

REGION 8 — HUDSON-MOHAWK

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The nesting season was generally warm, dry and uneventful. Observers did not report any unusual bird activity, but the very dry weather must have had an effect on breeding in some species. At Albany, June, July, and August comprised the twelfth thru fourteenth straight months with above normal temperatures. Runs like this are not likely to represent random fluctuations around long-term averages. June and July were both dry, with rainfall 1.6 and 1.35 inches below normal, respectively. Farmers began cutting hay early and by the end of June the alfalfa harvest was 94 percent complete (versus an average of only 64 percent). Early cutting probably adversely affected some grassland species. The dry weather stunted regrowth of hay fields and by the end of June many fields looked like August. During that month, rainfall returned to near normal thanks to Hurricane Bob on 19 Aug. Apparently it brought only rain to the Region.

Reports further documented a number of continuing trends. As populations of Double-crested Cormorant grow, numbers of non-breeding summer reports are increasing. Common Raven is firming up its foothold in the Region, and Carolina Wren continues to pop up in new places. Wood Duck seems to have had a very productive season and for some reason there was a flurry of N. Bobwhite reports (releases?). Observers are alert to the status of grassland species. They seem to be holding on in the few places in

which they have bred over the last five years or so. This season, very substantial numbers of Upland Sandpiper and Grasshopper Sparrow were found on three potential landfill sites in the Town of Northumberland, SARA. Unusual species reported during the period included **Red-necked Phalarope**, **American Pipit** and "Lawrence's" Warbler.

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Abbreviations: FiveR - Five Rivers Environmental Education Center, Delmar; HudR - Hudson R; SBNHP - Saratoga Battlefield National Historical P; SaraSpa - Saratoga Spa SP.

LOONS-DUCKS: Com. Loon: nest with egg Jabe Pd WARR 20 Jun (KPA), fate unknown; one Springhill Pd WARR 6 Jun (ER); two pair Thirteenth L WARR all summer, no sign of nesting. Pied-billed Grebe: RENS 9,30 Jun (JC), locally very scarce in summer. Double-crested Cormorant: dozens present HudR and Mohawk R after mid July. Least Bittern: two-three Carter L WASH 28 Jul (JS). Great Blue Heron: 102 Vischer Ferry Aug. Great Egret: up to 17 Vischer Ferry July-Aug. Snowy Egret: two HudR COLU 23, one 29 Aug (WC). Black-crowned Night-Heron: singles Collins L SCHE 18 Jul, Vischer Ferry 18 Aug (BP); rare locally. Mute Swan: nested Vosburgh Marsh GREE, raising eight y (*fide* RPG). Brant: 20 Petersburg 10 Jun (AGR), very late. Wood Duck: six broods totaling >40 y FiveR (AM), three broods was previous max; good success Carter L (JS); numerous broods RENS; 25 Pine Swamp RENS 25 Aug (PFC). Ring-necked Duck: male Pine Swamp, Nassau, 24 Jun (PFC), very unusual. Hooded Merganser: two ad, six y SaraSpa 13 Jul (BP).

HAWK-ALCIDS: Osprey: 10 reports. Bald Eagle: 7 reports, two ad, three imm, two unknown. N. Harrier: pair, apparently not nesting, T Northumberland June (KPA, RLH). Cooper's Hawk: 7 reports. N. Goshawk: four y fledged Battenville (RR *fide* JS); pair Grafton 4 Jul (PFC). Red-shouldered Hawk: three y fledged Jenny L SARA (RPY); bred Pine Swamp RENS (PFC). Merlin: one Niskayuna 26 Aug (BB, KB), early. N. Bobwhite: reported Hoosic Falls, Cambridge, Schodack Landing. Com. Moorhen: apparently breeding Carter L WASH (JS). Upland Sandpiper: two Argyle WASH 1 Jun (BP); three WASH 25 Jun (BG *fide* BP); eight pair T Northumberland SARA (KPA, RLH); several including pair with one y Minaville MONT 9 Jun (BB, KB). Least Sandpiper: arr RENS 30 Jun (JC), early. **Red-necked Phalarope**: one Goeffroy's Pd COLU 24 Aug (WC, RLH, AL, KD, EG), related to hurricane Bob? Caspian Tern: one Catskill 23 Aug (WC).

PIGEONS-WOODPECKERS: Mourning Dove: continues to increase Jenny L SARA (RPY). Black-billed Cuckoo: seemed numerous SCHO (AMa), but scarce elsewhere. Yellow-billed Cuckoo: three SCHO (AMa) only report. Barred Owl: abruptly scarce Jenny L (RPY). Com. Nighthawk: many over downtown Schenectady 2 Aug (BB, KB), unreported elsewhere. Belted Kingfisher: three FL Pine Swamp RENS 24 Jun, early. Red-headed Woodpecker: RENS 17 Jun (JC); pair Towpath Rd WASH (BG *fide* BP).

FLYCATCHERS-STARLINGS: Yellow-bellied Flycatcher: one Goeffroy's Pd COLU 24 Aug (WC), rarely reported in Region. Tree Swallow: very good productivity at colonies monitored by RPY, but raccoons preyed upon 18 of 37 nests at North Broadalbin. Blue Jay: low for fifth year Jenny L (RPY). Com. Raven: reported from Berlin, Thacher SP (ALBA); nine Stephentown Center 15 Jul (PFC). Carolina Wren: *intro*. Winter Wren: reports in SARA and Petersburg, Grafton, Stephentown Center where not known regular breeder. Ruby-crowned Kinglet: one Cambridge WASH 29 Jul (JS). E. Bluebird: 47 fledged FiveR (versus 13 last year), including third broods (AM). **Am. Pipit**: one RENS 3 Jun (JC), very late. Cedar Waxwing: abundant throughout.

VIREOS-WARBLED: Golden-winged Warbler: singles Argyle WASH 1 Jun (BP), Cambridge 23 Aug (JS). Blue-winged X Golden-winged Warbler: one "Lawrence's" Old Chatham 3 Jul (KD); single "Brewster's" Thacher SP 10 Jul (BB, KB), Berne ALBA 5 Aug (KPA). N. Parula: one Castleton I SP 22 Jun (WC). Cerulean Warbler: NY Castleton I SP 22 Jun (RPG). Ovenbird: 39 hatching year birds banded Jenny L, third best year in 22 (RPY). Mourning Warbler: singing male Petersburg Pass RENS 23 Jun (AGR). Wilson's Warbler: arr FiveR 25 Aug (AM).

TANAGERS-WEAVERS: Rose-breasted Grosbeak: down at Jenny L (RPY). Vesper Sparrow: on territory at two sites in RENS (PFC), several Fonda MONT (BB, KB), two males T Northumberland SARA (KPA, RLH). Grasshopper Sparrow: good numbers SBNHP at least 12 territorial males on potential landfill sites T Northumberland SARA (KPA, RLH), the highest known local densities. Henslow's Sparrow: at least two SBNHP; male on territory Altamont (BJ). Dark-eyed Junco: another poor year Jenny L; only five HY birds banded (50-90 was typical in years prior to 1985-86 - RPY). Orchard Oriole: down in usual areas (RPG). Pine Siskin: scarce. Evening Grosbeak: two Saratoga Springs 15 Jul (CF).

Errata: In the winter season report I inadvertently moved Castleton and Schodack Center from RENS to COLU. Delete the record of Little Blue Heron on 5 and 27 Apr in COLU.

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