----	J. B. Belknap
Hamburg, Orchard Park, East Aurora	-----	Not stated
Jamestown	-----	Roger H. Sundell
Keuka Park	-----	F. K. Guthrie
Kingston-Mohonk Lake-Ashokan Reservoir	-----	Not stated
Manhattan Island	-----	Richard Ryan
Monticello	-----	Kenneth D. Niven
Olean	-----	S. W. Eaton
Oneonta	-----	Emery L. Will
Peekskill	-----	Not stated
Port Chester	-----	William B. Cook
Putnam County	-----	Not stated
Rochester	-----	Not stated
Rockland County	-----	Robert F. Deed
Saranac Lake	-----	Not stated
Schenectady	-----	Guy Bartlett
Staten Island	-----	Mathilde D. Weingar
Syracuse	-----	Walter Spofford
Troy	-----	Byron T. Hipple, Jr.
Watertown	-----	Frank A. Clinch
Watkins Glenn	-----	Jamesine Bardeen

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## A SUMMARY OF THE 56th CHRISTMAS BIRD COUNT IN NEW YORK STATE

GEORGE E. L. LIPPERT

This paper summarizes the Christmas Bird Counts in New York State conducted from December 24 1955 to January 2 1956 (see 1956, *Audubon Field Notes* 10 (2): 82-93). The 55th Count was summarized in the last issue of this magazine (6 (1): 13-15), and future summaries will be provided yearly. In the species tabulations two numbers are given, first the number of counts on which it was reported, second the total number of birds seen.

**LONG ISLAND** — Temperature on the nine counts varied from 15° to 24°F. 144 individuals cooperated, varying from one to 50 observers per count group 498 hours were spent in the field, 392½ afoot, 91 in cars, 19 on boats and 6 on bicycles. 159 miles were traveled, 378 afoot, 1028 by car and 65 by boat. Total species: 146; total birds, 196,277.

Common Loon 9, 106; Red-throated Loon 7, 29; Red-necked Grebe 2, 4; Horned Grebe 9, 768; Pied-billed Grebe 6, 80; Gannet, 4, 18; European Cormorant 4, 32; Double-crested Cormorant 3, 5; **American Egret** 1, 4 (S. Nassau Co.); Great Blue Heron 8, 122; Black-crowned Night Heron 7, 103; American Bittern 3, 8; Mute Swan 6, 456; Whistling Swan 1, 1; Canada Goose 5, 755; Brant 3, 3695; Mallard 6, 936; Black Duck 8, 9516; Gadwall 1, 18; American Widgeon 5, 399; Pintail 5, 248; Green-winged Teal 5, 84; Shoveller 1, 32; Wood Duck 2, 4; Redhead 4, 84; Ring-necked Duck 5, 138; Canvasback 5, 364; Greater Scaup Duck 8, 31,476; Lesser Scaup Duck 5, 144; American Goldeneye 8, 1882; Bufflehead 7, 233; Old-squaw 8, 890; Harlequin Duck 2, 2; White-winged Scoter 9, 11167; Surf Scoter 6, 1214; American Scoter 8, 3551; Ruddy Duck 4, 99; Hooded Merganser 4, 47; American Merganser 6, 411; Red-breasted Merganser 8, 5181; Sharp-shinned Hawk 4, 10; Cooper's Hawk 5, 8; Red-tailed Hawk 4, 16; Red-shouldered Hawk 1, 4; Rough-legged Hawk 1, 1; Bald Eagle 1, 1; Marsh Hawk 6, 51; **Gyrfalcon** 1, 1 (black phase, S. Nassau Co.) Pigeon Hawk 1, 1; Sparrow Hawk 8, 88; Ruffed Grouse 1, 2; Bob-white 2, 45; Ring-necked Pheasant 7, 44; Clapper Rail 5, 13; Virginia Rail 1, 6; Florida Gallinule 1, 1; American Coot 6, 247; Piping Plover 1, 2; Killdeer 5, 38; Black-bellied Plover 3, 21; Woodcock 2, 4; Wilson's Snipe 7, 32; Lesser Yellow-legs 1, 1; Greater Yellow-legs 1, 2; Purple Sandpiper 4, 166; Red-backed Sandpiper 4, 151; Sanderling 4, 657; Glaucous Gull 1, 1; Iceland Gull 2, 2; Great Black-backed Gull 9, 1711; Herring Gull 9, 39357; Ring-billed Gull 9, 975; Bonaparte's Gull 4, 436.

Mourning Dove 6, 570; Barn Owl 1, 2; Screech Owl 4, 11; Horned Owl 1, 2; Long-eared Owl 2, 3; Short-eared Owl 1, 5; Saw-whet Owl 1, 1; Belted Kingfisher 6, 32; Yellow-shafted Flicker 6, 68; Yellow-bellied Sapsucker 1, 3; Hairy Woodpecker 6,40; Downy Woodpecker 8, 173; **Western Kingbird** 1, 1, (Brooklyn); Eastern Phoebe 2, 2; Horned Lark 7, 700; Blue Jay 7, 696; American Crow 8, 1735; Fish Crow, 3, 24; Black-capped Chickadee 8, 552; White-breasted Nuthatch 6, 123; Red-breasted Nuthatch 6, 91; Brown Creeper 4, 10; Winter Wren 6, 14; Carolina Wren 4, 13; Long-billed March Wren 3, 8; Mockingbird 2, 3; Catbird 4, 20; Brown Thrasher 3, 9; American Robin 8, 416; Hermit Thrush 4, 24; Eastern Bluebird 1, 36; Golden-crowned Kinglet 4, 35; American Pipit 1, 3; Cedar Waxwing 3, 27; Gray Shrike 3, 3; Loggerhead Shrike 1, 1; Common Starling 8, 48749; Myrtle Warbler 8, 632; **Yellow-breasted Chat** 2, 2 (Cent. Suffolk and S. Nassau Cos.); House Sparrow 8, 12,859; Eastern Meadowlark 7, 369; Red-winged Blackbird 4, 458; **Baltimore Oriole** 1, 1 (N. Nassau Co.); Rusty Blackbird 3, 36; Purple Grackle 2, 16; Brown-headed Cowbird 4, 724; Cardinal 4, 43; Evening Grosbeak 2, 8; Purple Finch 4, 26; House Finch 1, 27; Common Redpoll 2, 19; Pine Siskin 5, 127; American Goldfinch 6, 605; Red Crossbill 1, 15; White-winged Crossbill 3, 6; Eastern Towhee 4, 18; Ipswich Sparrow 4, 5; Savannah Sparrow 7, 394; Sharp-tailed Sparrow 1, 3; Seaside Sparrow 2, 5; Vesper Sparrow 4, 29; Slate-colored Junco 7, 1773; Oregon Junco 1, 1; Tree Sparrow 8, 2381; Chipping Sparrow 2, 5; Field Sparrow 6, 95; White-crowned Sparrow 1, 11; White-throated Sparrow 7, 1347; Fox Sparrow 5, 116; Swamp Sparrow 7, 89; Song Sparrow 8, 1154; Lapland Longspur 2, 5; Snow Bunting 7, 467. (Also during count period: Snow Goose, Black-legged Kittiwake)

**MAINLAND NEW YORK** — Temperature on the 27 counts varied from -7° to 36°F. 455 individuals cooperated, varying from 1 to 60 observers per count group. 1121 hours were spent in the field, 681<sup>3</sup>/<sub>4</sub> afoot, 18 on boats and 686 in cars. 5442 miles were traveled, 584 afoot, 4754 by car and 104 by boat. Total species: 139; total birds 297,432.

Common Loon 3, 13; Red-throated Loon 3, 7; Horned Grebe 11, 358; Pied-billed Grebe 10, 40; European Cormorant 2, 20; Double-crested Cormorant 1, 6; Great Blue Heron 8, 54; Black-crowned Night Heron 3, 12; Mute Swan 5, 24; Canada Goose 2, 371; Snow Goose 1, 1; Mallard 17, 1600; Black Duck 24, 10059; Gadwall 3, 4; European Widgeon 1, 1; American Widgeon 4, 65; Pintail 6, 24; Green-winged Teal 3, 16; Shoveller 1, 1; **Wood Duck** 3, 4; Redhead 6, 2763; Ring-necked Duck 7, 158; Canvasback 12, 17145 (**10950 Buffalo**); Greater Scaup Duck 11, 26869; Lesser Scaup Duck 8, 112; American Goldeneye 13, 3855; Bufflehead 10, 594; Old-squaw 6, 378; White-winged Scoter 7, 637; Surf Scoter 3, 5; American Scoter 4, 31; Ruddy Duck 4, 83; Hooded Merganser 8, 83; American Merganser 17, 5684; Red-breasted Merganser 11, 785; Goshawk 5, 6; Sharp-shinned Hawk 6, 10; Cooper's Hawk 13, 23; Red-tailed Hawk 17, 114; Red-shouldered Hawk 8, 20; Rough-legged Hawk 5, 13; Bald Eagle 5, 10; Marsh Hawk 6, 14; Peregrine Falcon 3, 4; Sparrow Hawk 21, 142; Ruffed Grouse 17, 50; Bob-white 1, 3; Ring-necked

Pheasant 24, 675; **Wild Turkey** 1, 20 (Deposit: probably a release); Virginia Rail 2, 7; American Coot 8, 209; Killdeer 4, 63; Black-bellied Plover 1, 12; Ruddy Turnstone 1, 2; Woodcock 1, 1; Wilson's Snipe 3, 6; Greater Yellow-legs 1, 1; Purple Sandpiper 4, 63; Sanderling 1, 5; Glaucous Gull 5, 16; Iceland Gull 3, 9; Great Black-backed Gull 12, 704; Herring Gull 23, 40654; Ring-billed Gull 13, 5826; **Franklin's Gull** 1, 1 (Buffalo); Laughing Gull 2, 8; Bonaparte's Gull 3, 1820; **Black-legged Kittiwake** 1, 1 (Buffalo).

Mourning Dove 14, 410; Barn Owl 1, 1; Screech Owl 10, 29; Horned Owl 13, 28; Barred Owl 5, 7; Long-eared Owl 2, 5; Short-eared Owl 3, 12; Saw-whet Owl 3, 4; Belted Kingfisher 14, 37; Yellow-shafted Flicker 12, 31; Pileated Woodpecker 11, 21; Red-bellied Woodpecker 4, 4; Red-headed Woodpecker 2, 3; Yellow-bellied Sapsucker 2, 2; Hairy Woodpecker 23, 233; Downy Woodpecker 27, 682; Horned Lark 11, 206; Blue Jay 26, 1705; American Crow 26, 10095; Fish Crow 2, 5; Black-capped Chickadee 27, 3764; Tufted Titmouse 4, 56; White-breasted Nuthatch 28, 496; Red-breasted Nuthatch 11, 53; Brown Creeper 21, 92; Winter Wren 8, 14; Carolina Wren 5, 5; Long-billed Marsh Wren 1, 1; Catbird 3, 5; Brown Thrasher 2, 4; American Robin 19, 453; Hermit Thrush 4, 14; Eastern Bluebird 4, 92; Golden-crowned Kinglet 13, 77; Ruby-crowned Kinglet 2, 2; Cedar Waxwing 11, 618; Gray Shrike 14, 41; Loggerhead Shrike 1, 1; Common Starling 27, 131949; Myrtle Warbler 5, 11; **Yellow-breasted Chat** 1, 1 (Staten Island); House Sparrow 27, 9263; Eastern Meadowlark 5, 110; Red-winged Blackbird 12, 490; **Baltimore Oriole** 1, 1 (Bronx-Westchester); Rusty Blackbird 4, 36; Purple Grackle 7, 19; Brown-headed Cowbird 8, 562; Cardinal 20, 398; Evening Grosbeak 19, 710; Purple Finch 9, 128; House Finch 1, 64; Pine Grosbeak 6, 90; Common Redpoll 11, 580; Pine Siskin 10, 368; American Goldfinch 20, 586; Red Crossbill 1, 3; White-winged Crossbill 2, 7; Eastern Towhee 7, 23; Savannah Sparrow 2, 44; Vesper Sparrow 1, 3; Slate-colored Junco 24, 2036; Tree Sparrow 26, 5181; Chipping Sparrow 2, 4 (Port Chester-Greenwich-Stamford, Bronx-Westchester); Field Sparrow 3, 64; White-throated Sparrow 13, 760; Fox Sparrow 3, 27; Swamp Sparrow 7, 72; Song Sparrow 18, 649; Lapland Longspur 3, 5; Snow Bunting 10, 1506. (Also during count period: Clapper Rail, Yellow-throat, Snowy Owl, **Tufted Duck** (Manhattan), Red-necked Grebe, Oregon Junco.)

Totals for entire state: 161 species; 493709 individuals.

R. D. No. 1, Brown Road, Albion, New York.

## NOTES

**A Survey of Eagles.** — The nesting success of the Bald Eagle in Florida has declined drastically in the last few years. Some ten years ago approximately 150 young were banded; in 1952 only 25. In a letter written in late February Charles Broley states that he banded only one this winter and probably would be able to band only two more: in a three county area formerly having some 65 nests, only three produced young.

With other reports also indicating a decline in numbers of Bald Eagles, the Audubon Society of the District of Columbia formed a committee to study the eagle's status in the Chesapeake Bay region, and they have suggested that a similar study be started in the Great Lakes Basin. Since I have been making a long term study of the Golden Eagle in the Appalachians and have in its course learned something of the Bald Eagle as well, it has been suggested that I undertake to broaden the scope of my survey to include the latter species. In order to do this for New York and adjacent areas, the help of observers in these areas will be needed. Federation of New York State Bird Clubs members can be of invaluable assistance in this project by collecting data. Perhaps an interested participant may be enlisted for each club area who will take it upon himself to find out the past, present and continuing status of the eagles and to help assemble this data. Interested Federation members are invited to contact the author.

In such a survey the help of fishermen and hunters can be of even more value because of the greater number and more extensive coverage. Since many sportsmen confuse the Osprey with the Bald Eagle and because of the intrinsic interest in the

Osprey also, it is suggested that information on both species be collected. All observations of these birds which may indicate nesting will be of value, particularly since nests cannot be located or even suspected in wilderness areas such as the Adirondacks except by the accumulation of many observations. I hope to receive reports on spring and summer eagles in the hope that these observations will lead to nests as yet undiscovered or unreported. At the present time my files contain records on only five current eagle nests along Lake Ontario, fewer from the interior of the state.

In my study of the Golden Eagle from Ungava to Georgia I am also collecting information on the Peregrine Falcon, partly because the aeries of these two cliff-nesting species can be confused, as they were by William Brewster 85 years ago and lesser observers since. It is interesting to note that two recently used New York State nests of the Bald Eagle, one dating back for more than 80 years, are also in cliffs.

In the present inquiry the focus of attention will be on the status of the Bald Eagle, but information of the Osprey, the Golden Eagle and the Peregrine Falcon will also be welcome. Specific information on the last two species especially will be held confidential because these birds are particularly subject to molestation.—Walter R. Spofford, Duguid Road, Fayetteville, N. Y.

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**Blue-winged and Golden-winged Warblers near Ithaca.** — The Golden-winged Warbler has been a fairly common resident of the lower elevations in western New York for at least fifty years (E. H. Eaton, 1914, "Birds of New York," II, 387), but it has been locally distributed. Until recently the Blue-winged Warbler has been exceedingly rare in central and western New York. In the early 1940's, however, it was found that the Blue-wing had become a fairly common bird in many parts of Chautauqua and Erie counties. The spread of this species in western New York has been briefly reviewed by Parkes (1949, *Wilson Bulletin* 61: 48-49).

In the Ithaca area neither Blue-winged nor Golden-winged Warblers had been found in the breeding season until 1953. In mid-May 1953 an apparently mated pair was located in Michigan Hollow approximately eight miles south of Ithaca. The male of this pair was collected. In the spring of 1954, we found approximately seven male Blue-wings and three male Golden-wings which appeared to be defending territories in the same area. Although no one revisited the area to locate nests it is quite probable that both species nest in Michigan Hollow.

The habitat preferences of the Golden-winged Warbler seem to vary in different regions. Territories are found in the Lake Ontario plains at the edges of wooded swamps, areas that do not seem attractive to these birds in the hills of southwestern New York. There the habitat requirements of the Golden-wing seem to include: (1) a slight hillside covered with a few rather large second-growth deciduous trees, sugar maple the species I have most often noted; (2) some scrubby growth (sumac, blackberries, etc.) around the base of the hill, and especially although not invariably old apple trees; (3) a moist area at or near the base of this growth, usually with rather long grass; (4) a nearby creek; (5) altitudes below 800 feet. The places in Michigan Hollow where Golden-wings turned up possessed these same characteristics and looked like ideal areas for them.

Once having invaded south-western New York, the Blue-wing has shown no tendency to be so narrowly restricted in habitat requirements. They are likely to be found in almost any type of second growth scrub, from habitat like that of the Golden-wing to areas much dryer, much more exposed and much higher in altitude. Thus it is possible in and near Chautauqua county to find an unusual situation: Golden-winged Warblers in the low valleys and some Blue-winged Warblers well up above near the crests of the hills.

The Blue-wings in Michigan Hollow in 1954 were all noted in low, moist areas, but were found in much more varied habitat than the Golden-wings. Nevertheless at least two were in habitat which would probably be suitable to Golden-wings. Such situations as this might well give the opportunity for inter-specific mating, and the establishment of a colony of these two species may bring more hybrid forms to the Ithaca area.

Subsequent search of this area in 1955 did not turn up birds of these species, although Blue-winged Warblers were found in two other locations near Ithaca.

Neither of these appeared to be nesting localities. It is still conjectural whether these two species have, or will have in the future, successfully established permanent breeding colonies in south-central New York State.—Edward L. Seeber, 213 Columbia Street, Ithaca, New York

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#### **Food Preferences of Wintering Robins in Central New York State, 1955-1956. —**

The winter of 1955-6, in spite of being a rather severe one with respect to amount of snow, ice and below-freezing temperatures (while lacking the extreme cold of some years), might be known at least in the Finger Lakes area as the Winter of the Robins.

The usual scattered reports of one or two Robins kept coming in to me and to the Ornithology office at Cornell throughout December and the first two weeks of January. Three Robins were spending most of their time with a neighbor of mine in Etna, feeding on multiflora rose fruits, and coming at times into my yard for the same food.

On January 15, however, I saw a flock of 18 Robins in Cayuga Heights near Ithaca and was told that up to 25 had been there all winter. The next day, the 16th, the calls and letters began to come in, telling of flocks all around Ithaca and eventually all around central New York State. We kept a record of most of these reports and on January 18, I put a small item in the ITHACA JOURNAL calling attention to the flocks and asking that people note what food was attracting them. Dr. Benjamin Burtt kindly ran a similar note in his weekly column "Keeping Up with the Birds" in the Syracuse POST-STANDARD, asking for the same information. The response was gratifying.

In general the Robins utilized natural food. I had only one report of their eating bread crumbs; one report, third hand, of their eating suet. I put out raspberries and mulberries from my freezer, but they were ignored. Multiflora rose and frozen apples left on the trees seemed to be the favorite foods but fruits of the following were also reported as being eaten: Mountain Ash, several species of Dogwood, Buckthorn, Washington Thorn, Autumn Olive, Cotoneaster, Myrtle, Wild Grape, Barberry, Privet, Cedar, Juniper and Sumac.

One observer saw a Robin locate a caterpillar and another saw one feed on insect eggs. A report came from Clifton Springs of a flock feeding on stone-flies (Plecoptera) in early February. Crows also fed on them.

No one seems willing to make any positive statements about the reasons for the large flocks being present throughout the winter, nor have I found anyone who has determined what population of robins these might have been. Were they northern birds that went no farther south than this? Were they mid-western ones that were driven east by some weather disturbance not evident to us? Were they the usual eastern population that found a great scarcity of food farther south because of late freezes in the spring of 1955 and, unusually early, worked their way back north where food was relatively abundant? Perhaps weather had little to do with it and the relatively abundant food supply played the important role. In any case it was pleasant to have them!

I am indebted to all who sent me their observations on the foods taken by these birds. Sally F. Hoyt, Laboratory of Ornithology, Cornell University, Ithaca, N. Y.

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## HIGHLIGHTS OF THE SPRING MIGRATION: APRIL, MAY 1956

About noon on Census Day Allan Klonick pointed out a bush literally filled with warblers; a dozen or more birds of over a half dozen species feeding within inches of the ground and within ten feet of us. As I mentally checked them off — Black-poll, Pine, Palm, Cape May, . . . even Prairie — I was evidently participating in an experience many others shared all over New York State this spring. Regional editors report not only excellent waves of passerine migrants, but also a marked tendency toward exposure. This last feature of the migration allowed many non-birders to experience the esthetic pleasure of watching these brightly colored mites, a pleasure so often reserved to those who wield eight or ten power glasses. This was the spring to take the wife out birding.

*Kingbird* summaries of the last five years indicate that this was the best state-wide spring migration of the Fifties. Wilson's and Canada Warblers were perhaps most plentiful this year, but in addition to heavy populations of these and other species we had excellent variety. Consider reports of a representative selection of our rarer warblers, Kentucky, Connecticut, Yellow-throated, Orange-crowned and the Brewster's hybrid, since the inception of *The Kingbird*. Here are the number of regional reports of these birds by years: 1951, 8; 1952, 5; 1953, 4; 1954, 12; 1955, 3; 1956, 24. The 1956 breakdown by regions is: Kentucky, 1, 2, 7, 8; Connecticut, 1, 2, 5, 8; Yellow-throated, 2, 3, 4, 8, 9, 10; Orange-crowned, 2, 3, 5, 8, 9; and Brewster's 2, 4, 5, 6, 9. (Others may not have been included with reports.)

With this heavy warbler migration came many Empidonax flycatchers, but whereas the warblers presented easy identification the flycatchers were quite difficult. The lack of song on the part of the warblers was compensated for by the ease of visual identification; this unfortunately was not the case with the flycatchers. We need the "fitz-brew" or "chebek" to identify these extremely similar birds; absence of the calls prevented much identification and hundreds could only be given their generic name. The number of Yellow-bellied Flycatcher reports indicate the larger number of Empidonax.

What were the factors behind this unusual migration? Anyone interested in the answer ought to take the time to read the individual regional reports for all areas of the state, at very least the introductions and the vireo-warbler sections. These reports are excellent, and they show amazing correlation in their analysis of the factors influencing this migration.

Briefly here is the picture. Mild weather never did arrive until late May, with frosts continuing until the last ten days in the month. This weather retarded foliage and insect development. Birds could not filter through the state as they did in 1954 and 1955, however, because of this food deficiency. Migrants which arrived on time could penetrate no farther north, and later waves piled up on these. The food supply which could not adequately support early migrants fell woefully short now. Tree top birds fed at stream side and marsh edge. Tom Lesperance indicates some casualties among Scarlet Tanagers, and suggests that less conspicuous birds may have died unnoticed.

Complete this interesting and complex picture by reading further. GRR.



## REGION 1 — NIAGARA FRONTIER

CLARK S. BEARDSLEE

Most of April gave us disappointing birding. True, the first six days were quite warm, but the March ice was too thick to melt quickly, and although a great deal of open water was present in the fields and sinks by the 6th, winter closed in again with a vengeance until the 27th. On the 28th some of the dammed-up migration broke loose and such species as Towhees, Brown Thrashers, and White-throated Sparrows swarmed into the area. May was cold and rainy, but we shall remember it as having provided the most consistently good birding of any May in many years. Vegetation was extremely retarded (foliation was not complete until June), while the birds were nearly on schedule. This made for optimum observing conditions for the small migrants, while the continual heavy rains kept the fields flooded throughout the period, making for good duck and shore bird observing. Extreme cold, particularly on the 17th, when the temperature was in the twenties in most of western N. Y., brought many insectivorous birds (notably tanagers, flycatchers, and swallows) right down to the ground for their food.

**LOONS — DUCKS:** Fewer Red-throated Loons and Red-necked Grebes than usual were reported. Mrs. McMurtry got the first Green Heron (Apr 29) and first migrant American Bittern (Apr 12) at Wellsville. The maximum count of Canada Geese at Wolcottsville and the Oak Orchard area was 28,000; there were great numbers there after mid-April, and as the heavy rains kept the fields flooded, more geese were reported in May than ever before (3000 May 5, Beardslee). Snow and Blue Geese were seen sparingly at Oak Orchard in April. All of the usual duck species were reported, but there was nothing exceptional either in numbers or in dates.

**HAWKS — OWLS:** There were good hawk flights along the south shore of Lake Erie Apr 22, 27, and 29, and another along the south shore of Lake Ontario westward into a stiff wind May 5 (seven species, Point Breeze, Beardslee). There was a fairly good shore bird movement. Woodcock were late, snipe on time. An early Black-bellied Plover was found on May 7 (Amherst, F. and E. Cuddy). Common Terns returned early, despite the cold (60 at Niagara Falls Apr 12, Mitchell), and the first Black Tern, also early, was seen at Wellsville May 1 (McMurtry). Barn Owls nested at Alden (Wolfling).

**SWIFTS — SHRIKES:** Whip-poor-wills were reported twice Apr 29 and twice Apr 30. Although one or two Nighthawks were seen rather early, few were present until well after their normal arrival date. Height of the Hummingbird migration was May 12. Phoebes did not arrive until Apr. 3. Least and Yellow-bellied Flycatchers were considerably more numerous than usual. Most swallows were rather late — exception, Barn (Apr 7, two at Oak Orchard, Beardslee). All thrushes arrived on schedule, none being reported early (a boon to the censors).

**VIREOS — WARBLERS:** Yellow-throated (May 12) and Solitary (May 6) Vireos were very late indeed. Philadelphia Vireos were unusually numerous, but in general the vireo migration was not very good, being particularly poor on May 20, when our spring bird count was held. All observers reported a splendid warbler migration, although there was some divergence of opinion as to which species were exceptionally numerous, principally due to areas worked. The consensus would be, I think, that Black and White, Magnolia, Cap May (locally), Blackburnian, Mourning, and Wilson's were much commoner than usual. Rarities included a Kentucky Warbler in the Klabundes' yard at Lewistown May 18-22 and a Connecticut in Forest Lawn Cemetery May 19 (Nathan et al). I thought most warblers were more silent than usual.

**BLACKBIRDS — SPARROWS:** Parker noted six Bobolinks at Stillwater (Chautauqua County) Apr 29. Orchard Orioles were reported from Forest Lawn Cemetery, Delaware Park, and from Lewiston. Kirsch found an Indigo Bunting at Hamburg Apr 30, but most observers had to wait another two weeks. Evening Grosbeaks

stayed at Hamburg and Jamestown until May 8, and at Wellsville until the 21st (McMurtry). Red Crossbills were last reported May 21 (Holland, James). The Klabundes had an Oregon Junco at their feeder Apr 2 to 21; many observers added it to their life list. Eaton collected a female Lark Sparrow Apr 29 (near Vandalia); it is interesting to note that another Lark Sparrow was seen at Morgan's Point, Ont. (outside our territory) May 11. The height of the White-crowned Sparrow migration was May 12.

132 McKinley Ave., Kenmore, N. Y.

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## REGION 2—GENESEE

LEO J. TANGHE

Prolonged cold in April held up many migrants until the week-end of Apr 28-29, when 31 new species were recorded for the year. May migrants arrived mostly on schedule. Birding during May was the best in many years; 206 species were observed during the month and 195 on Spring Census Day, May 20. Noteworthy records of birds observed on a single day were: 152 species at Braddocks Bay (approximately one square mile) on May 12 by Listman, Bieber and McKinney; 115 species at Ling Road (approximately one-fourth square mile) on May 20 by Dobson; and 170 species within a 50 mile radius of Rochester on May 20 by Taylor, Klönick and Rising.

(Ed. note: April-May and August-November 1955 reports not included in this magazine are summarized in 1955, Goshawk 8 (2).)

**LOONS — DUCKS:** Large numbers of Common Loons, Red-throated Loons and Holboell's Grebes were seen by the Kemnitzers during April along Lake Ontario east of Rochester. Counts were 494, 412 and 14, respectively on Apr 14; and 818, 723, and 9, respectively on Apr 21. Counts of 50 to 75 Common Loons were reported through the first week of May. Two American Egrets were observed for a few days at Braddock's Bay. A Snowy Egret was found in Durand Eastman Park on May 15 (Mrs. Moon) where it remained for a week and was seen by numerous observers. A few Whistling Swans remained in the area longer than usual. One was seen at Braddock Bay (Listman), two in Durand Eastman Park (Dobson), and one on Irondequoit Bay as late as May 20 (McDonald). A good variety of ducks was present throughout this period except that Green-winged Teal did not arrive until Apr 2 and Wood Ducks were comparatively few, usually only one or two birds being reported at a time. There were no records of European Widgeon this spring. Two Surf Scoters were seen at Mendon Ponds Park on Apr 2 by the Whites and Dakins, and 138 White-winged Scoters at Port Bay on May 26 by the Kemnitzers. A Harlequin Duck was seen by Listman and Haft at Braddock Bay on May 27 much later in the season than the other few records for this bird here.

**HAWKS — OWLS:** Best day at the Hawk Lookout at Braddock Bay was May 12 when Listman, Bieber and McKinney recorded 11 species of hawks, including 2000 Sharp-shinned, 2200 Broad-winged, 14 Bald Eagles, and 17 Ospreys. Many observers had good close looks at Dowitchers in spring plumage at Ling Road. They remained for two weeks, with a maximum count of 16 on May 26. Ruddy Turnstones were present in good numbers at Braddock Bay. From the same area a Willet was reported by Bieber on May 12, and a Knot on May 26 by Miller. The latter bird is seldom seen here in spring and only sparingly in fall. A few Red-backed Sandpipers were seen, but no White-rumped. Winter gulls made surprisingly early departures considering the cold spring. Last dates for the Glaucous, Iceland and Black-backed Gulls were Apr 29, 4 and 14, respectively. A Barred Owl was heard in the pre-dawn hours at Conesus Lake on May 20 by Taylor, Klönick and Rising. Other owls recorded were the Screech, Great Horned, Long-eared, Short-eared, and Saw-whet, but these were all below their normal count. An evening owl trip to

Bergen Swamp in April produced no owls, but only the Wilson's Snipe in courtship flight. This year the Barn Owl was not to be found at Scottsville where it had been resident for several years. No Snowy Owls have been reported.

**SWIFTS — SHRIKES:** The best record in this group was the American Magpie seen two miles west of Kuckville, Orleans County, on April 21 by Listman and McKinney. This bird perched in the open 250 feet away, and was observed with binoculars and scope at leisure. (Ed. Note: This is a Reg. on l Record details of which have not yet been forwarded.) Large migratory flocks of about 1000 Chimney Swifts (downtown Rochester, Dobson) and 1500 Blue Jays (Braddock Bay; Listman, Bieber and McKinney) were reported. Swallows were late in arriving in appreciable numbers, but several thousand spent the first two weeks of May at Ling Road. Barn, Bank, Tree and Rough-winged Swallows flew underneath a low bridge, where they could be seen from above at a distance of only 5 to 10 feet. Cliff Swallows were scarce this spring. A flock of about 60 Horned Larks near Mendon Ponds on April 8 contained one-third Prairie and two-thirds Northern (McKinney). There were two or three reports each of Olive-sided Flycatcher, Tufted Titmouse, Carolina Wren and Mockingbird.

**WARBLERS — VIREOS:** The warbler migration was exceptionally good here this spring, with 36 warblers recorded. This included 34 species, one sub-species (Yellow Palm) and one hybrid (Brewster's). Most of the rarer warblers were seen on the week-end of May 19-20. These included Blue-winged at Bergen Swamp by McKinney, and at Letchworth Park by R. Simons and Kramer; Brewster's at Powder Mill Park by Mrs. Davis; Orange-crowned at Webster by Kemnitzers, at Ling Road by O'Hara, Miller, Tanghe and Dobson, at Braddock Bay by Listman, Bieber, McKinney and Brown, and at Gaines (Orleans County) by Weeks; Yellow-throated at Mendon Ponds by Mrs. White; Pine at Ling Road by Kionick, Rising and McKinney, and at Long Pond Woods by O'Hara and Miller (Apr 28); Prairie at Braddocks by Listman, Bieber and McKinney, and at Ling Road by Tanghe, Dobson et al; and Yellow-breasted Chat at Webster by Kemnitzers and at Braddocks Bay by O'Hara and Miller. This spring many of the warblers could be seen at eye level at close range.

**BLACKBIRDS — SPARROWS:** Phenomenal flights of Red-wings and related birds took place during the first week of April when a mild break in the weather followed a prolonged cold spell. On Apr 4 a flight of over 100,000 Redwings passed eastward along the lakeshore at Braddock Bay (Listman). On the following day there was a lesser flight of 23,000 Redwings and 3000 Bronzed Grackles. Numerous Rusty Blackbirds, Meadowlarks, Robins and Flickers were in these flocks. A Western Meadowlark appeared at Manitou on Apr 28 and was seen again in almost exactly the same location on May 12 and 20. Several observers saw and heard this bird. Another, probably a different bird, was seen at West Webster, about 15 miles east of Manitou, on May 23 by Mrs. Kemnitzer. Evening Grosbeaks remained until May 15, but there were no Pine Grosbeaks throughout the spring or winter. There were several reports of Lincoln's Sparrow, the first of which was seen at Mendon Ponds by Mrs. White on May 8. The last report of Lapland Longspurs was on Apr 8: two birds were seen by McKinney, one in summer plumage.

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### REGION 3— FINGER LAKES

SALLY F. HOYT

April and May in the Finger Lakes were as cold and wet as any on record. While Walker reports the last killing frost at Waterloo on May 16, my thermometer in Etna stood at 21° F. on May 25, and there were snows in early May. Opinions vary on whether the timing of migration was affected. Around Ithaca birds seemed to come in pretty much on schedule, but near Geneva they were slow in arriving.

There was unanimous agreement on one point: unusual behavior of migrants and arriving residents. The leaves were so late in coming out (as

much as three weeks late in sections) and the insect population so reduced by the late freezes also, that tree-top feeders were driven to low levels or the ground and non-birders were seeing warblers for the first time in their lives. Baltimore Orioles, Scarlet Tanagers and Rose-breasted Grosbeaks fed in fields, on road edges (where many were killed) and came to feeders for suet, peanut butter and sunflower seeds. Songs of many species were at a minimum and made identification difficult, especially of the Empidonax Flycatchers.

Keuka Lake was high, so few shore birds stopped there on migration. Ice did not leave the collecting basins of the Hornell Reservoir until Apr 15, affecting the water-bird report.

**LOONS — DUCKS:** Loons were somewhat scarcer than usual on Cayuga. On Keuka Lake there were more than usual but not up to peak years (Guthrie). One Holboell's Grebe was reported on Cayuga on Apr 29 (H. Adams). Great Blue Herons were down in numbers at Montezuma Refuge (Walker). A new herony located last year near Ithaca by R. Smith was again occupied this year. The first American Egrets were reported at Montezuma in April. More Least Bitterns were reported on the Ithaca census day (May 20) than for several years. A Whistling Swan was present at the Refuge for two weeks in April; ten were reported at Tioga, Pa., just out of our area. None were recorded this year at Hornell as they are not seen there unless the ice leaves the Hornell Reservoir basin by early April. 15 Brant at Ithaca May 17 (Jehl). 2 Snow Geese and 2 Blue Geese were at the Refuge in April. 14,000 was the highest count of Canada Geese at the Refuge, and one Lesser Canada was trapped and confined there.

Gadwalls continue to increase and are nesting at the Refuge. A European Widgeon was reported there on May 20 (Jack Saunders). Wood Ducks have slumped slightly in numbers at Hornell (Groesbeck) after an increase. Several pairs are nesting at Sapsucker Woods, Ithaca again. There was a good count of Old-squaws on Cayuga in early May. Groesbeck reports that Buffleheads have increased steadily in the Hornell area since '39 and Ruddies since '44. White-winged Scoters were reported on several dates on Cayuga, and five appeared at Hornell on Apr 29 for the first time since '47. Two Surf Scoters were seen on Seneca Lake May 13 (F. Gambrell).

**HAWKS — OWLS:** No noteworthy Hawk migration was reported in the Region, although Groesbeck saw 21 Broadwings on Apr 29 just outside Livingston County. The pair of Bald Eagles at Montezuma raised one young this Spring, and two adults and one immature Eagle were seen at Hector Falls Pt. north of Watkins Glen on May 21 (M. Bardeen). More Osprey reports than usual this spring: from Avoca, Ithaca, Etna, Tyrone, Hornell and the Refuge. One Duck Hawk reported from the Refuge May 13 (F. Gambrell) and 1 south of Ithaca on May 18 (Mr. and Mrs. E. Terry). Nesting Hawks are doing well around Ithaca, especially Red-shouldered. Pheasants were scarce at Avoca (Carter) and down slightly in numbers around Ithaca. Virginia Rails seem scarce throughout the Region, Soras in usual numbers. Florida Gallinules continue to be scarce, but P. Kelsey reported one on Apr 24 on a pond near Mohawk Airport, Ithaca and Walker saw one at the Refuge on May 30. Coot continue to increase.

Killdeer are scarcer than usual at Avoca (Carter). Ruddy Turnstones, not always seen in Spring, occurred at the Refuge in May. Woodcock are somewhat down in numbers near Ithaca (O. Hewitt). The pair on the Bardeen farm at Burdett had 2 eggs on May 26. The Upland Plover has not been reported this year from its old station near Dryden. Least Sandpipers were common on May 20, noted by both the Elmira census group and the Ithaca group in the Cayuga Basin. Red-backed Sandpipers and Dowitchers were with the Turnstones at the Refuge on May 20. Groesbeck observed 186 Ring-billed Gulls in a field at Arkport May 6. 1 Bonaparte's Gull was seen by Allen on a tiny pond near Sapsucker Woods on Apr 20. Ward reported a poor flight of Bonaparte's on Seneca this year, but 500 were at the Refuge (Walker). Black Terns were abundant at the Refuge in May. 1 was seen on a lake near Quackenbush Hill in Steuben County by the Chemung Valley Aud. Soc. on May 20. Mourning Doves seemed abundant everywhere. More Black-billed Cuckoos reported this year than Yellow-billed, several nests with eggs by June 15.

Screech Owls were absent around Keuka. One Long-eared Owl reported May 13 at Geneva (Peck).

**SWIFTS — SHRIKES:** The Red-headed Woodpecker continues to be a rarity, and does not seem to be nesting at Stewart Park, Ithaca this year. One reported at Swanson farm, s. of Ithaca, on Apr 30 and one on golf course. They were not anywhere in evidence at the Refuge on May 20. Hairy Woodpeckers are scarce at Avoca (Carter). From several regions came reports that Empidonax Flycatchers were unusually silent, and hence could not be identified. However, the Yellow-bellied, often missed on migration, was seen at Clifton Springs in May (Munford), at Avoca on May 22 (Carter) and at Ithaca on May 20. The Olive-sided Flycatcher, likewise sometimes missed, was reported from Avoca on May 22 (Carter) from Geneva on May 27 (Ward) and Sapsucker Woods, Ithaca on May 14 (Allen).

Rough-winged Swallows are down in numbers at Avoca. Groesbeck reports a colony of Purple Martins at Arkport which has grown, in the 7 years it has been there, to almost 50 pairs. The first ones arrived at Ithaca unusually early this spring on Apr 5 (Allen). Carolina Wrens are again nesting at Kent's Point on Seneca Lake (Woodward). The Short-billed Marsh Wren seems scarcer than usual, and both Marsh Wrens were absent at Keuka (Guthrie).

A Mockingbird was reported by Al Kopp from Reading Center on May 24 and 25. Brown Thrashers are up in numbers at Geneva (Walker). Robins were late in nesting, although they returned on schedule. Groesbeck reports a partial albino Veery at Hornell, the head only being albinistic (May 18). All areas mourn the continued decrease in numbers of Bluebirds. Each year they fail to return to or to occupy old boxes. 3 pairs of Blue-gray Gnatcatchers occurred at Keuka (Guthrie) and Mrs. V. Whitaker reported a pair building at Penn Yan on April 14. They were also reported at Elmira and Ithaca. Ruby-crowned Kinglets seemed scarcer than usual. Few reports of Pipits. Large flocks of Cedar Waxwings occurred at Avoca in April.

**VIREOS — WARBLERS:** Good migration of both vireos and warblers throughout the Region, and as remarked earlier a combination of factors contributed to the number of reports, particularly of warblers. A White-eyed Vireo, second in history of the Elmira area records, occurred at the little Horseheads March 16-20 (found by R. Andrus and seen and heard by many). The Blue-headed Vireo was seen May 5 at Avoca where it is reported as often missed. Elmira had its second record of the Philadelphia Vireo but the Club notes that perhaps it is usually overlooked. May 12 and 14 were noted as good warbler days at Hornell (Groesbeck) where all, even Blackburnian and Bay-breasts were feeding low. Prothonotary Warblers, often reported only from Montezuma, were seen this year at Ithaca and Elmira on migration. Each year brings more reports of Blue-winged Warblers in the Ithaca area, and this year Golden-wings have been found at new stations too. Spiker saw a Blue-winged in Guyariga Valley May 13. Tennessee Warblers were abundant at Avoca and lingered late (Carter). Orange-crowned Warblers, rarely seen in the Region in spring, were recorded at Elmira (Smith et al) May 5, at Avoca May 25 (Carter), and at Ithaca May 20 (Hewitt). Cape Mays were abundant around Ithaca, but scarce at Avoca. A Yellow-throated Warbler was seen by many observers at Joe Smith's in Elmira on May 9, and there were two unverified but seemingly good reports of them near Ithaca (H. M. Johnson, A. Rosser). Blackburnian and Black-throated Green Warblers were scarce at Avoca, Black-polls scarce at Ithaca and Avoca. A Yellow Palm Warbler, a rarity, was seen by Loren Ward during migration at Geneva. Groesbeck reports an increase in Water-thrushes at Hornell. Chats are scarce everywhere, but are nesting again at the Bardeen farm at Burdett. The most unusual feature of the warbler migration was the great abundance, everywhere in the region, of Wilson's Warblers, in good song, still reported at Ithaca on June 9. Canadas seemed more abundant too.

**BLACKBIRDS — SPARROWS:** Three reports of Orchard Orioles: an imm. male at the A. A. Allen home, Ithaca on May 6, in immature at Elmira on May 20, and one at Dundee on May 13 (Lerch). Grackles are increasing everywhere, and Cowbirds are more common at Avoca (Carter). Many Scarlet Tanagers were seen feeding on the ground, and Groesbeck watched them eating sumac on May 18. Cardinals have become quite common around Hornell, everywhere except in the Collecting Basin area, and Groesbeck wonders if the foliage-control spraying might influence this. Evening Grosbeaks lingered into May, but most departure dates were before May 15, a week earlier than last year. A total of 854 E. Grosbeaks

banded at Etna from December through May. Pine Siskins were less common than some years, except at Avoca. Red Crossbills were reported from four places in April: Ithaca, Keuka, Geneva and Watkins Glen. Tree Sparrows, which left Avoca earlier than usual (Carter) left Etna at some time as other years. All areas reported the largest numbers of White-crowned Sparrows ever seen on Spring migration. Spiker banded 90 at Branchport. The numbers reached their peak at Ithaca May 7-9. Lincoln Sparrows were reported more often than in some years.

"Aviana", Etna, New York.

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## REGION 4 — SUSQUEHANNA

LESLIE E. BEMONT

The weather during April and May has for the most part been unseasonably cold. During April there were a couple of moderately heavy snowfalls, the worst occurring April 8, and there were snow flurries more days than there weren't. There were few pleasantly mild days until almost the middle of May and most nights to the end of May brought frost or near frost. Almost all species returned late as compared to other years. The most notable exceptions were some of the normally late migrants such as Yellow-bellied, Alder and Olive-sided Flycatchers, Bay-breasted and Black-poll Warblers which were either on time or even somewhat early. The cold weather may well have been responsible for the frequency with which Baltimore Orioles and Scarlet Tanagers were seen feeding on the ground by holding up the hatching of the insects that they normally feed on in the tree tops. All in all it was a very satisfactory migration from the watchers' point of view. There were few pronounced waves but rather a steady stream of migrants. The cold weather also held back the leaves so that observation was relatively easy.

**LOONS — DUCKS:** Single Common Loons were reported from Norwich Apr 14 to 29 (Whites) and from Deposit Apr 30 (Wilson). Two were at Guilford Lake in Chenango County May 6 (Whites). The Norwich and Deposit areas are the only areas in the region from which Loons are reported with anything approaching regularity. Horned Grebes seem to have been especially common for this region this spring. 18 reports were received, totalling about 75 birds, from the April-May period. The largest count reported was of 15-20 birds at Unadilla Apr 22 (Wisner). The last report was from Oneonta May 20 (Will). Pied-billed Grebes were scarce at Deposit (Wilson) and Binghamton (Triple Cities Naturalists' Club) but seemed normal elsewhere. Great Blue Herons were seen in normal numbers. Mr. Wilson reports a flock of 12 plus one American Egret flying in circles over a wooded hilltop near his home in Deposit Apr 17. Other American Egret reports: one near Greene Apr 26 (Stratton), one near Binghamton May 5 (Topping) and one near Norwich May 11 (Whites). One Green Heron on Apr 29 at Sherburne (Whites) and four more the same day at Deposit (Wilson) were our first. A Black-crowned Night Heron along the Susquehanna River at Endwell Apr 2 was our first (Gendel). Highest count to date was nine at Willow Point, across the river from Johnson City, May 7 (Bemont, M. Washburn). Our first American Bittern was near Norwich Apr 21 (Whites). A pair was observed mating May 10 at Deposit (Wilson). A Whistling Swan was seen on the Chenango River above Binghamton from May 19 until 26 when it was found dead. It proved to be a young female (Loomis). Canada Geese seemed normal in numbers with the migration peak coming during the last eight or ten days of April. Over 1000 birds were seen flying over the Oxford area Apr 29 in "four formations in one flock" (Stratton). Baldpates seemed less common than usual. Three were seen Apr 6 at Boland's Marsh north of Binghamton (Marsis) and one at the same place the following day. Five males at Deposit May 6 (Wilson) were the only others reported. Only two Green-winged Teal reports: Apr 14 and May 5, both from the

Binghamton area (TCNC). The first Blue-winged Teal was at Deposit May 14 (Wilson). An American Goldeneye Apr 22 at Unadilla (Wisner) and another Apr 29 at Norwich (Whites) were both rather late. Buffleheads seemed more common than usual. There were seven reports totalling about a dozen birds. The last report was from Whitney Point May 6 (E. J. Smiths). Old-squaws were at Deposit from Apr 29 to May 12 with the peak being 30 on Apr 30 (Wilson). One near Norwich Apr 29 (Nodecker) was the only other one reported. 13 White-winged Scoters were seen Apr 30 and seven more May 6 at Deposit (Wilson) and four were seen at Norwich May 10 (Whites). Two Ruddy Ducks were at Norwich Apr 29 and another May 11 (Whites). Seven reports containing a total of 18 Red-breasted Mergansers were received. The first was at Unadilla Apr 21 (Wisner) and the last at Deposit Apr 30 (Wilson). They were also reported from Norwich (Whites). They are not usually reported from the region at all.

**HAWKS — OWLS:** The usual two or three Turkey Vultures were present around Deposit during the period (Wilson). Mr. Rose of South Kortright writes that they are usually quite common there, but this year he has only seen them two or three times. A flight of hawks in which 50 were counted was observed in SE Chenango County Apr 29 (Nodecker). This is the first hawk flight of such proportions reported in the region within the last few years. The first Osprey was at Unadilla Apr 13 (Wisner) and they have been fairly common throughout the region since. Florida Gallinules were not seen until May 5 when they were found near Binghamton (Bemont, M. Sheffield). April 20 is the normal first date. Coot have been very uncommon: only three reports totalling four birds. Two at Binghamton Apr 22 (TCNC), one at Deposit May 25 (Wilson), and one at Norwich May 29 (Whites). Killdeer seem to be less common than usual in the Binghamton area (TCNC). The first Woodcock reported was near Binghamton Apr 7 (Sheffields). On May 20 an adult was seen with three young near Unadilla (Wisner). The first Spotted Sandpiper was near Norwich Apr 28 (Whites). May 6 saw the first Solitary Sandpipers at Deposit (Wilson) and at Binghamton (Bemont). A White-rumped Sandpiper was at Oneonta May 20 (Will). A flock of 50 Herring Gulls, our last, was seen May 12 near Deposit (J. E. Smiths). Bonaparte's Gulls have been more common than usual, our first: seven at Norwich (Whites) and one at Unadilla (Wisner) on Apr 22. The high count was nine at Deposit Apr. 30 (Wilson). The last ones were one each at Binghamton (TCNC) and Deposit (Wilson) May 13. Two Caspian Terns were seen near Norwich Apr 29 (Whites). This is the first record for the region in the last few years. A Black Tern May 5 and another May 27 were the first and the last for the region. These were the first noted in the Deposit area for a number of years (Wilson). Three at Guilford Lake May 6 (Whites) and four near Binghamton May 13 (Sweet) were the only other ones reported. Black-billed Cuckoos were noted first in the Binghamton area May 13 (TCNC) and have been fairly common since. Yellow-bills on the other hand have been almost completely absent. A Barred Owl was heard near Deposit Apr 21 (Wilson).

**GOATSUCKERS — SHRIKES:** A Whip-poor-will was at Oneonta May 20 (Will) and another was at Unadilla May 30 (Campbell). The first Nighthawks were at Binghamton May 13 (Hannans) and the first Chimney Swifts at Oxford Apr 29 (Nodecker). A Ruby-throated Hummingbird was observed during its pendulum flight May 12 near Binghamton (Sheffields). A Red-headed Woodpecker was near Binghamton May 13 (TCNC) and another was at Oneonta about a week later (Will). Our first Yellow-bellied Sapsucker was at Deposit Apr 13 (Wilson). In the Binghamton area they have been especially numerous since their arrival (TCNC). A Kingbird was at Deposit May 3 for our first (Wilson). In spite of an especially successful nesting season last year they have been a little less common than usual. Our first Crested Flycatcher was at Deposit May 1 (Wilson). A very late first Phoebe was at Oxford Apr 1 (Stratton). There were several reports of Yellow-bellied Flycatchers. The first was near Norwich May 24 (Whites), two were near Binghamton May 25 (Sheffields) and two more May 28 (Bemont). Two were at Unadilla May 26 and three more May 30 (Wisner). An Alder Flycatcher near Binghamton May 14 (Bemont) was a little early. The first Least Flycatcher was at Deposit Apr 29 (Wilson) and the first Wood Pewees at Binghamton May 13 (TCNC). A rather early Olive-sided Flycatcher was at Binghamton May 13 (TCNC). They were reported more frequently this year than usual. Our first Tree Swallows were six near Binghamton Apr 2 (Bemont), the latest they have been in five years. Bank Swallows appeared at Binghamton Apr 22 and reoccupied the colony at Boland's Marsh even though the bank is slowly being removed to make way for a new housing development (TCNC). Rough-winged and Barn Swallows were both at

Boland's Marsh Apr 7 (TCNC) for our first. A previously unreported Cliff Swallow colony was reported from the Deposit area (Wilson) and another one was found south of Binghamton near the Pennsylvania border (Washburns). The Richford colony seems to have increased slightly since last year (Bemont). A few Purple Martins were back at their colony along Upper Front Street just north of Binghamton (TCNC). This is the only active colony known to me in the region. The last reported Red-breasted Nuthatch was at Oneonta May 20 (Will) and the last Brown Creeper at Binghamton May 13 (TCNC). The first House Wren was at Deposit Apr 30 (Wilson). Winter Wren records were more frequent than usual. One was heard singing near Binghamton Apr 11 (Marsi). The last one was at Binghamton on May 8 (Bemont, M. Washburn). No records of Carolina Wrens this spring. The first Catbird was at Norwich May 1 (Whites). A late first Brown Thrasher was at Binghamton Apr 28 (Sheffields). In Deposit they were rather scarce. Wood Thrushes were at Binghamton May 1 (TCNC) and Hermit Thrushes at Deposit Apr 8 (Wilson). An Olive-backed Thrush was in Binghamton May 3 (Doren, Saunders). Two Veeries at Deposit May 3 (Wilson) were our earliest. At least some of the Bluebird houses put out by the Naturalists' Club have been successful in attracting Bluebirds. After an absence of a year Blue-grey Gnatcatchers again appeared in the Binghamton area at most of the old stations and several new ones. The first ones were at Endicott May 5 (Bemont). One was seen at Deposit May 7 (Wilson), the first since 1948. Golden-crowned Kinglets were normal in numbers during migration and were seen until May 13 around Binghamton (TCNC). Ruby-crowned Kinglets were first seen at Deposit Apr 11 and were normal in numbers there until May 15 (Wilson). At Binghamton and Unadilla they appeared Apr 21 and were extremely common for a while. At Binghamton the main wave had passed by May 7 and they finally disappeared after May 15. At Unadilla they were still very common at the end of May. The only Pipits reported were two at Whitney Point May 8 (TCNC) and two more the same day at Norwich (Whites). There were two late reports of Northern Shrikes, one at Upper Lisle Apr 3 (Carter) and one at Cincinnati Apr 9 (Whites).

**VIREOS — WARBLERS:** Our first Yellow-throated Vireos were at Deposit May 6 (Wilson), none in other areas until May 12 but numbers normal. A Blue-headed Vireo at Binghamton Apr 29 (Marsi) was the earliest. Reported scarce at Deposit but normal elsewhere. A Red-eyed Vireo at Unadilla May 7 (Wisner) was the first. May 13 was the earliest they were seen elsewhere. A Philadelphia Vireo was at Oneonta May 20 (Will) and another was seen singing at Deposit May 21, 22 and 24 (Wilson). An early Warbling Vireo was at Ely Park in Binghamton Apr 30 (Bemont), but there were no more until May 6. First dates for some common warblers: Black and White Apr 28 at Unadilla and Deposit, Tennessee May 13 and Nashville May 3 at Binghamton, Yellow May 2 at Oxford, Black-throated Blue May 3, Myrtle Apr 27, Black-throated Green Apr 28 and Blackburnian Apr 28 at Deposit, Chestnut-sided May 2 and Ovenbird May 1 at Binghamton, Northern Water-thrush May 1 at Norwich, Louisiana Water-thrush Apr 22 at Unadilla, Northern Yellow-throat May 2 and Redstart May 1 at Deposit. Tennessee and Nashville Warblers seemed more common than usual and Myrtle Warblers, although still the commonest warbler, were slightly down in numbers. The rest of these seemed about normal. Golden-winged Warblers were not found until May 13 on the Naturalists' Club spring census and again a Brewster's was found on the census. The first date for Parula Warblers was May 12 when one was found at Norwich (Whites) and another near Binghamton (Sheffields). The first Magnolia Warbler was found May 7 near Binghamton (Sheffields) and they have been very much in evidence since. They haven't been so common for several years. The earliest Cape May Warbler was at Deposit May 7 (Wilson). They were more common than they have been for the past two years but their numbers didn't approach what they were in 1952 and 1953. A Cerulean Warbler was seen singing near Deposit May 30 and 31 (Wilson). A Yellow-throated Warbler was reported from the Oneonta area May 20 (Will). A Bay-breasted Warbler was at Oxford May 12 (Stratton). At Unadilla they were being seen at the rate of about ten a day from May 20 on (Wisner). A Black-poll Warbler recorded near Deposit May 15 was our earliest (Wilson). Several records of Mourning Warblers were obtained. One was at Deposit May 15 and 20 (Wilson). One was at Binghamton May 16 (Sheffields), and one at Norwich May 27 (Whites) and still another at Unadilla May 30 (Wisner). The Binghamton area is the only part of the region from which Yellow-breasted Chats were reported. They were first seen May 13 and numbers have been normal. The surprise of the warbler migration has been the number of Wilson's Warblers. They were first seen May 13 around Binghamton (TCNC) and one or two have been seen on almost every



outing to the end of the month. The Deposit and Unadilla areas seemed to share in this abundance to a lesser extent, but in other parts of the region numbers were more normal. The earliest Canada Warbler was at Binghamton May 6 (TCNC). At Deposit they have been unusually common (Wilson).

**BLACKBIRDS — SPARROWS:** A Bobolink at Oxford Apr 30 (Stratton) was our earliest by a wide margin as there were no others found until May 12. Baltimore Orioles arrived at Binghamton and Unadilla May 5. There have been several reports that Orioles were feeding on the ground quite a bit. Rusty Blackbirds were seen until May 13 (TCNC). Scarlet Tanagers were first seen May 6 at Binghamton, Deposit and Norwich. They seemed to be more common than usual and have also been recorded feeding on the ground, particularly in the Unadilla area where Mr. Wisner writes of 11 on the ground in one yard at the same time. The first Indigo Buntings were in the Binghamton area May 13 (TCNC) and have been rather scarce in comparison with previous years. In Deposit they didn't show up until May 30 (Wilson). In Unadilla they seemed normal (Wisner). The last Evening Grosbeak was at Unadilla May 21 where a flock of 50 was present as late as May 11 (Wisner). Several reports of late Pine Grosbeaks were received, the latest from Oneonta May 20 (Will). There were also several late reports of Redpolls. The last record was a flock of about 500 birds at Deposit Apr 19 (Wilson). Several Pine Siskins at Unadilla May 27 (Wisner) were the latest of several reports. About eight Red Crossbills were near Binghamton May 6 (TCNC) and a flock of 30 White-winged Crossbills were at Deposit May 14.

The last Slate-colored Juncos were at Binghamton May 13 (TCNC) and the last Tree Sparrow was at Deposit May 1 (Wilson). Firsts: Chipping Sparrow, Binghamton Apr 23 (Shanley); Field, Endwell Apr 8 (Bemont); two White-crowned, Deposit Apr 29 (Wilson). White-crowns were more common than usual. The last one was at Unadilla May 18 (Wisner). The White-throated Sparrow that wintered at Deposit was last seen Apr 14. One was seen at Binghamton Apr 7 (Marsi) and may also have been a wintering bird. The first definite migrants were at Deposit and Binghamton Apr 26 and the last ones at Deposit May 26. They were quite common all the time they were here and on some days the woods were literally full of them. A late Fox Sparrow was at Binghamton May 13 (TCNC). A Lincoln's Sparrow was caught and banded at Endwell May 12 (Bemont).

710 University Ave., Endwell, N. Y.

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## REGION 5 — ONEIDA LAKE BASIN

FRITZ SCHEIDER

The first week of April brought a marked thaw and a concomitant heavy influx of migrants. Despite this thaw both Oneida Lake and Sandy Pond were still frozen on Apr 7. On Apr 8, 4½ inches of heavy, wet snow plus cold weather forced thousands of recent migrants (Robins, Savannah, Vesper, and Song Sparrows, many blackbirds) to the roadside for food and resealed the recently thawed-out smaller marshes. Apr 9-15, though warm and fair, produced no great increase in migrants, only a diminution in what few ducks had arrived. The 16th to 26th consisted mostly of cold, wet days, freezing nights, and strong north winds, a combination which produced scant numbers of migrants, the majority of them late. Warm south winds on the night of Apr 27-28 induced a major migrational movement and with early AM showers, the area was flooded with hundreds of Thrashers, Hermit Thrushes, Fox, Field, White-throated, and White-crowned Sparrows, Sap-suckers, Creepers, Towhees, and Ruby-crowned Kinglets. This horde of migrants stayed for one or two days, then rapidly dwindled in the opening days of May.

Early May was a series of cool days, cold nights, retarded foliage, and no birds. From May 11 on, however, even despite the cold weather of May 15-27, wave after wave (May 12, 16, 19, 22, 23, 27) of warblers and other migrants appeared, usually following cold early rains. Accordingly, the early warblers (Myrtle, Black-throated Green, Palm) were seen in fewer numbers but the later warblers (Wilson's, Blackburnian, Bay-breasted) were observed in profusion. The cold, cloudy weather through the greater part of May retarded leaf growth and insect hatching; the first condition resulted in easier observation and the second resulted in many of the tree-top warblers feeding on the ground, scratching like White-throated Sparrows. This migration also showed many, many more reports of numbers of Scarlet Tanager, Baltimore Oriole, and Rose-breasted Grosbeak, all of which were seen frequently feeding in plowed fields. Migrational singing was practically non-existent and local May arrivals were often seen days ahead of the 1st singing noted. Noteworthy also were: (1) the numbers of late-staying ducks, and (2) the burst of shorebirds, attracted to the windrows of dead fish along Sandy Pond, in the last 10 days of May. Extensive tent caterpillar damage through southern Oswego and northern Onondaga Counties has occurred.

**LOONS — DUCKS:** Common Loon: first arrivals on Apr 1; major flight not until last ten days of April; many stayed on larger lakes until mid- and late May. Red-throated Loon: one in winter plumage, Apr 21, Selkirk, is the only report. Red-necked Grebe: one Apr 21, near Texas, and two Apr 29, Oneida Lake are the sum of the spring reports. Horned Grebe: a few in early April but late April saw tremendous numbers of them (eg. 280, April 22, Oneida Lake); a few stayed into late May. Double-crested Cormorant: one Apr 7, Lake Ontario near Texas, is early. American Egret: one, May 20, Selkirk is the only spring report; there are usually one or two April reports. Whistling Swan: two reports. Canada Goose: flight only fair; the best count at Mud Lake was 2500, Apr 15 with 700 of them still there on May 6; however, no late May stragglers reported. Snow Goose: one report of a single bird, Oneida Lake, second week of April. Brant: unlike past few years' flurry of reports, only one report, four on May 25, Sandy Pond Inlet. Dabbling ducks: all extremely scarce, a condition probably due to the prolonged high water, frozen marshes, and overall poor feeding. Diving ducks: Oneida Lake flight was markedly reduced, largely because of ice conditions in early and mid-April.

**HAWKS — OWLS:** Turkey Vulture: reported in April from Fulton, Texas, and Mexico with first date, Apr 8. Goshawk: last report is an adult, Apr 7, near Texas. Sharp-shinned Hawk: peak flight was 190 on Apr 15. Red-tailed Hawk: peak flight was 109 on Apr 15. B. P. Burt has noted a greater percentage of nests of this species with three young and/or eggs this spring than in the last three years; also many nests are two to three weeks behind previous years' dates in hatching. Broad-winged Hawk: first record is one, Apr 1, near Texas (very early); no really major flight observed this year. Bald Eagle: the Lake Ontario nest again appears to be without young. Harrier: high spring count is 70, Apr 15, along Lake Ontario. Osprey: many reports of single birds from Apr 15 to May 21. Merlin — a single male, Apr 14, Green Lakes State Park, is the only one noted. Coot: a very poor flight. Piping Plover: two, May 20, Sandy Pond; one has been seen there repeatedly since. Ruddy Turnstone: really a wonderful flight; first were 4 on May 26, Oneida Lake; up to 100+ in the closing days of May at Sandy Pond. Woodcock: first reported on Apr 4 (very late) near Clark Reservation. Wilson's Snipe: the Apr 8 storm forced down many Snipe. Upland Sandpiper: not reported until Apr 28 (late); reports indicate an encouraging increase in numbers of this bird. Greater Yellow-legs — not reported until Apr 15 (very late) and in very small numbers (4-8). Knot: eight on May 20 at Sandy Pond is our earliest spring record; 4-17 seen there to closing days of May. Pectoral Sandpiper: only one record, that of two, Apr 22, North Syracuse. Great Black-backed Gull: a few immatures present to May 27 at Sandy Pond Inlet. Ring-billed Gull: 10,000, mostly first and second year birds, were noted on May 20, Sandy Pond; the latter group was probably attracted to the area by the mid- and late May kill of the abundant moon-eyes. Bonaparte's Gull: almost totally absent as a migrant. Common Tern: first arrivals Apr 22, Phoenix; birds scarce at Oneida Lake to date, probably because of unseasonable high water.

Caspian Tern: first on Apr 22; high count 26, May 5, Sandy Pond inlet. Cuckoos: despite very pronounced tent caterpillar damage, cuckoos have been scarce all spring. Barn Owl: one trapped in a sawdust chute, Apr 18, near Nedrow; later banded and released; the pair at Warners, Onon. Co., returned to the last year's nest site in the third week of May. Whip-poor-will: first reported with the wave on Apr 28; many scattered reports of migrants up to June 1; a nest of this species was found in the Rome Pine Plains May 27 (P. Paquette, R. Wayland-Smith). Nighthawk: first May 13, but the majority of areas did not report them until the 20-21 of May.

**SWIFTS — SHRIKES:** Swift: first arrivals with the late April wave; like the nighthawk, the major group was late, many breeding birds not arriving until mid-May. The Ruby-throated Hummingbird appears to be quite scarce in comparison to counts of past few years. Red-bellied Woodpecker: a single male present to early June near Nedrow (Chamberlaine); formerly recorded only in winter in that sector. Red-headed Woodpecker: no April dates; two of the nine known breeding stations in this area have been abandoned this spring; in a few years it will probably be extirpated as a breeder here. Sapsucker: a very late flight (first arrival on Apr 11!) and until Apr 28 counts were ridiculously low; the April 28 flight left birds all over Onon. and Oswego Counties, many staying in non-breeding areas until the 2nd week of May; last migrant on May 20. Yellow-bellied Flycatcher: surprising in view of the cold weather is the arrival date of May 9 (early); reported often with a high of 6 on May 19, Camillus Valley. Alder and Least Flycatcher: arrival dates May 14 and 4 respectively. I have seen more Empidonax flycatchers this spring (up to 120/day) than in any of the past 5 years; the majority of them passed through in irritating silence. Wood Pewee and Olive-sided Flycatcher: both appeared on May 12, remarkably early for the latter species; about three times the usual spring reports of each were noted. Horned Lark: a flock of about 60, plainly referable to the northern race, were seen Apr 22 near Phoenix; these along with the other northern winter visitants probably stayed later because of the cold April weather. Tree Swallow: not reported until Apr 3 (late); 700+ were noted flying south along Sandy Pond on Apr 7; on Apr 8, the day of the wet snow, hardly any could be found. Bank Swallow: one on Apr 7 near Texas is early. Cliff Swallow: both number of colonies and individual colony size seem to be falling rapidly each year. Blue Jay: flocks of birds still migrating along Lake Ontario on May 20! Red-breasted Nuthatch: flight was small but protracted, Apr 14 and May 20. Brown Creeper — very scarce through early April but a flock of 50 was reported on Apr 28 and many (up to 15/day) were reported through the first week of May. Winter Wren: Apr 28-29; last migrant, May 20, Selkirk. Carolina Wren: after the rugged winter, it is heartening to receive reports of this bird from Selkirk (from May 6 on), Clark's Reservation (2 pair thru April & May), and Highland Forest, the last a single bird at 1500' on Arab Hill on May 20 (W. F. Minor). Short-billed Marsh Wren: 1 reported on May 4, Oneida (H. P. N.); as was the case last year, not one breeding pair reported. Catbird: daily counts of this species have been remarkable; it was not unusual to see 35 to 45 in a ½ hour's walk at Syracuse in first two weeks of May. Veery: first arrived with the flight of Apr 28; migrants still passing thru May 27. Olive-backed Thrush: many observers commented on the flocks of this bird; it was noted frequently feeding on sumac seed clubs; very rarely heard singing this spring. Gray-cheeked Thrush: scattered reports of single birds from May 20-26. Bluebird: a few records for early and mid-April; otherwise practically unreported and breeding pairs are extremely scarce.

Blue-gray Gnatcatcher: like the Carolina Wren and Cardinal, spreading into new sectors; first date Apr 27, Syracuse; three pairs located in Camillus Valley with a partially built nest discovered there on May 26 (D. Ackley); Mrs. H. Aspinwall saw a single bird at Rome on May 22, and D. Ackley also had one at Oneida, Apr 28. Golden-crowned Kinglet: very poor April flight; last date, May 12, Syracuse. Ruby-crowned Kinglet: a late flight but the region was flooded with these birds in the Apr 28 wave; present to May 12 in numbers; departure date May 20. Pipit: none reported until Apr 8; very few birds and no large flocks reported but the last date of May 12 is late. Cedar Waxwing: spring numbers have been extremely erratic; seen in numbers in early April and early May; absent through the remainder of the period although by late May the summer numbers appeared to be established. Northern Shrike: last date, and our latest ever, is one adult, Apr 15, Clay Swamp. Loggerhead Shrike: first reported from northern Cayuga Co. Apr 4 (Benton).

**VIREOS — WARBLERS:** Blue-headed Vireo: flight was late — May 4 was

first arrival. Red-eyed Vireo: through late May, great numbers of this bird passed but the flight of June 6 is the greatest ever noted in this area (eg. 60 birds in 100 yards of brush) and the total in the area must have been enormous. Philadelphia Vireo: many reported this spring. One observer has seen a total of 14 compared to the usual two or three.

The April migrant Warblers arrived approximately a week to ten days late. The first ten days of May showed counts of these earlier migrants far below normal and practically all early May species were tardy by two or three days. With May 11 the numerical situation changed tremendously and great numbers of warblers passed through from that date to Jun 5. Particularly scarce were Myrtles, Palms, and Cape Mays. Particularly abundant were Blackburnians, Nashville, Magnolia, Chestnut-sided, Black-throated Blue, Bay-breasted, and Canada. The last ten days of May saw startling numbers of Mourning, Black-poll, and Wilson's Warblers. Black & White: first birds on May 3. Prothonotary: May 20 at Short Point Bay, Oneida Lake; female seen carrying nesting material on May 23, same place. Golden-winged: not reported until May 12, about four days late; reported from Oneida on May 12 (the first local record) and a new breeding station was found at Selkirk, May 20. Blue-winged: a non-singing bird seen repeatedly in Camillus Valley from May 17 to end of period. Brewster's: a singing bird seen at Camillus Valley on May 13 and frequently thereafter (our first local record); the presence of this bird would suggest a Golden-winged:Blue-winged nesting here last year. Tennessee: from May 13 on, this bird was common with a high of 35 on May 25; present to Jun 5; one of the few migrants that indulged in much singing. Orange-crowned: four records of this very rare spring migrant between May 15-20. Nashville: none reported in April, but May numbers (30-35 in an hour's walk) were impressive; last date June 5, Syracuse. Yellow: notable lack of song in this species through first two weeks of May; peak numbers not attained until May 12-13, about a week later than usual. Magnolia, Chestnut-sided, Black-throated Blue, Blackburnian: arrival dates about three days behind and extremely scarce until the wave of May 12; the wave of May 19 brought even greater numbers of Blackburnian and Chestnut-sided along with hordes of Bay-breasted, the last about 5 days late. Cape May: first arrived on May 6; numbers thru Syracuse were very low (high of 12 on May 11), but both Rome and Oneida reported better than usual counts. Mrs. H. Aspinwall noted the Cape May several times feeding on suet. Black-poll: not reported until May 20 (very late) but counts in the fourth week of May much higher than in past four years — up to 45/day. Palm: very few individuals reported but both arrival and departure dates are remarkably late, Apr 28 and May 30 respectively. Connecticut: one report of this very rare spring migrant, a male on May 20, Green Lakes State Park (Dr. Evelyn Eddy). Mourning: arrived with the May 19 wave; peak date was 16 on May 27, Camillus Valley. Yellow-breasted Chat: one present from May 13 (D. Griffin) to end of period in wet aspen-willow brush at Camillus Valley; first local record in three years. Wilson's: first reported on May 14, Syracuse; an outstanding flight in late May with reports ranging from 9 - 25/day; still passing thru in numbers (15 - 18/day) at end of period; this and the Mourning Warbler, in contrast to the majority of warblers, sang frequently in their passage thru the area. Canada: not recorded until May 10 but the waves of May 29 & 27 produced small flocks of this species and 50/day counts were reported between those dates. Redstart: Apr 28 is arrival date (early): very little singing until the third week of May.

**BLACKBIRDS — SPARROWS:** Western Meadowlark: a meadowlark consistently singing the Western's song has been heard and seen repeatedly (May 12 to Jun 3) near Routes 104B and 3, south of Selkirk. Baltimore Oriole: certainly a very common migrant this year; many were noted gorging on tent caterpillars; the most curious feeding was several orioles eating dead moon-eyes in company with shorebirds and other blackbirds at Sandy Pond, May 27. Scarlet Tanager: all observers commented on the number of individuals seen, often forming loose flocks of ten to 20 birds; frequently noted feeding on plowed ground. Rose-breasted Grosbeak: between May 12 and 20 these birds were reported everywhere in small flocks with a preponderance of males; often seen feeding on the ground, Towhee-fashion. Evening Grosbeak: a sharp drop in numbers with the warm weather of early April; however, two, May 25, Syracuse. Purple Finch: this year's flight was late and poor. Red-poll: flocks of 200 - 250 reported in first weeks of April; last noted is 12, April 15, near Texas. Siskin: a few reported in April; many reported throughout May with the last three on May 25. Junco: late April counts were close to the peak counts of the early April and flocks of 35 to 100 stayed into early May; last

migrant reported May 20. Tree Sparrow: many small flocks (16-65) lingered in wet brushy areas thru the last two weeks of April; last seen on May 6 at Clay Swamp. The tardiness of the above two species probably resulted from the prolonged cold spells of April. Chipping Sparrow: extremely poor flight with comparable count 1/4 to 1/10 of last year's figures. Field Sparrow and Towhee: the flight of Apr 28 brought hundreds of these birds down over the area; both were noted feeding on shoreline wrack (Oneida Lake) and on open lawns. White-crowned Sparrow: from Apr 21 (near Rome) to May 30, Syracuse; outstanding numbers thru the first two weeks of May with 150+ on May 12 as peak figure. White-throated Sparrow: Burt's banding shows a better flight than '55 but lower numbers than '54; peak numbers on May 8. Fox Sparrow: small numbers thru April; flight of Apr 28 left stragglers to May 1, the departure date. Lincoln's Sparrow: first report, one trapped and banded on May 9; about 10 birds reported to last date, May 20 with 3/day as peak count. Lapland Longspur: a single report, five in spring plumage with a large flock of Horned Larks and three Snow Buntings near Baldwinsville on Apr 8, the last date for both those winter visitants.

151 Seventh North Street, Syracuse 8, N. Y.

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## REGION 6 — ST. LAWRENCE

FRANK A. CLINCH

The first of April brought spring-like weather and the snow began to melt at last. Winter had lasted to the end of March. The month of May was nearly four degrees below normal and the rains were frequent. These weather conditions delayed the development of some species of plants and insects much more than others. Warblers that usually feed in the tree tops were forced to look for food nearer the ground where they were more easily seen. Less foliage on the trees also helped observers. Many birds arrived late this spring, but a few were seen about the usual time. No doubt these same conditions also help to explain why so many people saw Scarlet Tanagers the latter part of May.

**LOONS — DUCKS:** The last half of April saw a good flight of Loons (Belknap). An American Egret was seen at the edge of Grasse River in front of Dr. Langdon's house on Apr 25. Egrets are more likely to be found in this region after the breeding season, although one was seen a few years ago near Potsdam about Apr 10 (Nichols). Canada Geese appeared early in April and stayed late. A flock of about 70 geese flew over Watertown May 5. The only Whistling Swans reported were seen by Evans near the outlet of Stony Creek in southern Jefferson County. Greater Scaup stayed as late as May 12, the latest on record (Nichols).

**HAWKS — OWLS:** Pigeon Hawk stayed until May 13 (Nichols). The earliest report of a Killdeer was Apr 4, although they are often seen two or three weeks earlier. Sora Rails were seen at Beaver Meadow May 18. Among the birds reported by David Gordon of Carthage are: Wilson's Snipe and Upland Plover Apr 28, Solitary Sandpiper May 5, Spotted Sandpiper and Pectoral Sandpiper May 12. The Solitary Sandpiper stayed until May 21 (Nichols), A Snowy Owl stayed for a week near Watertown and was last seen May 18 (Belknap).

**SWIFTS — WARBLERS:** The first Chimney Swift was seen in Watertown May 12 and Nighthawks came the next day. Tree Swallows appeared the first week in April in spite of adverse weather (Belknap) and on time (Nichols). Barn Swallows reached Madrid Apr 13, three days earlier than any previous record (Nichols). L. Blake of Potsdam has one pair of Bluebirds but says they are about as scarce as last year. Nichols says that they have been rare this year as last and mentions their inability to compete with Starlings. Joseph and Agnes Blake noted that the warblers came about on time but stayed late. They saw and positively identified: Black and White, April 28; Black-throated Green, May 11; Wilson's, May 17;

Canada, May 22; Prothonotary and Blackburnian, May 20; Chestnut-sided, May 12 and May 20, Parula, May 22. On May 25 they identified the Blue-winged, Golden-winged and Brewster's Warblers and they saw Yellow-breasted Chats on May 11. All of the birds were either seen near Watertown or at their camp near Clayton. A Wilson's Warbler was seen May 19 (Gordon) and one was found dead in Watertown. Among the warblers reported by Gordon are: Nashville, May 12; Canada, Magnolia and Bay-breasted, May 19; Parula, May 20; and Black-poll June 3. He mentions that many of these were seen feeding near the ground as were three Cerulean Warblers near Watertown. Cape May Warblers appeared May 15 and stayed until May 27; Canada Warblers arrived May 16 (early). Nashville Warblers stayed until May 21 and Tennessee Warblers until June 1 (late dates, Nichols).

**BLACKBIRDS — SPARROWS:** Baltimore Orioles were first seen in Carthage May 11 and in Watertown May 13. Redwings were about a month late in reaching Madrid, and Meadowlarks were also late. A Rusty Blackbird was seen May 5 (Gordon). Scarlet Tanagers were first seen May 14. There were many reports of these birds being seen and they were seen in many places. Probably the conditions for seeing them were better than usual as it does not seem possible that there is the increase the number of records might seem to indicate. The number of Evening Grosbeaks coming to feeders began to decrease about the first of May and very few came after May 11 to May 15. However, two males were still coming to the feeder of Louise Blake near Potsdam (June 5). Perhaps their mates have nests near. Pine Siskins were seen near Clayton May 22 and a small flock stayed near Potsdam for two weeks. A heavy flight of White-crowned Sparrows occurred between May 1 and May 21. Juncos were seen from late April to May 23 which is late (Belknap).

173 Haley St., Watertown, N. Y.

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## REGION 7 — ADIRONDACK-CHAMPLAIN

THOMAS A. LESPERANCE

April, the coldest in 32 years, was followed by the coldest May on record. These probably will also be noted as two of the rainiest months. There were only 13 clear days during this period and the rainfall was fantastic. Snow fell on May 4 to a depth of one inch. Again on May 11 it adorned the trees but melted at ground level. Near freezing temperatures held back the development of insects to the point where only the barest minimum were available and our bird friends had to work hard to find even these few. It forced the top level feeding species down to ground level where what little sunshine we did have encouraged some insects to develop. Stream edges were overrun with species normally found in tree tops and at hilly or mountainous elevations. Here the early hatches of aquatic insects provided the bulk of food during this period.

Scarlet Tanagers seemed to be hurt the most and many perished. Possibly other species also died, but the bright red of the Tanager caught the eye and many were brought to me for identification and for mounting. Many of the early birds moving into this area somehow found sufficient food to maintain themselves, but as they tried to move further north they met even colder conditions and returned. This only aggravated the circumstances since the area already was holding more birds which had followed the first wave. We therefore had a tremendous population of birds in an area with inadequate food. It made for a birder's dream come true; their preoccupation in finding food made the shiest species as friendly as the family canary. Tanagers could be approached to within five feet and leaning against a tree

would invite warblers to search your person for food. I feel sure that when all records are in for this year it will disclose some very unusual facts.

**LOONS — DUCKS:** Common indigenous species started nesting early along the lake marshes. Most species had moved into opening ponds and lakes inland by Apr 18 (Amstutz). Ducklings of Black and Wood Ducks were seen by May 1 in AuSable River.

**HAWKS — OWLS:** Some Sparrow Hawks remained, migrants returning by Apr 1. Red-tailed and Red-shouldered Hawks were at Willsboro Mountain Apr 10; Cooper's and Sharp-shinned Hawks at Keeseville Apr 9. Killdeer: Keeseville Apr 11, Sunmount Apr 21. Spotted and Solitary Sandpiper at Wickham's Marsh Apr 12. White-rumped and other sandpipers with Lesser Yellowlegs near Rainbow Lake (Amstutz). Herring and Ring-billed Gulls nesting about two weeks late.

**SWIFTS — SHRIKES:** Chimney Swifts at Keeseville May 20, Hummingbird at Essex May 22, and Whip-poor-will at Keeseville May 3. Nighthawk, a new species over this village last year, returned again this year on May 26. Tree Swallow Apr 6, Barn Swallow Apr 10, both at Keeseville. Cliff Swallow is again unreported. As previously reported it is becoming rare in this region. On the other hand Rough-winged and Bank Swallows fill the air along Lake Champlain, very large populations having built up in the past two years. Winter Wren at Sunmount May 19 (Amstutz). Robins were only casual at Tupper Lake until Apr 18, then solid (Amstutz), first at Keeseville Apr 5. Wood Thrush and Veery at Essex May 23 (Mason), Hermit, Olive-backed, Gray-cheeked Thrushes and Veery at Tupper Lake May 19, 20 (Amstutz). At Keeseville: Olive-backed Apr 17, Gray-cheeked May 18, Wood May 20, Bluebird Apr 30, and Catbird May 18. After a lapse of one year Thrasher returned to Keeseville. Kingbird: Essex May 23, Tupper and Keeseville May 24. Cedar Wax-wings were numerous at Essex and Keeseville early in May. Pipits, which were at Tupper Apr 21, were not reported elsewhere.

**VIREOS — WARBLERS:** Philadelphia Vireos were seen in large numbers May 20 at Tupper Lake (Amstutz). Blue-headed Vireo was at Keeseville May 3. The heavy warbler wave was May 15 to 20. Kentucky Warbler, seldom prone to work this far north, was under observation for a considerable period by Miss Amstutz and Mr. Perron at Tupper. Despite a careful report, these observers raise the question of accuracy themselves. At Essex the warblers appeared somewhat early: Myrtle May 3, Yellow Palm May 9, Blackburnian, Cape May, Yellow-throat on May 11, Black-throated Green May 12, Redstart and White-eyed Vireo May 13, and Black-throated Blue and Canada May 16 (Mason). Mrs. Mason also reports a heavy influx of Canada Warblers. At Keeseville these were everywhere. Worm-eating Warbler May 26 at Wickham's Marsh; Louisiana Water-thrush, Keeseville.

**BLACKBIRDS — SPARROWS:** Red-wing: Keeseville Apr 7, Tupper Apr 18 Grackle: Tupper Apr 18, Keeseville Apr 19. Baltimore Oriole was at Essex and Keeseville May 13, Tupper May 19. Purple Finches, which had been at Keeseville all Winter, appeared at Tupper Apr 28. Rose-breasted Grosbeak at Essex May 23; Scarlet Tanager, Essex and Keeseville May 22; and Indigo Bunting at Keeseville May 23. Towhees were reported in normal numbers except at Keeseville where they seemed abundant. Tree Sparrow, Keeseville Apr 6, Tupper Apr 28; White-throat, Essex May 9, Tupper May 14, Keeseville May 16; Chipping, Keeseville May 16; White-crown, Essex May 9, Keeseville May 10.

Keeseville, New York.

## REGION 8 — MOHAWK-HUDSON

JAMES K. MERITT

April temperatures in the Schenectady area averaged an even 44 degrees, slightly more than a degree below normal. May temperatures averaged 55.4 degrees, 2.7 degrees below normal. Record low temperatures were set on five days during May. An indication of the relative coolness is the fact that some snow was present in Thacher Park until at least the beginning of the last week in May. Precipitation was about average for the period, that for April being slightly less than normal and that for May being slightly greater than normal.

Overall, the spring migration was excellent, a distinct contrast to a year ago. There were several contributing factors. Alternate periods of warm and cool weather in May brought in the migrants in definite waves. Since foliage development was considerably behind schedule throughout the period, conditions for observation could hardly have been better. Tent caterpillar infestation was minor, again a sharp contrast to last spring. The warbler migration was spectacular, both as to numbers seen and varieties recorded. During the peak of some of the waves these birds were commonly seen on lawns, in the streets and in low bushes. Thrushes were also present in well above average numbers. Only in the case of the cuckoos was the spring flight somewhat disappointing. There were only a few reports of the Black-bill, and I know of no reports of the Yellow-bill.

Some 185 species were reported in Region 8 during the two-month period. Arrival dates were generally earlier than last year, and departure dates were generally later. However, I am inclined to attribute this to more extensive field work this year early in May. The Schenectady Bird Club "Century Run" of May 5 revealed about 136 species.

**LOONS — DUCKS:** About 25 Common Loons were seen at Saratoga Lake on Apr 25 (Hazel Bundy, Marjorie Foote). A flock of over 50 Horned Grebes in breeding plumage was seen on the Mohawk just east of Schenectady on Apr 22 (Meritt). Four parties reported the species on May 5, but I do not know the number of individuals involved. An unusual find was a Double-crested Cormorant seen at Vischer Ponds on the evening of May 5; this species was unreported locally in 1955. No American Egrets were seen. The Black-crowned Night Heron was not observed until Apr 12, and the American Bittern was not reported until Apr 24 (Esley Hallenbeck). A rarity was a Whistling Swan seen on a backwash of the Mohawk near Fultonville on Apr 30 (Gladys Zimmer). Some 45 Old-Squaws were seen in that same area on Apr 30 (Zimmer), and two others were seen near Vischer Ponds on Apr 20 (Meritt). Buffleheads were reported from several areas on May 5. Hooded Mergansers were rather frequently reported in April. The species was recorded on several occasions at Vischer Ponds, and on Apr 19 six were present at Tomhannock Reservoir (Brother E. Austin).

**HAWKS — OWLS:** The Turkey Vulture is by no means a common bird locally; however, there were several period reports. On Apr 5 one was seen along the Thruway just west of Albany (Allen Benton). Another bird was reported on May 18 (Foote), and on May 30 two were seen near Catskill (Meritt). Still another was reported on May 14 (Sam Madison). The first Broad-winged Hawk was reported from Burnt Hills on Apr 28 (Foote). Ospreys seemed more common than usual along the Hudson below Albany. There were no Bald Eagle reports. A Woodcock nest containing four eggs was discovered near Shaker Road, Albany, on Apr 28 (Alvin Cook). A pair of Upland Plovers was present near Delmar throughout the month of May, but no nest was discovered (Joseph Pell). There were several reports of the



Greater Yellow-legs, the first being an extremely early arrival on Apr 4 (Hallenbeck). The Lesser was recorded in early May (Gustave Angst). The Great Black-backed Gull was reported as late as Apr 15 (Walt Kashan). Some 80 Bonaparte's Gulls were seen at Ballston Lake on May 6 (Phil Currier). Several Common Terns were seen over the river near Mohawk View on Apr 29 (Marie Novak), and another was seen near Albany on May 31 (Mildred Betts). A Black Tern was observed near Mohawk View on May 5. A Horned Owl's nest with four young was reported near Alplaur in late April (fide Angst).

**GOATSUCKERS — SHRIKES:** Nighthawks were not overly common in May. The Chimney Swift was first seen at Schenectady on May 1 (Angst, Meritt). Pileated Woodpeckers were reported on quite a few occasions during the period. An adult Red-headed Woodpecker was present near Rotterdam Junction on May 16 and for several days thereafter (Carrington Howard). The first Crested Flycatcher was reported from Schenectady's Central Park on Apr 29 (SBC). On May 22 a Yellow-bellied Flycatcher was seen in Washington Park, Albany, and on May 30 and 31 another individual was seen in Loudonville (Mabel W. French). Another Yellow-bellied was seen in the Karner pine barrens on May 30 (SBC). The Alder Flycatcher was first reported on May 5 (SBC), and there were several May reports of the Olive-sided Flycatcher. Purple Martins arrived at Selkirk on Apr 7 (fide Nelle Van Vorst), their earliest arrival there in at least four years. The first Barn Swallows were seen near Ballston Lake on Apr 12 (Grace Hackett). A pair of Carolina Wrens was present throughout the period at the Delmar Game Farm and from all indications appeared to be breeding (Steve Fordham). Another individual was present throughout the period at Scotia (Hallenbeck). On May 5 and 6 a Mockingbird was seen near Albany (Minnie Scotland), and another was seen in Scotia on May 9 (Ann Merritt). As previously stated, thrushes were present in extremely good numbers. There was only one report of the American Pipit — several seen near Scotia in mid-April (Walt Sabin). A Northern Shrike was observed on the late date of Apr 8 (Kashan).

**VIREOS — WARBLERS:** The Warbling Vireo was first reported on the early date of May 1 (French), and the Yellow-throated was first observed on May 5 (SBC). The only report of the Philadelphia Vireo was from Troy on May 22 (Austin).

Many observers termed the warbler flight unprecedented. 33 species were reported in May, but missed completely were the Blue-winged Warbler and Yellow-breasted Chat. The only report of the Worm-eating was from Wolf's Hollow, near Hoffmans, on May 13 (SBC). Tennessee Warblers were widely reported. On the latish date of May 29 a fairly compact and vociferous group of about 20 was observed in Niskayuna (Meritt). On May 22 an Orange-crowned Warbler was seen and heard in Washington Park, Albany (French). A singing Cerulean Warbler was seen in Thacher Park on May 19 (Hallenbeck, Meritt, Sabin). The Blackburnian was first reported on May 5 (SBC), and this species was subsequently present in very good numbers. The Bay-breasted Warbler was also widely reported. On May 20 a Connecticut Warbler was closely observed near Saratoga Springs (Elizabeth Feldhusen). Reports of the Mourning Warbler and Black-capped Warbler were numerous and possibly unprecedented. The latter was first observed at Vischer Ponds on the early date of May 3 (French).

Three southern warblers were reported. I have checked into these records in some detail and believe them to be valid, but the fact remains that they were seen by one observer (each) only. On May 19 Mac Andrews saw a Yellow-throated Warbler on his property near Schenectady. He first observed the bird with the naked eye at a distance of about twenty feet and a few minutes later was able to observe it at about the same distance with 8X binoculars. On May 17 and again on May 23 Mrs. Gordon Randall had good views of what she is very sure was a Prothonotary Warbler along a creek bank on her property in Niskayuna. On May 17 a Kentucky Warbler was accidentally trapped in a screened-in porch at the home of Alan Lukens in Niskayuna.

**BLACKBIRDS — SPARROWS:** Several Orchard Orioles, a species unreported locally last year, were observed. On May 17 a female was seen in Amsterdam Prothonotary Warbler along a creek bank on her property in Niskayuna. On May immature male appeared there (Fitzgerald). The species was reported from Troy on May 18 and again on May 22 (Austin). The last report of the Rusty Blackbird was on May 5, and at least half a dozen Cardinals were observed that day (SBC). Evening Grosbeaks were last seen at Amsterdam on May 6, thus bringing to a close

an unprecedented incursion in that area. Mrs. Fitzgerald banded 1212 individuals there during the winter season. A single Evening Grosbeak was present at Gallupville the last week of May (Zimmer). The Redpoll was last observed on May 5 (SBC). There were several May reports of the Pine Siskin; this species had been previously unreported locally this year. On Apr 13 six Red Crossbills were seen at Schenectady, and on May 24 three were observed in the same area (Gloria Meader). The Tree Sparrow was last seen on May 7 (French). The White-crowned Sparrow migration was extremely good, the first report for the species being on Apr 29 (Kashan). The Lincoln's Sparrow was first seen in Amsterdam on May 6, and several were subsequently banded there (Fitzgerald). This species was also reported from Niskayuna (Novak).

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## REGION 9 — DELAWARE-HUDSON

FRED N. HOUGH

Most of April was anything but pleasant as far as the weather was concerned. Temperatures averaged below normal for the month and precipitation in the form of snow was far above normal. On April 28 a warm air mass from the south moved across the region, jumping temperatures to the mid-eighties, but it was short-lived as cool northerly winds on the eve of May returned the weather to more chilly levels. May did not improve. Temperatures remained cool with intermittent frosts occurring to the end of the month. Most observers estimated the foliage development to be retarded about two weeks.

**Migration versus Weather:** The strong clock-like control of insective migrating forces brought many of the spring arrivals into our region about on time in spite of the inclement weather conditions. In fact, many observers were surprised to see certain species ahead of their normal arrival date. Once here there was no turning back, so it was commonplace during such deep snows as that of Apr 8 to see migrants anywhere where there might be a chance of finding food. Bird feeders, plowed roadsides, or almost any bare exposure was sure to be visited by some of the migrants. Many of our northern visitors lingered longer than usual before making their departure. May migrants flooded into the region in good numbers especially during the weeks of May 6 and 13. In conjunction with the retarded foliage there was also a dearth in certain insect fare, which seemed to affect the warblers most. Many of these tree-top feeders were forced near or to the ground in search of their food — a great boon to the observers. So many birds normally not feeding near the ground were found about lawns and gardens that even non-observers were heard commenting about it. This abnormal feeding pattern caused many record breaking lists to be made. Several observers reported lists varying from 85 to 110 for a single day's count. In Rockland County several southern vagrants were found defying the cool weather.

**LOONS — DUCKS:** The Common Loon was seen by Ed Treacy on Stillwell Lake, West Point, Apr 10. Spring numbers of Great Blue and Black-crowned Night Herons reported off in Rockland County (Robert Deed). A Least Bittern was seen at Grassy Point, Rockland, on May 17 (Eugene Brown, Deed). The flight of Canada Geese seemed normal in this region. Dr. Andrew Weir saw about 50 Snow Geese near Waccubac on Apr 1. Duck populations seemed about usual for the period. Several Buffleheads and four Old-squaw were spotted on Orange Lake, Orange County, Apr 29 by Treacy and Paul Jeheber. Scoters are sometimes seen along the

Hudson River. On May 12, John C. Orth saw seven White-winged and about sixty Surf Scooters near Fort Montgomery. On May 20 he counted over 300 Brant on the Hudson in the same area.

**HAWKS — OWLS:** There was little indication of any upset in the hawk populations: probably no shortage in their food supply. A first record for Dowitcher in Ulster County was made on May 20, when about two dozen were seen at the Ashokan Reservoir. (JBNHS field trip). A flock of twenty-three Bonaparte's Gulls at Piermont Pier Apr 29 sets a new late date for this species (RAS field trip). On this date it was also seen on Lackawach Reservoir, Sullivan County (Niven). Treacy carefully identified two Caspian Terns on the Hudson River shoreline at Cornwall on Apr 28.

**SWIFTS — SHRIKES:** An early Eastern Kingbird appeared at Hurley, Ulster County, on Apr 29 (JBNHS field trip). Empidonax Flycatchers appeared abundant in certain parts of Ulster during mid-May. They were frequently seen feeding very close to the ground, often in weedy fields (Hough). In spite of the weather setback, most swallows were reported as numerous in the region. An exceptionally early Cliff Swallow was seen at the nesting site on the Ashokan Reservoir Apr 17 (Al Feldman). Mr. and Mrs. Frank Steffens found a Mockingbird at New City, Rockland, on Apr 15, and Niven had one at Loch Sheldrake, Sullivan Co., May 6. The Olive-backed Thrush appeared common in Putnam County (Mrs. George Little) and also in Ulster County where more than usual were seen (Dunbars, Hough, Pyle). Gray-cheeks were also seen more frequently in Ulster. Gnatcatchers were more common in Rockland this season (Deed), and at least two were observed near Hurley in Ulster on Apr 29 (JBNHS field trip).

**VIREOS — WARBLERS:** Some lateness was indicated in the arrival of most vireos that normally arrive soon after May 1. The migrant warblers made a colorful spectacle in this region. Many were considered more than usual in numbers which was probably due to the forced change in their feeding habits ultimately ending in frequent exposure. The Brewster's hybrid was reported twice: once near Carmel, Putnam County, on May 17 (Little) and another near Highland Falls, Orange Co., on May 19 (Steffenses, Treacy). Dr. Marjorie Hooper made the third Rockland Co. record of the Orange-crowned Warbler on Apr 25. The Cerulean Warbler was found at Orangeburg, in lower Rockland, on May 19 by the Steffenses and Treacy. The Yellow-throated Warbler is quite rare in New York State. This year credit goes to Dr. Hopper for the first Rockland County record. Near Congers on May 7 she watched one at close range and also heard it sing. A very early Black-poll was seen at Piermont on Apr 29 (RAS field trip). The Hooded arrived in Rockland Co. on Apr 29, an early date (RAS field trip). Mourning Warblers were more common than usual this spring. Even more reports were made on Wilson's and Canada Warblers.

**BLACKBIRDS — SPARROWS:** A new record was the Brewer's Blackbird studied closely by Mrs. Wilbur Carr at her feeder in Ferndale, Sullivan Co., Apr 17 and 18. The Orchard Oriole returned to its nesting site at Stone Ridge, Ulster Co., May 11, for the fourth consecutive year (Hough). A Baltimore Oriole was seen at Kingston, in Ulster, on Apr 29, a little early (Dr. Arthur Cragin). Some indication of distress among Scarlet Tanagers concentrated in certain areas of Rockland and Westchester apparently from the lack of food (Deed, Mrs. William Grierson). The Blue Grosbeak appeared at Grand View, Rockland, on May 3 (David Hill, Deed and others). A late departing Pine Grosbeak was seen at East Middle Patent, Westchester, on Apr 22 (James Todd). Late Redpolls reported in the region were seen near New Paltz, Ulster, on Apr 4 (Dr. Robert Pyle) and near Monticello Apr 15 (McBride). Two late Pine Siskins were at Mt. Kisco, Westchester, May 23 (Stan Grierson). A male White-winged Crossbill was banded by Ilse Dunbar on Mar 28 near her home at Lomontville in Ulster. This bird is seldom reported in this county. Tree Sparrows lingered in Ulster Co. to the latter part of April. More than usual were heard singing. White-crowned Sparrows were up in numbers this spring. They were even reported at Mohonk Lake, atop the Shawangunks, by Dan Smiley, who considered them unusual there. White-throats flooded the whole region during late April and early May. The Lincoln's Sparrow was seen on several occasions this spring. It appeared at Kripplebush, in Ulster, on May 5, again May 13 and from 15 to 20, all at the residence of Fred Hough, who also heard one sing several times on May 20. One was seen near Millwood, Westchester, on May 11 (Shirley Towbis). Others were seen near Bear Mt. and Fort Montgomery (Orth) and at New City, May 15 to 19 (Steffens).

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## REGION 10 — MARINE

JOHN J. ELLIOT

Although April weather for the most part was cold and damp a surprising number of early bird records came in, some bordering on first dates for the region. May proved a record-breaking month for bird migration and many observers remarked that they had not seen such large numbers and diversified species in many years. Early May was unseasonably cold, but with the hot weekend of May 12-13, phenomenal numbers appeared and counts were above average through the end of the month. Migration along the coast was also retarded and water birds lingered in many cases into late spring. Big-day counts were successful with a maximum of around 160 species in the third week of May. On May 13, 28 species of warblers were counted from Lawrence to Far Rockaway (J. Bull). One striking feature of spring was the general occurrence of the Yellow-throated Warbler; numbers of White-crowned Sparrows reported in Central Park, N. Y. C. were phenomenal and Nashville Warblers were also reported as unusually abundant on different days (E. Eisenmann).

**LOONS — DUCKS:** There were no reports of Sooty Shearwater, although abundant last spring; Gannets moved through to the end of the period with 29 over a mile stretch at Moriches, May 30 (Elliott). Double-crested Cormorants moved northward in long, stringy flocks into late May. Both Snowy and American Egrets were present at Jones Beach in late April; a Least Bittern was found at Baldwin, Apr 17. Many northern breeding ducks, including Scaup, Ring-necked, Golden-eye and Scoters lingered into late April; Gadwall stayed on the Jones Beach pond very late and two Shovellers were still present in the Jamaica Bay sanctuary through May.

**HAWKS — OWLS:** Three migrant Red-tailed Hawks at Orient, Apr 1; Broad-winged appeared at Northport Apr 28; latest Rough-legged, Jones Beach, Apr 14 (Brooklyn Bird Club); late Pigeon Hawk, Shinnecock, May 26 (R. Wilcox). Two King Rails were present at Lawrence, May 6; a Purple Gallinule in weakened condition was found at Westhampton Beach, Apr 19, died later (R. Wilcox). Some shore birds appeared early with Hudsonian Curlew at Jamaica Bay Apr 7; Upland Plover passed over that area Apr 22 (Bull). Five Willet were seen at Mecox, May 11 (Wilcox). Purple Sandpiper broke all spring records with individuals remaining at Moriches jetty to May 30 (Elliott) and at Atlantic Beach jetty to June 2 (J. Mayer, G. Rose). There were several records of Northern Phalarope from Apr 30 and two Red Phalaropes were reported from Jones Beach around May 25; outstanding were two, possibly three Ruffs at Jamaica Bay during May. There were 350 Bonaparte's Gulls at Dyker Beach Apr 19 (I. Alperin); on May 26 five were present at Mecox and two Caspian Terns on May 12 (Wilcox); a Black Tern was seen at Jam. Bay, May 12 (R. Grant).

**SWIFTS — SHRIKES:** Nighthawk appeared early with one present Apr 19 at Hempstead (Mrs. E. W. Teale) and one at Brookhaven, Apr 23 (D. Puleston). Unusual was a Red-bellied Woodpecker at Hempstead, May 24 (Teale, Miss H. Sullivan). Flycatchers came through with Olive-sided as late as May 30 and a Yellow-bellied Flycatcher at Far Rockaway the same day. A small flight of Rough-winged Swallows were present at Mill Neck Apr 29; five Martins at Sayville Apr 26 (J. T. Nichols); Magpie at Montauk Apr 5 (D. Guthrie). Three Tufted Titmouse records: Woodmere, Mill Neck and Northport. Red-breasted Nuthatch stayed until May 25 with one at Lawrence (Bull, Eisenmann). One Mockingbird record: Manorville, Apr 2 (G. Raynor). First Gnatcatcher appeared at Central Park, Apr 18 and was regularly reported afterward with scattered records from Wading River to N. Y. City. A few Shrikes came through in April, records mostly from Eastern Long Island.

**VIREOS — WARBLERS:** Red-eyed Vireo was found at Riis Park Apr 28; Warbling Vireo eastward to Massapequa during May: Cape May, Blackburnian

and Bay-breasted Warblers were reported more common than usual in the Port Washington area (Lyman Langdon Audubon Society). First Yellow-throated Warbler Apr 24, at Hempstead (A. Wollin); also reported May 2-8 at Central Park, Van Cortland Park, Dyker Beach (Eisenmann). Tennessee Warbler came through to the end of the month. Louisiana Water-thrush showed up in late April. Mourning Warbler at Jones Beach May 19 (Elliott), and present in Springfield, May 30 (Mayer, Rose); also two at Northport, same day (E. Mudge). An early Hooded Warbler was seen at Brookhaven Apr 23, and remained to May 1 (Puleston, Raynor). Maximum flight of Canada Warblers with an estimated 50 at Mill Neck May 20 (Elliott).

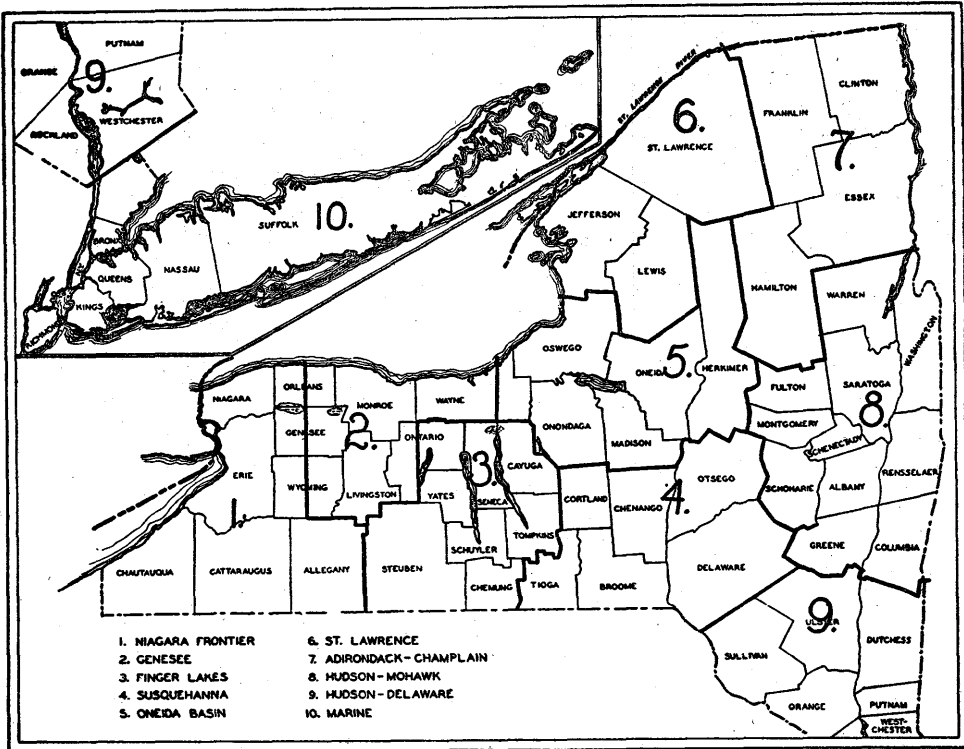
**BLACKBIRDS — SPARROWS:** Nine Bobolinks at Brookhaven, May 4 (Puleston); Orchard Oriole very scarce and seemingly more so each year. One record: male singing at Far Rockaway May 25. First record of Scarlet Tanager was early, with one seen at Welfare Island Apr 10 and one at Van Cortlandt Park Apr 28. An early Rose-breasted Grosbeak looked strangely out of place feeding on the bare ground Apr 21 at Jones Beach. The bird, a male, was streaked black and white on the head and the spring plumage had not approached the breeding stage (Baldwin Bird Club). There was also a pair of early Rose-breasted Grosbeaks at a West Hempstead feeding station for several days from Apr 16 (E. Morgan).

There was one spring Dickcissel report, May 14-19 at Port Washington (Lyman Langdon Audubon Society). Evening Grosbeak lingered into May with three or four reports: latest, Jones Beach May 25, three (Bull) and Manhattan Beach June 2, one (Mayer, Rose). The House Finch has extended its range into Brooklyn, present at Sheepshead Bay Apr 19 (Alperin). There were a few records of Redpolls in April; latest Red Crossbill record — 12 present at Jones Beach on Apr 21 (Baldwin Bird Club). Five Juncos remained at Garden City to Apr 29 (Nichols); White-throated Sparrow was last seen at Port Washington May 21 and a week earlier several reports of Lincoln's Sparrow came in from Western Long Island.

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