



Photo by Mark Suomala

2010 Project Nighthawk

Field Season Results



Volunteers gather at Friendly's Restaurant to share observations after participating in a coordinated watch in Concord.

Photo by Jane Kolias

Concord: All patches that had displaying male Common Nighthawks were visited and checked. No signs of nesting were found on any of the patches. Volunteers conducted three coordinated watches in Concord: June 8, June 17 and July 7. We had males displaying regularly over 5 sites: The Steeplegate Mall, Concord Public Library, Heritage Heights Health Center, 53 Regional Drive, and Chenell Drive. This is two fewer than last year but two males appeared to have crossed the Suncook River into Pembroke.

Keene: After a report of a fledgling from last year, no chicks were observed this year. All Keene patches were checked with no sign of nesting, however, three birds were reported in June from an individual watch.

Upper Valley: All nest patches were checked with no sign of nesting. No birds were reported in the Upper Valley area.

New For This Year



Volunteer Jane Kolias and project coordinator Becky Suomala add calcium (crumbled concrete) to the nest patch on the roof of the Concord Public Library.

Photo by Robert Vallieres

Calcium Added to Select Patches

Research suggests that calcium may be a limiting factor in nighthawk reproduction. We added calcium to three patches in the Concord area. We experimented with three different types of calcium: crumbled concrete, crushed egg shells, and crushed oyster shells.



Patch at 6 Loudon Road. Lighter areas are additions of calcium in the form of crushed oyster shells.

Photo by Jane Kolias

Slideshow Presentation Available

Project Nighthawk volunteer Jane Kolias created a Power Point slide show for public presentation. The program describes the natural history of Common Nighthawks, the recent decline of nighthawks throughout North America, and the efforts of Project Nighthawk to help restore nesting nighthawks to urban areas. If you are interested in booking this program, please contact Becky Suomala: 603-224-9909 ext. 309 or email bsuomala@nhaudubon.org.

Nesting Pair Located in Gravel Pit



Thanks to the great observation skills of volunteer Stephanie Parkinson we confirmed a nesting pair in Pembroke. The pair were located along the tree line at the edge of a gravel yard among the leaf litter. With the help of dedicated volunteers we were able to observe the parents defending the nest, feeding the chick, and chasing intruders. The family was last observed around the nest site area on August 26th.

Top left and right photos by Becky Suomala
Bottom photo by Stephanie Parkinson

Female Nighthawk Perched at Havenwood



Havenwood Health Center building manager, Mark Jenks, was surprised to flush a female nighthawk from the roof during a routine check of the HVAC rooftop system. The bird flew to a nearby tree where she remained for at least 15 minutes. Male and female nighthawks were very active at this site, however, we were unable to confirm any nesting. Havenwood Health Center is located just off East Side Drive in East Concord and is host to two nest patches.

Photo by Jane Kolias

Nest Patch to be Incorporated into New Roof Design

The James C. Cleveland Federal Building and the Warren B. Rudman Federal Courthouse, 55 Pleasant Street in Concord, will be getting new roofs that will incorporate two nighthawk nest patches. The Cleveland building will become home to an energy star rated Integrated Photovoltaic (PV) System that utilizes crystalline 65kw PV panels. The Rudman Building rooftop area, approximately 19,600 square feet, will have a green *vegetative* roof. Project Nighthawk coordinator Becky Suomala

met with the site coordinator for the rooftop project, Patrick Ross, to discuss the best location and design for the nest patches. Data collected from Project Nighthawk documenting males displaying over this location for the past four years encouraged project managers to include nest patches in the roof design. Project Nighthawk volunteers also monitored nighthawk activity at the Federal Building this summer to be sure there was no nesting during the construction.

Project Background and Plans for Next Year

New Hampshire Audubon's Project Nighthawk began in 2007 as an experiment to test the potential for restoring urban-nesting nighthawks by placing simple gravel "nest patches" on flat rooftops. 2011 will mark the fifth year of the project. Although nighthawks have not nested on any of the patches, Audubon staff biologist and project coordinator, Becky Suomala along with many dedicated volunteers, have recorded several hundred hours of nighthawk behavior, some of which may be new to science.

Data collected thus far is being analyzed with an aim to publish observations about nesting behavior and territorial displays. We plan to monitor the patches for at least one more year. Monitoring will also continue at nesting and non-nesting sites that have activity. At the completion of the 2011 breeding season we will evaluate the patches to decide whether or not to continue with the project or to shift our focus in another direction.

Sponsors and Supporters

Thank you to the following individuals and businesses whose donations of time, space and funding helped make Project Nighthawk possible in 2010.

Antioch University New England
Ashuelot Valley Environmental Observatory
Matthew Boesch
Charter Trust Company
Mark Ciborowski
City of Keene
Claremont School District
Concord Public Library
Corriveau-Routhier, Inc.
Cracker Factory
Larry Denoncourt
Filtrine Manufacturing
Hannafords
Havenwood Health Service Center
Pat Immen

Interface Stereo
Betsy Janeway
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Keene State College
Keene High School
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Smith's Medical
Stevens High School
Arthur and Dawn Stavros
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Sulloway & Hollis, PLLC
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Unitarian Universalist Church of Concord
USA CRREL
Woodsville High School
Mary Wright

Volunteers

Thank you to the many volunteers who logged 241 hours of activities including individual and coordinated watches, patch monitoring, surveys, and office work.

Phil Brown	Ken Klapper	Linda Rauter
Sheridan Brown	Jane Kalias	Udo Rauter
Lou-Anne Conroy	Richard Langsner	Becky Suomala
Ann Donaghy	Eric Orff	Mark Suomala
Catie Donohue	Gail Page	Michael Thompson
Lindsey Herlihy	Kathie Palfy	Robert Vallieres
Stephanie Herlihy	Stephanie Parkinson	
David Howe	Carol Plato	
Pam Hunt	Bob Quinn	
Marshall Iliff	Joe Quinn	



Volunteers meet to wrap-up the 2010 season of nighthawk and Whip-poor-will watching at the *Goatsucker Gala*. Photo by Caitie Donohue

Volunteer

- Become a nest patch monitor: Assess a patch in early spring to determine if repairs are needed, monitor the patch throughout the breeding season.
- Evaluate/set up a camera for nest patch monitoring.
- Join a coordinated watch to monitor nighthawk activity.

Make a Donation

- Project Nighthawk is funded primarily by private donations (a donation coupon is enclosed).
- Family Radio Services (FRS)
- night vision binoculars

Project Nighthawk On Line

Visit Project Nighthawk web page where you will find the following links:

- Project Nighthawk Overview
- Project Nighthawk FAQ
- Common Nighthawk Information Sheet
- Photo Gallery of Patches
- Project Summaries for 2007, 2008, 2009
- Information on donating and volunteering
- Project Nighthawk gravel patch handbook that includes:
 1. How to Install a Gravel Nest Patch
 2. Sample Patch Photos
 3. Patch FAQs for building owners and managers
 4. Registration and Monitoring Forms

<http://nhbirdrecords.org/bird-conservation/Nighthawk-main.htm>.



Project Nighthawk is a self-funded project of New Hampshire Audubon's Conservation Department. For information contact project coordinator Becky Suomala: bsuomala@nhaudubon.org or 603-224-9909 ext. 309.