

REGION 8 — HUDSON-MOHAWK

ALAN MAPES

A cooler than normal June gave way to a warmer than usual period in July and August. Temperatures for the whole period averaged about one degree higher than normal. The rainfall total at Albany for the three months was near normal, yet the Region remained in a moderate to severe drought.

Summer observations of Osprey are becoming more frequent. Three pairs of Bald Eagle were present during the nesting season. A pair in COLU was territorial, but laid no eggs for the second consecutive year. In SCHO, a nesting failed at hatching time, perhaps due to weather. The ALBA pair successfully fledged one young. Carolina Wren reports were conspicuously few during the period, after several years of increasing presence. Perhaps the past long, harsh winter reduced their numbers. Nesting success for Eastern Bluebird was only fair, as reported by nest box surveys in SCHO and ALBA. Cool weather seemed to take a toll on nestlings. Some nest box predation was noted at an ALBA site, although the raccoon population (our usual source of predation) suffered a dramatic decline due to the rabies epidemic that hit the central parts of Region 8 this spring. Nestings of Orchard Oriole were confirmed at three locations in the Region this year. Adults were seen feeding fledglings at all three places. House Finch remains lower in numbers at Schenectady and at Five Rivers Center in Delmar, as first reported last winter.

Long-term observations of bird populations conducted by Robert Yunick at Jenny Lake, SARA, produced the following observations. Blue Jay numbers increased after a crash in 1987 and a low population level from 1987 to 1992. Chipping Sparrow was very scarce, continuing a sharp decline in recent years. An irruption year seems to be in the making for Red-breasted Nuthatch and Black-capped Chickadee, with good numbers of each banded during August. Dark-eyed Junco has mysteriously disappeared as a breeding species at Jenny Lake. Prior to 1985, it was an abundant nester. Purple Finch had another poor breeding season, following last year's precipitous decline at Jenny Lake, but post-breeding dispersal brought numbers of Purple Finches to the area in August. Of 166 banded, however, 109 were adults and only 57 immature. Yunick reports that young normally outnumber the adults by 2-3:1. Evening Grosbeak was present at lower elevations during July, which is very unusual.

Many reports of Common Nighthawk were received due to a special request for information put out on Bird Line of Eastern New York. The first report of a good sized flock was of 20 birds at Albany on 17 Aug. Fifty were seen over Saratoga Springs on 25 Aug, and 50+ were reported from Albany on 27 Aug.

The Region saw a few rare occurrences during the period. An **American White Pelican** was present on the Mohawk River at the Colonie Town Park from 3 to 6 Jun. An immature **Whimbrel** was seen at a sod farm near Saratoga Battlefield National Historic Park on 29 Aug by Jane Graves and Walter Ellison. A **Buff-breasted Sandpiper** was found on a baseball field in Green Island, ALBA, on 25 Aug and remained through 28 Aug. The bird was seen by many observers.

Contributors: Alan Devoe Bird Club monthly sighting reports (ADBC); Birdline of Eastern New York (BEN); Ken Able; Paul Connor; Jane Graves; Alan A. Mapes (AAM); Andrew Mason (AM); Walter Ellison; Laura Meade (LM); Barb Putnam; Jim Sotis.

Abbreviations: FiveR - Five Rivers Environmental Education Center, Delmar, ALBA; PISP - Peebles Island State Park, Cohoes, ALBA; SaraL - Saratoga Lake, SARA; SBNHP - Saratoga Battlefield National Historic Park, SARA; VFNP - Vischer Ferry Nature Preserve, SARA.

Summer reports: **Com. Loon:** pair successfully fledged one chick Thirteenth L WARR (KA), second successful year in a row there. **Pied-billed Grebe:** one Carter L WASH 30 Jul (JS), only report. **AM. WHITE PELICAN:** *intro*. **Double-crested Cormorant:** several PISP throughout period (BEN). **Least Bittern:** two Carter L WASH Jul-Aug (JS), only report. **Great Blue Heron:** max 13 VFNP 24 Aug (BEN). **Great Egret:** many reports after 14 July, max 17 VFNP 24 Aug (BEN). **Snowy Egret:** several reports after 29 Jul, max 12 VFNP 6 Aug (BEN). **Black-crowned Night-Heron:** three reports, one Germantown 31 Jul; two imm VFNP throughout Aug (both BEN); two WASH 5 Aug (JG). **Green-winged Teal:** many reports VFNP late Aug. **Blue-winged Teal:** two VFNP 14 Aug (BEN), only report. **Canvasback:** one Hudson R SARA 17 Jun (BEN), ad male Hudson R COLU 13 Jun (PC), unusual.

Osprey: four reports, one Germantown 30 Jul (BEN); one Scotia 6 Aug (BEN); one Battenville 7 Aug (JS); one Hudson R COLU 16 Aug (PC). **Bald Eagle:** *intro*. **N. Harrier:** one Jefferson 1 Jun (AM), only report. **N. Goshawk:** three reports, pair defending nest Taborton RENS 12 Jun (PC); ad Knox 17 Jun (KA); ad SBNHP 16 Jun (JG). **Red-shouldered Hawk:** one Hillsdale 2 Jun (ADBC), only report. **Broad-winged Hawk:** nesting suspected Jenny L SARA (RY) and Schodack

Center (PC). **Am. Kestrel**: considered scarce by two reporters. **Com. Moorhen**: ad with y VFNP 26 Jul (BEN), five imm on 14 Aug (BEN); five-six families Carter L WASH throughout the period (JS), unusually abundant. **Black-bellied Plover**: one 29 Aug Hudson R SARA (BEN), only report. **Semipalmated Plover**: one PISP 16 Aug (BEN), only report. **Greater Yellowlegs**: arr two VFNP 24 Aug (BEN). **Lesser Yellowlegs**: arr several 26 Jul VFNP (BEN); max nine VFNP 24 Aug (BEN). **Solitary Sandpiper**: arr VFNP 26 Jul (BEN). **Upland Sandpiper**: only at two locations, ad singing Northumberland 13 Jun (BP); many reports Ft Edward, two ad, three y 13 June (BEN), max eight ad, five y 20 Jun (BEN). **WHIMBREL**: *intro*. **Semipalmated Sandpiper**: arr three VFNP 3 Aug (BEN); max ten Tomhannock Res 28 Aug (BEN). **Least Sandpiper**: arr VFNP 3 Aug (BEN); max 30 PISP 18 Aug (BEN). **Pectoral Sandpiper**: only two reports, five PISP 18 Aug; four PISP 28 Aug (both BEN). **Stilt Sandpiper**: imm Tomhannock Res 28-31 Aug (WE) unusual. **BUFF-BREASTED SANDPIPER**: *intro*. **Short-billed Dowitcher**: only two reports, Cohoes 15 Aug and Tomhannock Res 31 Aug (BEN), numbers not given. **Bonaparte's Gull**: imm PISP 28 Aug (BEN), only report. **Black Tern**: one near Tomhannock Res 31 Aug (BEN), only report.

Black-billed Cuckoo: only two reports, one SBNHP 29 Jul (JG), one SaraL 29 Aug (BEN). **Whip-poor-will**: one Hague WARR 25 June (LM); one Cairo 26 Jun (BC), only reports. **Com. Nighthawk**: *intro*. **Red-headed Woodpecker**: pair T Kingsbury WASH (BP), probable nesting, only report. **Red-bellied Woodpecker**: only two reports.

Olive-sided Flycatcher: one Schodack Center 9 Jun (PC), late migrant; one Berne 30 Aug (KA), only reports. **Yellow-bellied Flycatcher**: arr Saratoga Springs 16 Aug (JG); one Albany 31 Aug and two Guilderland 31 Aug (BEN). **Tree Swallow**: max 100 VFNP 1 Aug (BEN). **Cliff Swallow**: last three VFNP 24 Aug (BEN). **Barn Swallow**: max 75 VFNP 1 Aug (BEN). **Com. Raven**: average number of sightings, reports from Cambridge, Thatcher P ALBA, North L GREE, Jenny L SARA and Hague. **Swainson's Thrush**: one in song Hadley Mt SARA 4 Jun (JG), only report. **Cedar Waxwing**: max 110 PISP (BEN).

Yellow-throated Vireo: one Cambridge 27 Aug (JS), only report. **Golden-winged Warbler**: one Freehold 13 Jun (BEN), only report. **Worm-eating Warbler**: one Thatcher P ALBA 4 Jul (BEN); one Kiskatom GREE 19 Jun (BEN), only reports. **Cerulean Warbler**: six Castleton I SP 5 Jun (BEN), only report. **Mourning Warbler**: singing male Prospect Mt Warr 8 Jul (BP), only report. **Wilson's Warbler**: one Guilderland 31 Aug (BEN), only report. **Canada Warbler**: one FiveR 25 Aug (BEN), only report.

Vesper Sparrow: three males Knox June (KA); four pairs Middleburg 23 Jun (KA), only reports. **Grasshopper Sparrow:** three reports SBNHP (BEN); two 12 Jun, one 21 June; three 15 Jul; none elsewhere. **Henslow's Sparrow:** max two SBNHP same dates as preceding; none elsewhere. **Dark-eyed Junco:** New Salem 31 Aug (BEN), early returns to wintering areas in low elevations; *intro*. **Orchard Oriole:** ad FY FiveR 14 Jun, Fort Edward 4 Jul, and Mill Creek Marsh COLU 5 Jul. **Purple Finch:** *intro*. **Evening Grosbeak:** SARA and GREE 4 Jul; Clifton Peak SARA 12 Jul; eight Rotterdam 19 Jul, last; none after late July.

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