



REGION 8—HUDSON-MOHAWK

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Spring 2015 began very cold and dry. March ended 5.2° F below average, with 1.96 fewer inches of precipitation. The last significant snowfall occurred on 28 March. April moderated to average temperatures and continued dry. The last frost of the season at Albany occurred on 25 April. Some large bodies of water, such as Saratoga Lake, did not break ice until April. May warmed up significantly, ending 7.3° above average. With 2.56 fewer inches of precipitation than average, it ended as one of the driest Mays at Albany since 1941. By spring's end the Weather Service classified much of our Region as experiencing a moderate drought. Area lawns turned brown as if it were mid-summer and stream flows were noticeably low.

Great Egrets are common spring and fall sightings throughout Region 8, but one spotted in Coxsackie, Greene County, reveals some interesting data about the migration and distribution patterns of this species in the Northeast. The bird was found with a blue wing tag and the bird was tracked down by Chip Weseloh and found to be from Nottawasaga Island, about 90 miles northwest of

Toronto near the town of Collingwood, Ontario, on the south end of Lake Huron.

Frank Mitchell, moving to the Region from Maine, reported **60 Short-billed Dowitchers** at the south end of Stanton Pond, Albany County, and did not fully realize how remarkable that number is for us. Will Raup speculated on a local listserv that the number may be a Region 8 maximum record, and he may be right. Although singles and a few birds have been reported off and on over the past decade, I believe the last record that comes even close was the 25 dowitchers I observed near Schodack Island, Rensselaer County, in May 2002 while canoeing for the second Atlas project. Mitchell reported that the birds did not tarry long. Many unusual shorebirds have few places to linger in our Region. The flock I spotted in 2002 on the Hudson alighted on a series of rotting dock pilings but for a few moments before resuming flight, flying a few meters above the water. What other shorebirds pass through our characteristically shorebird-poor Region when there are no eyes to see them?

Bob Yunick reports one of the largest Black-capped Chickadee irruptions he has observed in his 40-plus years of banding at Jenny Lake, Saratoga. The majority of the 286 individual chickadees he captured up until May were immature (64 percent). He captured 72 in one day on 27 March. Many birders in the northern parts of Region 8 reported a modest Bohemian Waxwing irruption in late winter and early spring.

Birders were excited to document several new locations for Golden-winged Warbler in the Region as well as both hybrids, "Brewster's" and "Lawrence's" Warbler, this spring. All were found singing and foraging in areas cohabitated by Blue-winged Warblers. The changes in distribution for this species group will be one of the interesting things to watch for as we prepare for New York's third breeding bird atlas.

Bill Cook reported from his compilation of sightings for the Alan Devoe Club that John Piwowarki noticed a redpoll with conjunctivitis at his feeder. He cites a Cornell study that found that 5-10 percent of House Finches have this disease, but redpolls were not mentioned. Both Purple Finches and American Goldfinches have been reported with conjunctivitis in our Region in recent years. Both Common Redpoll and Pine Siskin were abundantly reported by feeder watchers during March and early April when winter was slow to loosen its firm grasp this year.

CONTRIBUTORS

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ABBREVIATIONS

FtE – T Fort Edwards, WASH; HR – Hudson River; VF – Vischer's Ferry, SARA.

WHISTLING-DUCKS - VULTURES

Greater White-fronted Goose: FtE 21 Mar; Hudson COLU 25 Mar.

Snow Goose: 300 Glen MONT 2 Apr, 6 blue morph present.

Cackling Goose: Neiber Swamp Livingston COLU 30 Mar.

Brant: max 70 New Baltimore GREE 29 May.

Gadwall: Stony Creek Res SARA 30 Mar.

N. Shoveler: Livingston COLU 6 Apr.

N. Pintail: max 8 Fonda MONT 10 Mar.

Canvasback: max 2 Cohoes ALBA 9 Mar.

Redhead: max 6 Crescent ALBA 6 Mar.

Greater Scaup: max 7 Stillwater SARA 1 Mar.

Lesser Scaup: max 5 Stillwater SARA 1 Mar.

White-winged Scoter: Copake COLU 12 Apr; 4 Alcove Res ALBA 16 May.

Long-tailed Duck: max 3 Queensbury WASH 17 Apr.

Barrow's Goldeneye: Cohoes ALB 2 Mar; Green I SARA 3 Mar; Ft. Miller WASH 26 Mar.

Red-breasted Merganser: Schuylerville 3 Mar; Green I SARA 3 Mar; Saratoga L SARA 24 Apr.

Ring-necked Pheasant: Stuyvesant COLU 5 March; Hillsdale COLU 1 Apr; Ancram COLU 25 Apr.

Red-throated Loon: max 7 Saratoga L SARA 17 Apr.

Pied-billed Grebe: arr Germantown COLU 1 Apr.

Red-necked Grebe: max 4 Saratoga L SARA 24 Apr.

Am. Bittern: arr Black Creek Marsh SARA 16 Apr.

Least Bittern: arr Black Creek Marsh SARA 16 Apr.

Great Egret: Cocksackie Grasslands GREE 3 Apr; VF 16 Apr.

Green Heron: arr Five Rivers ALBA 24 Apr.

Black-crowned Night-Heron: Cocksackie Grasslands GREE 25 May.

HAWKS – LARIDS

Osprey: arr Germantown COLU 26 Apr.

N. Goshawk: Wilton SARA 29 Mar; Chatham COLU 27 Apr; Berne ALBA 16 May.

Red-shouldered Hawk: Clifton Pk SARA 23 Mar; Northumberland SARA 30 Apr.

Broad-winged Hawk: arr Malta SARA 25 Apr.

Golden Eagle: Fort Ann WASH 1 Mar.

Virginia Rail: arr Black Creek Marsh SARA 15 Apr.

Sora: arr Kingsbury WASH 18 Apr.

Com. Gallinule: VF 30 Apr.

Am. Coot: arr Chatham COLU 26 Apr.

SANDHILL CRANE (R8): Colonie ALBA 17 Apr.

Black-bellied Plover: Cohoes ALBA 4-7 May.

Spotted Sandpiper: arr Collins L SCHE 22 Apr.

Solitary Sandpiper: arr Neiber Swamp Livingston COLU 1 May.

Greater Yellowlegs: arr Greenport COLU 14 Apr.

Lesser Yellowlegs: Cohoes ALBA 24 May.

Upland Sandpiper: W Ames MONT 17 Apr; 2 SCHE Co Airport SCHE 18 Apr.

Least Sandpiper: arr Greenport COLU 9 May.

White-rumped Sandpiper: Stillwater SARA 26 May.

Short-billed Dowitcher: 60 Stanton Pd ALBA 19 May, likely a Region 8 max record

Wilson's Snipe: arr Papscafee I RENS 27 Mar.

Iceland Gull: max 6 Crescent ALBA 5 Mar.

Lesser Black-backed Gull: Crescent ALBA 11 Mar; Cohoes ALBA 25-7 May.

Glaucous Gull: Colonie ALBA 5 Mar; Green I SARA 9 Mar

Caspian Tern: arr Colonie ALBA 1 May; Cohoes ALBA 29 May.

Black Tern: Saratoga L SARA 17 May.

PIGEONS – PARROTS

Yellow-billed Cuckoo: arr Five Rivers ALBA 9 May.

N. Saw-whet Owl: Bolton SARA 7 May.

Com. Nighthawk: arr Bog Meadow SARA 16 May.

Whip-poor-will: arr Malta SARA 6 May; 2 Hillsdale COLU 6 May; Coeymans ALBA 7 May; Ghent COLU 15 May; max 7 Malta Tech Park SARA 16 May.

Chimney Swift: arr Hudson COLU 30 Apr.

Ruby-throated Hummingbird: arr Schodack RENS 2 May.

FLYCATCHERS - WAXWINGS

Olive-sided Flycatcher: Five Rivers ALBA 17 May; New Lebanon COLU 23 May.

Yellow-bellied Flycatcher: Normanskill ALBA 17 May.

Acadian Flycatcher: Middleburgh SCHO 30 May.

Least Flycatcher: arr Hoosic Falls RENS 3 May.

Great Crested Flycatcher: arr Livingston COLU 29 Apr.

E. Kingbird: arr Ooms Pd COLU 19 Apr.

Yellow-throated Vireo: arr Greenport COLU 4 May.

Blue-headed Vireo: arr Bog Meadow SARA 18 Apr.

Warbling Vireo: arr Charlston SF SCHO 26 Apr.

Philadelphia Vireo: New Lebanon COLU 9 May.

Red-eyed Vireo: arr Berlin RENS 30 Apr.

Purple Martin: arr Saratoga SARA 19 Apr.

N. Rough-winged Swallow: arr Bethlehem ALBA 6 Apr.

Bank Swallow: arr Scotia SCHE 22 Apr.

Cliff Swallow: arr Mechanicville SARA 24 Apr.

Barn Swallow: arr Germantown COLU 19 Apr, late.

House Wren: arr Five Rivers ALBA 16 Apr.

Veery: arr Ancram COLU 2 May.

Swainson's Thrush: arr Albany 5 May.

Wood Thrush: arr Sloansville SCHO 29 Apr.

Gray Catbird: arr Mechanicville SARA 30 Apr.

Brown Thrasher: arr VF 16 Apr.

Am. Pipit: Livingston COLU 2 Apr; Cohoes 23 May.

BOHEMIAN WAXWING (R8): max 50
Queensbury WARR 11 Mar; Burnt Hills ALBA 21 Mar.

LONGSPURS - WARBLERS

Lapland Longspur: Stuyvesant COLU 5 Mar.

Ovenbird: arr Ballston SARA 26 Apr.

Worm-eating Warbler: arr Germantown COLU 6 May.

Louisiana Waterthrush: arr Five Rivers ALBA 16 Apr.

N. Waterthrush: arr VF 25 Apr.

Golden-winged Warbler: Putnam WASH 8 May; Five Rivers ALBA 12 May.

Blue-winged Warbler: arr Cairo GREE 3 May.

"Brewster's" Warbler: Putnam WASH 8 May; FtE 8 May.

"Lawrence's" Warbler: Hannacroix ALBA 8 May.

Black-and-white Warbler: arr Malta SARA 25 Apr.

Tennessee Warbler: arr Livingston COLU 1 May.

Nashville Warbler: arr Austerlitz COLU 3 May.

Mourning Warbler: Pine Bush ALBA 20 May; Partridge Run ALBA 30 May.

Com. Yellowthroat: arr Hudson COLU 29 Apr.

Hooded Warbler: arr Copake COLU 9 May.

Am. Redstart: arr Germantown COLU 30 Apr.

Cape May Warbler: arr Albany 5 May.

Cerulean Warbler: max 4 Schodack I RENS 11 May.

N. Parula: arr Nassau RENS 4 May

Magnolia Warbler: arr Greenville GREE 2 May.

Bay-breasted Warbler: arr Putnam WASH 8 May.

Yellow Warbler: arr Germantown COLU 25 Apr.

Chestnut-sided Warbler: arr Amsterdam MONT 3 May.

Blackpoll Warbler: arr Livingston COLU 1 May.

Black-throated Blue Warbler: arr Troy RENS 1 May.

Palm Warbler: arr Schodack RENS 13 Apr.

Pine Warbler: arr Five Rivers ALBA 16 Apr.

Yellow-rumped Warbler: arr Germantown COLU 13 Apr.

Prairie Warbler: arr Livingston COLU 30 Apr.

Black-throated Green Warbler: arr Saratoga SARA 1 May.

Canada Warbler: arr Bolton SARA 7 May.
Wilson's Warbler: arr VF 8 May.

TOWHEES - WEAVERS

Scarlet Tanager: arr Catskill GREE 2 May.
E. Towhee: arr Taghkanic COLU 12 Apr.
Chipping Sparrow: arr Hudson COLU 6 Apr.
Field Sparrow: arr Five Rivers ALBA 3 Apr.
Vesper Sparrow: arr Saratoga Co Airport
SARA 21 Apr.
Savannah Sparrow: arr Livingston COLU 14
Mar.

Grasshopper Sparrow: arr Albany Airport
ALBA 7 May.

Rose-breasted Grosbeak: arr Albany 29 Apr.
E. Meadowlark: arr Papscahee I RENS 26
Mar.

Rusty Blackbird: max 20 VF 17 Apr.

Orchard Oriole: arr Ancram COLU 25 Apr.

Com. Redpoll: last E Charlton SARA 18 Apr,
numerous; bird with conjunctivitis reported
(*fide* BC), first for species in Reg, *intro*.

Pine Siskin: max 23 E Greenbush RENS 22
Apr, numerous.