

REGION 8 - HUDSON MOHAWK

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Spring 1998 was one of the warmest in many years. As reported from the Albany International Airport, the mean temperature in March was 38.4° F, 4.1° above normal, with 37% sunshine. The last week of the month was exceptionally warm, with an all-time record high of 89° on the 31st. The 2.88 inches of precipitation was slightly below normal, with only 6.3 inches of snow. April's temperatures averaged 48.8° F, 2.4° above normal, with 46% sunshine. There was a slightly above-normal 3.49 inches of precipitation. May was very warm and wet, averaging 62.8° F, 5.2° above normal, with 53% sunshine. Rainfall totaled 5.87 inches, 2.46 inches above normal.

The migration seemed to be both early and late. Waterfowl moved through quickly and early breeders arrived generally earlier than usual. Rainy weather in the mid-Atlantic states during the first half of May slowed migration; excellent weather during the second half allowed migrants to slip through relatively unnoticed. Early leaf-out made it difficult to spot birds in the shrubs and trees. Peak migration days were 28 March, 30 April, and 15-16 May. There were a number of very early migrants, with Virginia Rail heard at Black Creek Marsh on 25 March, Barn Swallow in Hillsdale on 28 March, House Wren in southern Rensselaer Co. on 30 March, Brown Thrasher at Five Rivers Environmental Education Center on 4 April, Blue-Headed Vireo at Chestertown on 11 April, and Veery at Carter Pond on 18 April. Early nesting American Robins, European Starlings, and Common Grackles produced some possible record early fledging dates. Walter Ellison observed a fledged juvenile American Robin on Meadowdale Road, Albany Co., on 14 May, 11 days earlier than the earliest dates listed in Bull and the Breeding Bird Atlas.

Two **Black Vultures** were spotted by Larry Federman near Exit 21 of the Thruway on 27 April, a probable first record for Greene Co. The northward spread of this species is becoming increasingly evident. Pete Nye reported that 5 pairs of Bald Eagles were nesting in the Region. Peregrine Falcon nested on the Dunn Memorial Bridge between Albany and Rensselaer, successfully fledging 1 chick. This is the first post-DDT-era nesting record for this species in the Capital Region. There was little shorebird habitat due to continued high water levels. Reports were mainly from the Stillwater Flats, sandbars on the Mohawk River, and the Schodack Marshes, with 16 species observed. Winter finch reports continued through the period, with Common Redpolls still being reported in early May.

Regional observers reported a total of 220 species. Included were 26 waterfowl, 13 hawks, 5 owls, 29 warblers, and 12 sparrows. Rarities sighted during the period included **Black Vulture**, Greater White-fronted Goose,

Golden Eagle, Long-eared Owl, Acadian Flycatcher, Bohemian Waxwing, Hooded Warbler, **Harris's Sparrow**, and **Blue Grosbeak**.

Contributors: Ken Able; Elliott Adams; Alan Devoe Bird Club monthly sighting reports (ADBC); Kate Beale; Bob Boehm; Robert Budliger; Paul Connor; Bill Cook; Walter Ellison; Craig Fosdick; Jane Graves; Rich Guthrie; Ron Harrower; Hudson Mohawk Bird Club's Birdline of Eastern New York (BEN); William Lee; Andy Mason; Nancy Martin; Laura Meade; Tom Palmer; Barbara Putnam; Jim Sotis; Craig Thompson; Alison Van Keuren; Chris Winters; Robert Yunick.

Abbreviations: BCM - Black Creek Marsh State Wildlife Management Area, ALBA; BCR - Basic Creek Reservoir, ALBA; BS - Bear Swamp, ALBA; CL - Collins Lake SCHE; CP - Carter Pond, WASH; CSR - Cold Spring Road, T Saratoga, SARA; FR - Five Rivers Environmental Education Center, Delmar, ALBA; FtE - Fort Edward, WASH; FtM - Fort Miller, WASH; GI - Green Island, ALBA; HPR - W. M. Holt Preserve, T New Scotland, ALBA; HR - Hudson River; JL - Jenny Lake, SARA; L7 - Vischer Ferry Power Station/Lock 7, SCHE; LG - Lake George, WARR; MR - Mohawk River; NB - New Baltimore, GREE; NR - Niskayuna Railroad Station, SCHE; NRP - Nott Rd. Park, Guilderland, ALBA; PB - Pine Bush Preserve, ALBA; SCA - Schenectady County Airport; SI - Simmons Island, Cohoes, ALBA; SkW - Skidmore Woods, SARA; SL - Saratoga Lake, SARA; SNHP - Saratoga National Historical Park, SARA; StFl - Stillwater Flats, SARA (includes Saratoga Sod Farm); TP - John Boyd Thacher SP, ALBA; TR - Tomhannock Reservoir, RENS; TRd - Tower Road, SARA; VF - Vischer Ferry Nature and Historic Preserve, SARA.

LOONS-DUCKS

Com. Loon: arr 1 SL 5 Apr; max 45
Sacandaga Res 20 May.
Pied-billed Grebe: arr 1 Copake 23 Mar.
Horned Grebe: arr 3 CL 27 Mar; max 9 SL
8 Apr.
Red-necked Grebe: arr 1 Niska Isle 6 Mar;
max 10 NB 3 May.
Great Cormorant: one Coxsackie 27 May
(C. Lamere to BEN); NYSARC requested.
Double-crested Cormorant: arr 1 SI 28
Mar; max 14 Lock 4 Stillwater 25 Apr.
Am. Bittern: max 5 BCM 16 May; also
reported from Glenville, FtE, Hague, TRd,
VF.
Least Bittern: 1 calling BCM 5 May
(BBo); also 16, 28 May; 1 COLU 16 May; 1
CP 20 May (JS).
Great Blue Heron: rookeries reported from
Bemis Heights (21 nests 18 Apr), T Ballston
(32 nests w 19 ad, 29 y 25 May).

Great Egret: 1 Cohoes ALBA 7 May (WL
to BEN); 1 CL 18 May (RP), unusual in
spring.

Green Heron: 8 reports; max 6 NAMC
MONT.

Black-crowned Night-Heron: 1 CL 20
Apr; 1 VF 8 May; 1 WR 19 Apr; 1 S.
Rensselaer 20 May.

BLACK VULTURE: 2 exit 21 Thruway 27
Apr (L. Federman to BEN); NYSARC
requested.

Turkey Vulture: max 48 MONT 9 May.

Greater White-fronted Goose: 1 T Easton
WASH 4 Mar (B. Corbett); 3 FtM 3 Mar (F.
Murphy/G. Goodness to BEN).

Snow Goose: arr 200 FtM 11 Mar; up to
1000 FtM 20-28 Mar.

Canada Goose: max 3000+ FtM 7 Mar.

Brant: 1 CL 1 Mar-12 May; 2 in flight over
Berne 18 May.

Mute Swan: 1 StP thru; 4 Catskill 7 Mar; 3
PISP 9 May.

Wood Duck: 11 Stockport Sta 6, 15 Mar; max 18 NRP 28 Mar; reported in good numbers.
Gadwall: arr 2 VF 4 Mar.
Am. Wigeon: arr 6 Alcove Res 2 Mar; last 1 VF 5 Apr.
Blue-winged Teal: max 10 VF 5 Apr.
N. Shoveler: 1 pr NR 12 Apr, only report.
N. Pintail: 3 Bemis Heights 8 Mar; 5 VF 28 Mar.
Green-winged Teal: max 7 VF 28 Mar; 36 Guilderland 5 Apr.
Canvasback: 1000 Cementon GREE 7 Mar (WE, NM).
Ring-necked Duck: arr HR CRt 113 WASH 4 Mar; max 100 TR 21 Mar; 50 still present BCR 3 May.
Greater Scaup: arr MR Colonie/Half Moon 28 Mar; max & last 100 SL 9 Apr.
Lesser Scaup: arr 1 NB 7 Mar; 1 FtM 20 Mar; 2 Round L 25 Apr, only reports.
Surf Scoter: 1 LG 15, 16 Mar; 6 BCR 3 May; 2 SL 16 May.
White-winged Scoter: 7 Alcove Res 16 May; 4 SL 16 May.
Bufflehead: arr 1 FtM 1 Mar; last SL 16 May.
Com. Goldeneye: max 73 HR FtM 20 Mar; not reported after 9 Apr.
Hooded Merganser: arr pr FR 1 Mar.
Com. Merganser: max 53 L7 1 Mar; 40 T Moreau 6 Mar.
Red-breasted Merganser: max 6 SL18 Apr.
Ruddy Duck: one Copake 23 Mar, Livingston 28 Mar; 3 BCR 9 May, unusual in spring.

HAWKS-ALCIDS

Osprey: 15 Apr, 9 May reports of singles; 5 observed in migration ALBA 18 May.
Bald Eagle: 19 Mar reports, 10 ad, 5 imm, 4 unspecified; 1 April report, unspecified; 17 May reports, 4 ad, 4 imm, 9 unspecified; nesting: 1 pr ALBA; 1 pr COLU; 1 pr GREE; 2 pr SCHO (pers comm - P. Nye).
N. Harrier: max 7 FtE 12 Mar; 19 reports of singles.
Sharp-shinned Hawk: 25 reports of singles.
Cooper's Hawk: 11 reports of singles.
N. Goshawk: pr in courtship TP 8 Mar (KA); 1 Gallupville 2 Apr (KB, Bbo); 1 Ghent 11 May (ADBC).

Red-shouldered Hawk: 9 reports of singles.
Broad-winged Hawk: arr one NB 16 Apr.
Red-tailed Hawk: 11 SBR 19 Mar; 14 migrating over NRP 28 Mar; 17 MONT 9 May.
Rough-legged Hawk: 1 Jefferson 6 Mar; 2 FtE 27 Mar.
Golden Eagle: 1 imm Gallupville 24 Mar (KB, BBo); 1 subad migrating over SNHP 15 Mar (CF).
Am. Kestrel: max 8 FtE 4 Apr; 13 MONT 9 May; nesting Amsterdam 10 Apr - nest box w. 5 eggs 20 May.
Merlin: no reports.
Peregrine Falcon: 1 FtE 7, 16 Mar; 1 NB 7 Mar; 1 Roger's Rock Mt 14 May; 1 VF 23 May; 1 Schenectady 31 May; pr. nesting Dunn Memorial Bridge, Albany.
Ruffed Grouse: first drumming SNHP 31 Mar.
Wild Turkey: max 68 Guilderland 15 Mar; 65 FtE 8 Apr, continuing good numbers.
Virginia Rail: max 5 BCM 3, 14, 16 May; up to 6+ CP 23 May.
Sora: pr Putnam Sta WASH 26 May; 1 BCM 27 May, only reports.
Com. Moorhen: 2 VF 12 May; 6-8 BCM 18 May; 8 CP 23 May.
Am. Coot: 1 Livingston 27 Mar; 1 BCR 9, 16 May.
Black-bellied Plover: 1 MR Half Moon 16 May.
Semipalmated Plover: max 22 MR Half Moon 16 May.
Greater Yellowlegs: only 3 reports of singles.
Lesser Yellowlegs: only 2 reports of singles.
Solitary Sandpiper: max 3 VF 13 May; 12 reports of singles.
Spotted Sandpiper: only 4 reports of singles.
Upland Sandpiper: arr 1 SCA 27 Apr; 1 Amsterdam 3 May; 1 SNHP 7 May; 1 Cary Rd FtE 16 May; last SCA 16 May; 1 Downmont Rd FtE 26 May; 4 CRt 42 FtE 29 May.
Least Sandpiper: 15+ MR Half Moon 16 May; 6 BCR 16 May.
White-rumped Sandpiper: 1 Schodack Marshes 16 May (WL).
Pectoral Sandpiper: 1 StFl 16 May.
Dunlin: 1 MR Half Moon 16, 18 May.

dowitcher sp.: 6 Blenheim SCHO 24 May (AM).

Com. Snipe: max 4 Meadowdale 16 Mar; 5 Gansevoort 2 Apr.

Am. Woodcock: arr 5 R 2 Mar; max 4 Meadowdale 16 May; numbers up from last year.

Laughing Gull: 2 MR Colonie 16 May (WL).

Bonaparte's Gull: no reports.

Iceland Gull: 1 Albany 3 Mar; 1 NR 14 Mar.

Caspian Tern: 1 CL 15 May (RP).

Com. Tern: 1 SL 14 May, only report.

Forster's Tern: 1 Niskayuna 21 May (RG to BEN).

Black Tern: 1 BCR 10 May; 4 SL 18 May; only reports.

DOVES-WOODPECKERS

Black-billed Cuckoo: 3 reports of singles; 3 SNHP 15 May; 4 BCM 16 May.

Yellow-billed Cuckoo: 1 Claverack 3 May; 1 CISP 25 May; 1 Gallupville 26 May; 1 Mill Creek 29 May, only reports.

E. Screech-Owl: 1 on nest FR 10 Mar; 1 road kill Amsterdam 14 Mar; 2 Tygert Marsh 18 May; 1 Stuyvesant 28 May; no other reports.

Great Horned Owl: 9 reports; 1 ad 2 yg in nest SL 28 Apr; nest at FR discovered 2 Mar-1 y fledged 13 May; nesting pr Gallupville fledged 2 y 17 May.

Barred Owl: 8 reports of singles.

Long-eared Owl: 1 Kinderhook 15, 17 May (A. Long to ADBC); 1 Claverack 16 May (ADBC).

Short-eared Owl: 1 FtE 16 Mar, only report.

Com. Nighthawk: 1 Hillsdale 17 May; 1 Saratoga 19 May; 1 Schenectady 20 May; 15 Stuyvesant 24 May.

Whip-poor-will: 2 Stanton Rd. Coeymans 15 May; 2 CSR 16 May; 1 Hague 14, 15 May; present Gulf Hill Rd. T Alcove (*fide* CT).

Chimney Swift: max 12 NAMC MONT.

Ruby-throated Hummingbird: 4 banded JL 16-31 May, incl 2 returns, one from 1995 (RY).

Red-bellied Woodpecker: 18 reports; max 5 CISP 8 Mar.

Yellow-bellied Sapsucker: several Rensselaer Plateau 12 May; max 3 TRd 16 May; 21 reports of singles.

Downy Woodpecker: max 18 NRP 28 Mar. **N. Flicker:** max 8 SUNYA 30 Apr; 22 NAMC MONT.

Pileated Woodpecker: 24 reports of singles; max 5 NRP 20 Apr; 1 at nest NRP 23 May.

FLYCATCHERS-WAXWINGS

Olive-sided Flycatcher: one BS 16 May (WL), only report.

E. Wood-Pewee: 18 reports of singles; max 10 SkW 27 May.

Yellow-bellied Flycatcher: 1 Schodack Ctr. 25 May (PC); 2 SUNYA 25 May (WE).

ACADIAN FLYCATCHER: 1 Mill Creek 29 May (BC).

Alder Flycatcher: only 3 reports of singles.

Willow Flycatcher: 8 reports of singles.

Least Flycatcher: max 4 BCM 14 May.

E. Phoebe: max 5 SNHP 31 Mar, 12 16 May; 23 reports of singles.

Great Crested Flycatcher: max 3 SNHP 16 May; 23 reports of singles.

E. Kingbird: 16 reports of singles; max 11 MONT 9 May.

N. Shrike: 1 Gansevoort 26 Mar (BP), only report.

Blue-headed Vireo: 21 reports of singles 11 Apr - 21 May; max 4 SUNYA 30 Apr.

Yellow-throated Vireo: 23 reports of singles; max 3 BCM 16 May.

Warbling Vireo: 23 reports of singles; max 15 CISP 25 May, Guilderland 14 May.

Red-eyed Vireo: max 9 SkW 27 May.

Fish Crow: 15 reports; max 4 MR Cohoes/Crescent Dam area 16 May; poss. nesting SUNYA (WE).

Com. Raven: reported throughout Region; nesting TP, juvs heard 15 May.

Horned Lark: max 15 FtE 25 Mar; 4 Saratoga Cty Airport 3, 16 May, incl displaying m; 8 Waterford 23 May.

Purple Martin: at least 7 prs SL 1 May.

Tree Swallow: high counts 400 Round L & 300 Lock 4 Stillwater 25 Apr.

N. Rough-winged Swallow: max 40-50 FR 28 Apr.

Bank Swallow: no colonies reported.

Cliff Swallow: low numbers.

Barn Swallow: max 45 MONT 9 May.

Black-capped Chickadee: max 28 PB 26 Apr; 89 banded JL 1 Mar-31 May (RY), predominately ad.
Tufted Titmouse: max 15 PB 26 Apr.
Red-breasted Nuthatch: max 4 NRP 15 Mar; 8 MONT 9 May.
White-breasted Nuthatch: max 7 NRP 15 Mar; 7 SUNYA 6 May.
Brown Creeper: first singing SNHP 7 Mar; 3 BCM 14 May.
Carolina Wren: 7 reports of singles.
House Wren: 1 Delmar 14 Apr, early; max 12 SNHP 6 May.
Winter Wren: 11 Apr reports; 1 Rensselaer Plateau 12 May; 2 Lishakill 3 May; 3 TP 15 May.
Marsh Wren: max 6 BCM 14 May.
Golden-crowned Kinglet: max 10 Warrensburg 5 Apr; 14 Meadowdale 5 Apr; 1 territorial TP 16 May.
Ruby-crowned Kinglet: last one COLU 16 May.
Blue-gray Gnatcatcher: max 7 BCM 3 May.
Veery: max 15 CISP 25 May.
Bicknell's Thrush: no reports from breeding areas in Catskills.
Gray-cheeked Thrush: 1 SUNYA 28 May (WE).
Swainson's Thrush: 3 reports of singles; nocturnal migrants heard over Berne 18 May, Schodack Ctr RENS 30 May.
Hermit Thrush: max 4 SNHP 13 Apr.
Wood Thrush: max 16 CISP 25 May; 7 SkW 27 May.
Am. Robin: fledged juv Meadowdale Rd 14 May (WE), 11 days earlier than early dates in Bull & Atlas.
Gray Catbird: max 20 Guilderland 14 May; 33 MONT 9 May.
N. Mockingbird: 9 reports of singles.
Brown Thrasher: 12 reports of singles; max 3 SNHP 15 May; 3 FtE 25 May.
European Starling: fledglings Schenectady 23 May, early.
Am. Pipit: 1 Amsterdam 6 Apr, 3 May; 7⁺ C Rt 68 SARA 24 Mar.
Cedar Waxwing: max 75 SUNYA 10 Apr; 200+ Salem 8 May.

WARBLERS

Blue-winged Warbler: arr Livingston 5 May; max 25 singing males SNHP 11 May.

"Brewster's" Warbler: 1 Ann Lee Pd. 13 May (G. Colburn to BEN); 1 Valatie 29 May (CW).

"LAWRENCE'S" WARBLER: 1 T Rotterdam 7 May (P Feinberg to BEN); 1 SNHP 16 May (BP).

Golden-winged Warbler: arr 1 Salem 8 May; 1 Gallupville 26 May; 1 SNHP 22 May.

Tennessee Warbler: only 2 reports.

Nashville Warbler: 10 reports 3 -16 May.
N. Parula: 8 reports 8 -16 May.

Yellow Warbler: max 31 CISP 25 May.

Magnolia Warbler: 17 reports 15 -30 May.

Cape May Warbler: 1 Gallupville 15 May; 1 HPR 18 May, only reports.

Black-throated Blue Warbler: 19 reports 30 Apr-18 May.

Yellow-rumped Warbler: max 35 SUNYA 30 Apr; last 1 TP 18 May.

Black-throated Green Warbler: 18 reports 30 Apr-18 May.

Blackburnian Warbler: 11 reports 30 Apr-23 May; max 3 TP 15 May.

Pine Warbler: 18 reports of singles; max 2 PB 25 Apr.

Prairie Warbler: arr. Gallupville 30 Apr; 7 reports; max 8 SNHP 15 May.

Palm Warbler: 7 reports 1-30 Apr.

Bay-breasted Warbler: 4 reports 16-24 May.

Blackpoll Warbler: 13 reports 16-24 May.

Cerulean Warbler: 15 CISP 25 May (RG), only report.

Black-and-white Warbler: max 5 HPR 9 May.

Am. Redstart: 18 reports 3-30 May; max 27 CISP 25 May.

Worm-eating Warbler: 1 BCM 16 May; 1 HPR 17-18 May; no reports from usual location on Blossom Hill Rd.

Ovenbird: max 11 SNHP 25 May; 28 MONT 9 May.

N. Waterthrush: max 13 MONT 9 May.

Louisiana Waterthrush: arr. Indian Kill 6 Apr; max 3 Vly Creek 12 Apr 18.

Mourning Warbler: no reports.

Com. Yellowthroat: max 16 SNHP 22 May.

Hooded Warbler: 1 HPR 17 May (WE, NM); 1 Valatie 25 May (CW).

Wilson's Warbler: 1 Greenport 16 May; 1 BCM 16 May; 1 Amsterdam 20 May; 1 FR 24 May, only reports.

Canada Warbler: 6 reports 15-28 May; max 4 Bear Swamp 28 May.
Yellow-breasted Chat: 1 Greenport 24 Apr (ADBC).

TANAGERS-WEAVERS

Scarlet Tanager: 22 reports of singles; 2 Guilderland 14 May; 4 TP 15 May; 3 singing m SkW 27 May.
E. Towhee: max 12 Guilderland 14 May; 12 SNHP 25 May.
Am. Tree Sparrow: max 14 Ramshorn Creek Preserve 7 Mar; last 1 Amsterdam 12 Apr.
Field Sparrow: arr 1 Austerlitz 27 Mar.
Vesper Sparrow: 4 Saratoga Cty Airport 3, 16, 18 May; 1 COLU 16 May.
Savannah Sparrow: max 11 MONT 9 May.
Grasshopper Sparrow: 1 SNHP 6, 16 May; 1 Altamont 18 May.
Henslow's Sparrow: arr 2 SNHP 6 May, did not remain; 1 Cary Rd FtE 16 May; 2 Dowmont Rd FtE 24 May.
Fox Sparrow: max 4 Gallupville 1st wk Apr; last Saratoga 16 May, very late.
Song Sparrow: arr Amsterdam 17 Mar; max 48 NRP 28 Mar.
Swamp Sparrow: 1 Ramshorn Creek Preserve 7 Mar, prob overwintered; arr 1 BCM 5 Apr.
White-throated Sparrow: first migrants Saratoga 30 Mar; max 36 SUNYA 30 Apr.
HARRIS'S SPARROW: 1 T Galway c. 26 Apr-4 May (JG, AV, mob); 1st since 1975 (NYSARC).
White-crowned Sparrow: last 1 SNHP 16 May.
Dark-eyed Junco: max 70 SUNYA 17 Apr.

Snow Bunting: max 100 FtE 1 Mar, only report.

Rose-breasted Grosbeak: max 5 TP 15 May.

BLUE GROSBEAK: 1 T Nassau RENS 16 May (K. Dunham, E. Grace/ADBC); first since 1963 (NYSARC requested).

Indigo Bunting: max 3 SkW 21 May, generally low number.

Bobolink: numerous FtE, farm fields ALBA, MONT, SNHP after 1 May; max 46 singing m SNHP 25 May.

Red-winged Blackbird: max 1000+ FtE 1 Mar.

E. Meadowlark: arr 3 Amsterdam 13 Mar.

Rusty Blackbird: arr 2 NRP 28 Mar; max 12 VF 1 Apr; last 2 Guilderland 26 Apr.

Com. Grackle: 1 fledged juv Meadowdale RD 14 May, four days earlier than early fl. date in Bull & Atlas.

Orchard Oriole: 1 FR 12 May; 1 Stuyvesant 16 May; 1 BCM 16, 18 May.

Baltimore Oriole: max 14 CISP 25 May.

Purple Finch: numbers low.

Red Crossbill: widely reported; max 12 5R 17 Apr (RB).

White-winged Crossbill: up to 12 Gallupville 1-30 Mar; 40 Hudson F 21 Mar.

Com. Redpoll: widely reported; 50 Gansevoort 25-26 Mar; max 60 Schodack Ctr 3 May.

Pine Siskin: widespread in small numbers thru.

Evening Grosbeak: widespread; max 18 Grapeville 29 Mar; 25 Jefferson 31 Mar.

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