

REGION 8—HUDSON-MOHAWK

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Spring 2011 was mild and wet. March ended with 1.3 inches more than average, with another inch and a half of rain above average for April, and finally an inch above average for May. Precipitation in most cases stretched out over several drizzly days rather than in strong downpours, although flooding did occur in some parts of the Region in April and May. Twenty days in May had either drizzle or rain showers. The grass grew fast and thick, and had farmers not leapt at the chance for early cuttings when the weather dried up in June, it would have been a good year for grassland nesting birds. The last frost occurred on 22 April, and May began a long moderating trend that brought above average temperatures that lasted beyond the spring season.

Brant made a good showing in the Region this spring. Moderately sized flocks from 70-500 moved through, mostly at night, during mid- to late May. Larry Federman recalls seeing them nearly everywhere in Greene County: “Around 8 p.m. the first of several large flocks were seen over the Hudson River in the Village of Catskill, Greene County—I estimated that flock at 200. Five minutes later, heading norrthwest from west of the Village of Catskill were another 300. Ten minutes later, as I approached the intersection of Rts 23A and

32, another flock of approximately 300 were heading north, in front of the eastern face of the Catskills.” Although not as widespread, Snow Geese also staged in the area in March, including a flock of 900 in Albany County. Area birders found Tundra Swans at three locations this season.

A relatively large single location maximum of eight Red-necked Grebes at Cossackie Boat Launch is unusual for our Region. An early Great Egret showed up at Vosburgh’s Marsh in Greene County on 3 April.

The Region hosted two species of kites this spring: the first, a Swallow-tailed Kite described with good details, seen in Albany County, and the second, a pair of Mississippi Kites back at their nest site in the town of Root, Montgomery County. Please see previous issues of this publication for a detailed description of these birds, the first nesting record for Mississippi Kite in the State.

Rich Guthrie found two Sandhill Cranes in Catskill in mid-April, and area birders recorded Caspian Terns at four different locations this spring. They are often not recorded most years, even though several migrate up the Hudson River to breeding locations on the Great Lakes. Bill Lee reports that he found 12 Upland Sandpipers at a single location in Ames, Montgomery County, a large number not only for the Region, but for the State as well nowadays.

Overall, no clear trend emerges for non-passerine migration. Herons and shorebirds appeared slightly later than average, with the exception of snipe and woodcock which arrive regularly in the southern part of the Region the first week of March. Duck migration is so variable in our Region that it’s hard to parse out trends from the noise in any given year. Early passerines, such as kinglets, gnatcatchers, towhees, and Hermit Thrush arrived slightly early. A very strong push of neotropical migrants moved into the Region on the evenings of 27 and 28 April, nearly a week earlier than average. All species of swallows arrived early this spring. Most vireos and warblers in particular arrived early this spring.

CONTRIBUTORS

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ABBREVIATIONS

BCM – Black Creek Marsh, ALBA; BRH – Burnt-Rossman Hills SF, SCHO;
BRU – T Brunswick, RENS; COH – T Cohoes, ALBA; FtE – T Fort Edwards,
WASH; HR – Hudson Ri; LIV – T Livingston, COLU; NBA – T New
Baltimore, GREE; PR – Partridge Run, ALBA; VF – Vischer's Ferry, SARA.

WHISTLING-DUCKS – VULTURES

Snow Goose: max 900 Five Rivers ALBA 12 Mar.

Brant: max 500 Catskill GREE 25 May, numerous evening migrants.

Tundra Swan: Stafford Bridge SARA 6-9 Mar; Ft Miller WASH 9 Mar; 3 Germantown 13 Mar.

Wood Duck: arr Neiber Swamp Livingston COLU 4 Mar.

Godwall: max 13 Crescent ALBA 13 Mar.

Eurasian Wigeon: Collins L SCHE 13 Apr.

Am. Wigeon: max 25 Claverack COLU 15 Mar.

Blue-winged Teal: arr VF 17 Apr.

N. Shoveler: max 3 Papscaanee RENS 18 Mar.

N. Pintail: max 18 Claverack COLU 15 Mar.

Canvasback: max 250 Germantown COLU 15 Mar.

Redhead: max 9 Cheviot COLU 8 Mar.

Greater Scaup: max 5 Northumberland SARA 26 Mar.

Surf Scoter: Collins L SCHE 8-14 Apr.

White-winged Scoter: Sacandaga L FULT 21 May.

Long-tailed Duck: max 6 COX Boat Launch 23 Apr.

Barrow's Goldeneye: Ft Miller WASH 12 Mar.

Red-breasted Merganser: max 5 Four-mile Pt GREE 5 Apr.

Ruddy Duck: Ft Miller WASH 20 Mar; Myosotis L SARA 21 May.

Ring-necked Pheasant: Saratoga Battlefield SARA 17 Mar; Old Chatham COLU 27 Mar; FtE 6 Apr; Austerlitz COLU 17 Apr.

Ruffed Grouse: Coeymans ALBA 31 Mar; Four-mile Pt GREE 1 Apr; Five Rivers ALBA 12 Apr.

Red-throated Loon: 2 Lock 7 SCHE 5 Apr; Collins L SCHE 6 Apr.

Com. Loon: max 8 Lock 7 SCHE Apr.

Pied-billed Grebe: arr 4-mile Pt GREE 15 Mar.

Horned Grebe: arr Chatham COLU 15 Mar.

Red-necked Grebe: COX 3 Apr; max 8 COX Boat Launch 23 Apr.

Great Cormorant: Germantown COLU 15 Mar; last New Baltimore GREE 31 Mar.

Am. Bittern: arr COX grasslands 22 Apr.

Least Bittern: max 2 BCM 21 May.

Great Egret: Vosburgh Marsh GREE 3 Apr.

Green Heron: arr Five Rivers ALBA 25 Apr.

Black-crowned Night-Heron: arr Catskill GREE 29 Apr.

Black Vulture: Livingston COLU 5 Mar.

HAWKS – ALCIDS

Osprey: arr Collins L SCHE 30 Mar.

SWALLOW-TAILED KITE: Wolforts Roost Country Club ALBA 29 Apr (eBird, fide RG).

MISSISSIPPI KITE: 2 Root MONT 22 May-thru (mob).

N. Goshawk: Austerlitz COLU 26 Mar; Partridge Run ALBA 20 Mar; Saratoga SARA 21 May; Rensselaerville ALBA 27 May.

Red-shouldered Hawk: arr Brunswick RENS 4 Mar.

Broad-winged Hawk: arr Rensselaer RENS 3 Apr.

Rough-legged Hawk: last Catskill GREE 13 Mar.

Golden Eagle: Brunswick RENS 4 Mar; COX 6 Mar.

Merlin: New Scotland ALBA 14 Apr; Albany 20 Apr; Brunswick RENS 28 Apr.

Virginia Rail: arr BCM 23 Apr.

Sora: arr RENS tech park 15 Apr.

Com. Moorhen: BCM 21 May.

SANDHILL CRANE (R8): 2 Catskill GREE 11 Apr (RG).

Black-bellied Plover: arr Wrights Loop SARA 19 May.

Semipalmated Plover: arr Rensselaerville ALBA 12 May.

Killdeer: arr COX 5 Mar.

Spotted Sandpiper: arr Albany 17 Apr.

Solitary Sandpiper: arr Clermont COLU 27 Apr.

Greater Yellowlegs: arr Wrights Loop SARA 6 Apr.

Lesser Yellowlegs: arr Wrights Loop SARA 5 Apr (KH), Reg record early.

Upland Sandpiper: max 12 Ames MONT 30 Apr (BL).

Dunlin: 6 Papscaanee RENS 14-16 May; 2 COX grasslands 25 May.

Wilson's Snipe: arr Burnt Hills ALBA 3 Mar.

Am. Woodcock: arr Livingston COLU 5 Mar.

Bonaparte's Gull: arr HR ALBA 5 Apr.

Iceland Gull: Cohoes ALBA 1-13 Mar.

Lesser Black-backed Gull: VF 17 Mar; 2 Coeymans ALBA 21 Mar.
Glaucous Gull: Cohoes ALBA 1-13 Mar.
Caspian Tern: Collins L SCHE 5 Apr (JN), Reg record early; Colonie ALBA 24 Apr; 3 Coeymans 4 May; Saratoga L SARA 24 May.
Black Tern: arr L George WARR 14 May; Myosotis L SARA 15 May; Saratoga L SARA 21-4 May.
Com. Tern: Saratoga L 21 May.

PIGEONS - WOODPECKERS

Black-billed Cuckoo: arr VF 8 May.
Yellow-billed Cuckoo: arr New Baltimore GREE 12 May.
Long-eared Owl: Rensselaerville ALBA 6 Apr.
N. Saw-whet Owl: Blackhead Mt GREE 21 May.
Com. Nighthawk: arr BCM 20 May.
E. Whip-poor-will: max 5 Saratoga SARA 21 May.
Chimney Swift: arr Brunswick RENS 27 Apr.
Ruby-throated Hummingbird: arr Brunswick RENS 26 Apr.

FLYCATCHERS - WAXWINGS

Olive-sided Flycatcher: Saratoga Battlefield SARA 22 May.
Yellow-bellied Flycatcher: Myosotis L SARA 21 May.
Least Flycatcher: arr Partridge Run ALBA 1 May.
E. Kingbird: arr Rensselaerville ALBA 24 Apr.
Great Crested Flycatcher: arr BCM 27 Apr.
N. Shrike: last Papscanee RENS 2 Apr.
White-eyed Vireo: S Glens Falls WARR 30 Apr.
Yellow-throated Vireo: arr BCM 27 Apr.
Warbling Vireo: arr VF 27 Apr.
Red-eyed Vireo: arr S Glens Falls WARR 27 Apr.
Purple Martin: Saratoga L SARA 24 May.
Tree Swallow: arr Ferry Drive SARA 13 Mar.
N. Rough-winged Swallow: arr Germantown COLU 19 Apr.
Bank Swallow: arr VF 17 Apr.
Cliff Swallow: max 30 Ballston Spa SARA 24 May.
Barn Swallow: arr Coeymans ALBA 7 Apr.
House Wren: arr Austerlitz COLU 29 Apr.
Marsh Wren: arr BCM 22 Apr.
Ruby-crowned Kinglet: arr Meadowdale ALBA 8 Apr.
Blue-gray Gnatcatcher: arr Claverack COLU 11 Apr.
Swainson's Thrush: arr Schodack RENS 4 May.
Wood Thrush: arr Livingston COLU 26 Apr.

The Kingbird 2011 September; 61 (3)

Gray Catbird: arr Brunswick RENS 26 Apr.
Brown Thrasher: arr Hillsdale COLU 19 Apr.
Am. Pipit: Rensselaerville ALBA 11 May.

LONGSPURS - WARBLERS

Snow Bunting: max 40 COX 1 Mar; last VF 4 Mar.
Blue-winged Warbler: arr Livingston COLU 26 Apr.
Tennessee Warbler: arr Livingston COLU 15 May.
Nashville Warbler: arr Galway SARA 26 Apr.
N. Parula: arr Vosburghs Marsh GREE 26 Apr (RG), Reg record early.
Yellow Warbler: arr Livingston COLU 25 Apr.
Chestnut-sided Warbler: arr COX grasslands 26 Apr.
Magnolia Warbler: arr Catskill GREE 6 May.
Cape May Warbler: arr Brunswick RENS 11 May.
Black-throated Blue Warbler: arr Five Rivers ALBA 27 Apr.
Yellow-rumped Warbler: arr Clermont COLU 22 Apr.
Black-throated Green Warbler: arr Amsterdam MONT 28 Apr.
Blackburnian Warbler: arr Brunswick RENS 27 Apr.
Pine Warbler: arr Clermont COLU 16 Apr.
Prairie Warbler: arr Livingston COLU 23 Apr.
Palm Warbler: arr Ann Lee Pd ALBA 11 Apr.
Bay-breasted Warbler: arr Brunswick RENS 12 May.
Blackpoll Warbler: arr Livingston COLU 8 May.
Cerulean Warbler: Schodack I RENS 11 May.
Black-and-white Warbler: arr Greenport COLU 26 Apr.
Am. Redstart: arr Papscanee RENS 27 Apr.
PROTHONOTARY WARBLER (R8): Turkey Run WMA ALBA 27 Apr (DG).
Worm-eating Warbler: 2 Coeymans ALBA 19 May; Deer Mt ALBA 21 May.
Ovenbird: arr COX grasslands 26 Apr.
N. Waterthrush: arr Rotterdam SCHE 26 Apr.
Louisiana Waterthrush: arr Five Rivers ALBA 9 Apr.
Mourning Warbler: arr Hunter Mt GREE 15 May.
Com. Yellowthroat: arr Copake COLU 30 Apr.
Hooded Warbler: New Scotland ALBA 18 May; Thatcher Park ALBA 21 May.
Wilson's Warbler: arr Schodack RENS 12 May.
Canada Warbler: arr Austerlitz COLU 7 May.

TOWHEES - WEAVERS

E. Towhee: arr Taghkanic COLU 20 Mar.

Chipping Sparrow: arr Voorheesville ALBA 20 Mar.

Field Sparrow: arr Hillsdale COLU 21 Mar.

Vesper Sparrow: arr Rensselaerville ALBA 23 Apr.

Savannah Sparrow: arr Livingston 20 Apr.

Grasshopper Sparrow: Saratoga Airport SARA 11 May.

Lincoln's Sparrow: arr Five-Rivers ALBA 4 May.

Scarlet Tanager: arr Claverack COLU 26 Apr.

Rose-breasted Grosbeak: arr Austerlitz COLU 26 Apr.

Indigo Bunting: arr Chatham COLU 28 Apr.

Bobolink: arr Five Rivers ALBA 30 Apr.

E. Meadowlark: arr Saratoga SARA 30 Mar.

Rusty Blackbird: arr 10 VF 14 Mar; max 50 VF 23 Mar.

Orchard Oriole: arr Brunswick RENS 28 Apr.

Baltimore Oriole: arr Ann Lee Pd ALBA 16 Apr.

White-winged Crossbill: 2 Stephentown RENS 5 Mar; E Greenbush RENS 18 Mar.

Com. Redpoll: last SCHO 5 Apr.

Pine Siskin: max 3 Stillwater SARA 6 Mar.

Evening Grosbeak: max 6 Saratoga 21 Apr.

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