



**Rochester Birding  
Association**

# Little Gull

*P.O. Box 92055, 1335 Jefferson Road, Rochester, NY 14692*

## June 2024 Events and Birding Field Trips

Leaders and trip details are subject to change. Please check the most recent issue of the Little Gull, or the online schedule at the RBA website <https://rochesterbirding.org/>, for updated information prior to departure! All field trips go rain/snow or shine unless there is a travel advisory issued. Trips run approximately 2 to 4 hours. Bring binoculars. Wear weather appropriate clothing and sturdy shoes. Registration is not required, please arrive at the designated meeting location 10 minutes before the start time of the trip. Colds, flu, and COVID are still around--if you're not feeling well, please stay home. Please carpool when possible. Enjoy your trip!

### **June 1 Ganondagan State Historic Site**

**Saturday** This trip has generated large species lists due to the many habitat types we will travel through. We will start from the parking lot to the longhouse and walk wide mown or packed dirt trails through the Meadowlark field and then head down through woods, shrub land, and wetland to an overlook in grassland. The round trip is 1.5 miles and includes some hills. After we reach the overlook, those who wish can continue for another 2 miles on the narrower Seneca Trail through field and woods, across County Route 41, and along a wooded stream valley to the Bobolink field. Restroom facilities are available at the museum center at end of trip. Meet at **8:00 a.m.** in the main parking lot situated below the new museum at 7000 County Road 41 (Boughton Hill Road), Victor, NY 14564.

**Leaders:** *Amy Kahn 585-310-2330 and co-leader Neal Reilly 518-256-9147*

### **June 2 Letchworth State Park**

**Sunday** This trip frequently garners one of the higher bird lists among RBA field trips. Of course, it gets an early start! We'll look for birds not frequently seen on other trips, such as Acadian Flycatcher. We'll do a fair amount of walking: one somewhat steep but short forest trail and a dirt road down to the river level, as well as some roadside birding. Restrooms are available at several locations along the way. Meet at **5:30 a.m.** at the Dam Overlook Gifts and Grill parking lot (use the Route 36 entrance to Letchworth State Park). Pack a lunch and snacks, as the trip will likely last well into mid-afternoon. **Spotting scopes would be very useful.**

**Leader:** *Elijah Kruger 585-329-7754 and co-leader Neal Reilly 518-256-9147*

### **June 8 Ganondagan State Historic Site, a Field Trip for Young Birders**

**Saturday** This trip is open to young birders ages 8 to 18 accompanied by a parent. This trip has generated large species lists due to the many habitat types we will travel through. We will start from the parking lot to the longhouse and walk wide mown or packed dirt trails through the Meadowlark field and then head down through woods, shrub land, and wetland to an overlook in grassland. The round trip is 1.5 miles and includes some hills. After we reach the overlook, those who wish can continue for another 2 miles on the narrower Seneca Trail through field and woods, across County Route 41, and along a wooded stream valley to the Bobolink field. Restroom facilities are available at the museum center at end of trip. Meet at **10:00 a.m.** in the main parking lot situated below the new museum at 7000 County Road 41 (Boughton Hill Road), Victor, NY 14564.

**Leader:** *Amy Kahn 585-310-2330 and co-leader Neal Reilly 518-256-9147*

### **June 8 Taylor Marsh (Joint trip with the Bergen Swamp Preservation Society)**

**Saturday** Taylor Marsh is a preserve owned by the Bergen Swamp Preservation Society and located in Ontario County north of Honeoye Lake. It is best known for marsh birds, including both American and Least Bittern and Virginia Rail. However, the star attraction is the Sandhill Cranes that have been present in this area all year around for many years. Breeding has been confirmed. They are occasionally heard at Taylor, although seldom seen. Taylor also has brush-shrub and wooded upland habitat with a good variety of spring migrants and breeding birds. An adjacent hay field is home to Bobolinks and Eastern Meadowlarks. It has a checklist of nearly 145 species that can be downloaded at [https://bergenswamp.org/TaylorMarshBirdList\\_19\\_03\\_03.pdf](https://bergenswamp.org/TaylorMarshBirdList_19_03_03.pdf).

This is mostly a flat trail, which can be muddy, and has one very small shallow stream to cross. Waterproof boots are advisable. No restrooms available. Meet at **8:00 a.m.** at the Taylor Marsh parking area on the west side of Allen's Hill Road just south of Nighan Hill Road. From Rochester, take I-390 south to the Avon exit. Turn left onto Routes 5&20 and go east. In the town of Lima, turn right onto Route 15 A and follow it south. Turn left onto Richmond Mills Road (Livingston County Road 41). It becomes Ontario County Road 15. Follow County Road 15 past County Road 37 and turn right at the next stop sign onto Allen's Hill Road. (There is no road sign at the intersection.)

**Leaders:** Lynn Braband 585-436-9388 and Jay Greenberg 585-256-0485

**June 9 Wyoming County Fields and Forest—New Compehner Farm**

Sunday

This is a great opportunity to explore an upland region of northeastern Wyoming County including New Compehner Farm (6340 LaGrange Road Wyoming, NY 14591). We will look for migrating and resident warblers, a variety of native sparrows, hopefully returning cliff swallows, both oriole species and open country birds, in a nice mixture of open fields and wooded habitats and bird friendly plantings. We will focus on locating several nesting species. This trip has a little of everything on a beautiful farm. Easy walking, but will cover a mile or two; wear sturdy shoes. The trip will last until noon. Use a restroom *en route*, if possible (there is a McDonalds in the town of LeRoy), otherwise a bathroom is available at the home of the leader. Meet at **7:30 a.m.** at 6340 LaGrange Road, Wyoming, NY 14591.

**Leaders:** Hans Kunze 585-813-2676 and Rick Stevens 585-689-1882

**June 15 Bergen Swamp**

Saturday

A trip to this unique place is by special permit from the Bergen Swamp Preservation Society and will feature nesting birds. The mix of vegetation zones provides secluded nesting habitat for the usual western N.Y. species as well as those more characteristic of the Canadian zone such as Blue-headed Vireo, Hermit Thrush, Ovenbird, and other warblers. This is a walking trip of 3 miles on variably wet and slippery corduroy trails that must be followed closely for safety reasons and because of the fragile habitat. **Sturdy boots** (rather than sneakers) **are strongly recommended**, and hiking or ski poles may be useful. Meet at **7:30 a.m.** at the main trailhead entrance to Bergen Swamp: 6646 Hessenthaler Rd, Byron, NY 14422. From Rochester, take I-490 west to Exit 2. Take Rt. 33 west and turn right (north) onto Route 19. Turn left at the fire station onto Hunter Road, it becomes Swamp Road. Follow Swamp Road west past Pocock Road and turn right onto Hessenthaler Road. The swamp entrance is at the kiosk on the right. Park along the right shoulder, but do not park in front of the caretaker's house.

**Leader:** Greg Lawrence 585-730-2553 and co-leader Neal Reilly 518-256-9147

**June 16 Odonata Sanctuary**

Sunday

The 100 acre privately owned Odonata Sanctuary, 20 Parrish Road, Honeoye Falls, NY 14472, is the former home of Joseph W. Taylor, who was a founder of the American Birding Association and president of Hawk Mountain Association. The sanctuary participates in the Wildlife Habitat Incentives Program (WHIP) that provides nesting acreage for grassland nesting birds such as Eastern Meadowlarks and Bobolinks. The sanctuary is an access point for the observation of migrating birds and monarch butterflies and is also home to one of the largest Eastern Bluebird nest box trails in the USA. The trails pass over streams, around a pond and through woodlands. No restrooms available. Meet at **8:00 a.m.** at the sanctuary. Enter the sanctuary at 20 Parrish Road and drive up the long, one-lane driveway.

**Leaders:** Tom Nash and Sheryl Gracewski 585-261-6975 and co-leader Steve Melcher 585-746-8078.

**June 23 Barnhart's Camp and Keeney Swamp**

Sunday

We will be birding as we drive (and stop) throughout the diverse landscapes of northern Allegany County including Keeney Swamp. Grassland, woodland, pond and swampland species such as Prairie and Mourning Warblers, Eastern Bluebirds, Indigo Buntings, and maybe a bittern could be seen. This trip generally goes all day so we can see as much as possible! Meet at **7:30 a.m.** at the Shop-n-Save on Rt. 408 (Mt. Morris-Nunda Rd), Nunda, New York, where restrooms are available. **Spotting scopes and FRS Radios would be useful.** Lunch at Barnhart's camp is a trip tradition—they grill the hot dogs! Bring a dish to pass—your choice (but this is optional).

**Leaders:** Jerry and Carolyn Barnhart 585-385-4026 and co-leaders Rick Stevens and Tom and Jeanne Verhulst 585-362-0803

## President's Corner, Randi Minetor

What an exciting spring it's been! Now it's time to think about breeding birds and the challenges they face as they build nests and raise young throughout our area.

This is the last year of New York Breeding Bird Atlas III (NYBBA), so if you are participating in this fascinating and important citizen science project, June is a prime month for getting out into the field and recording what you see. You'll find all the information you need at <https://ebird.org/atlasny/about> to understand how to observe bird behavior and record it on the NYBBA site on eBird. There's still plenty of time to get involved—only a small fraction of birding blocks (3 x 3 mile squares) have been completed, so your participation is vital to help complete the statewide atlas.



Photo by Richard Ashworth

Birds need places to nest, but manicured lawns and well-pruned trees do not attract them. You can make your yard a safe place for birds, whether they nest in cavities in trees or birdhouses, on ledges with cover (like the insides of barns), or deep in brush piles. It's tough to resist the urge to clean up every leaf and twig in your yard and whisk them off for compost, but many birds love piles of brush and leaves. Consider turning your yard into a habitat for many species of birds by letting the seasons pass naturally, leaving your leaf and twig detritus where it falls and creating piles that help birds hide from predators. You will be thrilled to welcome the new birds that move in.

Birds also need food that they recognize, beyond what you may offer in your feeders. Many birds are fruit eaters that will never come to half an orange or a dish of grape jelly—they need berries and other fruits they can glean from fruiting trees, like serviceberry, spicebush, and winterberry. These native trees provide year-round fruit for birds like waxwings, robins, blackbirds, bluebirds, thrushes, and even some warblers and vireos. Native wildflowers—black-eyed Susan, purple coneflower, common and butterfly milkweed, Joe-Pye weed, cardinal flower, wild bergamot, blazing star, common yarrow, boneset, tickseed coreopsis, and many others—provide familiar foods to local birds as well, turning your yard into Bird Central throughout the summer and fall.

There's one more thing you can do to help birds nest, feed, and care for their young throughout the breeding season. Now that a variety of apps have put birdsong in the palms of our hands, many birders find it very easy to use playback—playing a recording of a bird's song in the field. Hearing the song can make the bird think that a rival individual has entered its territory, so the bird may rise from its nesting area to defend itself and its mate. Sometimes a female will emerge from the nesting area to check out the new singing male, to see if he may be preferable to the one she's already chosen. The bird's response to playback briefly disrupts its process of nesting, breeding, and raising young. While there is precious little research about whether playback hurts birds or disrupts breeding, experts agree that the responsible thing to do is to resist the temptation to draw birds out with recordings, especially during breeding season. Let's do everything we can to help bird populations increase this summer.

## RBA Annual Picnic— Thursday June 13th, 2024 @ 5:30–8:30 pm

**Burrough Audubon Nature Club, 301 Railroad Mills Road, Pittsford, NY 14534**

- Please bring your own dinner, as you prefer. If you would like to grill, please bring your own meat. RBA will provide charcoal.
- We will provide plates, cups, plastic utensils, and ice.
- The picnic is always informal and fun. There's no formal program; it's just a lot of birders talking about birds, travel, and other adventures.
- The BANC facility is located in an ideal place to see birds. This is a great opportunity to enjoy this lovely spot, with an after-dinner walk to look for breeding songbirds and year-round residents.

**Looking forward to see you there!**

## Volunteer Opportunities!

Want to have the fun of meeting lots of enthusiastic birders at events throughout our area? Take a shift at the Rochester Birding Association table at one of these exciting events! RBA has never been in higher demand at events in our parks than we are this summer, so we need lots of help with staffing our table. It's an easy day: Just come and talk to people about birds and birding, hand out brochures, and give people our new RBA wristbands.

We're planning to raffle off a bird feeder during each event, compliments of our dear friends at The Bird House. So people will fill out tickets with their name and phone number and drop them into a bowl. Easy-peasy!

Here are the event dates. Can you help? Please contact our Volunteer Coordinator, Lauren Doucette, at [lannedougherty@gmail.com](mailto:lannedougherty@gmail.com).

**Saturday, June 29, exact time TBD:** Hamlin Beach State Park 75<sup>th</sup> anniversary, at the park

**Saturday, July 20, 10 a.m. to 4 p.m.:** New York State Parks and Historic Sites 100<sup>th</sup> Anniversary, Letchworth State Park. We have one person for this, but we need three more for morning or afternoon shifts.

**To reserve your shift, contact Lauren Doucette**

[lannedougherty@gmail.com](mailto:lannedougherty@gmail.com)



## Welcome to the Flock

Join us in welcoming these 16 new or returning members who joined in the last month.

Maryjane Link  
Sheila & Don Yerdon  
Deborah Bauer  
Patricia Ealy  
Christine Ealy & Nick Pucillio

Richard Fadok  
Judith Knight  
Jim Mott  
Patrick & Jessica Murphy  
Amy Palka

Elaina Parina & Nicole  
Steszewski  
Beverly Strohm



Snow Geese, Hamlin  
© Alan Bloom 2/20/23

### Current RBA Membership as of May 15 is 374:

- 350 Household memberships
- 1 Junior member
- 1 Corporate member (The Bird House)
- 21 Complimentary

Jo Taylor, Membership Data



## Field Trip Reports

### Owl Woods 3/23/24

The morning of the Owl Woods trip was a cold one- but that did not stop the birdwatchers! Despite the 28 degree drizzly weather, the group was optimistic about the trip. Unfortunately, no Saw-whet Owls were seen. A probable Long-eared Owl had been flushed in the woods earlier before the trip and was likely seen again by a few participants as it flushed again. A Gray Catbird and Hermit Thrush were seen as well as Black-capped Chickadee, Northern Cardinal, Northern Flicker, Dark-eyed Junco, Cooper's Hawk and other common winter birds.

After the walk through Owl Woods, the members of the group moved to the Hawkwatch platform at Braddock Bay Park. From the platform we were able to observe Bald Eagle, American Coot, Northern Shoveler, Gadwall, American Wigeon, Mallard, Canvasback, Ring-necked Duck, Long-tailed Duck and Red-breasted Merganser. The cold kept us from staying too long but overall a good time was had by all!

*Liz Magnanti, Doug Rabjohns and Elizabeth Rabjohns*

### Highland Park, 4/24/2024

The weather cooperated this year, with light cloud cover and temps in the 50s. Eight birders and two leaders gathered under just budding cherry blossoms. A Red-bellied Woodpecker, Dark-eyed Juncos and a Ruby-crowned Kinglet were found almost immediately. Chipping Sparrows and a Downy Woodpecker showed well, as did an American Goldfinch. Soon after we were treated to great views and photo ops of a Red-tailed Hawk perched low and unconcerned near the sidewalk! Though Fox Sparrows were long gone this year and no Brown Thrasher or Ravens, we had good looks at a Hermit Thrush, White-throated Sparrows, a Song Sparrow, a Yellow-rumped Warbler, and a Great Blue Heron flyover. We bettered last year's total by two with 25 species. Thanks to all who came to enjoy the Spring migrants and at-peak magnolia trees and daffodils at a one of Rochester's favorite parks.

*Amy Kahn and Jeanne Verhulst*

### Cobbs Hill Park, 5/1/2024

Despite cool temperatures, fine drizzle, early fog, and overcast skies, 29 participants joined four leaders for the always-popular visit to Cobbs Hill Park, focusing as usual on the Washington Grove. We split into three groups, each heading in slightly different directions, but everyone ultimately saw most of the 53 species we collectively encountered. Warblers were the main attraction, 13 in total, with the highlights in this regard being an early Tennessee, an uncommon Orange-crowned, a showy Ovenbird, and good numbers of Nashvilles, Northern Parulas, and Black-throated Greens. A Scarlet Tanager was also on the menu,

as were Hermit and Wood Thrushes, Baltimore Orioles, Rose-breasted Grosbeaks, Eastern Towhees, and a seemingly out of place Eastern Bluebird. Thanks to Pat Martin and Sue Robertson for co-leading, and also to the many experienced birders among us, especially Bill Haake, for their assistance.

*Tom and Jeanne Verhulst*

### Rush Riverside Refuge, 5/9/24

Fifteen birders made the trip through the varied habitats that encompass the Rush Riverside Refuge. A cool and partly sunny day led to sightings aplenty. Highlights included good looks at Blue-winged, Magnolia and Blackburnian Warblers out of a solid dozen warbler species. Baltimore Orioles were just eclipsed by White-throated Sparrows, Barn Swallows and Yellow Warblers for most numerous species of the day, although Yellow-rumped Warblers, Common Yellowthroats and Scarlet Tanagers were plentiful. We got a quintet of woodpeckers, a quartet of Flycatchers (Eastern Phoebe, Least Flycatcher, Great-crested Flycatcher and Eastern Kingbird) and a trio of Vireos. The woods held Wood Thrush and Swainson's Thrush as special additions. The surprise of the day was a Wild Turkey, who flew low through the woods in front of the group. Some folks made it to the recently discovered display of Virginia Bluebells, serenaded by Field Sparrows, Goldfinches and Eastern Bluebirds with the resident Red-tailed Hawk circling overhead. More than 60 species of birds were identified. Special thanks to co-leaders Sue Robertson and Nick Kachala.

*Ann McMican*



Riverside Refuge Field trip, 5/9/2024, Jack Mould

### Beechwood State Park, 5/5/2024

Rain subsided to mist at the first pick-up at Webster Park. At the second stop, B. Foreman Park east of Pultneyville, no rain, but a strong wind kept the birds down. But by the time we arrived at Beechwood State Park, the rain

had returned and the wind continued, making for a cold 53 degrees. We all added extra layers before we began our walk down the main entrance road. As we got further into the park, tall trees and hedgerows provided some protection from the wind. Ruby-crowned Kinglets, American Goldfinches, a Black-and-white Warbler, and White-throated Sparrows were seen early on. A Black-throated Green Warbler was heard. We tried taking a couple of trails off the track to Maxwell Creek, but there were too many downed trees or very wet conditions to allow us to continue on them. This slight deviation did prove worthwhile, however: two Scarlet Tanagers and a female Rose-breasted Grosbeak were found in the same tree along the track. Returning to the open field we had good looks at a Northern Parula and a Yellow-rumped Warbler. A Baltimore Oriole and Gray Catbird were seen. The rain continued (sometimes heavy), but we proceeded down the field hoping to find a Thrasher or some thrushes in the open forest to the east of the field—no luck. Continuing to the edge of the forest where it meets Lake Ontario and Maxwell Bay, we sought shelter from the rain and had the chance to dry our optics in the small pavilion. Many Barn, a few Bank and one or two Rough-winged Swallows were darting about over the lake. Three Belted Kingfishers and a Kingbird were seen. Many Red-breasted and a few Common Mergansers were in the near shore of the lake, and a couple of Bufflehead were spotted. A pair of Wood Ducks flew by. In Maxwell Bay, three Killdeer were having a dispute, a Spotted Sandpiper was located, and a couple of Great Blue Herons flew off. We headed back with the intention of going to the pond in the apple orchard on the west side of the park, but with the rain continuing, and many people cold and quite wet, even with rain gear, everyone decided to call it a day and forego Huckleberry Swamp this year. The main track back to the parking lot was like walking in a shallow stream, but a Black-throated Blue Warbler made an appearance to cheer the soggy group. Thanks to the eight hardy and enthusiastic participants (one from Buffalo!) who showed up, despite the rain, and who lent their excellent ears and eyes to help us garner 44 species for the trip.

*Jim Wood and Jeanne Verhulst*

#### **Braddock Bay Hawkwatch, 5/14/2024**

Seven trip members joined the leaders at Braddock Bay on a chilly 57 degree morning. From the beginning it was clear that a raptor flight was unlikely as we had total cloud cover and an east wind, not the desired southerly wind direction.

Most were fairly new birders so our focus changed to working the park for any migrants. We worked hard and patiently to be sure that all saw the commoner Palm, Yellow-rumped and Yellow Warblers. Most also saw Common

Yellowthroat, Black-throated Blue and Nashville warblers. Baltimore Orioles showed up every so often to brighten up a gloomy morning.

Raptors by then were only one Bald Eagle and one Northern Harrier which would later be rounded out by 5 Sharpshinned and 1 Cooper's Hawk.

We walked out the boardwalk to view the Ruddy Ducks and Lesser Scaup that had been lingering and were serenaded by a couple of Marsh Wrens, one of which showed itself a few times.

Turning back to the grassy areas, we spotted the calling Bobolinks in the treetops and Eastern Kingbird.

The gravel trail along the scrub and hedgerows provided the rarest bird of the day and all saw the lingering Tree Sparrow! A little further along we got great views of White-crowned Sparrows showing off their simple but striking head stripes. White-throated Sparrow joined the group so we could study the plumage differences.

Time moved very quickly and although we never set foot on the hawkwatch platform we ended up with 54 species for the morning. Thanks to all who came along!

*Mike Tetlow and Neal Reilly*

#### **Ontario Pathways - 05/07/2024**

Phelps is home to Ontario Pathways, a lovely old rail trail. It stretches out through farmland and woodland. Flint Creek winds its way along crossing the path at several beautiful bridge locations. This is another trail that we birders have access to that is kept pristine by dedicated volunteers.

The weather was really gorgeous. We were a small group. That gave us the opportunity to take our time, really study the birds and have great birding discussions.

The woods were enchanting with Wood Thrush's melodic song. Orioles seemed to be everywhere singing and chattering, non-stop! Rose-breasted Grosbeaks made quite an appearance, 4 in one location, 7 in all, songs and 'squeaky sneakers'! Strident Yellow Warblers, American Redstart and Common Yellowthroats were trying to not be outdone.

In fact, the chorus of many species lined our route with sight and sound. Warbling Vireo, Northern Parula, Blackburnian and Black-and-white Warblers were highlights. House Wrens bubbled and Carolina Wrens seemed to be calling at every location near and far.

In total, 50 species were observed. And, 7 birders went home very happy with a lot of birdsong in their heads.

*Rosemary Reilly*

#### **High Acres Nature Area - 04/20/2024**

Always popular, 23 participants showed up on this crisp cool morning. The trip proved to be rewarding in birds and sense of birder community. Conversations, reconnections

and birds always start in the parking lot.

As a trip leader you can feel responsible (quite stupidly) for the bird activity. This trip started out painfully slow. Perhaps it was the cold keeping the birds down and out of detection. Coming off a rainy spell, the trails were wet, slippery and very muddy in places. Playing a call was met with indifference, at least on the part of the birds.

Finally in the eastern wetlands, we found waterfowl. We had nice views of Blue and Green-winged Teal, Ringed-necked and Ruddy Ducks, Red-breasted Mergansers, Gadwall and a solo Pie-billed Grebe. Sometimes this is my favorite spot because it's so alive with sound. The Tree Swallows bubbled and chattered checking out their new nest cavities and a Belted Kingfisher let loose with its rattle, as if to say, 'this territory is mine'.

On the blue trail causeway, we enjoyed the antics and 'talk back' of a Virginia Rail. For some, it was the first time ever actually seeing this colorful marsh resident, a small bird with a big voice. And, hard to believe, but this moment had its competition when six Sandhill Cranes were spotted. They were pretty far out but still exciting to see, long-necked, deep flap and trailing legs. It's the first time that I have ever seen cranes from this location.

Wilson's Snipe can flush easily, so we always try to approach the vernal pools cautiously. This bird is a definite spring target bird. We were rewarded with 4 snipe, some vocalizing and some giving us their brief flashes of flight.

In the end, our day wasn't so quiet after all. In addition to the birds already mentioned, we had several species each of raptors, swallows and sparrows, Ruby-crowned Kinglets and a Blue-gray Gnatcatcher, plus Pine and Yellow-rumped Warblers. Final total of species was 52!

Thank you to the volunteers who make this trail passable, either by making WM do it or taking care of it themselves.

*Rosemary Reilly, Gayle Lazoration, Brian Rohrs*

#### **Manitou Beach Preserve and West Spit 5/11/2024,**

Eleven folks including 3 visitors and several new members braved lots of mud to spend the morning of Saturday May 11 birding. The day started cool and cloudy but as it warmed the birds proceeded to get more and more active. We had a grand total of 55 species for the day and a few folks who were there before 8 am had an additional 6 species. We had twelve warbler species, both Great Blue Heron and Green Heron and a flyover Bobolink. Several people had more than one lifer. All in all, a great day in May.

*Amy Kahn and Christina Hoh*

#### **Four Mile Creek Preserve, Webster 4/28/2024**

Ten birders, including some new faces, met on a cloudy morning to explore Four Mile Creek Preserve to catch late wintering birds and early migrants. We always seem to be

racing the rain on this trip, but it held off and we had a nice, if slightly muddy, walk through the preserve. We found many woodpeckers, some early local breeders like Blue-headed Vireo, Cedar Waxwing, and Eastern Phoebe, and kept an eye to the sky to catch a handful of migrating Turkey Vultures and Sharp-shinned Hawks. We got a hint of the warbler migration to come with a Blue-winged Warbler, Black-and-white Warbler, Yellow Warbler, and several Black-throated Green Warblers flitting through the buds in the canopy. Near the end of our walk we found a beautiful singing male Baltimore Oriole, a first-of-year bird for many and a great promise of warmer weather to end the trip with 46 species.

*Christina Hoh, Sheryl Gracewski & Tom Nash*

#### **Braddock Bay Hot Spots 4/27/2024**

17 birders and 2 leaders gathered at Braddock Bay Park on an overcast, cool, and breezy day. This new field trip focused on searching the natural areas surrounding Braddock Bay. After some birding around Braddock Bay Park the group moved over to Owl Woods. We were pleased to spot a number of migrants including: Black-throated Green, Black-and-white, Pine, and Yellow-rumped Warblers as well as Northern Harrier and Cooper's Hawks. At the West Spit we encountered newly arrived Palm Warbler and Blue-gray Gnatcatcher. We also had very nice views of Sharp-shinned Hawk, Solitary Sandpiper, and a very cooperative Spotted Sandpiper for a total of 57 species.

Thanks to everyone who participated.

*Neal Reilly and Robert Crandal*

#### **Woodcock Display at Owl Woods 4/6/2024**

17 birders gathered at Owl Woods on a pleasantly cool evening with a light breeze. After a brief introduction to our target bird for the evening, the American Woodcock, we headed into the woods. A few birds were present that evening including tiny Golden Crowned Kinglets, loud Common Grackles, and a flock of American Robins passing over. As dusk drew on one Woodcock began calling behind the group. The bird flew right over us to get out in to the dancing grounds. Soon, at least 4 males were sky dancing around us. Several birds were spotted in the beam of Robert's light allowing good views. A life bird for at least three members of the group. Thanks to everyone who participated.

*Neal Reilly and Robert Buckert*

## Records Report April

April 2024, like all months this year to date, was mild. Temperatures averaged 49.1°, 2.3° above average. This April also started abnormally wet; one of the wettest starts to any April on record. Precipitation totaled 4.35", or 1.36" above average. The only snowfall for the month was 0.9" that fell on 4-5 April. A weekend of sunny skies followed the Region's last snowfall of the year, but these sunny skies were unable to hold, and by the afternoon on Monday 8 April, clouds obstructed the total solar eclipse. Two inches of the Region's precipitation fell on 11-12 April. Towards the end of the month, temperatures turned cooler, yet dry, to give a pleasant end to the month.

In all, there were ~101,800 eBird lines in the download. Approximately 768 eBird observers contributed these sightings, up 18.2% from 2023. The monthly total of 221 species is the highest for any April since the particular statistic has been kept (1974), with the next closest being 2022 (218) – most Aprils are just at or below 200 species for the month.

Waterfowl continued to be less abundant this month than compared with past Aprils, as many migrating species moved in and moved out two to three weeks earlier than average. Large concentrations of dabbling ducks can often be found in the NMWMA into early April, but even this year numbers seemed down, as most birds had already moved through in February and March. The highest numbers of dabbling ducks were surprisingly around the Braddock Bay area the first week of the month. Among the rarities, David Brown reported a Eurasian Wigeon on 8 April, which was seen by many through 10 April. Two additional Eurasian Wigeons were noted in the NMWMA on 8 April and 26 April, respectively. The male Harlequin Duck at West Port Bay continued through at least 1 April. Migrant scoters were noted on several small bodies of water, including Silver Lake. Silver Lake also continued to hold good numbers (for an inland body of water) of Bufflehead (132) and Lesser Scaup (140).

Numbers of other waterbirds were down over last April. Following the early departure trend, Horned Grebe and Red-necked Grebe numbers were low. No major loon flights were observed on Lake Ontario, although a count of 137 Common Loons on Conesus Lake on 4 April stood out. The maximum count for Red-throated Loon (13) occurred past Braddock Bay on 20 April. An early Common Gallinule was reported on 1 April from the NMWMA. Virginia Rail also arrived early, but exactly how early is difficult to determine, as for many half-hardy species, single overwintering birds likely vocalized on good weather days early in the month. No rare waders were found this April, which tends to be one of the better months for rare herons or ibises to show up. American Bittern arrived slightly early, especially at the NMWMA.

Shorebird numbers and diversity built throughout the month, with 17 species reported. A Sanderling that passed the East Spit on 4 April stood out as record early for Region 2. An American Avocet found by Dave Tetlow on 21-22 April at the Martin Road transient pond in Hamlin treated many observers to close views. Two American Golden-Plovers were found around the Savannah Mucklands on 7 April. Eight were observed at the same location on 17 April. Two Upland Sandpipers flew over together near Edgemere Drive in Greece on 28 April. Greg Dashnau reported a Marbled Godwit in the NMWMA at Carncross Road on 24-25 April.

One of the more subtle changes that occurs in April is the departure of many Herring Gulls, among other species of gulls. As expected, numbers of Herring Gulls were replaced with numbers of Ring-billed Gulls. Iceland Gull and Glaucous Gull were still found in small numbers, with the last Iceland Gull being observed on 27 April and the last Glaucous Gull on 17 April. Nick Kachala reported an adult Little Gull on Silver Lake on 5 April. Caspian Tern, following arriving this year in March, continued to build in numbers along the lakeshore. Black Tern arrived by 24 April. There were six or seven Forster's Terns seen this month, with two being away from the lakeshore at Silver Lake on 13 April. The Braddock Bay Hawk Watch continued strong for April, with 44,483 new birds tallied over 207 hours of observation. Days that stood out include: 6 April (3,887 raptors, majority Turkey Vulture), 10 April (3,322 raptors, majority Turkey Vulture plus 279 Sharp-shinned Hawks), 16 April (1,157 raptors, first major Broad-winged Hawk flight with 938 counted), 18 April (3,286 raptors, good Broad-winged Hawk flight with 2,798), 19 April (12,292 raptors, exceptional Broad-winged Hawk flight with 10,901, most in one single hour, 783 Sharp-shinned Hawk), 23 April (5,912 raptors), and 28 April (4,561 raptors). Brown captured the experience and feelings from 19 April well in his daily summary video for that day: [https://youtu.be/9u8eV\\_vVgE8?si=ttV4PG0qTu0BDJ9Q](https://youtu.be/9u8eV_vVgE8?si=ttV4PG0qTu0BDJ9Q). For a complete table of April hawk count data, please refer to the filtered table at HawkCount.org: [https://hawkcount.org/month\\_summary.php?rsite=353&ryear=2024&rmonth=04](https://hawkcount.org/month_summary.php?rsite=353&ryear=2024&rmonth=04). Finishing out the raptors, an impressive five different Swainson's Hawks were seen around the Region. Four passed hawk watches (two from Braddock Bay), but one dark juvenile was observed from Tyre Road near the NMWMA by at least 95 birders between 16-22 April. The last Northern Shrike was observed on 1 April, a slightly earlier than usual departure. Numbers of swallows continued to build, with an early Purple Martin at the Montezuma Audubon Center attracting a few eager year listers. Marsh Wrens seemed early, but again, it is hard to tell until numbers really start to build (for example multiple singing Marsh Wrens around Braddock Bay) if these were



## Records Report continued

overwintering birds singing with the good weather. Brad Carlson photographed a Bohemian Waxwing in Mendon with a flock of Cedar Waxwings. 28 April was noted as a good day for migrating Lapland Longspurs, with one morning flight watch party counting 97 along the Greece lakeshore. Chris Wood observed the Region's only report of Evening Grosbeak from the Hamlin lakeshore on 27 April. A Regional first GOLDEN-CROWNED SPARROW was photographed at a private Henrietta home on 17 April and stayed through 24 April. This bird represents one of only a few New York State records. Bobolink, Baltimore Oriole, and Orchard Oriole were slightly early as well. Among the warblers, migration was in full swing by the last week of the month, with 24 species observed. Chris Wood observed a Louisiana Waterthrush along the flooded woods at Armitage Road on 23 April. Robert Buckert picked out a Golden-winged Warbler on 30 April near Brockport. Andy Guthrie reported a Yellow-throated Warbler from Hamlin Beach SP on 18 April. Prairie Warblers were found on their breeding grounds south of Harriet Hollister Spencer State Recreation Area by 29 April. Another unchasable rarity, a Western Tanager, was photographed at a private feeder in Greece on 30 April. The morning flight watch party on 28 April also picked out a flyover Dickcissel. Overall, an excellent start to peak migration despite many days of uncooperative weather.

See the noteworthy records table posted on the RBA website for more details and records and please send in reports to eBird, the GeneseeBirds listserv, or to Nick Kachala at nicholaskach@gmail.com

Observers: Michael Adriaansen, Janet Akin, Osvaldo Araya, Ryan Ballard, Niki Banke, Timothy Banker, Ted Barnett, Jessie Barry, Mitchell Barry, Frederic Beaudry, Linda Benedict, David Benvent, Lynn Bergmeyer, Shawn Billerman, Linda Birkel, Robin Blakesley, Alan & Lisa Bloom, Terry Bohling, Lynn Braband, Christopher Brandt, Kyle Brock, Scott & Janet Brooks, David Brown, Logan Brunner, Robert G. Buckert, Sara Burch & Jacob McCartney, Brad Carlson, Robert Cicotta, Roger Clark, Sara Close, Kelly Close, Lorenzo Colantoni, Jeremy Collison, Andrew Consler, Robert Crandall, Willie D'Anna, Doug Daniels, Thomas Davis, Cliff Dekdebrun, Peggy Dempsey, Kim Denise, Diane Egan, Adam Farid, Kevin Farrell, Rob Fergus, Annabelle Foos, George & Katie Ford, Kyle Gage, Andrew Garland, John Garrett, Matthew Gavette, Janis George, Candy Giles, James Goetz, John & Karla Gordinier, Sheryl Gracewski, Jay Greenberg, Kevin Griffith, Austin Groff, Lucretia Grosshans, Michael Gullo, Carmen Gumina, Andrew Guthrie, Richard Guthrie,

Bill Haake, Becky Harbison, Kim Hartquist, Christina Hoh, Bruce Hoover, Dick Horsey, Bill Howe, Lynn Howes, Pam Inzinna, Carolyn Jacobs, Colleen Josh, Nick Kachala, Amy Kahn, Laura Kammermeier, Ryan Kayhart, Jacob Kearney, David Kennedy, James Kimball, Mark Kimble, Cindy Kindle, Kathleen Kirsch, Hans Kunze, Michael Kutny, Michael Laird, Chris Lajewski, Greg Lawrence, Joan Lindberg, Patricia Lindsay, Peggy Mabb, Peggy Macres, Cynthia Marino, Patricia Martin, Lauri Mattle, Ryan McGinty, Jay McGowan, Phil McNeil, Scott Meagher, Jim Miles, Mark Miller, Kent Millham, Phil Mills, Shai Mitra, Kris Montalbano, Mary Moore, Brian & Brooke Morse, Jonathan Mott, Hollis Noble, Matt Nusstein, Andrea Patterson, Jeremy Pete, Michael Peter, Luanne Pignataro, Sandy Podulka, Jay Powell, Derek Pulhamus, Doug & Elizabeth Rabjohns, Carolyn Ragan, Neal Reilly, Rosemary Reilly, Michael Rizzo, Susan Roberts, Susan Robertson, Stacy Robinson, Brian Rohrs, Andrew Romanowski, Claudia Rosen, Wade & Melissa Rowley, Robert Ryan, Shawn Ryan, Jennifer Rycenga, Anne Salverda, Greg & Shannon Sanda, Dominic Sherony, Robert & Susan Sphan, Kim Steininger, Rick Stevens, Reuben Stoltzfus, Kimberly Sucy, Joe Swertinski, Stephen Taylor, Annette Teng, David Tetlow, Michael & Joanne Tetlow, Eunice Thein, Nathan Ukens, Tom & Jeanne Verhulst, Mike Wasilco, Bridget Watts, Kim Weeks, Chris Wood, Jim Wood, and Charlie Woodruff (Not all 768 observers are listed here).

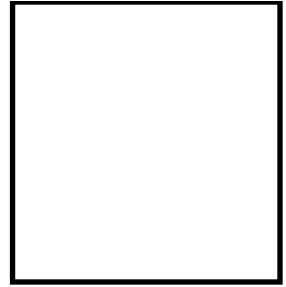
Red-tailed Hawk, Highland Park, Jeanne Verhulst 4/24/24.



	2024	2023	10-year Avg
Species for May	221	197	200.6
New for the year	72	55	58.2
Total for the year to date	234	215	212.3



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