

Norfolk 5 May (HM et al.). Chelmsford S.L., *Sudbury* hosted a Le Conte's Sparrow in May (CW), while single birds were at the Tip of Long Point 5 May (MH et al.) and at nearby Breakwater 16 May (L.P.B.O.). A Nelson's Sharp-tailed Sparrow was at Wheatley Harbour 16 May (MD). In s. Ontario, Long Pt.'s Breakwater had an imm. Harris's Sparrow 2 May (SM et al.), and an ad. was along Hastings Dr., Long Point 13–15 May (m. ob.); another was at *Essex's* North Dike Road 9–12 May (GSP, EP), while one visited a feeder in Blackstock, *Durham* from late Mar to early Apr, and resurfaced again 26 Apr (HR). The basic-plumaged male **Smith's Longspur** found in Feb remained at Hagersville, *Haldimand* until 16 Mar (m. ob.). Single Blue Grosbeaks were at Pt. Pelee 7 (EB, IC, MB, JP, GC) & 9 May (RM, SMA, JPr). Pelee's 2nd **Painted Bunting** was seen by many 7–15 May at Sleepy Hollow (CN, GBo), although its elusive nature caused scores of birders to leave disappointed. Two other males surprised and delighted birders during their stay in the Sault Ste. Marie area on the same dates (*vide* BK). The Tip of Long Point had single Dickcissels on 15 and 27 May (MH).

Rare for *Thunder Bay*, a singing Eastern Meadowlark was in O'Connor Twp. 17–21 May (MZ). A Western Meadowlark was observed at Batchawana Bay, Algoma 7 May (AW), and another was in Chelmsford, *Sudbury* 20 May+ (JL). Yellow-headed Blackbirds were reported from across s. and e. Ontario (m. ob.), and a Brewer's Blackbird was at the 2nd Concession, *Norfolk* 13 Apr (L.P.B.O.), with another at the Tip, Long Point 15–16 Apr (L.P.B.O.). Approximately 4000 Baltimore Orioles were noted flying s. off the Tip of Pt. Pelee 9 May during a weather-induced reverse migration widespread in the Pelee area (BMD et al.); the 4 at Atikokan 23–26 May were the first seen in the region since 1996 (DHE).

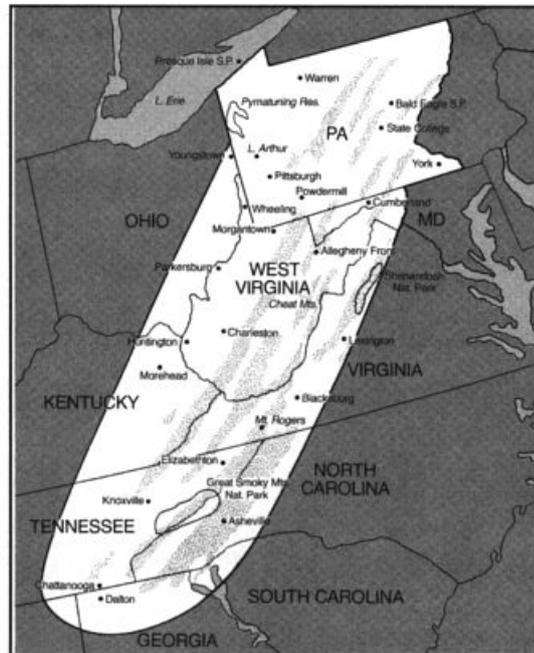
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Appalachia



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No doubt due to unseasonably mild late winter conditions, there were indications

that spring migration got underway earlier than usual in the northern part of the Region. By the first week of March, up to 50,000 waterfowl (mostly diving ducks) already had collected on Presque Isle Bay at Erie, Pennsylvania. Later in the month, cool and rainy conditions precipitated a few heavy fallouts of waterbirds across northern Appalachia. Higher water levels in some of the Region's marshes compared

to recent years were identified as having a positive effect on the number and diversity of bitterns and rails detected this spring. And, while the same high water levels may have led to lower overall numbers of shorebirds across the Region, there were more than the usual number of occurrences of notable species from this group

Notwithstanding some high points in the spring migration of nonpasserines, the lack of any significant fallouts of warblers or other Neotropical migrant passerines in Appalachia through mid-May gave many field observers the impression of a lackluster season. At Powdermill Nature Reserve in southwestern Pennsylvania, however, a more or less steady migration of songbirds from April through May netted the banders 3475 birds of 109 species, which was the best spring banding result there since 1990 (seasonal banding summaries for this station are posted at <<http://www.westol.com/~banding>>). A wave of slightly early first dates for many passerines occurred over most of the Region during an especially warm and mild third week of April. The peak migration for most of these same species, however, was about average. Some unseasonably very cold temperatures over several successive days toward the end of May in the northern part of the Region did "ground" insectivorous passerines in some areas, but this came on the heels of the main flight of Neotropical migrants, so the number of affected birds did not appear to be especially high. There were a few reports, however, of mortality of both adults and young of earlier nesting species, such as Eastern Bluebird and Purple Martin, associated with this cold snap.

Abbreviations: B.E.S.P. (Bald Eagle S. P., Centre, PA); P.I.S.P. (Presque Isle S.P., Erie, PA); P.N.R. (Powdermill Nature Reserve, Rector, Westmoreland, PA); P.O.R.C. (Pennsylvania Ornithological Records Committee); Y.C.S.P. (Yellow Creek S.P., Indiana, PA).

LOONS THROUGH IBIS

On 25 Mar, during a major fallout of 30 species of waterbirds, 11 Red-throated Loons put down at Y.C.S.P., and 2 were at Keystone Res., *Armstrong*, PA 26-27 Mar (MHi, GL); a rather late bird was at B.E.S.P. 12 May (MHe). No significant fallout of Common Loons, however, was reported from anywhere in Appalachia, the best count being of only 6 at Pymatuning L., PA 2 Apr (SK); 2 late birds were at Waynesboro, *Augusta*, VA 25-27 May (JSp). High counts of Horned Grebes in w. Pennsylvania included 205 at Shawnee L., *Bedford* 26 Mar (CM), 100+ in the Pymatuning

L. area 28 Mar (RFL), and 1000 at B.E.S.P. also on the 28th (EZ). Away from L. Erie, single Red-necked Grebes were at Akeley Swamp, *Warren*, PA (*vide* TG) and on Youghiogheny Res., *Fayette*, PA 1 May (MHi). Seven Eared Grebes that wintered on S. Holston L., TN were last seen (in breeding plumage) 16 Apr (RKn), and an Eared was at Kahle L., *Venango*, PA 23 Apr—1 May (RSt, m. ob.). Four American White Pelicans appeared on the Kanawha R. at Winfield Lock & Dam, *Putnam*, WV 15 Apr (ph. WA) for the only Regional report. A count of 55 Double-crested Cormorants 15 Mar represented a record high for the Staunton, VA area (AL), while 411 were listed at L. Arthur, *Butler*, PA 16 Apr (SK).

Migrating American Bitterns were more widely reported than usual from across much of the Region, especially during the first two weeks of Apr, with a high count of 14 at P.I.S.P. on the 11th (JM). A Little Blue Heron was a rare stray at Crossingville, *Crawford*, PA 28 Apr (SR), and another was in *Garrett*, MD 19 May during a fallout of waterbirds coinciding with the passage of a cold front (MJI). In w. Pennsylvania, an early Cattle Egret was found near Huntingdon 4 Apr (DK), and singles were at Springboro, *Crawford* 18 Apr (AT) and Waterford, *Erie* on the 19th (J&TC); elsewhere, another northward stray stopped near a campground in *Mason*, WV 28 Apr (WA). A count of 20 Black-crowned Night-Herons at P.I.S.P., where the species is not known to nest, was exceptionally high 20 May (*vide* JM). One or two pairs of Yellow-crowned Night-Herons were believed to be nesting at Elizabethton, TN this spring, a single was at Jackson Park, Hendersonville, NC 27 Apr (WF, RSe), and in Pennsylvania, 2 were rarities at P.N.R. 5 May (BJ). The Region's only Glossy Ibis was reported from Buzzard Swamp, Marrienville, *Forest*, PA 12 May (F&JMc) for a county first.

WATERFOWL THROUGH RAPTORS

A flock of 6 Greater White-fronted Geese that had spent Feb at the Byrd locks & dam, *Mason*, WV was last seen 3 Mar (WA). Three Brant stopped at B.E.S.P. 29 Apr, where another put down 15 May (MHe); a single was at P.I.S.P. 24-26 May (BC). The waterfowl record of the season, however, was of a **Black Brant** at Reedsville, *Preston*, WV 4-5 May (GF)—a first for the state. A "large flock" of Tundra Swans passed over N. Warren, PA the evening of 16 Mar (CP), but no unusually large gatherings were found on w. Pennsylvania lakes, the best being 90 on L. Perez, *Huntingdon* 16 Mar (GG) and 150 at Hartstown Marsh, *Crawford* 12 Mar (MB). Away from their narrow trans-Appalachian flight path, a single swan was at

Brevard, *Transylvania*, NC 29-30 Mar (2nd county record; NS), and a wintering bird at Green Bottom W.M.A., *Cabell*, WV remained through 3 Mar (WA). An ad. **Whooper Swan**—shy of approach and not banded or otherwise marked—appeared on Centertown L., Galeton, *Potter*, PA 21-23 Apr (GW, JF) The P.O.R.C. will assess evidence concerning the possible wild status of this bird.

A total of 193 Gadwalls was listed at Pymatuning L. 30 Mar (RFL). An imm male Eurasian Wigeon was a rarity at P.I.S.P. 6 Mar (JB), where a 2nd bird was found 11 Apr (JM). The best count of American Wigeon was of 165 at Hartstown, PA 3 Mar (MBr). A raft of 1030 Ring-necked Ducks was on L. Arthur, *Butler*, PA 17 Mar (PH), and 2340 stopped at Tamarack L. and Conneaut Marsh, *Crawford*, PA 23 Mar (RFL). On 25 Mar, over 3000 Lesser Scaup were in the Meadville, PA area, including 1800 on Woodcock L. (RFL). The imm. male **Harlequin Duck** that had wintered at P.I.S.P. stayed until at least 6 Apr (JM, m. ob.) The 25 Mar fallout of waterbirds at Y.C.S.P. included all three scoters, with 2 Surf, 8 White-winged, and one Black, and that same day a Surf and 3 White-winged Scoters were on Trout Run Res., Ligonier, PA (RCL). Other better counts of Surf Scoters included 4 at Selinsgrove, *Snyder*, PA 28 Apr (MB) and 5 at B.E.S.P. 21-22 (*vide* EZ). A late Black Scoter was at B.E.S.P. 12 May (MHe). On 16 Mar small flocks of Long-tailed Ducks were widely reported across n. West Virginia, Pennsylvania, and se. Ohio (m. ob.), and weather-related fallouts brought 218 to Y.C.S.P. 25 Mar (MHi, GL) and 500 to B.E.S.P. 26 Mar (EZ). Over 3000 Red-breasted Mergansers were on Pymatuning L. 2 Apr (SK). A raft of 500 Ruddy Ducks settled on L. Arthur, PA 30 Mar (PH), and 519 were listed at Pymatuning 15 Apr (RFL).

Osprey migration was both heavy and a bit early. At the two spring hawk watches reporting, 84 were listed at Tussey Mt., *Huntingdon*, PA (DO) and 120 at Allegheny Front, *Bedford*, PA (CM); early returns included one at Sandy Cr., *Wood*, WV 24 Mar (JE) and one back on its nest at Somerset L., PA 31 Mar (JP). Two Mississippi Kites were rare sightings over Jackson Park, Hendersonville, NC 13 May (RSe), as was one at W. Augusta, VA 26 May (*vide* YL). Bald Eagle numbers continue to increase in appropriate habitat nearly throughout Appalachia: in w. Pennsylvania, for example, there were at least 31 active nests spread out over eight counties, 14 in *Crawford* alone (DB). On 14 Apr, 340 Broad-winged Hawks passed Soddy Mt., TN hawkwatch (BHa), the best-ever single day spring total there. There was a strong Golden Eagle flight along the

Pennsylvania ridges, where 76 were observed from Allegheny Front (CM) and 119 from Tussey Mt (DO); w. of the mountains, one was at Tamarack L., Meadville, PA 21 Mar (RFL).

RAILS THROUGH GULLS

The hot spot for rails in Appalachia was Standifer Gap Marsh, *Hamilton* TN, where five species were seen, including a **Yellow Rail** on 13 Apr (first se. Tennessee record; DJ, JHe), only to be followed by a **Black Rail** 11 May (*fide* KAC). Virginia and King Rails, as well as Sora, also were found there all season (m. ob.). Ten Common Moorhens were at Mosquito L., OH 27 May (CB), one was at Akeley Swamp, *Warren*, PA 27 May (CP), and they were numerous in their usual breeding marshes near Pymatuning L. (RFL). A wintering Sandhill Crane at Rosman, *Transylvania*, NC was last seen 27 Mar (NS), one stopped in the French Broad R. Valley, NC 23 Mar (WF), and one was at Green Bottom W.A., *Cabell*, WV 23 Mar (WA); in w. Pennsylvania, cranes were found in eight counties, and a new e. breeding range extension was established when a pair and 2 downy young were seen at Dushmore, *Sullivan* 19 May (NK, m. ob.).

A wide variety of shorebirds, many of them unusual for Appalachia, made stopovers this spring. Five Black-bellied Plovers at Garrett, *Somerset* 14 May (*fide* JP) provided a good count for the Pennsylvania mountains, but the only American Golden-Plover was at Brainerd Levee, *Hamilton*, TN 28-30 Mar (JC). Almost never seen in the Region away from L. Erie, a **Piping Plover** was a great rarity at Y.C.S.P. 30 Apr (MH, GL m. ob.). Increasingly regular in the Region, 6 American Avocets were in *Greene*, TN 13 Apr (*fide* RKn), 25 near Staunton, VA 21 Apr (AL), and 4 at P.I.S.P. 26 May (JHo).

Willetts also were more frequent, led by a count of 20 at Huntington, WV 25 Apr (WA). A very rare Whimbrel was located during a waterbird fallout in *Garrett*, MD 17 May (DCz). A Whimbrel at Standifer Gap was a first for se. Tennessee 14 Apr (*fide* KAC), one was at N. Branch, *Allegheny*, MD 25 May (JBC, RKi), and up to 4 frequented P.I.S.P. 24-26 May (JM) Sixteen Marbled Godwits was a remarkable count at Austin Springs, TN 20 Apr (RKn); one was a good find at P.I.S.P. 28 Apr (JM, BC). A Spotted Sandpiper at L. Perez, *Huntingdon*, PA 2-3 Mar (*fide* GG) was presumably the same bird seen there in late Feb. A dozen Red Knots was an unusually good count for P.I.S.P. 25 May (DW). There were some high counts of Common Snipe in Pennsylvania, including 65 at Hartstown 16 Mar (MB) and 73 at Berlin, *Somerset* 6 Apr

(JP). A Wilson's Phalarope was a rarity at Imperial, *Allegheny*, PA 15 May (DW); a single was at N. Branch, MD 19 May, where 3 were also found on the 25th (RKi, JBC).

As usual, most of the Region's rare gull reports came from P.I.S.P., including sightings of a Laughing Gull 29 Apr (BC), a Franklin's 29 May (JHo), and one or 2 Little Gulls 10-29 Mar (JM)—plus another 27 May (BC). Other good Presque Isle records included four reports of Thayer's Gull 7-23 Mar, and several listings of Iceland and Glaucous Gulls 7 Mar—20 Apr (JM). Numerous Lesser Black-backed Gulls were observed at Presque Isle 2 Mar—6 May, with a high count of 10 on 20 Apr (JM); elsewhere, a Lesser Black-backed at Cumberland 18 Mar was a first for w. Maryland (ph. RKi). There were five active Herring Gull nests in May in a recently established colony along the Allegheny R. at Pittsburgh (SK). During a period of cold weather, a Common Tern was studied in *Allegheny*, MD 17 May (DCz), along with Black Terns at several locations nearby.

DOVES THROUGH THRUSHES

A Eurasian Collared-Dove that wintered at Fairview, *Erie*, PA remained through at least 5 May (JM), and one was at Collinsville, *York*, PA 27 Apr+ (AM, PR). A Big Spring Day count in Augusta, VA 4 May produced 5 Chuck-will's-widows and 24 Whip-poor-wills (YL), with the latter species more widely reported elsewhere in the Region than during most recent years. A Ruby-throated Hummingbird 2 Apr at Blairsville, *Union* was early for the Georgia mountains (*fide* DF), and 59 banded at P.N.R. reflected a heavy spring flight in w. Pennsylvania (RM, RCL). The only reports of Yellow-bellied Flycatcher were of one at Chickamauga N.M.P., *Hamilton*, TN 20 May (KAC), 7 banded at P.I.S.P. in May (RFL), and 8 banded at P.N.R. between 11 May and a record late 15 Jun (RCL, RM). A rather early Eastern Kingbird was at McDonough W.A., *Wood*, WV 22 Apr (JB). Rare anywhere in the Region, a Loggerhead Shrike was a good find at Green Bottom W.M.A. 24 Mar (WA). In Pennsylvania, single late Northern Shrikes were near Warren 11 Mar (CP) and Hartstown 18 Mar (RN).

White-eyed Vireos continued to push their range northward into n. Pennsylvania, with up to a dozen heard near Sandy L., *Mercer* 15 May (NT), and singles at Geneva Marsh, *Crawford* 22 May (CL) and Akeley Swamp, *Warren* 14 May (JF). Early Yellow-throated and Warbling Vireos were at Enlow Fork, PA 18 Apr (RB), and in one of the better flights of recent years, 16 Philadelphia Vireos were banded at P.N.R.

7-22 May (RM, RCL). Two early Tree Swallows were at Conneaut Marsh, PA 2 Mar (DW), and 9200 were estimated at Pymatuning L 17 May (RFL); a flock of 850 Cliff Swallows was at the Linesville fish hatchery, Pymatuning 17 May (RFL).

Following a fairly heavy fall flight of Black-capped Chickadees in Pennsylvania, an "echo" migration was evident at P.N.R. during the first three weeks of Apr (RCL, RM) A Carolina Chickadee that strayed n to Franklin, *Venango*, PA 22 May (JSt) was well out of known breeding range. The first nesting record of Red-breasted Nuthatch for Georgia was established 2 May at W. Ford along the Chattooga R., *Rabun*, where two additional nests were found later that month (FR) A Sedge Wren was found in the French Broad R Valley, *Henderson*, NC 11 May (*fide* WF), and one sang persistently at Cottage, *Huntingdon*, PA 26-27 May (GG). At P.N.R., thrush numbers were up over most recent springs, with 5 Gray-cheekeds banded 1-5 May and 41 Swainson's netted 3-26 May (RM, RCL) A male **Varied Thrush** was seen briefly at Black Moshannon S.P., *Centre*, PA 9 Mar (KCa)

WARBLERS THROUGH FINCHES

For many birders in Appalachia, the quality of the spring migration as a whole is judged by the strength of the warbler flight. Across the Region, the warbler flight probably can best be described as a steady, but comparatively thin, stream, with no major fallouts reported At the two reporting banding stations, however, the steady flight produced good numbers of some species and high overall diversity. At P.N.R., where 608 warblers of 28 species were recorded over the course of 50 banding days between mid-Apr and the end of May, Yellow, Chestnut-sided, and Black-and-white Warblers and Northern Waterthrush were all netted in well above-average numbers, while the spruce budworm specialists made poor showings (RM, RCL). At P.I.S.P., during some 20 days of banding over the same period, 533 warblers of 23 species were processed (RFL), including high counts of 45 Western Palm Warblers 7 May and 34 Blackpoll Warblers 1 Jun

A Blue-winged Warbler at P.I.S.P. 10 Apr (*fide* JM) was about three weeks early, and other early Blue-wingeds were in *Wood*, WV 17 Apr (JB) and at Enlow Fork, PA the 17th (RB). The only Lawrence's Warbler report came from Beech Fork Dam, *Wayne* WV 24 Apr (WA). Yellow-throated Warblers appear to have extended their range in nw. Pennsylvania to include Conneaut Marsh (SR, RFL) and Oil Cr. S.P. (CL), as well as to Bradford in the n. part of the state (RY). Early Cerulean

Warblers were at McDonough W.A., Wood, WV and Pike, KY (*vide* BPB) by 18 Apr, and the first 2 reached Hendersonville, NC 19 Apr (WF). In addition to several records from the usual migration stopover and nesting sites, a Prothonotary Warbler was at Allegheny Res., McKean, PA 11-13 May (JF), and one was banded at P.N.R. 7 May (RM, RCL). Other early warblers include Worm-eating in Wood, WV 16 Apr and a Kentucky there 15 Apr (JB); the first Hooded Warbler (about two weeks early) was at P.N.R. 17 Apr (RCL, RM).

Among highlights of the sparrow flight was a Lark Sparrow at Portersville, Butler, PA 17 Apr (WS). Two Clay-colored Sparrows at Pisgah Forest 25-27 Apr (NS, m. ob.) represented just the 2nd *Transylvania*, NC record; one was a rarity at P.I.S.P. 5 May (J&TC), and another was banded at P.N.R. 10 May (RM, RCL). The Fox Sparrow migration was heavy over much of w. Pennsylvania; 61 were banded at P.N.R. 27 Feb—16 Apr (RM, RCL), and 18 were at a feeder near Berlin 16 Mar (JP). A Harris's Sparrow at Weyers Cave, Augusta, VA 5 Apr—5 May (ph. MHo) attracted much birder interest and established a first county record (YL). A Dickcissel that had wintered in Greene Twp., Erie, PA was last seen 11 Mar (JM), one was at Riverport, Hamilton, TN 28 Apr (DJ), and another near New Enterprise, Bedford, PA on 31 May (RM). A Blue Grosbeak was a rare, early find at McDonough W.A., WV 28 Apr (*vide* JE), and singles at Bellfonte 6 May (ML) and at Smicksburg, Indiana, PA 11 May (*vide* MHi) were well out of the usual range. The sole report of Western Meadowlark came from Belleville, Mifflin, PA where one was seen over a two-week period beginning 11 May (*vide* GG).

Following a heavy winter invasion, up to 6 Purple Finches remained at a Blairsville, GA feeder through 14 Apr (DF), and several were seen through late Apr in Hamilton, TN (KAC); in Pennsylvania, good numbers passed over the Tussey Mt. hawkwatch, including 130 on 17 Apr (SM). Late reports of Red Crossbill included one at a feeder in Warren, PA 8 Apr (JF), and one near Meadville, PA 30 May (KM). In Virginia, single White-winged Crossbills appeared at Staunton 21-23 Mar and at Stuarts Draft 10 Apr (YL); a male was at a feeder in Canfield, OH 22 Apr (NB), and a female frequented a Frostburg, MD feeder until 1 May (*vide* RKi). Up to 20 White-winged Crossbills that had wintered at Lake City, Erie, PA remained through 23 Apr (JM). A Common Redpoll was at Rew, McKean, PA 8 Apr (JF), and a few remained in Erie, PA through 14 Apr (m. ob.). A small flock of Pine Siskins visited a feeder at Blairsville, GA

through at least 10 May (DF), and one was banded at P.N.R. 17 May (RM, RCL). The American Goldfinch migration was particularly heavy in PA (m. ob.), with a record 828 birds banded at P.N.R. during the season (RM, RCL). Late Evening Grosbeaks included one at Johnstown, PA 9 May (KG) and another at Pine Grove Furnace S.P., Cumberland, PA May 10 (RKO).

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Western Great Lakes



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Strays from the West dominated a long list of casual and accidental species.

Early March was colder than it had been all winter. A wide variety of migrants arrived earlier than usual as temperatures soared into the 80 degrees Fahrenheit during mid-April. Early migrants were soon shocked into reality by a cold spell that persisted into late May.

Abbreviations: M.C.G.I. (Milwaukee Coast Guard Impoundment, WI); Mud L. (*Traverse*, MN); p. a. (pending acceptance); Pte Mouillee (Pointe Mouillee State Game Area, Monroe, MI); Tawas Pt. (Tawas Point State Park, Iosco, MI); W.P.B.O. (Whitefish Point Bird Observatory, Chippewa, MI).