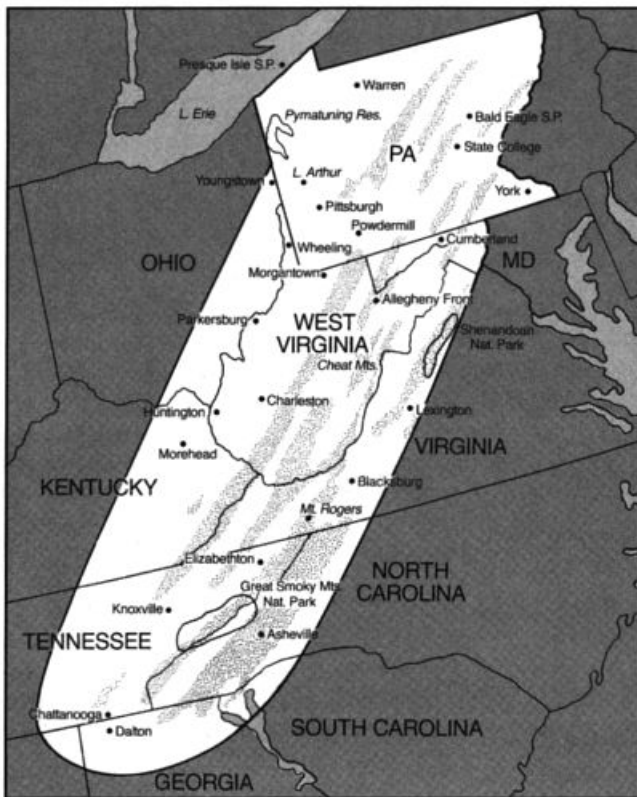


appalachia



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Early March was warmer than usual and, even in the north, most large bodies of waters were ice-free, providing numerous resting areas for migrating waterfowl. By mid-month, for example, 35,000 diving ducks, mostly Canvasbacks and Greater and Lesser Scaup, had gathered on Presque Isle Bay, Erie. This warm spell allowed a few of the normally early landbird migrants, such as Eastern Phoebe, Tree Swallow, and Fox Sparrow, to arrive even earlier than usual. Then, with the return of cold weather later in March, most migrants returned to near-normal schedules. In the Pittsburgh region, Paul Hess observed no substantial flights of migrating passerines before the strong warm front of 2 May. Just a few days later, however, it appeared as though most breeding birds in that area were on territory and in normal numbers. Most birders, especially in the southern Appalachians, considered the second half of May duller than usual for

migrants, with many northern vireos, flycatchers, and warblers apparently over-flying the Region.

Abbreviations: F.B.R.V. (French Broad River Valley, Henderson, NC); M.L.W.A. (Mosquito Lake Wildlife Area, Trumbull, OH); P.I.S.P. (Presque Isle S.P., Erie, PA); P.N.R. (Powdermill Nature Reserve, Rector, Westmoreland, PA); S.H.L. (South Holston L., Henderson, TN).

LOONS THROUGH VULTURES

There was a better-than-usual flight of Red-throated Loons across w. Pennsylvania, with a dozen reports 11 Mar–23 May; a fall-out 8 Apr included singles on Somerset, Conneaut, and Kahle Lakes, as well as L. Arthur (v.o.). Good numbers of migrating Common Loons were observed throughout the Region, including 40 at L. Julian, Buncombe, NC, 20 Mar (WF), 60 on Kahle L., Venango, PA, 3 Apr (JS), and 70 flying past Soddy Mt. hawkwatch in e. TN 11 Apr (WH). Horned Grebes were widely reported in March, with 199 on Conneaut L., PA, 11 Mar (RFL), and 2,000 at P.I.S.P. 12 Mar (JM). A total of 17 Red-necked Grebes was reported 20–30 Apr, distributed over eight w. Pennsylvania lakes from Somerset to Erie

(v.o.). The last of several wintering Eared Grebes at S.H.L. was seen 18 Apr (HPL). Double-crested Cormorant numbers generally were lower than during the previous spring, but in Pennsylvania as many as 26 were on the Allegheny R. at Starbrick, Warren, 3 Apr (TG), with 36 in w. Crawford 22 Apr (RFL) and 71 on L. Somerset 22 Apr (AM, JRP).

During the second half of April there was a good flight of American Bitterns; reports from 15 localities included 4 birds at Brainerd Levee, Hamilton, TN, 17 & 28 Apr (KC) and numerous records from P.I.S.P. (JM). A Least Bittern was at Brainerd Levee 13 Apr (KC), 2 were at Grand River W.M.A., Trumbull, OH, 30 May (CPA), and several records came from P.I.S.P. 6–28 May (JM). A high count of 19 Great Egrets came from Elizabethton, TN, 30 Mar (GWA). In the north, early birds were at Sandy Creek Marsh, Wood, WV, 1 Apr (DE), Kahle L., PA, 2–3 Apr (JS), with 3 at Youngsville, Warren, PA, 3 Apr (fide TG). A Snowy Egret was at Austin Springs, TN, 17 Apr (HPL), and 2 were in Hamilton, TN, 21 May (HS); in Pennsylvania, singles were at P.I.S.P. 12 May (JS, DS) and 20–22 May (JM). A Tricolored Heron at P.I.S.P. 14–27 May was joined by a second bird 28 May (JTC). An early Green Heron was at Conneaut Marsh, Crawford, PA, 26 Mar (IF). Cattle Egret sightings included one at Brainerd Levee 7 Apr (DP), 2 at L. Julian, NC, 8 Apr (WF, MW), and one at Pymatuning L., PA, 27 May (RFL, JH). Two early Yellow-crowned Night-Herons were at Kiwanus L., York, PA, 27 Mar (RE), one was at Jackson Park, Henderson, NC, 29 Apr (WF, RLS), and 2 were at Kendall Recreation Area, Clinton, KY, 9 May (FR). Black Vultures continue to extend their range westward beyond the Allegheny Front in sw. Pennsylvania; 6 were at Berlin, Somerset, 24 Mar, and there were several reports from nearby Mt. Davis (JRP).

WATERFOWL THROUGH CRANES

The only Ross's Goose report was from Saltsburg, Indiana, PA, 3 Mar–13 May (MAD). Mute Swans, now regular in nw. Pennsylvania, were at Starbrick (TG), Tamarack L., Meadville (RFL), and P.I.S.P.(JM); in Trumbull, OH, a pair frequented Shenango W.A. (DJH). The Tundra Swan migration peaked in w. Pennsylvania the first week of Mar, with

175 at Hartstown, *Crawford*, 1 Mar (MB), 153 at the Allegheny Front hawkwatch, *Somerset*, 4 Mar (MM), and 390 in *Venango*, 6 Mar (JS). At Pymatuning L., PA, American Wigeon numbers peaked at 697 on 19 Apr (RFL) and 2 late birds were at Swoope, *Augusta*, VA, 14 May (YL). A flock of 10 Blue-winged Teal was early at Brainerd Levee, TN, 11 Mar (JC) and at F.B.R.V. numbers peaked at 75 on 9 Apr (WE, MW). An exceptionally heavy fallout of 2250 Northern Pintails occurred at Tamarack L. 8 Apr (RFL), while 43 Northern Shovelers were at M.L.W.A. 5 Apr (DJH). There were 320 Ring-necked Ducks at Grand River W.A., OH, 14–15 Mar (CB); 950 at Conneaut L., PA, 19 Apr (RFL); and a lingering bird was at Fisherville, VA, 20 May (YL). Among a half-dozen records of Surf Scoter from w. Pennsylvania were reports of 3 at Woodcock L., *Crawford*, 26 Apr (LC), and a late bird on Kahle L. 10–13 May (JS). On 30 Apr, 2 Black Scoters were at Two Mile Run Park, *Venango*, PA (JS) and 2 were at Keystone Res., *Indiana*, PA (MRH). Long-tailed Ducks put down in w. Pennsylvania in small numbers; highest count among six reports, was of just 27 at Starbrick 27 Apr (TG). At Pymatuning, Buffleheads peaked at 925 on 8 Apr; there were 250 Hooded Mergansers there 11 Mar and 500 Red-breasted Mergansers 2 Apr (RFL). There were 900 Ruddy Ducks at Pymatuning 8 Apr (RFL), 500 at L. Latonka, Mercer, PA, 13 Apr (NT), and 500 at Kahle L. 22 Apr (JS).

Early Ospreys appeared in *Wood*, WV, 3 Mar (*vide* JE), and *Venango* Township, *Erie*, PA, 5 Mar (LD). According to Pennsylvania Game Commission personnel (BP), there were 8 active nests in *Mercer* and 2 in *Butler*. Bald Eagles continue to thrive in nw. Pennsylvania, with 18 active nests and 25 live eaglets as of 5 Jun (BP). Following their heavy winter invasion in the n. Appalachians, a return migration of Northern Goshawks continued in w. Pennsylvania through the third week of Apr and a late bird was in *Huntingdon*, PA, 25 May (GG). Red-shouldered Hawks were widely reported, with a high count of 18 at the Allegheny Front hawkwatch, *Somerset*, PA, 4 Apr (MM). The last wintering Rough-legged Hawk at Shady Valley, TN, was seen 29 Mar (HPL, AW), and a late migrant was at Mercer, PA, 21 Apr (NT). There were too many Merlin sightings to list individually, but one at Stuarts Draft, VA, 7 May provided a new late spring date for *Augusta* (YL), and 12 were listed at P.I.S.P. 13 Mar–21 May (JM). In their 10th consecutive year of nest-

ing on the Gulf Building in downtown Pittsburgh, a pair of Peregrine Falcons produced four young (DBr). A pair that historically nested at Chickamauga Dam relocated to Falling Creek Falls, TN, 6 mi from their old site (DL), while three pairs were known to be nesting in w. North Carolina (*vide* NS).

Fifteen Soras were at Hiwassee W.R., TN, 5 Mar (DG), with 6 at Brainerd Levee 28 Apr (KC). There were 14 Common Moorhens at M.L.W.A. 13 May (CB), and they were common at both the Conneaut and Hartstown marshes, PA (RFL, IF). Three early Sandhill Cranes were in Mercer, PA, 8 Mar (NT), and a total of 13 were near Grove City 7 May (GW); one was at Springboro, *Crawford*, PA, 9 May (AE); another, captured at Belle Valley Elementary School, was released at Siegel Marsh, *Erie*, early in May (JTC).

SHOREBIRDS THROUGH TERNS

Two Black-bellied Plovers at Hooper Lane, *Henderson*, NC, 10 May (WF, RLS) were the Region's only report. American Golden-Plovers were slightly more numerous, with singles at Hooper Lane 17 Apr (WF), Imperial, *Allegheny*, PA, 10 Apr (*vide* PH), and Kahle L., PA, 10 May (JS). An early Greater Yellowlegs was at M.L.W.A. 3 Mar (DJH), 30 were at F.B.R.V. 21 Apr (WF, BO), and a high count of 80 was noted at Pymatuning L. 22 Apr (RFL, IF). Four Willets were at S.H.L. 15 May (HPL). In Pennsylvania, one was at P.I.S.P. 7–8 May (JM, RES), one was at Goddard S.P. 13 May (DD), and 2 were at Hereford Manor L., *Beaver*, 16 May (PM). An exceptionally large flock containing 64 Whimbrels gathered at M.L.W.A. 19 May (DJH, ph. CB), and 10 were at S.H.L. 25 May (HPL) for a 5th local record. Eight Marbled Godwits at P.I.S.P. 8 May (RES) represented the largest group ever reported in Pennsylvania. On 13 May, three Ruddy Turnstones were at S.H.L. (WC) and one was in *Garrett*, MD (FP); 7 turnstones were in a field at M.L.W.A. 19 May (DJH). An estimated 50–60 Red Knots were at P.I.S.P. 17 May (JM). Two Western Sandpipers stopped at Donegal L., *Westmoreland*, PA, 8 May (RCL); another was at F.B.R.V. 26 May, along with 5 White-rumped Sandpipers 29 May (WF, BO). An early Stilt Sandpiper appeared at Austin Springs, TN, 23 Mar (HPL, AW) and another was at Brainerd Levee 7 Apr (KC). In Pennsylvania, 2 Stilt Sandpipers found at Dunning Creek, *Bedford*, 23 May stayed two weeks (TD), and one was at L. Peru, *Huntingdon*, 24–26 May (GG). High Common Snipe counts included 65 at Dunning Creek 3 Apr (TD) and 137 at Shady Valley, TN, 26 Mar (WC). Single

Wilson's Phalaropes appeared at Brainerd Levee 9 May (*vide* KC), at Dunning Creek 8 May (TD), and near Mammoth, *Westmoreland*, PA, 15 May (DL, MM).

The remains of a Pomarine Jaeger were found at P.I.S.P. 29 Apr (ph. JM). A scattering of Laughing Gull reports came from e. Tennessee, including 2 at S.H.L. 16 Apr (WC, HPL), 3 at Chickamauga L. 9 May (KC), and 2 at Nickajack L. 17 May (KC). Single Laughing Gulls were at P.I.S.P. 13 & 20 May (JM), and a Franklin's Gull stayed 8–13 May (RES, CT). Single Little Gulls were at P.I.S.P. 5 Mar and 9 Apr and a Black-headed Gull was there 29 Apr (JM). The Ring-billed Gull colony at the General Electric plant in Erie contained an estimated 500–700 nests; about 30 pairs of incubating Herring Gulls were new to the site this year (JM). Other rare gulls at *Erie* (all *vide* JM) included Thayer's 30 Mar; single Iceland Gulls 7 & 30 Mar and 14 May, 2 Lesser Black-backs 5 Mar; and Glaucous Gulls 7 & 18 Mar and 11 Apr. There were 50 Caspian Terns on Gull Point, P.I.S.P., 8–11 May (RES); the best count away from L. Erie was of 10 at L. Somerset, PA, 19 Apr (*vide* AM), and one was unusual at L. Julian, NC, 15 Apr (WF). Common Terns were scarce, although 33 were at M.L.W.A. 13 May (CB). As in recent years, Forster's was the most frequently found tern over most of the Region, with a high count of 18 at Kingsport, TN, 5 Apr (HPL). A scattering of Black Terns in the mountains included 5 migrants at Broadford L., MD, 12 May (FP), 2 at S.H.L. 21 May (WC), and 3 at L. Somerset, PA, 28 May (JRP).

DOVES THROUGH WARBLERS

Eurasian Collared-Dove populations continued to expand in *Hamilton*, TN, where breeding was confirmed in Chattanooga (CLB). There were a dozen records of Long-eared Owl at P.I.S.P. 29 Mar–23 Apr (DD) and one was near Franklin, PA, 4–18 Apr (JS). A Short-eared Owl stayed at Hooper Lane, NC, through 21 Mar (WF); in w. Pennsylvania a dozen were at various localities in *Erie*, *Venango*, and *Westmoreland* (v.o.). An early Ruby-throated Hummingbird was in *Wood*, WV, 19 Apr (*vide* JE); few other contributors mentioned the species, but 45 banded at P.N.R. (RCL, RM) indicated an average migration. An over-wintering Rufous Hummingbird at Signal Mt., TN, was last seen 12 Mar (*vide* KC); another, at Brevard, NC, left 12 Apr (*vide* NS).

Olive-sided Flycatchers were widely encountered, including 6 in se. TN 9–23 May (KC), one at Humpback Mt., VA, 13

May (*vide* YL), and a dozen records from scattered sites across w. Pennsylvania (v.o.). At P.N.R., 8 Yellow-bellied Flycatchers were banded 10 May–3 June (RCL, RM); otherwise, the only report was of one near Franklin, PA, 15 May (JS). On 7 May, a male Scissor-tailed Flycatcher reappeared at a historic nesting locality near Charleston, TN, for the 4th year in a row, but there was no evidence of breeding this season (*vide* KC). A Loggerhead Shrike was a rare find at Lanesville, PA, 10 Mar (RFL). Following the record winter invasion of Northern Shrikes, late migrants were at Grand River W.A., OH, 15 Mar (CB) and P.I.S.P. 18–19 Mar (MF, EH). Common Ravens continue to increase nearly throughout the Region; nesting was confirmed well w. of the mountains in *Greene*, PA, for the first time (RKB).

An early Tree Swallow was at L. Arthur, PA, 7 Mar (RSt) and 5,300 were at Pymatuning L. 22 Apr (RFL). A colony of Bank Swallows at Boaz, *Wood*, WV, contained 40 nesting cavities (JE); there were 100 cavities at a Conneaut L., PA, site in late May (RFL) and 500 at two colonies in *Venango*, PA (JS). An early Barn Swallow appeared at Franklin Center, *Erie*, PA, 15 Mar (KA). On 20 Mar, two Brown-headed Nuthatches were located at L. Julian, NC, where they are rare permanent residents (WF), and at least 8 were at Kingston Steam Plant, *Roane*, TN, 11 May (FR). An exceptionally early Veery was singing at Middlebrook, VA, 6 Apr (RH). Gray-cheeked Thrushes seemed scarce, but singles were at Jackson Park, NC, 2 May (WF) and Hamilton, TN, 6 May (KC), and 4 netted at P.N.R. 18–27 May (RCL, RM). There was a consensus that Wood Thrushes returned to their breeding grounds a week early, on average, and that populations were up from recent years. There were 200 American Pipits at Hooper Lane, NC, 4 Mar (WF).

Blue-winged Warbler numbers continue to increase in the Region, but there are areas, particularly in the uplands, where Golden-winged continue to do well. Atlasing in Raleigh, WV, produced 210 Golden-winged and 95 Blue-winged Warblers (RC); but the *Greene*, PA, North American Migration Count listed 50 Blue-winged and just one Golden-winged (*vide* RKB). Birds representing the rare Lawrence's hybrid were observed in *Hamilton*, TN, 13 May (*vide* KC), and *Beaver*, PA, 31 May (BH); sightings of Brewster's were too numerous to list. Rare in spring, 4 Orange-crowned Warblers were at Jackson Park, NC, 24 Apr (WF); 4 were at P.I.S.P. 13–20 May (RFL, AE); and one was

near Franklin, PA, 4 May (JS). An early Chestnut-sided Warbler was at Churchville, *Augusta*, VA, 9 Apr (*vide* YL). A singing Yellow-rumped Warbler at Mt. Mitchell S.P., NC, 30 May suggests the possibility of breeding there (TH). Many observers believed Cerulean Warblers were doing well; they were locally common in the Laurel Highlands of sw. PA (RM) and considered "abundant" in forested areas of *McDowell* and *Greenbrier*, WV (RC). A Swainson's Warbler was at Chimney Rock Park, NC, 15 May (WH, BO), at least 2 were at Red River Gorge, KY, in late May (FR), and singles were found at Booker T. Washington S.P. 27–30 Apr and White Oak Mt, *Hamilton*, TN, 1 May (*vide* KC). A Connecticut Warbler was in *Hamilton*, TN, 13–14 May (*vide* KC); in Pennsylvania, singles were in Pittsburgh 17 May (WS) and Butler 24 May (GW), and 2 were at P.I.S.P. 21 May (JM, JTC). A scattering of Mourning Warbler sightings came from nearly throughout the Region; 17 were banded at P.N.R. 5 May–6 Jun (RCL, RM). A Hooded Warbler at P.N.R. 21 Apr was about a week early for that area (RCL, RM).

TANAGERS THROUGH FINCHES

Two Summer Tanagers were good finds at Jackson Park, NC, 29 Apr (WF, RLS), while one was in *Wood*, WV, 5 May (JE) and imm. males were at P.I.S.P., well n. of their usual range, 8 & 13 May (DS, LC). The Spotted Towhee that wintered at Export, PA, remained through late March (v.o.). In the north, where they do not winter, an early Chipping Sparrow appeared at Plumville, *Indiana*, PA, 2 Mar (MMo). Now regular in w. Pennsylvania, Clay-colored Sparrows were at Piney Track, *Clarion*, 23 May (MM), *Imperial*, *Allegheny*, 30 May (CT), *Penssy Swamp*, *Lawrence*, 31 May (LW), and 3 records came from P.I.S.P. 14–22 May (JTC, MF). In North Carolina, 2 Lark Sparrows were at Ashville 12 Apr (CG), while one was on Jeffress Rd., *Henderson*, 26 Apr (WF); in Pennsylvania, one was at P.I.S.P. 17 Apr (BW) and another was at Dunning Creek 1 May (TD). Two early Savannah Sparrows were near L. Raystown, *Huntingdon*, PA, 10 Mar (GG). A survey of Henslow's Sparrows produced 9 n. of Butler, PA, in mid-May (GW), 6 at Latrobe 13 May, and 8 at Piney Track 23 May (MM). There was an unusually good passage of Fox Sparrows through sw. Pennsylvania (PH), including 77 banded at P.N.R. Apr–May (RCL, RM). Two Lapland Longspurs were still at Hooper Lane, NC, 1 Mar (WF), and a late bird was at Kahle L., PA, 12 Mar (WFy). An exceptionally early

Indigo Bunting appeared at Moraine S.P., PA, 3 Apr (WS). Up to 10 Dickcissels were at Swoope, VA, 20–26 May (YL), one was at F.B.R.V. 20 Apr (WF), and another was at Friendsville, MD, 6 May (*vide* FP).

A Western Meadowlark 13 Mar along Skunk Run Rd., *Mercer*, PA, was a county first (NT). The last wintering White-winged Crossbill at Signal Mt., TN, was noted 15 Mar (ME); 4 were at Russell, *Warren*, PA, 13 Mar (*vide* TG) and a late bird lingered in *Erie* until 24 May (BG). Common Redpolls stayed in w. Pennsylvania through mid-Mar, including 40 at N. Warren 13 Mar (*vide* TG), a few at Franklin (JS) and at P.I.S.P. (MF) 18 Mar; 6 very late birds were at Pittsburgh 29 Apr (JV). A Hoary Redpoll was reported from Grove City, PA, 3 Mar (RSt). Following a heavy winter flight, Pine Siskins were widely reported, including 100 on 23 Apr at Roan Mt., TN (AT). Two lingered at Flat Top Mt., *Bledsoe*, TN, through 24 May (RDS). Although birds in breeding condition were caught at P.N.R., nesting was believed to have been unsuccessful (RCL, RM). Evening Grosbeaks sightings were scattered, with a high of 80 at Roan Mt. 23 Apr (AT); late birds were at several sites in w. PA the first week of May (v.o.).

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