

REGION 8 — HUDSON-MOHAWK

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Reports from the Albany County Airport indicate that June's weather was very dry and sunny, with a normal average temperature of 66.9°F and 73% sunshine. The highest temperature reading of 95°F on 19 Jun was a record. Precipitation of 2.27 inches was 1.35 inches below normal, with virtually no rain after 12 Jun. July was also hot and dry, with the average temperature of 74°F 2.2° above normal, with 70% sunshine. A 99°F reading on 14 Jul was the monthly high. Precipitation totaled 2.23 inches, 0.95 inches below normal. The major weather event was a destructive wind and hail storm on 15 Jul, which resulted in straight line wind damage throughout the Region. July was the eleventh consecutive dryer than normal month, putting the Region into a drought condition. August continued warmer than normal, with an average temperature of 70.8°F, 1.2° above normal, with 75 percent sunshine. For a change, rainfall was slightly (0.19 inches) above normal, with a total rainfall of 3.66 inches.

The dry and stable weather conditions during June produced an excellent breeding season. The two Tree Swallow colonies monitored by Robert Yunick near Amsterdam and Broadalbin had 22 of 30 and 46 of 54 nest boxes occupied, respectively; 285 hatching-year birds were banded. Wood Duck nesting at Five Rivers was up due to nest box management, with at least five broods hatched.

For the fourth year in a row, there were three active Bald Eagle nests. The SCHO pair fledged two young, while the COLU and ALBA pairs produced no young. Late in September, a new nest was discovered by a hunter in GREE. In addition, there were sightings of adult eagles at Garnet Lake and Thurman WARR on June 3 and July 22, as well as two adults and two young birds at Garnet Lake on July 15. Two adult and three immature eagles were reported along the Hudson River in the Castleton/New Baltimore area throughout the period.

Fish Crow continued its northward march. A family group was observed by Bill Evans from Cornell near the Sacandaga Reservoir in the Town of Mayfield FULT on the 13-14 July. Fish Crow has been present in the Albany-Schenectady area for some time, as well as in Saratoga Springs, but this is the first report from the Sacandaga area.

Robert Yunick reported the nesting at Jenny Lake of a pair of Winter Wren in an artificial structure. This may be only the second time in North America that such nesting has taken place, based on a literature

search and the Cornell Nest Card program. The first occurrence was also at Jenny Lake in 1989. A more complete account will appear in a future *Kingbird*. His other reports from Jenny Lake included the following observations. Ruby-throated Hummingbird numbers were down somewhat from last year. Blue Jay continued scarce. Both Black-capped Chickadee and Red-breasted Nuthatch numbers were up significantly; irruptions appear to be in the making for both species. Chipping Sparrow was up slightly after recent poor years, with seven individuals banded May through August. Dark-eyed Junco continued its poor showing, possibly due to increased numbers of deer and their negative impact on the forest understory. Purple Finch numbers were up after last year's disastrous season. Evening Grosbeak bred for the seventh consecutive year.

Grassland bird populations at the Saratoga Battlefield were monitored for the second year by Rachel Mazur. Henslow's Sparrow set up territories, but no report on nesting success has been received to date. Her impression was that Eastern Bluebird nesting was up and Bobolink nesting was down. Reports of Northern Harrier and Grasshopper Sparrow are in the statistical section of this report.

Shorebird reports were down significantly from last year. Habitat was limited due to the drying up of the impoundments at Vischer Ferry and the apparent abandonment of Basic Creek Reservoir, which now resembles an overgrown pasture. In all, 18 species were reported and the numbers of individuals were low. The most noteworthy was Willet, not reported Regionally since 1969.

The surprise rarity of the period was an immature *Wood Stork*, discovered at Vischer Ferry Nature and Historic Preserve on 24 Aug by Dick Beeler during a HMBC evening bird walk. It was keeping company with a flock of some 56 Great Egret, that a very high number for this area. The *Albany Times-Union* on 26 Aug covered this rare event, calling it the "sighting of the century." This good press stimulated a lot of interest in birding, and is an example of the value of good press relations. It was in fact only the third time the bird had been reported in the Region. There are two nineteenth century records mentioned in Bull. Many people saw the bird on both the evening of 24 Aug and all day on 25 Aug, but it had departed by 26 Aug along with most of the egrets.

Another surprise was a *Sooty Tern* reported by Rich Guthrie (he's the guy with the weird yard list, remember). The only previous record in the Region for Sooty Tern occurred in 1980, when at least nine were seen in the same area following the passage of Hurricane David, which brought several other rarities to the Region. One can speculate that this year's

bird may have been driven out of its normal range by Hurricane Felix.

Other unusual birds included *Glossy Ibis*, *Willet*, and *Sharp-tailed Sparrow*. 187 species were reported during the period.

Contributors: Ken Able; Alan Devoe Bird Club monthly sighting reports (ADBC); Robert Budliger; Paul Connor; Bill Cook; Walter Ellison; Craig Fosdick; Laurie Freeman; Jane Graves; Richard Guthrie; Hudson-Mohawk Bird Club's Birdline of Eastern New York (BEN); Cliff Lamere; William Lee; Andy Mason; Nancy Martin; Rachel Mazur; Laura Meade; Frank Murphy; Ray Perry; Barbara Putnam; David Russell; Elton Rising; Jim Sotis; Robert Yunick.

Abbreviations: BCWMA - Black Creek Marsh State Wildlife Management Area, ALBA; CL - Carter Lake, WASH; FSF - Featherstonough State Forest, SCHE; HP - E.N. Huyck Preserve, ALBA; JL - Jenny Lake, SARA; NRP - Nott Road Park, Guilderland, ALBA; PISP - Peebles Island State Park, SARA; SBNHP - Saratoga Battlefield National Historic Park, SARA; SSF - Saratoga Sod Farm, SARA; SI - Simmons Island, Cohoes, ALBA; VFNHP - Vischer Ferry Nature and Historic Preserve, SARA.

Summer Reports: **Com. Loon:** pair w two chicks Garnet L WARR 22 Jul (DR); bred 13th L WARR, fledged one chick (KA); pair Jabe Pd WARR 20 Jun (LM, ER); one Green I ALBA 25-30 Jun (WE, NM). **Pied-billed Grebe:** one Collins L SCHE 22 Aug (RP); one FSF 26 Aug (RP); one CL 29 Aug (JS); no breeding reports. **Double-crested Cormorant:** three reports; max 61 Green I ALBA 25 Jul (WE). **Am. Bittern:** only three reports. **Least Bittern:** one CL 6 Jun (RB, JG), two 23 Jun, 16 Aug (JS). **Great Egret:** arr Ghent COLU 9 Jul (ADBC); max 56 VFNHP 26 Aug (WE, NM, mob). **Snowy Egret:** imm Cohoes 25 Jul, max three Cohoes 6-12 Aug (WE, NM). **Green Heron:** max 20+ CL 29 Aug (JS). **Black-crowned Night-Heron:** arr three SI 21 Jul, max five 6 Aug (WE). **Wood Stork:** intro. **Glossy Ibis:** one Cohoes Commons ALBA 25 Jul (WE). **Wood Duck:** max 48 Half Moon SARA 26 Aug (WE, NM). **Green-winged Teal:** molting male CL 17 Jun (JS), breeding suspected. **Blue-winged Teal:** arr two Cohoes 12 Aug (WE, NM). **Gadwall:** one w six chicks VFNHP 3 Jul (RB, JG). **Ring-necked Duck:** one FSF 10 Jul-26 Aug (RP). **Lesser Scaup:** one Green I ALBA 6-12 Aug (WE). **Com. Goldeneye:** one Green I ALBA 25-30 Jul (WE, NM). **Bufflehead:** female SI 26 Aug (WE). **Hooded Merganser:** female, two y SSP 30 Jun (JG).

Osprey: one Collins L SCHE 12 Jun (RP); one Jabe Pd WARR 20 Jul (LM, ER); six August reports. **Bald Eagle:** intro. **N. Harrier:** bred SBNHP (RM); apparent breeding T Knox and E Berne (KA); seven reports of singles. **Sharp-shinned Hawk:** five reports. **Cooper's Hawk:** pair T

Knox 1 Jun (KA); five reports of singles. **N. Goshawk**: one ad Berne 9 Jun (KA); one Stephentown Center RENS 6 Jul (PC); two Thacher Pk ALBA during Aug (KA). **Red-shouldered Hawk**: seven reports; possible nesting T Meco FULT (LF). **Broad-winged Hawk**: no breeding noted Schodack RENS (PC), first failure since 1968; bred Meco, at least one y fledged (LF); four other reports. **Peregrine Falcon**: nest Whitehall, unsure about success; two nests L George WARR, each fledged one y; one PISP 18 Aug (FM to BEN). **Wild Turkey**: numbers continued high throughout Region. **Virginia Rail**: max five CL 23 Jun (JS); five imm VFNHP 26 Aug (WE, NM, mob) **Sora**: three reports. **Com. Moorhen**: bred VFNHP; bred CL, max 30-40 seen during season (JS). **Black-bellied Plover**: one SSF 4 Aug (WE); one Cohoes 12 Aug (WE, NM). **Am. Golden-Plover**: one NRP 31 Aug (WE), only report. **Semipalmated Plover**: arr one SI 4 Aug (WE). **Killdeer**: max 100 SSF (BP). **Greater Yellowlegs**: arr five 21 Jul VFNHP (WE). **Lesser Yellowlegs**: arr four SI 8 Jul (WE); max 36 Mohawk R Cohoes/Waterford 6 Aug (WE). **Solitary Sandpiper**: arr one SI 6 Aug (WE); max 10 VFNHP 26 Aug (WE). **Willet**: juv PISP 6 Aug (WE). **Spotted Sandpiper**: max 27 Cohoes 30 Jul (WE, NM). **Upland Sandpiper**: two Kobor Road T Gansevoort SARA 15 Jun (JG); eight ad four y Fort Edward 18 Jun (BP); one near Sharon Springs SCHO/OTSE line 4 Jul (KA). **Ruddy Turnstone**: ad SI 4 Aug (WE, NM). **Semipalmated Sandpiper**: arr SI 8 Jul (WE). **Least Sandpiper**: arr three SI 8 Jul, max 22 Cohoes 30 Jul (WE, NM). **White-rumped Sandpiper**: two SI 6 Aug (WE). **Pectoral Sandpiper**: one SI 21 Jul (WE), only report. **Short-billed Dowitcher**: ad SI 6 Aug (WE). **Com. Snipe**: four VFNHP 24 Aug. **Ring-billed Gull**: juv arr 8 Jul; max 500-800 Cohoes-Crescent area late Jul (WE, CF). **Herring Gull**: juv arr 12 Aug; max 70 Colonie 26 Aug (WE, NM). **Com. Tern**: three Alcove Res ALBA 11 Jun (RB, JG). **Sooty Tern**: one flying s along Hudson R New Baltimore 11 Aug (RG), **Black Tern**: one Niskayuna RR Station SCHE 26 Jun (RP).

Black-billed Cuckoo: fifteen reports. **Yellow-billed Cuckoo**: none. **E. Screech-Owl**: one calling Delmar through Jul (RB); one Schodack Center 30 Jul-26 Aug (PC); one Guilderland 2-30 Aug (WE, NM); one Jefferson 12 Aug (AM). **Great Horned Owl**: imm heard Schodack Center 2-3 Aug (PC); four other reports. **Barred Owl**: pair T Saratoga throughout period (CF); six reports of singles. **Com. Nighthawk**: three Glens Falls 15 Jun (BP); one Schenectady 26 Jun-26 Aug (RP); one Athens 25 Aug (ADBC). **Whip-poor-will**: two T Hague WARR 1 Jun-10 Jul (LM); two Cold Spring Road SARA 4 Jul (JG). **Chimney Swift**: max 100 PISP Aug (BEN). **Ruby-throated Hummingbird**: 25 banded JL May through Aug; one observed flying at and buzzing Magnolia Warbler T Saratoga 31 Aug (CF). **Red-**

bellied Woodpecker: eight reports. **Yellow-bellied Sapsucker:** nested Stephentown Center, Broadalbin, Meco; six other reports.

Olive-sided Flycatcher: one Tower Road SARA 3 Jun (BP); one Lens L WARR 6 Jun (JG). **Yellow-bellied Flycatcher:** two Gansevoort 17, 20 Jul (BP); one Schodack Center 18 Aug (PC); one imm NRP 23 Aug (WE). **Willow Flycatcher:** max 15 BCWMA 11 Jun (RB, JG). **Horned Lark:** nested Schenectady County Airport (RP). **Purple Martin:** nested Saratoga L. **Tree Swallow:** *intro*. **N. Rough-winged Swallow:** last four PISP 15 Jul (WE). **Bank Swallow:** nested SSP; last SSF 29 Aug (CF). **Blue Jay:** only two banded JL during August. **Fish Crow:** three Castleton RENS 19 Aug (PC); *intro*; five reports of singles. **Com. Raven:** reported throughout Region. **Carolina Wren:** one Round Pd RENS 9 Jul (PC); one Guilderland 12-23 Aug (WE); one singing throughout period Delmar (RB); only reports. **Winter Wren:** one Lens L WARR 6 Jun (JG); two Thacher Pk ALBA 11 Jun (JG); one Hadley Mt SARA 29 Jun (JG). **Marsh Wren:** nested BCWMA, Mill Creek Marsh COLU. **Golden-crowned Kinglet:** five HP 27 Aug (WE). **Veery:** max 12 Cold Spring Road SARA 9 Jul (JG). **Swainson's Thrush:** one singing Spring L RENS 6 Jul (PC), only report. **Wood Thrush:** max 39 CBBS. **Brown Thrasher:** seven reports. **Cedar Waxwing:** at nest Kobor Road SARA 13 Jun (JG), early.

Yellow-throated Vireo: two-three singing Mill Creek Marsh COLU 4 Jul (PC); max six CBBS. **Blue-winged Warbler:** max 16 SBNHP 5 Jun (JG). **Golden-winged Warbler:** none. **Blue-winged X Golden-winged Warbler:** Brewster's type HP 27 Aug (WE), PISP 29 Aug (JG). **Tennessee Warbler:** one SBNHP 28 Aug (JG). **Nashville Warbler:** two Tower Road SARA 6 Jun (RB, JG); one HP 27 Aug (WE); one SBNHP 28 Aug (JG). **N. Parula:** one Lens L WARR 6 Jun (RB, JG); imm HP 27 Aug (WE); one SBNHP 28 Aug (JG). **Chestnut-sided Warbler:** max ten HP 27 Aug (WE). **Magnolia Warbler** arr two NRP 23 Aug (WE). **Black-throated Blue Warbler:** max five Hadley Mt SARA 29 Jun (JG). **Yellow-rumped Warbler:** max 16 HP 27 Aug (WE). **Black-throated Green Warbler:** max nine Hadley Mt SARA 29 Jun (JG). **Pine Warbler:** three Cold Spring Road SARA 9 Jul (JG). **Prairie Warbler:** six reports Jun-Jul, max five SBNHP 23 Jun (JG). **Bay-breasted Warbler:** one SBNHP 28 Aug (JG). **Cerulean Warbler:** only report two CBBS. **Worm-eating Warbler:** only report two CBBS. **N. Waterthrush:** only two reports. **Louisiana Waterthrush:** four reports. **Mourning Warbler:** pair Spier Falls Road SARA 3 Jun (BP); nested Meco (LF); one New Baltimore 25 Aug (RG). **Wilson's Warbler:** arr Skidmore woods SARA 22 Aug (JG); one HP 27 Aug (WE). **Canada Warbler:** one Thacher Pk ALBA 11 Jun (RB, JG); one or more singing Spring Lake area RENS 9 Jul (PC); arr Guilderland 9 Aug (WE).

Scarlet Tanager: thirteen reports, max 12 CBBS. **Indigo Bunting:** seven reports. **Vesper Sparrow:** five reports; max three m T Knox ALBA through period (KA). **Grasshopper Sparrow:** one pair nested SBNHP, two broods (RM); one m singing beginning 3 Jun for several weeks Hinds Road WASH (BP); one m T Knox ALBA 23 Jun (KA). **Henslow's Sparrow:** 15 territorial males SBNHP, three more present for at least one day. **Sharp-tailed Sparrow:** one possible Indian Meadows Pk SCHE 3 Jun (RP, NYSARC), first report since 1968 if accepted. **Lincoln's Sparrow:** probable breeders in bog near Taborton RENS (PC), species not found in RENS in Atlas project. **Bobolink:** max 22 males SBNHP 5 Jun (JG). **Orchard Oriole:** one BCWMA 11 Jun (RB, JG). **Purple Finch:** 157 banded JL June through August. **White-winged Crossbill:** two T Thurman WARR 2 Jun (DR). **Pine Siskin:** none. **Evening Grosbeak:** two Tower Road SARA 6 Jun (RB, JG); two Fox Hill Road SARA 10 Jun (JG); one T Thurman WARR 1 Jun (DR); possible breeding JL (RY).

Corrigenda: 45(1):54. **Semipalmated Sandpiper** should be attributed to WL rather than WE. 45(1):55. Two lines were combined and should read: **Palm Warbler:** last Ghent COLU 18 Oct (ADBC). **Blackpoll Warbler:** ten reports, max 18 SUNYA 29 Sep (WE, NM).

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