

REGION 8—HUDSON-MOHAWK

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Spring 2012 began very warm and largely dry. March's average temperature was 10.9° F above average at Albany International Airport. March ended with 1.67 fewer inches of rain than average. At Albany, the last snowstorm of the season occurred on 1 March dropping over 4" of snow. Six days in March topped 70°, hastening an early bloom of fruit trees and early green up. April's temperature and precipitation averages approached normal, although the Region remained slightly drier than average. May ended 4.1° warmer than average, with two more inches of rain than average. The Region experienced more growing days than average this spring, with an early leaf out of spring ephemerals, shrubs, and trees.

Waterfowl migration appeared similar to previous springs, with two uncommon species, Greater White-fronted Goose and Cackling Goose. The single location maximum of 81 Common Loons on Glen Lake, Warren County, reported by Mona Bearor in mid-May, is unprecedented in the Region as far as I can tell from the records at my disposal.

Nancy Kern, who is one of those birders who finds interesting species just by travelling around and stopping here and there at unassuming places, was rewarded by spotting an immature **Yellow-crowned Night-Heron**. John Hershey's quick eye and camera captured a **Little Blue Heron** on the edge of a grassy horse paddock on Riverview Road in the town of Clifton Park.

Dan Furbish reported the "blonde" morph of Short-eared Owl near Fitzpatrick Drive at the Fort Edwards grassland area, and the same area near Nature Conservancy property off of Blackhouse Road on May 27 hosted a **Sedge Wren** spotted by Scott Stoner and others from the Hudson Mohawk Bird Club. The group was enjoying watching harriers soaring over the fields until they spotted the wren in the nearby bushes.

The average 2012 arrival date for all species is among the earliest ever recorded. New early records were set for Virginia Rail (21 March), Lesser Yellowlegs (18 April), Tennessee Warbler (15 April), Black-throated Green Warbler (11 April), Pine Warbler (17 March), and Blackpoll Warbler (2 May). These early arrival dates are consistent with a host of early phenological events, from flowering dates, amphibian singing, fish spawning, and insect hatchings. As we, the birders of this section of New York, continue to accumulate evidence that both birdlife and other forms of wildlife are changing their seasonal patterns, we face one of the most fascinating questions that can be asked by modern ornithologists: How will birds adapt to this changing climate in the coming century and centuries to come?

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 River; LIV – T Livingston, COLU; NBA – T New Baltimore, GREE; PR – Partridge Run, ALBA; VF – Vischer's Ferry, SARA.

WHISTLING-DUCKS – VULTURES

GREATER WHITE-FRONTED GOOSE (R8): Ft Miller WASH 3 Mar (RR).

Snow Goose: max 200 BCM 11 Mar.

CACKLING GOOSE: Dale's Bridge Rd Germantown COLU 25 Apr (NK).

Brant: max 2000 New Baltimore GREE 15 May.

Tundra Swan: 5 at 4-mile Pt GREE 29 Apr (AIM).

Wood Duck: arr Neiber Swamp Livingston COLU 1 Mar.

Gadwall: max 12 Stanton Pd ALBA 18 Mar.

Am. Wigeon: max 7 BCM 17 Mar.

Blue-winged Teal: arr Niskayuna SCHE 9 Apr.

N. Shoveler: max 5 Niskayuna SCHE 4 Apr.

N. Pintail: max 50+ Vosburg Marsh GREE 4 Mar.

Greater Scaup: max 25 Saratoga L SARA 4 Mar.

Lesser Scaup: max 231 Saratoga L SARA 15 May.

White-winged Scoter: max 57 Glen L WARR 15 May.

Black Scoter: 2 Saratoga L SARA 15 Apr.

Long-tailed Duck: max 2 Lock 7 SCHE 25 Mar.

Bufflehead: max 35 Saratoga L SARA 22 Apr.

Red-breasted Merganser: max 2 Galway L SARA 16 Apr.

Ruddy Duck: max 10 COX res 8 Mar.

Ring-necked Pheasant: COX 12 Mar; Chatham 4 May.

Red-throated Loon: Germantown COLU 19 May.

Com. Loon: max 81 Glen L WARR 15 May (MB), Regional high count.

Pied-billed Grebe: arr Snyder's L RENS 12 Mar.

Horned Grebe: max 12 Saratoga L SARA 15 Apr.

Red-necked Grebe: max 7 Saratoga L SARA 15 Apr.

Double-crested Cormorant: arr Germantown COLU 8 Mar.

Great Cormorant: max 3 HR Germantown COLU 7 Mar.

Am. Bittern: arr WASH 11 Apr.

Least Bittern: arr SARA 25 Apr.

Great Egret: 2 Rotterdam ALBA 29 Mar-3 Apr; Ann Lee Pd ALBA 11 Apr; COX grasslands 11 Apr.

LITTLE BLUE HERON (R8): VF 9 May (mob).

Green Heron: arr Five Rivers ALBA 16 Apr.

Black-crowned Night-Heron: arr Germantown COLU 22 Apr.

YELLOW-CROWNED NIGHT-HERON

(R8): Ghent COLU 4 May (NK).

Black Vulture: max 15 Schenectady SCHE 18 Mar.

HAWKS – ALCIDS

Osprey: arr Balston Spa SARA 3 Apr.
N. Harrier: max 7 COX flats 3 Mar.
N. Goshawk: Livingston COLU 8 Apr; Five Rivers ALBA 9 May.
Red-shouldered Hawk: Catskill GREE 7 Mar; Saratoga SARA 12 Mar; Ballston Spa SARA 8 Apr; Five Rivers ALBA 4 May.
Broad-winged Hawk: arr Livingston COLU 16 Mar.
Rough-legged Hawk: last Guilderland ALBA 16 Apr.
Golden Eagle: Partridge Run ALBA 4 Mar; Stuyvesant COLU 12 May.
Virginia Rail: arr BCM 21 Mar, Reg record early.
Sora: arr BCM 16 Apr.
Com. Gallinule: arr SARA 25 Apr; BCM 19 May; 2 Dresden WASH 19 May.
Am. Coot: 2 SARA 3 Apr; 2 Alcove Res ALBA 27 May.
SANDHILL CRANE (R8): max 5 Ghent COLU 17 Mar (CW); Poestenkill Airport RENS 30 Apr (JD).
Semipalmated Plover: arr Schenectady SCHE 15 May.
Killdeer: arr Livingston COLU 1 Mar.
Spotted Sandpiper: arr COX grasslands 22 Apr.
Solitary Sandpiper: arr WASH 4 May.
Greater Yellowlegs: arr Chatham COLU 4 May.
Lesser Yellowlegs: arr HR WASH 18 Apr, Reg record early.
Wilson's Snipe: arr Hudson COLU 4 Mar.
Am. Woodcock: arr Greenport COLU 28 Feb.
Bonaparte's Gull: arr HR SARA 25 Mar.
Black Tern: arr Saratoga L SARA 19 May.

PIGEONS - WOODPECKERS

Yellow-billed Cuckoo: WASH 21 May; Ravena ALBA 30 May.
Short-eared Owl: 2 COX flats 3 Mar; 6 FtE 15 Mar, "blonde" morph bird spotted there (DF).
Com. Nighthawk: arr Livingston COLU 15 May.
E. Whip-poor-will: max 4 Malta Tech Park SARA 10 May.
Chimney Swift: arr Albany 7 Apr.
Ruby-throated Hummingbird: arr Guilderland ALBA 30 Apr.
RED HEADED WOODPECKER (R8): Niskayuna SCHE 16-23 May (ER).

FLYCATCHERS - WAXWINGS

Yellow-bellied Flycatcher: Century Run COLU 12 May.
Least Flycatcher: arr Albany 24 Apr.
E. Kingbird: arr SARA 23 Apr.

Great Crested Flycatcher: arr Galway SARA 2 May.
White-eyed Vireo: Basic Creek ALBA 19 May; Glenville SCHE 22 May.
Yellow-throated Vireo: arr Albany 2 May.
Blue-headed Vireo: arr Five Rivers ALBA 15 Apr.
Warbling Vireo: arr VF 26 Apr.
Philadelphia Vireo: WASH 21 May (KM).
Red-eyed Vireo: arr Ramshorn-Livingston GREE 28 Apr.
Purple Martin: Saratoga L SARA 19 May.
N. Rough-winged Swallow: arr E Greenbush RENS 31 Mar.
Bank Swallow: arr Coeymans ALBA 18 Apr.
Cliff Swallow: arr Ballston Spa SARA 17 May.
Barn Swallow: arr WASH 6 Apr.
House Wren: arr Meadowdale Rd ALBA 18 Apr.
SEDGE WREN (R8): FtE 27 May.
Marsh Wren: arr SCHE 31 Mar.
Ruby-crowned Kinglet: arr Taghkanic COLU 14 Apr.
Blue Gray Gnatcatcher: arr SCHE 19 Apr.
Veery: arr Ramshorn-Livingston GREE 2 May.
Swainson's Thrush: arr SCHE 2 May.
Wood Thrush: arr SCHE 23 Apr.
Gray Catbird: arr VF 18 Apr.
Brown Thrasher: arr Livingston COLU 11 Apr.
Am. Pipit: max 8 Poestenkill RENS 10 May.

LONGSPURS - WARBLERS

Lapland Longspur: 2 SARA 30 Mar (KM).
Snow Bunting: max 100 Colonie ALBA 1 Mar.
Ovenbird: arr Hudson COLU 2 May.
Louisiana Waterthrush: arr Delmar ALBA 25 Mar.
N. Waterthrush: WASH 4 May.
Blue-winged Warbler: arr WASH 18 Apr.
Black-and-white Warbler: arr Providence SARA 21 Apr.
Tennessee Warbler: arr SARA 15 Apr, Reg record early.
Nashville Warbler: arr Albany 1 May.
Mourning Warbler: L Desolation SARA 28 May.
Com. Yellowthroat: arr VF 2 May.
Hooded Warbler: 2 Holt Preserve ALBA 11 May.
Am. Redstart: arr Schenectady SCHE 3 May.
Cape May Warbler: arr L Desolation SARA 3 May.
Cerulean Warbler: arr Schodack I RENS 5 May.
N. Parula: arr Albany 4 May.
Magnolia Warbler: arr Schenectady SCHE 23 Apr.

Bay-breasted Warbler: Five Rivers ALBA 12 May; WASH 18 May.

Blackburnian Warbler: arr VF 2 May.

Yellow Warbler: arr VF 19 Apr.

Chestnut-sided Warbler: arr Livingston COLU 30 Apr.

Blackpoll Warbler: arr Schenectady SCHE 2 May, Reg record early.

Black-throated Blue Warbler: arr Schodack RENS 5 May.

Palm Warbler: arr Five Rivers ALBA 19 Apr.

Pine Warbler: arr Edinburg SARA 17 Mar, Reg record early.

Yellow-rumped Warbler: COX 5 Mar.

Prairie Warbler: arr Livingston COLU 1 May.

Black-throated Green Warbler: arr Schenectady SCHE 11 Apr, Reg record early.

Canada Warbler: arr Ramshorn-Livingston GREE 6 May.

TOWHEES - WEAVERS

E. Towhee: arr Cobleskill SCHO 26 Mar.

Chipping Sparrow: arr Guilderland ALBA 22 Mar.

CLAY-COLORED SPARROW (R8): Five Rivers 2-11 May; Malta Tech P SARA 19 May.

Field Sparrow: arr Livingston COLU 8 Mar.

Vesper Sparrow: arr SARA 5 Apr; Saratoga Airport SARA 19 May.

Grasshopper Sparrow: Saratoga Airport SARA 19 May.

Fox Sparrow: max 6 Catskill GREE 13 Mar.

Lincoln's Sparrow: arr Providence SARA 8 May.

White-crowned Sparrow: arr Papscanee RENS 1 May.

Scarlet Tanager: arr Albany 1 May.

Rose-breasted Grosbeak: arr Glenville SCHE 25 Apr.

Indigo Bunting: arr Guilderland ALBA 5 May.

Bobolink: arr Five Rivers ALBA 4 May.

Rusty Blackbird: arr 43 BCM 11 Mar; max 140 VF 1 Apr.

Orchard Oriole: arr Chatham COLU 4 May.

Baltimore Oriole: arr Saratoga SARA 15 Apr.

Red Crossbill: Dresden WASH 9 Mar (DH).

Pine Siskin: max 12 Dresden WASH 9 Mar; 2 Providence SARA 26 Mar.