

REGION 8—HUDSON-MOHAWK

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The weather in March 2018 was dominated by three heavy snowfalls on the 2nd, 7th-8th, and 13th of the month. Albany received about a foot of snow from each event. Not surprisingly, there was still snow on the ground in valley areas through 25 March. The average temperature and precipitation were very close to normal by month's end. April was much colder, 6.7°F below normal, and wetter, 1.00" above normal. Temperatures returned closer to seasonable by the last week of the month, just in time for the arrival of early long-distance migrants. Leaf-out was far behind typical levels. The pendulum swung in the opposite direction as May commenced, with warm and dry conditions throughout the month and very favorable weather for migrants heading to their breeding grounds. The temperature was 6.0° above average at Albany, and precipitation was almost two inches below normal.

A pair of **Greater White-fronted Geese** continued along the Hudson River in Fort Miller, Washington County throughout March. An additional bird was found among Canada Geese on the Mohawk River in Fultonville, Montgomery County on 25 March. Brant made a large northward movement over the area on the evening of 21 May, with many observers reporting more than one thousand birds. Most dabbling and diving ducks were seen in good numbers, with scoters being scarce in spring as usual. Canvasback and Redhead continued to be elusive in the Region, with just two reports received in April. A high count of 58 Long-tailed Ducks at Alcove Reservoir on 7 April was notable, as was a report of 70 Green-winged Teal at Vosburgh Swamp WMA, Greene County on the same date. Ron Harrower did a full circuit around Saratoga Lake

on 17 April and recorded 38 Common Loons for the morning. 29 Red-necked Grebe were observed on the north end of Lake George at Hague, Warren County on 21 April. During the Alan DeVoe Bird Club Birdathon Day on 12 May, a Snowy Egret was discovered resting in the Stony Kill near Chatham, Columbia County.

A **Chuck-will's-widow** was detected by three observers on 19 May near West Mtn., Warren County. This is the same location where one or more has been observed for at least the past two years. Area birders will monitor the location this summer and in future seasons. A most interesting species in our Region! Eastern Whip-poor-will continues to be found in traditional strongholds, especially the Luther Forest area in Saratoga County. A promising positive trend continues at the Albany Pine Bush Preserve, where formal nightjar surveys located at least four vocalizing individuals in three separate units of the fragmented habitat. The whip-poor-wills were heard into late June and might well be expected to attempt to repopulate the recently restored habitat where they formerly bred.

There were two reports of **Red-necked Phalarope** during the spring migration. One sighting was from the Schoharie Reservoir on 17 April, a single bird. The other observation was two birds at the Alcove Reservoir, Albany County on 9 May. Wrights Loop in Saratoga County produced some excellent shorebird sightings, as the rains of April flooded the farm fields there, and the water gradually subsided leaving shallow foraging habitat. Black-bellied Plover and Short-billed Dowitcher were noted there.

Bonaparte's Gull was observed in very high numbers at widespread locations during April. Two cool, wet weather events put down large flocks onto area waters, once on 15 April and again for a few days at the end of the month. The 15 April occurrence was remarkable for the high counts at so many locations: 210 at Saratoga Lake, 120 at East Canada Lake, 105 on the Mohawk River in Colonie, 100 at Schoharie Crossing, and 83 at Collins Lake. Gary Chapin picked out a **Little Gull** in a flock of Bonaparte's at Bob & Betty Cummings Memorial Park, Washington County on 29 April. Unquestionably the highlight of the spring gull season, however, was the **Mew Gull** found and photographed by Ted Keyel at Collins Lake, Schenectady County during the 15 April event. This represents a rare inland sighting away from the Atlantic Coast and Great Lakes. On 15 April a group of 31 Caspian Terns was observed flying north up the Hudson River from Schodack Island SP.

Short-eared Owls were scarce in March, with a high count of four at the Ft. Edward Grasslands. John Kent found five at a new location along the Hudson River in Selkirk in an area of abandoned farm fields. Snowy Owls continued in the Ft. Edward area through late March, the Montgomery County farmlands into early April, Albany International Airport through 5 April, and a very late owl at Schenectady County Airport on 16 April.

Lindsey Duval had high counts of Golden-crowned and Ruby-crowned Kinglets at Vischer Ferry NHP on 20 April, with 96 of the former and 56 of the

latter. Schodack Island SP is renowned for the density of birdsong emanating from the thick understory of its floodplain habitat, and some careful trailside surveys came up with the following high counts in May: 16 Veery, 16 Wood Thrush, 38 Gray Catbird, 53 Ovenbird(!), and 62 American Redstart(!). Impressive numbers to be sure.

Selected species of interest included three reports of **Clay-colored Sparrow**, one of which was seen by Tristan Lowery on 7 May in the busy urban environment of Washington Park in the city of Albany. Rusty Blackbird numbers seemed to be holding steady, with one report of 115 from Bog Meadow Brook in Saratoga County on 3 May. Worm-eating Warbler may be continuing to make inroads into southern reaches of the area, with observations from three locations in the hill and ravine region of southeastern Albany County. Bill Cook also made note of some species possibly expanding the northern extent of their breeding range, in an excerpt from his monthly summary for the Alan DeVoe Bird Club (Columbia County): “Hooded Warbler bred in Columbia County from 2001 to 2004 on the Alander Mountain trail in Copake. Since then it has shown up as a migrant in 2009, 2015, and this year. Worm-eating Warbler, which also breeds on the Alander Mountain trail in the rhododendron understory is being found at many sites in southeastern Columbia County and is apparently a common breeder in this, until recently, under-birded area. Another unusual southern species, the **Acadian Flycatcher**, made an appearance at Will Yandik’s (Livingston) house this month.”

241 species were reported during the period.

CONTRIBUTORS

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ABBREVIATIONS

APBP – Albany Pine Bush Preserve, ALBA; **AR** – Alcove Res, ALBA; **BCM** – Black Creek Marsh, ALBA; **BCR** – Basic Creek Res, ALBA; **BMB** – Bog Meadow Brook Nature Trail, SARA; **CCGP** – Coxsackie Creek Grasslands Preserve, GREE; **CF** – Cohoes Flats, ALBA; **CL** – Collins L, SCHE; **CRM** – Cline Rd. Marsh, FULT; **FR** – Five Rivers EEC, ALBA; **FtEG** – Ft. Edward Grasslands, WASH; **FV** – Franklinton Vlaie, SCHO; **HP** – Huyck Preserve, ALBA; **OCA** – Ooms Conservation Area, COLU; **PRWMA** – Partridge Run WMA, ALBA; **SNHP** – Saratoga National Historical P, SARA; **TR** – Tomhannock Res, RENN; **VFNHP** – Vischer Ferry Nature & Historic Preserve, SARA; **WMP** – Wilson M. Powell Wildlife Sanctuary, COLU.

WATERFOWL - HERONS

Greater White-fronted Goose: 2 Ft. Miller WASH 1 Mar.
Snow Goose: max 150 Fultonville MONT 17 Mar.
Brant: max 1900 BCM 21 May.
Gadwall: max 12 Copake L COLU 22 Mar.
Am. Wigeon: max 42 Rexford SARA 24 Mar.
Blue-winged Teal: max 24 VFNHP 15 Apr.
N. Shoveler: max 13 Rexford SARA 22 Apr.
N. Pintail: max 120 Wrights loop SARA 25 Mar.
Green-winged Teal: max 70 Vosburgh Swamp WMA ALBA 7 Apr.
Canvasback: max 3 Middleburgh SCHO 19 Apr.
Ring-necked Duck: max 430 Saratoga L SARA 8 Apr.
Greater Scaup: max 164 Saratoga L SARA 14 Apr.
Lesser Scaup: max 250 Saratoga L SARA 14 Apr.
White-winged Scoter: max 9 Bob & Betty Cummings Memorial Park WASH 29 Apr.
Black Scoter: Saratoga L SARA 13 Apr; AR 9 May.
Long-tailed Duck: max 58 AR 7 Apr.
Bufflehead: max 80 BCR 19 Apr.
Com. Goldeneye: max 120 Ft. Miller WASH 2 Mar.
Barrow's Goldeneye: Saratoga L SARA 11 Apr.
Hooded Merganser: max 50 Westerlo ALBA 17 Apr.
Red-breasted Merganser: max 10 Saratoga L SARA 3 May.

Ruddy Duck: max 70 BCR 19 Apr.
Red-throated Loon: max 4 Ft. Miller WASH 5 Apr.
Com. Loon: max 38! Saratoga L SARA 17 Apr.
Pied-billed Grebe: 4 Collins L SCHE 12 Apr.
Horned Grebe: max 8 Saratoga L SARA 8 Apr.
Red-necked Grebe: max 29 L George WARR 21 Apr.
Great Cormorant: arr Germantown COLU 3 Mar.
Double-crested Cormorant: arr TR 26 Mar.
Am. Bittern: arr BCM 13 Apr.
Least Bittern: arr BMB 5 May.
Great Egret: max 3 RamsHorn-Livingston Sanctuary GREE 27 Apr; Wrights Loop SARA 19 May.
Snowy Egret: Chatham COLU 12 May.
Green Heron: arr Drowned Lands SCA COLU 4 Apr.
Black-crowned Night-Heron: max 5 Crescent Park Trail SARA 23 Apr.

VULTURES – LARIDS

Black Vulture: max 25 Guilderland ALBA 3 Apr.
Osprey: arr Glenville SCHE 27 Mar.
N. Harrier: max 4 FtEG 2 Mar.
Broad-winged Hawk: arr Saratoga Springs ALBA & Bethlehem ALBA 1 Apr.
Rough-legged Hawk: last Fultonville MONT 8 Apr.
Golden Eagle: Fultonville MONT 21 Mar.
Virginia Rail: arr BCM & Drowned Lands SCA COLU 13 Apr.

Sora: arr Drowned Lands SCA COLU 14 Apr.
Com. Gallinule: arr Carter's Pond WMA WASH 23 Apr.
Am. Coot: max 3 Barber's Farm SCHO 21 Apr.
Sandhill Crane: max 2 Bear Swamp SCHO 19 Apr.
Black-bellied Plover: 2 Wrights Loop SARA 13 May.
Semipalmated Plover: max 19 Lock 2 Mechanicville SARA 23 May.
Spotted Sandpiper: arr Fultonville MONT 3 Apr.
Greater Yellowlegs: max 40 Wrights Loop SARA 1 May (DD), high count.
Lesser Yellowlegs: max 18 Wrights Loop SARA 7 May.
Upland Sandpiper: max 3 W. Ames MONT 31 May.
Ruddy Turnstone: Galway L SARA 26 May.
Dunlin: max 28 Lock 2 Mechanicville SARA 23 May.
Pectoral Sandpiper: max 4 Wrights Loop SARA 21 Apr.
Short-billed Dowitcher: Wrights Loop SARA 26 Apr, 13 May.
Wilson's Snipe: max 18 Wrights Loop SARA 19 Apr.
RED-NECKED PHALAROPE (R8): Schoharie Res SCHO 17 Apr (DH, JoR); 2 AR 9 May (TW), *intro*.
Bonaparte's Gull: max 210 Saratoga L SARA 15 Apr (LD), high count.
Little Gull: Bob & Betty Cummings Memorial Park WASH 29 Apr.
MEW GULL: Collins Lake SCHE 15 Apr (TK), *intro*.
Iceland Gull: last Saratoga L SARA 9 Apr.
Lesser Black-backed Gull: last Schoharie Crossing SHS 2 May.
Glaucous Gull: last South Bay WASH 26 Mar.
Caspian Tern: max 31 Schodack Isl SP 15 Apr.
Black Tern: Saratoga L SARA 15-17 May.
Com. Tern: max 4 Saratoga L SARA 14 May.

PIGEONS – PARROTS

Yellow-billed Cuckoo: arr Deer Mt Nature Trail ALBA 15 May.
Black-billed Cuckoo: arr Clifton Park SARA 6 May.
Snowy Owl: last Schenectady Co Airport 16 Apr.
Short-eared Owl: last FtEG 25 Mar.
N. Saw-whet Owl: Greenfield SARA 21 Apr; CRM 4 May.

Com. Nighthawk: arr Livingston COLU 7 May.
CHUCK-WILL'S-WIDOW: West Mt Ski Area WARR 19 May DH, EP, JoR), *intro*.
E. Whip-poor-will: max 7 Luther Forest SARA 14 May.
Chimney Swift: arr Schoharie Crossing SHS MONT 24 Apr.
Ruby-throated Hummingbird: arr Hillsdale COLU 28 Apr.
Red-headed Woodpecker: Oppenheim FULT 23 May, only report.

FLYCATCHERS – WAXWINGS

Olive-sided Flycatcher: arr Horicon WARR 18 May.
E. Wood-Pewee: arr Olana SHS 28 Apr, early.
Yellow-bellied Flycatcher: arr APBP 17 May.
Acadian Flycatcher: Livingston COLU 12 May, only report.
Alder Flycatcher: arr BMB 5 May, early.
Willow Flycatcher: arr FR 10 May.
Least Flycatcher: arr BMB 27 Apr.
Great Crested Flycatcher: arr FR 2 May.
E. Kingbird: arr Chatham COLU 24 Apr.
N. Shrike: last Sprakers MONT 29 Mar.
Yellow-throated Vireo: arr Drowned Lands Swamp Cons Area COLU; RamsHorn-Livingston Sanctuary GREE 2 May.
Blue-headed Vireo: arr Vosburgh Swamp WMA GREE 15 Apr.
Warbling Vireo: arr multiple loc 2 May.
Philadelphia Vireo: arr Normanskill Farm ALBA; Johnstown FULT 23 May.
Red-eyed Vireo: arr multiple loc 5 May.
Purple Martin: arr Saratoga L SARA 7 Apr.
N. Rough-winged Swallow: arr Babcock L RENS; VFNHP 8 Apr.
Tree Swallow: arr multiple loc 27 Mar, late arrival date.
Bank Swallow: arr The Crossings ALBA 21 Apr.
Cliff Swallow: arr Ashland GREE 23 Apr.
Barn Swallow: arr The Crossings ALBA 12 Apr.
House Wren: arr Berne ALBA 17 Apr.
Marsh Wren: arr Drowned Lands SCA COLU 13 Apr.
Blue-gray Gnatcatcher: arr Schoharie Crossing SHS MONT 24 Apr.
Ruby-crowned Kinglet: arr Schodack Isl SP RENS 1 Apr.
Veery: arr Hillsdale COLU 1 May.
Bicknell's Thrush: Hunter Mt GREE 26 May.
Swainson's Thrush: arr Hunter GREE 4 May.
Wood Thrush: arr Ghent COLU 28 Apr.

Gray Catbird: arr Henry Hudson Pk ALBA 29 Apr.
Brown Thrasher: arr Albany ALBA & Kinderhook COLU 13 Apr.
Am. Pipit: arr Staats Isl Rd RENS 1 Apr.

LONGSPURS – WARBLERS

Lapland Longspur: last 10 Palatine MONT 19 Mar.
Snow Bunting: last 10 Palatine MONT 3 Apr.
Ovenbird: arr Pachaquack Pres COLU 28 Apr.
Worm-eating Warbler: arr Drowned Lands Swamp Cons Area COLU & 2 Louise E. Keir WMA ALBA 4 May.
Louisiana Waterthrush: arr FR 10 Apr.
N. Waterthrush: arr BMB; Mohawk Riverside Landing Pk ALBA 26 Apr.
Golden-winged Warbler: nr Putnam Sta WASH 12-18 May; FR 20 May.
Blue-winged Warbler: arr FR 24 Apr, early.
“Brewster’s” Warbler: nr Putnam Sta WASH 12 May, only report.
Black-and-white Warbler: arr Woodlawn Pres SCHE 24 Apr.
Tennessee Warbler: arr Papscanee Isl NP RENS 7 May.
Nashville Warbler: arr Central Pk SCHE 22 Apr, early.
Mourning Warbler: arr RamsHorn-Livingston Sanctuary GREE & Helderberg-Hudson Rail Trail ALBA 13 May.
Com. Yellowthroat: arr Drowned Lands SCA COLU; FR 1 May.
Hooded Warbler: arr Louise E. Keir WMA ALBA 12 May.
Am. Redstart: arr Drowned Lands Cons Area COLU & Papscanee Isl NP RENS 2 May.
Cape May Warbler: arr Livingston COLU 1 May.
Cerulean Warbler: arr Harlem Valley Rail Trail COLU 3 May.
N. Parula: arr FR 2 May.
Magnolia Warbler: arr BMB 3 May.
Bay-breasted Warbler: arr Ft Ann WASH 9 May.
Blackburnian Warbler: arr WMP 29 Apr.
Yellow Warbler: arr Elka Pk GREE & Corning Riverfront Pres ALBA 27 Apr.
Chestnut-sided Warbler: arr Drowned Lands SCA COLU 2 May.
Blackpoll Warbler: arr BMB & Washington Pk ALBA 9 May.

Black-throated Blue Warbler: arr multiple loc 2 May.
Palm Warbler: arr Westerlo ALBA 2 Apr.
Pine Warbler: arr Ghent COLU 16 Mar, early.
Prairie Warbler: arr multiple loc 2 May.
Black-throated Green Warbler: arr Olana SHS COLU 28 Apr.
Canada Warbler: arr Harlem Valley Rail Trail COLU 8 May.
Wilson’s Warbler: arr VFNHP 3 May.

TOWHEES – WEAVERS

E. Towhee: arr E Greenbush RENS 7 Apr.
Am. Tree Sparrow: last Moreau SARA 3 May.
Chipping Sparrow: arr multiple loc 2 Apr.
Clay-colored Sparrow: arr Washington Pk ALBA 7 May.
Field Sparrow: arr Henry Hudson Pk ALBA 2 Apr.
Vesper Sparrow: arr Cocksackie GREE 1 Apr.
Savannah Sparrow: max 14 The Crossings ALBA 21 Apr.
Grasshopper Sparrow: arr Ft Edward WASH 3 May.
Fox Sparrow: max 6 FR 29 Mar.
Lincoln’s Sparrow: arr Mawignack Pres GREE 13 May.
Swamp Sparrow: 2 Mud Creek ELC COLU 23 Mar.
HARRIS’S SPARROW: last Altamont ALBA thru 1 Mar (LA, SF).
White-crowned Sparrow: max 8 FR 3 May.
Scarlet Tanager: arr Papscanee Isl NP RENS 2 May.
Rose-breasted Grosbeak: arr New Lebanon COLU 24 Apr.
Indigo Bunting: arr Poestenkill RENS 3 May.
Bobolink: arr FtEG & FR 28 Apr.
E. Meadowlark: arr Livingston COLU 3 Mar.
Rusty Blackbird: max 115 BMB 3 May.
Orchard Oriole: arr Queensbury WARR 1 May.
Baltimore Oriole: arr BMB 27 Apr.
Purple Finch: max 23 Providence SARA 6 Apr.
Red Crossbill: max 16 Rensselaerville SF ALBA 24 May.
Pine Siskin: max 37 Bolton Landing WARR 4 Mar.
Evening Grosbeak: max 7 Bolton Landing WARR 4 Mar.