

REGION 8—HUDSON-MOHAWK

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The weather for June 2018 was marked by normal temperatures and a small deficit in the average rainfall. Albany recorded a high temperature of 97°F on the 18th and 94° on the 30th, but no prolonged heat occurred. Daily rainfall totals were one-half inch or less. July 2018 featured well-above normal temperatures, with a five-day heat wave to open the month. Temperatures ended up 4.7° higher than average. Precipitation was slightly higher than the norm, with most of it falling in the last ten days of the month. August 2018 was also very warm, at 5.0° above average, and the rainfall surplus was 0.74" at Albany. Overall it was a very humid, at times oppressive, summer.

Common Nighthawk reports were steady through the end of August, but overall numbers seemed to be down. The nighthawk watch at the Albany Pine Bush Preserve had very diminished numbers, with a high count of 31 birds on 29 August. The maximum reported number was 103 in Saratoga Springs on 19 August. The previously reported Chuck-wills-widow near West Mountain, Warren County, continued to be detected in late June into early July. Several observers obtained audio recordings of the vocalizations. Eastern Whip-poor-will numbers appeared to be stable across the area, with the notable bright spot the resurgence of calling birds at the Albany Pine Bush Preserve.

Shorebird numbers were down from recent seasons, with the wetter than normal conditions leading to higher water levels and less available habitat in this already shorebird-challenged Region. There were a couple of highlights however. A **Ruddy Turnstone** appeared at Cohoes Flats on 24 July and lingered for three days. On 25 August John Roosenberg found a **Baird's Sandpiper** in the grassy margins of a farm pond near Cobleskill. The bird stayed in the area for several days. Two more **Baird's Sandpipers** were discovered at Cohoes Flats on 30 August. They stuck around until the following day. A **Long-billed Dowitcher** was observed by David Harrison at Cohoes Flats on 7 August. He and two other birders obtained diagnostic photographs of the bird, which still retained much of its alternate plumage. There are no previous

eBird records of the species in Region 8, so it was certainly the first report in some time for the area.

Two juvenile Little Blue Herons appeared this year at Lock 2 on the Hudson River near Mechanicville, following consecutive years with a single juvenile present. The shallow, marshy backwater along the margins seems to be a magnet for wading birds during post-breeding dispersal. Many Great Blue Herons, Green Herons, and Great Egrets are seen there annually, and Snowy Egret has been found previously as well. An additional juvenile Little Blue Heron appeared at Nassau Lake, Rensselaer County on 19 August, seen by Naomi Lloyd.

A Snowy Egret made a one day appearance at Cohoes Flats on 1 June, first observed by Zach Schwartz-Weinstein. Rich Guthrie had a group of four Snowy Egrets along the Hudson River north of Athens, Greene County on 24 July, and a single bird seen from the New Baltimore side of the river on 23 August. Naomi King discovered an adult **Yellow-crowned Night-Heron** at a small suburban pond near Defreestville on 2 August.

A Snowy Owl spent the Spring-Summer seasons in central Saratoga County, one of approximately thirty Snowy Owls to have been recorded "summering" in the United States in 2018 (S. Weidensaul, pers. comm.) The bird appeared to be in good health and was eating well, with regurgitated pellets regularly observed beneath one of its favored perches. A more detailed report may be forthcoming from the observer.

Paul Novak found an **Acadian Flycatcher** at the new Doodletown WMA in Columbia County on 12 June. He was conducting an avian point count as part of the NYS DEC Young Forest Initiative. **Sedge Wrens** were present this breeding season in at least four distinct locations in the vicinity of the Washington County Grasslands. The species seems to favor that area when found in our Region but can go undetected for years at a time. The last reports were from 2010 and 2012. Clay-colored Sparrow was present again this year in the Grasslands as well, with as many as three reported along the SF Trail there. Hooded Warbler continues its slow northward range expansion into Region 8, with singing males reported from the Albany Pine Bush Preserve and from a riparian corridor near Canajoharie in Montgomery County.

Bob Yunick provided a detailed account of his Adirondack feeding/banding operation at Jenny Lake (JL) at 1250' elevation, five miles west of Corinth, Saratoga Co, NY:

"The breeding season at JL was in two words: **very disappointing** in so many respects.

Purple Finch – a disastrous season! Ad were **late in arriving** on 5/13 and few in number: only 5 banded and 2 returns, **all m** in May. First ad/f banded 6/16 (very late); total banded in Jun was 26 only 10 of which were f, and 18 returns captured (10 m/8 f). **First imm banded 7/8** (late) and **only 5 were banded** by 7/29; 5 ad (3 m/2 f) banded and 9 returns (5 m/ 4 f) captured in Jul.

So, to date from 5/13 to 7/29 a total of **43 ad/m and 24 ad/f** have been captured from which **only 5 imm have been banded** suggesting a serious breeding failure. Imm Purple Finches should be swarming at these feeders by late Jul, while on 7/29 I ran my 5 ½ mist nets for 3 hrs catching 4 ad/m and 3 ad/f, but not a single imm. A manuscript I have in press for *North American Bird Bander* covering 47 years of banding 13,256 finches and 3240 recaptures as returns attributes their population decline at JL to climate change. The optimal cool breeding climate they require has disappeared. The 5 imm referred to above were banded on 7/8, and *no additional imm were banded in Aug*, a month of usual abundance, making this a record low year in 49 years of banding at JL. One ASY/m banded on 8/4 was the only PUFU banded in Aug; 3 return ASY/fs (one 5yrs old) and a repeat SY/m were the only other captures for the month. I conducted 4 banding sessions in Aug using 5 ½ mist nets for 2-4 hrs each session: 8/4, 8/11, 8/18 and 8/31.

Ruby-thr Hummer – as of 7/29 no imm were yet seen or banded, normally they appear before then. Ad were scarcer than usual and sugar water consumption low: **13 banded in May and 9 in Jun**, last on 6/29. Also, **10 returns** were captured for a **total of 32 birds**. Four trapping sessions of 1-2 hrs each on 7/6, 7/13, 7/20 and 7/27 produced no captures. At best 2 m and 1 f were seen occasionally at the 3 feeders. First banded HY was a m on 8/10, then a f on 8/17; one ad F banded 8/10 and 8/26, and ad m 8/17.

I weigh the sugar water in the feeders to determine daily consumption. Historically it peaks in late-May/early Jun, giving a good indicator of the seasonal abundance of the breeding population. This year it peaked at 122g/day on 5/25, well below average and nowhere near the record of 1070 g/day in 2003, when 185 hummers were captured over the entire season.

Blk-c Chickadee – **no ad or imm were banded in Jun/Jul**, which is very unusual. Only 2 return birds were captured in Jun. The extraordinary cone crop of the previous summer/fall appears to have had a major impact on this species. On my small half acre lot at JL, thousands of cones fell from the white pines on the property, perhaps the biggest crop since I've been there from 1970. From 7/1/17 to 6/30/18, I captured a **record low** total of **9 chickadees** (7 banded and 2 returns). Over the past 48 yrs the 7/1 to 6/30 total has ranged from 16 to 388 per year, average 152. Chickadees were very scarce at the feeders in Jun and totally absent in Jul. A modest appearance began in mid-Aug with 2 ad banded and an ad return captured 8/18; and another ad return along with the first HY banded on 8/31.

Red-br Nuthatch – perhaps due to the record cone crop, this irruptive species was similarly affected. **Two very newly fledged imm were banded 6/16 and another on 6/30**, not recaptured thereafter. An ad/f banded on 4/18/18 and recaptured 4/27, 5/28, 6/24, and 7/14 was probably their mother. **Otherwise, I banded no R-b Nuts from 5/21/17 to 4/18/18 (nor caught any previously banded ones)**. A similar modest stirring, as with the chickadees, of 2 ad/m banded 8/31."

199 species were reported during the period.

CONTRIBUTORS

Larry Alden, Will Aubrey, Ramona Bearor, Susan Beaudoin, Mike Birmingham, Nancy Castillo, Glen & Malinda Chapman, Steve Chorvas, Jeremy Collison, Bill Cook, Brianna Denoncour, Alan Devoe Bird Club recent sightings, Amanda Dillon, Craig Driggs, Bruce Dudek, Alan Dupuis, Lindsey Duval, Larry Federman, Peter Feinberg, Debra Ferguson, Mark Fitzsimmons, Rich Guthrie, HMBirds Yahoo Group, Larry & Barbara Hall, David Harrison, Ron Harrower, John Hershey, John Kent, Nancy Kern, Naomi King, Bill Lee, Naomi Lloyd, Tristan Lowery, Larry Main, Alan Mapes, Leigh McBride, Thom McClenahan, Steve Mesick, Joyce Miller, Frank Mitchell, Frank Murphy, Jenny Murtaugh, Paul Novak, Ellen Pemrick, Will Raup, Gregg Recer & Cathy Graichen, Neal Reilly, Stacy Robinson, John Roosenberg, Jeanette Roundy, Lydia Schereen, Kathy Schneider, Zach Schwartz-Weinstein, Marian Sole, George Steele, Scott Stoner, Craig Thompson, Alison Van Keuren, Phil Whitney, Tom & Colleen Williams, Will Yandik, Robert Yunick.

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** – Cocksackie 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 - HUMMINGBIRDS

Brant: max 75 Blockhouse P SARA 3 Jun.

Mute Swan: max 3 Germantown COLU 21 Jun.

Wood Duck: max 53 nr Schuylerville SARA 9 Jun.

Blue-winged Teal: max 2 Wright's Ferry Launch, Putnam WARR 27 Aug.

Green-winged Teal: max 4 Mine Kill SP SCHO 31 Aug.

Pied-billed Grebe: max 2 Amy's P WASH 30 Jun.

Com. Nighthawk: migrants arr Colonie ALBA 9 Aug; max 103 Spring Run Trail SARA 19 Aug.

CHUCK WILL'S WIDOW: last West Mt Ski Area WARR 7 Jul.

E. Whip-poor-will: max 4 West Mt Ski Area WARR 29 Jun.

Chimney Swift: max 250 CF 12 Aug.

RAILS - LARIDS

Virginia Rail: max 7 BCM 13 Jun.

Sora: reported from nine locations regionwide.

Com. Gallinule: max 5 Corbin Hill Rd SCHO 6 Aug.

Black-bellied Plover: max 2 CF 13 Aug.

Semipalmated Plover: max 21 CF 14 Aug.

Killdeer: max 27 CF 19 Jul.

Upland Sandpiper: max 2 Ft Edward WASH 9 Jun, 25 Jun; Schenectady Co Airport SCHE 20 Jun.

RUDDY TURNSTONE (R8): one CF 24-26 Jul (TW), *intro*.

Sanderling: max 2 CF 23 Jul; L Taghkanic SP COLU 24 Jul.

Dunlin: Round Lk Pres SARA 20 Jul, only report.

BAIRD'S SANDPIPER (R8): two CF 30 Aug (TW); one nr Cobleskill SCHO 25 Aug (JR), *intro*.

White-rumped Sandpiper: one CF 22 Jul, 30 Aug.

Pectoral Sandpiper: max 6 CF 30 Aug.

Short-billed Dowitcher: one CF 21 Jul, 14 Aug; Great Sacandaga L FULT 21 Jul.

LONG-BILLED DOWITCHER (R8): one CF 7 Aug (DH), *intro*.
Solitary Sandpiper: max 10 Wrights Loop SARA 7 Aug.
Lesser Yellowlegs: max 6 CF 14 Jul.
Greater Yellowlegs: max 3 CF 23 Jul.
Bonaparte's Gull: max 21 CF 26 Jul.
Caspian Tern: max 6 Bob & Betty Cummings Memorial P WASH 25 Aug.

LOONS - PARROTS

Am. Bittern: max 3 S Cambridge WASH 13 Jul; Corbin Hill Rd SCHO 21 Jul.
Least Bittern: max 3 BCM 13 Jun.
Great Blue Heron: max 38 Bear Swamp Pres heronry ALBA 24 Jun.
Great Egret: max 18 TR 26 Aug.
Snowy Egret: max 4 nr Athens GREE 24 Jul.
Little Blue Heron: 2 juv Champlain Canal Lock 2 SARA 28 Jul-28 Aug.
Green Heron: max 12 nr Athens GREE 15 Jul.
Black-crowned Night-Heron: nr Cambridge WASH 15 Jul; nr Athens GREE 11 Aug; Halfmoon SARA 14 Aug; nr Schuylerville SARA 23 Aug; Champlain Canal Lock 2 SARA 24 Aug.
YELLOW-CROWNED NIGHT-HERON: Defreestville RENS 2 Aug (NKi), *intro*.
Black Vulture: max 45 Greenport COLU 1 Jul.
Osprey: max 5 Ft Edward WASH 14 Jul.
N. Harrier: max 4 Ft Edward WASH 19 Aug.
Red-shouldered Hawk: max 4 Stillwater SARA 16 Jun.
Belted Kingfisher: max 4 nr Schaghticoke RENS 16 Jul; Milton SARA 19 Jul.
Am. Kestrel: max 12 T Root MONT 16 Aug.
Merlin: max 3 Bolton Landing WARR 31 Jul.
Peregrine Falcon: max 3 Dunn Memorial Bridge RENS 12 Jun; North-South L Campground GREE 21 Jul.

FLYCATCHERS – SNOW BUNTING

E. Wood-pewee: max 10 Spruce Mt SARA 2 Jun.
Yellow-bellied Flycatcher: max 6 Plateau Mt GREE 10 Jun.
Acadian Flycatcher: Doodletown WMA COLU 12 Jun, only report.
Alder Flycatcher: max 5 Garnsey Pk SARA 15 Jul.
Willow Flycatcher: max 14 BCM 12 Jun.
Least Flycatcher: max 7 Mt Tom SF WASH 24 Jun.
E. Phoebe: max 8 multiple loc.

Great Crested Flycatcher: max 6 nr Schuylerville SARA 9 Jun.
E. Kingbird: max 15 BCM 9 Aug.
Yellow-throated Vireo: max 5 Hudson Crossing P SARA 6 Aug.
Blue-headed Vireo: max 6 Spruce Mt SARA 2 Jun; Cherry Plain SP RENS 3 Jun; Mountaintop Arboretum GREE 15 Jun.
Warbling Vireo: max 11 nr Schuylerville SARA 9 Jun.
Com. Raven: max 6 Pine L FULT 10 Jun; Elka P GREE 14 Jun; Coveville SARA 12 Jul.
Horned Lark: max 2 CF 19 Jul.
Purple Martin: max 30 Round L Pres SARA 28 Jul.
N. Rough-winged Swallow: max 37 Waterford SARA 5 Jul.
Bank Swallow: max 140 nr Schaghticoke RENS 27 Jun.
Cliff Swallow: max 25 Florida MONT 29 Jun.
Barn Swallow: max 80 Overmountain Cons Area COLU 13 Jun.
Brown Creeper: max 5 Mountaintop Arboretum GREE 15 Jun.
Winter Wren: max 10 Plateau Mt GREE 2 Jun.
Sedge Wren: 2 Dowmont Rd WASH 12 Jul; New Swamp Rd WASH 14 Jul.
Marsh Wren: max 15 BCM 6 Jun; Drowned Lands Swamp Cons Area COLU 9 Jun; Schodack Creek RENS 26 Jun.
Carolina Wren: max 8 Normanskill Farm ALBA 20 Jul.
Blue-gray Gnatcatcher: max 7 nr Schuylerville SARA 9 Jun.
Golden-crowned Kinglet: max 5 Plateau Mt GREE 2 Jun.
Ruby-crowned Kinglet: max 2 West Kill Mt GREE 10 Jun.
E. Bluebird: max 16 Prospect Cem SARA 15 Jul.
Veery: max 18 Malta Tech Pk SARA 3 Jun; Schodack I SP RENN 21 Jun.
Bicknell's Thrush: 4 Plateau Mt GREE 10 Jun.
Swainson's Thrush: max 7 West Kill Mt GREE 10 Jun.
Wood Thrush: max 17 Milton SARA 19 Jul.
Gray Catbird: max 27 Schodack I SP RENN 21 Jun.
Brown Thrasher: max 5 Prattsville GREE 17 Jun.
N. Mockingbird: max 12 The Crossings ALBA 28 Jun.
Cedar Waxwing: 80 Hudson Crossing P SARA 21 Aug.

Evening Grosbeak: Broadalbin FULT 25 Jul; CRM 10 Aug.

Purple Finch: max 9 Providence SARA 20 Aug.

Red Crossbill: max 12 Mt Tom SF WASH 24 Jun.

Pine Siskin: max 13 Mountaintop Arboretum GREE 7 Jun.

NEW WORLD SPARROWS - CARDINALIDS

E. Towhee: max 17 L Taghkanic SP COLU 30 Jun.

Clay-colored Sparrow: one FtEG 7 Jul.

Field Sparrow: max 17 Saratoga Spa SP SARA 2 Aug.

Vesper Sparrow: max 2 Saratoga Co Airport SARA 7 Jun; Stuyvesant COLU 3 Jul.

Savannah Sparrow: max 16 OCA 17 Jun.

Grasshopper Sparrow: max 4 Dowmont Rd WASH 21 Jul.

Song Sparrow: max 35 Normanskill Farm ALBA 20 Jul.

Swamp Sparrow: max 25 BCM 6 Jun.

White-throated Sparrow: max 12 Edinburg SARA 7 Jun.

Dark-eyed Junco: max 12 Grafton RENS 12 Aug.

Bobolink: max 150 FtEG 14 Jul.

E. Meadowlark: max 5 SNHP 12 Jun.

Orchard Oriole: max 5 SNHP 26 Jul.

Baltimore Oriole: max 45 APBP 24 Jul, bird banding.

Ovenbird: max 30 Black Mt RENS 17 Jun.

Worm-eating Warbler: max 3 Alander Mt Trail COLU 18 Jun; reports from 5 add loc in ALBA, COLU, & GREE.

Louisiana Waterthrush: max 5 Overmountain Cons Area COLU 3 Jun.

N. Waterthrush: max 3 Spruce Mt WASH 23 Jun.

Blue-winged Warbler: max 5 L Taghkanic SP COLU 27 Jun.

“Brewster’s” Warbler: Garnsey P SARA 15 Jun.

Black-and-white Warbler: max 7 Spruce Mt WARR 16 Jun.

Tennessee Warbler: migr arr Henry Hudson P ALBA 20 Aug; Saratoga Spa SP SARA 24 Aug.

Nashville Warbler: max 2 four loc GREE & WARR; migr arr APBP 23 Aug.

Mourning Warbler: max 2 Jewett GREE 1 Jul.

Com. Yellowthroat: max 23 SNHP 14 Jul.

Hooded Warbler: max 2 Louise E. Keir WMA ALBA 9 Jun; Overmountain Cons Area COLU 17 Jun; reports from 4 add loc in ALBA, COLU, GREE, & MONT.

Am. Redstart: max 31 Schodack I SP RENN 21 Jun.

Cape May Warbler: migr arr Peebles I SP SARA 19 Aug; White Ck WASH 20 Aug.

Cerulean Warbler: max 3 Overmountain Cons Area COLU 13 Jun.

N. Parula: max 5 Piseco Rd FULT 16 Jun; migrants arr Saratoga Spa SP SARA 25 Aug.

Magnolia Warbler: max 8 Plateau Mt GREE 2 Jun.

Bay-breasted Warbler: migr arr APBP 23 Aug.

Blackburnian Warbler: max 15 Spruce Mt SARA 2 Jun.

Yellow Warbler: max 18 nr Schaghticoke RENS 22 Jun; Hudson Crossing P SARA 6 Aug.

Chestnut-sided Warbler: max 10 APBP 5 Jun; Galway SARA 8 Jun.

Blackpoll Warbler: max 20 Plateau Mt GREE 2 Jun.

Black-throated Blue Warbler: max 8 Plateau Mt GREE 10 Jun.

Palm Warbler: migr arr Bob & Betty Cummings Memorial P WASH 20 Aug; APBP 23 Aug.

Pine Warbler: max 10 Hudson Pointe NP WARR 25 Jun.

Yellow-rumped Warbler: max 20 Plateau Mt GREE 2 Jun.

Prairie Warbler: max 5 APBP 5 Jun; FR 8 Jun; nr Hillsdale COLU 13 Jun.

Black-throated Green Warbler: max 20 Hunter GREE 2 Jun.

Canada Warbler: max 2 BMB 7 Jun; Lassellville SF FULT 17 Jun; Grafton RENS 1 Jul; migr arr Providence SARA 20 Aug; Peebles I SP SARA 20 Aug; Henry Hudson P ALBA 20 Aug.

Wilson’s Warbler: migrants arr APBP 21 Aug; BMB 26 Aug.

Scarlet Tanager: max 5 Hemlock Trail SARA 15 Jun.

Rose-breasted Grosbeak: max 7 Grafton RENS 12 Aug.

Indigo Bunting: max 7 APBP 12 Jun; Overmountain Cons Area COLU 16 Jun.