

REGION 8 — HUDSON-MOHAWK

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Unusual weather was the rule for the season in eastern New York. One reporter called it "a year without summer". June was cool and dry, with an unusually cool period from 19 through 25 Jun when the temperature did not even reach 75°F during the days. This was our coolest July on record, dating back nearly 200 years. Mean temperature was nearly 4° below normal and rainfall was 70% above normal.

Records of nesting success and comments on populations were mixed. R. Yunick's banding efforts with Tree Swallow colonies showed early broods prospering from the dry, sunny weather of early June. Late broods suffered from the cold and rain, with many late fledged young found dead in nest boxes. On 5 Jul, 22 dead young were found in eight boxes near of Schenectady.

At his Jenny Lake SARA banding station, Yunick reports a season of contrasts, with strange increases and decreases in avian populations. Species that occurred in greater than usual numbers included Rose-breasted Grosbeak, American Goldfinch and Evening Grosbeak. Apparent breeding failures were noted in Hermit Thrush, Ovenbird, Chipping Sparrow, Dark-eyed Junco and Purple Finch. Low in numbers were Black-capped Chickadee, Common Grackle, Brown-headed Cowbird and Red-winged Blackbird. A dramatic downturn for the three icterids, starting in the mid-1980's, was noted. House Finches have declined in numbers at several places where feeding stations are operated year round. At Five Rivers Center, Delmar this was the first noticeable decline since a flock of these westerners appeared in 1979.

There were many Turkey Vulture sightings throughout the period, and it continues to increase in the Region. Bald Eagle was on the upswing in the Region with three nesting pairs, up from up from one pair last year. The SCHO eagles provided the first successful nesting for Region 8, with one chick fledged. Pairs in ALBA and COLU built nests but laid no eggs, typical behavior for young birds. D. Cooper's report of two Common Raven in SCHO, one suspected to be a fledgling,

is our first suggestion of nesting from that county. A survey of mountain tops in the Catskill Forest Preserve documented nesting of Bicknell's Gray-cheeked Thrush. During the period of 19–25 July, these thrushes were found on Hunter, Plateau, Black Dome, Black Head and Westkill Mountains, all located in GREE. No reports of Henslow's Sparrow were received from the Region and the species was absent from its two traditional nesting areas, one in Knox and another at the Saratoga National Historic Park.

Very few reports of migrant shorebirds and warblers were received, but this may reflect the low level of birding effort from late July through the end of August.

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Abbreviations: FiveR – Five Rivers Environmental Education Center, Delmar, ALBA; SaraL – Saratoga Lake; SNHP – Saratoga National Historic Park; RBHSF – Rossman–Burnt Hills State Forest, SCHO.

Summer reports: **Com. Loon:** pair Jabe Pd WARR all season (ER), no apparent nesting success; one Moreau L SARA 28 Jun (BP); pair with one chick Thirteenth L WARR after 2 Aug (JM, KA), fledged successfully. **Double-crested Cormorant:** present on Hudson R after mid July. **Great Egret:** two Hudson R COLU 11, 26 Aug (BC); one Ghent 10, 16 Aug, scarce. **Snowy Egret:** one Ghent 15 Aug, only report. **Black-crowned Night-Heron:** imm Black Creek Marsh ALBA 22, 24 Jul (KB & BB), first there in several years; one Hudson R at Waterford 26 Aug (SS). **Mute Swan:** increasing but no nesting success reported; new nesting pair Round L SARA, nest easily visible and heavily covered, no eggs hatched; pair L George WARR through all season, no report of nesting; pair on Bell's Pd COLU failed to nest, vacated 10 Jun. **Green-winged Teal:** two Willie Marsh FULT 6 Aug (PC), unusual. **Com. Merganser:** female with eight y Jenny L SARA 3 Jul (RY), first nesting in 23 years; female Fox Creek ALBA 14 Jun (KA), possibly nesting.

Osprey: five reports starting 17 Aug. **Bald Eagle:** *intro.* **N. Harrier:** breeding pair Knox (KA). **Cooper's Hawk:** breeding pair Gallupville

(KB & BB); four other reports. **N. Goshawk**: pair with three y in nest Battenville WASH 14 Jun (BP); two other reports. **Red-shouldered Hawk**: pair Hopkins Pd SCHO 5 Jun (DC) only report. **Broad-winged Hawk**: nesting pair Schodack RENS throughout the period, FY 24 Jul (PC), only report. **Com. Moorhen**: nesting Vischer Ferry Preserve first seen 2 Jul (JG), only report. **Solitary Sandpiper**: arr Chatham 10 Aug; three FiveR 30 Aug (SS). **Least Sandpiper**: one FiveR 29 Aug (SS), only report.

Yellow-billed Cuckoo: one Chatham 11 Jul (ADBC), only report. **Com. Nighthawk**: numerous over downtown Schenectady mid July (BB), one regular over Saratoga Springs (JG), three there 14 Aug, scarce elsewhere, no migrating flocks noted. **Whip-poor-will**: one Hague 11 & 26 July (LM), only report. **Red-headed Woodpecker**: pair Towpath Road WASH 3 Jun-6 Aug, only report. **Red-bellied Woodpecker**: one Stuyvesant COLU 24 Jun (ADBC), only report.

Olive-sided Flycatcher: one FiveR 3 Jun (AM), only spring report; one calling FiveR 26 Jul (AM), early migrant. **Horned Lark**: male Middleburg 19 Jun (KA), only report. **Fish Crow**: suspected nesting at Niskyuna Landfill SCHE (RY); eight at Schenectady Chemical plant 18 Jun (RY), expanding w along Mohawk R? **N. Raven**: two RBHSF 2 Jul (DC), *intro*. **Gray-cheeked Thrush**: *intro*.

Philadelphia Vireo: one Chatham (BC) 15 Aug, early. **Golden-winged Warbler**: one SNHP 27 Aug (JG), scarcer than usual there; one Berne 19 Jun (KA). **Pine Warbler**: male singing RBHSF 30 Jun (DC), only report. **Cerulean Warbler**: one Gallupville 8-9 Jun (BB), not known to breed in that area. **Mourning Warbler**: probable nesting Spier Falls Road SARA 4 Jun (GH); one Berne 14 Aug (KA). **Yellow-breasted Chat**: singing male FiveR 9 Jun (AM), present one day only, only report.

Vesper Sparrow: one Knox 18 Jun (KA); one Ghent 5 Jun and 18 Jul (ADBC), only reports. **Grasshopper Sparrow**: probable nesting, two locations SNHP (JG); three pairs Knox throughout June (KA). **Orchard Oriole**: probable nesting FiveR (AM), male seen daily through 24 Jun, female seen on three occasions. **Evening Grosbeak**: breeding pair at Petersburg (AR) and breeding for the fourth consecutive year at Jenny L (RY).

Corrigendum: The TUFTED DUCK report from Saratoga L (*Kingbird* 42:116) was the fourth, not the first, record at the same location over the past 10 years

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