

REGION 8—HUDSON-MOHAWK

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Summer 2010 ended hotter and drier than average. June concluded with temperatures 1.3° F above average and an inch less rain than average. July produced eight days above 90° and ended 3.8° above average with 0.60 fewer inches of rain than average. August continued the trend, ending 3.0° above average with 2 fewer inches of rain than average. By summer's end, many waterways, reservoirs, and streams dropped to drought levels, and area residents reported wells drying up. Few puddles meant fewer breeding opportunities for mosquitoes, and forests hosted fewer arthropods. Many oaks began shedding

acorns early, and by the end of the season near-drought-like conditions caused early leaf fall in water-stressed trees.

An unusually early and pronounced Great Egret invasion occurred this summer, with reports beginning in early July and continuing through the fall. These conspicuous white vagrants are spotted, usually by passing motorists, in many of the Region's small waterways each summer. This summer is unusual for its many large single location maxima, including 24 at Crescent in Albany and 39 at Vischer's Ferry, Saratoga County. Two **Snowy Egrets** were found in the Region as well as two **Little Blue Herons**, an adult in Cohoes, Albany County, and an immature in nearby Rensselaerville.

Tim O'Conner located nests of Virginia Rail and Least Bittern near North Bay, Greenport, Columbia County, in a contiguous patch of cattail. Although both species were recorded in that stretch of the river in previous years, they were not confirmed as breeders during the 2000 Breeding Bird Atlas.

After much anticipation, and many hours of searching, Rich Guthrie observed and video recorded **Mississippi Kites** feeding fledglings in the town of Root, Montgomery County, representing the first confirmed breeding record for this species in New York State and one of only a handful in the Northeast. Rich and others observed three adult birds tending to the nest, one bird likely a sub-adult joining in on the parenting behavior of the mated pair. The existence of a sub-adult this year suggests that the adult pair may have produced a chick in 2009, since it seems extraordinarily unlikely that a third vagrant bird would have located this nest and joined the pair this far north of the kite's typical breeding range.

Region 8 only observes good shorebird migrations in years of drought, when a few exposed mudflats occur on lakes and reservoirs. Many thousands of birds fly over the Region each year, but few land. This summer, David Harrison found an interesting pocket of shorebirds on Stony Creek Reservoir in Albany County, including the locally large maximum of 200 Least Sandpipers, Semipalmated Sandpiper, Pectoral Sandpiper, and Semipalmated Plover. Other birders in the Region found **Baird's Sandpiper** at Cohoes, Albany County, and there were scattered reports of Short-billed Dowitchers and White-rumped Sandpiper.

Passerine reports yielded few surprises this summer, except for an interesting report of Golden-Winged Warbler in Germantown, Columbia County, and a Yellow-breasted Chat at Vischer's Ferry, Saratoga County. The latter species has gone unreported in Region 8 for many years. Finally, although Montgomery County hosts Clay-colored Sparrows nearly every summer, an unusual report of one in Albany County by T. Lloyd Williams was unexpected so far from suitable grassland habitat.

CONTRIBUTORS

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ABBREVIATIONS

COH – T Cohoes, ALBA; COX – T Cocksackie, GREE: FtE – T Fort Edwards, WASH; HR – Hudson Ri; VF – Vischer's Ferry, SARA.

WHISTLING-DUCKS – VULTURES

Blue-winged Teal: COX grasslands 8 Jul; 6 Stony Creek Res ALBA 21 Aug.
Great Egret: 2 Partridge Run ALBA 23 Jun; 6 VF 21 Aug.
Long-tailed Duck: L George WARR 8 Jul.
Ring-necked Pheasant: Queensbury SARA 7 Jul.
Horned Grebe: L George WARR 2 Jun.
Least Bittern: Greenport COLU 1 Jul, nesting; 2 BMC 3 July; Niskayuna SCHE 3 Aug.
Great Egret: 5 Cohoes ALBA 19 Jul; 6 Niskayuna SCHE 21 Jul; 24 Crescent ALBA 3 Aug; max 39 VF 20 Aug, numerous reports.
Snowy Egret: Cohoes 19-31 Jul; Ferry Drive SARA 30 Jul.
LITTLE BLUE HERON: imm Cohoes ALBA 8 Aug; Myosotis L ALBA 17-19 Aug.
Black-crowned Night-Heron: Cohoes ALBA 28 Jul.
Black Vulture: Albany 24 Jun.

HAWKS – ALCIDS

MISSISSIPPI KITE: 2 Root MONT Jun-thru, first nesting record for NYS, intro.
N. Goshawk: max 4 Partridge Run ALBA 1 Jun-11 July; max 4 Burnt-Rossmann Hills SF SCHO 19 Jun – 5 Jul, with fledglings.
Red-shouldered Hawk: Rensselaer Forest Tract RENS 8 Jun; Clermont COLU 18 Jun.
Com. Moorhen: 2 Rural Grove MONT 3 Jul; 2 Glen MONT 3-18 Jul.
Semipalmated Plover: Stony Creek Res ALBA 21 Aug.
Solitary Sandpiper: Schoharie Creek GREE 4 Jul.
Greater Yellowlegs: COX grasslands 2 Aug.
Lesser Yellowlegs: 2 Cohoes ALBA 15 Jul.

Upland Sandpiper: 3 Ames MONT 2 Jun thru.
Ruddy Turnstone: L George WARR 1 Jun.
Semipalmated Sandpiper: 4 Stony Creek Res ALBA 21 Aug; Crescent ALBA 21 Aug.
Least Sandpiper: 10 COX grasslands 8 Jul; COX 30 Jul-3 Aug; Cohoes Flats 31 Jul; max 200 Stony Creek Res ALBA 21 Aug.
White-rumped Sandpiper: Myosotis L ALBA 2-9 Aug.
BAIRD'S SANDPIPER: Myosotis L ALBA 19-22 Aug; Crescent 20 Aug; Cohoes ALBA 21 Aug.
Pectoral Sandpiper: 2 VF 21 Aug; 5 Stony Creek ALBA 21 Aug.
Short-billed Dowitcher: Rensselaerville ALBA 25 Jul; Crescent ALBA 21 Aug.
Bonaparte's Gull: 2 4-mile Pt GREE 27 Jul; New Baltimore GREE 1 Aug.
Caspian Tern: Cohoes Flats ALBA 10 Jul; 2 Coeymans ALBA 11 Jul.
Black Tern: 2 Saratoga L SARA 6 Jun; Myosotis L ALBA 14-15 Aug.
Com. Tern: Rensselaerville ALBA 23 Jul.

PIGEONS - WOODPECKERS

Long-eared Owl: Rensselaerville ALBA 1-28 Jun.
N. Saw-whet Owl: Rensselaerville ALBA 11 Jul.
Com. Nighthawk: max 50 Colonie ALBA 25 Aug.

FLYCATCHERS - WAXWINGS

Yellow-bellied Flycatcher: Blackhead Mt GREE 12 Jun; Hunter Mt GREE 21 Jun.
Purple Martin: Saratoga L SARA 5 Jul; L Lonely SARA 10 Jul.

Cliff Swallow: 10 Chism Farm Ancram COLU 3 Jun, Jewett GREE 26 Jun; Wilton SARA, Jul-thru, previously unreported colony; Glen MONT 18 Jul.

Sedge Wren: 2 Plum Rd FtE 25 Jun (BP).

Bicknell's Thrush: 2 Blackhead Mt GREE 12 Jun.

WARBLERS

Golden-winged Warbler: Germantown COLU 14-22 Jun.

Tennessee Warbler: Partridge Run ALBA 20 Aug; Dutton Ridge SF SCHO 26 Aug.

N. Parula: Sprakers MONT 3 Jul.

Cape May Warbler: 2 Dutton Ridge SF SCHO 26 Aug.

Bay-breasted Warbler: Partridge Run ALBA 20 Aug.

Worm-eating Warbler: max 3 Coeymans ALBA 13 Jun.

Mourning Warbler: Petersburg RENS 8 Jun; 2 Burnt-Rossman SF SCHO 19 Jun; Hunter Mt GREE 21 Jun.

Hooded Warbler: New Salem RENS 15 Jun.

Wilson's Warbler: Partridge Run ALBA 20 Aug; Brunswick RENS 21 Aug; Dutton Ridge SF SCHO 26 Aug.

Canada Warbler: 2 Sand L RENS 8 Jun; Hunter Mt GREE 21 Jun; Brunswick RENS 21 Aug.

YELLOW-BREASTED CHAT: VF 5 Jun (SA).

TOWHEES - WEAVERS

CLAY-COLORED SPARROW: Rensselaerville ALBA 25 Jul (TLW).

Vesper Sparrow: FtE 25-6 Jun.

Grasshopper Sparrow: 2 Saratoga Airport SARA 6 Jun; 2 Minden MONT 20 Jun.

E. Meadowlark: max 5 Claverack COLU 15 Aug.

Red Crossbill: Partridge Run ALBA 24 Jul.

Evening Grosbeak: Chatham 15-16 Jun; Glen MONT 4 Jul.