

REGION 8 - HUDSON-MOHAWK

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One hundred and sixty species were reported during the summer months. However, this figure reflects just a few locales in Region 8, since only a small number of dedicated birders were active here. The specific places in the Region covered were Amsterdam, Berne-Knox, Cherry Plain-Stephentown, Clarksville-Delmar, Embough Bay-Coxsackie, Hague, Jenny Lake and Schenectady. Overall species' lists and numbers therefore may not adequately represent Region 8 as a whole. However, the reports received were thorough and contained interesting information. This was not a season for rarities, so birders occupied themselves with the delights of watching Robins as they produced one clutch after another, sometimes reusing the same nests, Bluebirds successfully rearing young from nest boxes, lots of Yellow and Chestnut-sided Warblers, and all of our other nesting species.

We certainly had a warm season for being out and about. According to the NE Regional Climate Center, temperatures were quite hot in June. Anyone not away on vacation during July easily can recall the high number of above 90°F days that month. August had mostly normal temperatures, but of course normal temperatures for August are still quite hot. Precipitation was approximately one half the norm in June and above normal in July. As much as Region 8 residents might complain about summer heat, the mid month reversal that took place in August captured everyone's immediate attention. Summer left in a rush as temperatures plummeted and cool rain began. By 22 Aug our swimming days were over. A two day rain storm with unusual NE winds heralded the beginning of fall.

Now on to the birds that kept our phones ringing and our binoculars swinging. Least Bitterns "popped" up and Kevin McGrath in particular woke up Black Creek Swamp with his excitement one early morning when he saw two fly in. This swamp is a place which birders always suspect harbors Least Bitterns but the species is seldom even heard there. Great Egrets began appearing on the Hudson near the Rip Van Winkle Bridge at the very end of August; indications are that the species will make news in the fall report also. Hawk lovers had ample reason to be looking up into the sky, since eight species could be found in the Region. Birders had to be lucky to see some while others spent the season and were quite visible. Northern Harriers bred in Knox, Paul Connor found Red-shouldered Hawk in Pine Swamp, Broad-winged Hawks treated golfers at the Ballston Spa Country Club to aerial displays and Red-tailed Hawks circled commonly above fields.

Seven species of flycatchers were found in the Region. Eastern Wood-Pewee, Least, Eastern Phoebe, Great Crested and Eastern Kingbirds were seen commonly. Eastern Bluebirds seem to continue to increase. Tom Palmer watched one pair produce three broods from one nest box with a total of twelve young successfully fledged. The sweet song of many a thrush rang throughout the Region. Veerys were reported from five areas, Swainson's from one, and birders thrilled to the melody of Hermit Thrushes from Hague. The "ee-o-lay" of Wood Thrushes

announced their presence around many of our homes. Ken Able extended our usual sparrow list this season by reporting Grasshopper and Henslow's Sparrows.

The fall warbler movement began in August. Clarksville alone had eleven species in one day including Northern Parula, Magnolia, Cape May, Yellow-rumped, Blackburnian, Palm, Bay-breasted, Blackpoll, Black-and-white, American Redstart and Wilson's.

Contributors: Ken Able, Linda Armstrong, Joseph Bach, Geoffrey Carleton, Paul Connor, Donald Davis, Clifford Decker, Dorothy Goodfellow, Becky Holberton, Jane Lape, Bill Lee, Kevin McGrath, Laura Meade, Tom Palmer, Elton Rising, Mike Serdinsky, Elaine Smith, Shirley Smith, Robert Yunick.

Abbreviations: CGCC - Columbia Green County Community College.

LOONS-DUCKS: Com. Loon: one Hague Jun then Aug. Pied-billed Grebe: one Cherry Plain Jun, one Stephentown Center Jul, two Basic Res Aug, only reports. Horned Grebe: arr L George 25 Aug. Double-crested Cormorant: last Hague 4 Jun; arr six Embough Bay 23 Aug, three Athens 29 Aug, three Basic Res 29 Aug. Least Bittern: two reports, one Tomhannock Creek Marsh, two Black Creek Marsh. Great Blue Heron: max 14 Embough Bay 23 Aug, one Hague all season. Great Egret: two Athens 29 Aug only report. Wood Duck: numerous reports all summer from most reporting locales. Com. Merganser: only report Hague 6 Jul.

HAWKS-ALCIDS: Turkey Vulture: entire period Hague, Clarksville, Thacher Park. Osprey: max four Athens 29 Aug, two Tomhannock Creek 23 Jul, one Cherry Plain 7 Aug. N. Harrier: entire season Knox. Sharp-shinned Hawk: sporadic at Amsterdam, CGCC, Cherry Plain and Middlegrove. Cooper's Hawk: singles reported in Cherry Plain, Schodack Center and Niskayuna. N. Goshawk: unusually high number reported, one pair courtship flight Knox, one Hadley Mt 30 Aug, one Catskill 5 Aug, one Embough Bay 23 Aug, one Cherry Plain 5 Jul. Red-Shouldered Hawk: seen regularly at Cherry Plain, W Stephentown, ads and im Pine Swamp 26 Aug. Broad-winged Hawk: seen all season in Ballston Spa, Schodack Center; one W Taghkonc 10 Jul, Hague 28 Jul and 14 Aug, scarce at Jenny L with one heard 16 Aug. Red-tailed Hawk: numerous reports from throughout season in Amsterdam, Clarksville, Catskill. Am. Kestrel: family group Pine Swamp 2 Jul, regularly seen in Ballston Spa, Clarksville, Delmar, Amsterdam. Ruffed Grouse: with young Hague and Clarksville. Lesser Golden-Plover: max 35 Cocksackie Flats 29 Aug (BC). Killdeer: max 60 Cocksackie Flats 29 Aug. Solitary Sandpiper: two reports, one Cherry Plain 16 Jul through Aug, Amsterdam 13 Aug. Spotted Sandpiper: one Clarksville 29 Aug only report. Upland Sandpiper: reported breeding Town of Florida, one Tomhannock Creek 23 Aug. Pectoral Sandpiper: arr four Cocksackie Flats 29 Aug. Ring-billed Gull: throughout season Hague Bay, one Stockport 5 Jul, 23 Embough Bay 23 Aug. Herring Gull: two reports, one Rip Van Winkle Bridge 4 Aug, two Athens 29 Aug. Great Black-backed Gull: single area, nine Catskill Jul through Aug.

PIGEONS-WOODPECKERS: Black-backed Cuckoo: numerous sightings throughout period Berne, Cherry Plain, Schodack Center, also seen sporadically Amsterdam, Catskill, Thacher Park. Yellow-billed Cuckoo: single report, one Athens 28 Jun. Barred Owl: two heard Jenny L Jun, occasionally Aug. Cherry Plain 14 and 28 Jun. Whip-poor-will: single reporting area, Hague during Jun, early Jul and then 15 Aug. Chimney Swift: regularly throughout period Amsterdam, other reports from Claverack, Catskill, Clarksville. Ruby-throated Hummingbird: all season in Clarksville, Amsterdam, Jenny L, Hague, max six Catskill 23 Aug. Red-headed Woodpecker: ads and im Pine Swamp 26 Aug, also nesting Amsterdam, West Berne. Red-bellied Woodpecker: no reports.

FLYCATCHERS-STARLINGS: Alder Flycatcher: two Cherry Plain 6 Jun and three there 5 Jul, only location. Willow Flycatcher: nesting in Amsterdam, max eight Castleton 1 Jul. Least Flycatcher: reported as widespread Cherry Plain area, uncommon Amsterdam and Clarksville. Horned Lark: successful breeding reported T Florida, individuals seen Town Knox 17 Jun, 8 Jul in past breeding area. Purple Martin: Hague through Jun and Jul. Tree Swallow: nesting in numerous locations Jun, Jul, migration seemed to begin late Jul, max 40 Catskill 23 Aug. Bank Swallow: max 150 Catskill 23 Aug. Fish Crow: breeding reports from Castleton and probable in Schenectady; one Berne 30 May (KA) is second local record. Black-capped Chickadee: unusually high numbers of breeding birds noted at Jenny L. Carolina Wren: two reports, one Amsterdam 9 Aug, one Clarksville 30 Aug. Winter Wren: all season Jenny L, Cherry Plain Jun & Jul, Hague Jul & Aug. E. Bluebirds: numerous successful nestings reported from many areas.

VIREOS-WARBLED: Solitary Vireo: breeding Jenny L, throughout season Cherry Plain. Yellow-throated Vireo: reported from five locations throughout season. Warbling Vireo: throughout season Cherry Plain, three to five at a time singing Jenny L Aug. Red-eyed Vireo: species noted in each locale included in this report. Blue-winged Warbler: nested Amsterdam, max four L Taghkonig 9 Jun. Golden-winged Warbler: one Catskill 12 Aug only report. Tennessee Warbler: arr male Berne 6-12 Jul; one Athens 29 Aug. Nashville Warbler: three reports, two Cherry Plain 5 Jul, Catskill 12 Aug. N. Parula: reported from Hague. Magnolia Warbler: max eight Cherry Plain, seen throughout season. Cape May Warbler: three Feura Bush 28 Aug (LA). Black-throated Blue Warbler: two locales, Jenny L, Cherry Plain. Black-throated Green Warbler: one report, eight Cherry Plain 14 Jun. Blackburnian Warbler: two breeding females Jenny L 28 Jun. Am. Redstart: breeding Amsterdam, Clarksville. Ovenbird: below average Jenny L, only seven im banded by Robert Yunick; reported from L Taghkonig, Cherry Plain, Hague.

TANAGERS-WEAVERS: Rose-breasted Grosbeak: common Amsterdam, all season Hague, scarce Clarksville, low numbers Jenny L. Indigo Bunting: common Amsterdam, present in Clarksville and Hague. Chipping Sparrow: scarce at Jenny L, Robert Yunick reports species continuing long term decline, seen commonly in Clarksville, Amsterdam, Hague. Field Sparrow: three locations Hillsdale, S Schodack, Amsterdam. Vesper Sparrow: max four Brookview 1 Jul, FY? Savannah Sparrow: common Amsterdam, others at Chatham, Brookview. Grasshopper Sparrow: three males on territory Schodack 1 Jun, one pair breeding Altamont. Henslow's Sparrow: two males Meadowdale 6 Jun, one pair Altamont, breeding groups T of Knox. White-throated Sparrow: male singing Jenny L 31 Jul, one juv 1 Aug, then at feeder later in Aug, nested Hague. Dark-eyed Junco: max 20 Cherry Plain throughout, numerous Thacher Park Aug, extremely scarce Jenny L where species is typically an abundant breeder. Bobolink: common Amsterdam, Castleton, Clarksville Jun and Jul. Orchard Oriole: single report, first year male E Greenbush 9 Jul. Purple Finch: Robert Yunick banded 234 at Jenny L since April, lowest total in 17 years; two Amsterdam 22 Aug, five Cherry Plain all season, Hague all season. Red Crossbill: one location, one or two Jenny L at various times. White-winged Crossbill: first seen in 18 years at Jenny L during summer season (RY).

ADDENDA: Stilt Sandpiper: one NE L George (Chapmans), additional report from last summer when Region 8 was without an Editor.

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