



Project Nighthawk 2012 Newsletter



Photo by Rebecca Suomala

Nighthawk female incubating 2 eggs at industrial site in Concord.

Concord Highlights: Two coordinated watches were held: June 10 and July 3. Twelve males were seen, which is three more than last year. One female was observed during watch #1 but was not seen during watch #2. We were able to later confirm two females at different locations matching the number of known females from last year. Males were observed displaying over the usual sites but also moved around between watch one and watch two. One male was observed displaying at a new location, NH Technical Institute. This was likely a male that relocated from a display site that was active in previous years.

Two Nests In Concord: Two active nests were found in the Concord area. Restricted access to one of the sites limited observations but behavior of the parents indicated a successful nest with at least one chick. We had excellent access to the second nest location,

Coordinated Watch Totals

Steeplegate Mall: 2 males
East of Rt. 106: 1 male
Seacoast Scaffold: 1 male, 1 female
Rt. 106: 1 male, 1 female
Broken Ground: 4 males
53 Regional Drive: 1 male
Downtown Concord: 1 male

thanks to the generous cooperation from the business owner, Seacoast Scaffold and Equipment Corporation and its employees. Workers first saw the female on the ground on June 11 and two eggs were observed the next day. Only one egg was viable and the chick hatched on June 29. With the help of dedicated volunteers we were able to have almost daily observations at the site for six weeks. Volunteers recorded the behavior of the male, female, and chick including incubation, chick feeding, nest defense, and territorial displays. The female and chick were last observed at the site on July 24.



Photo by Rebecca Suomala



Photo by Jane Kolias

Top: Nighthawk female sitting on eggs in Concord (close-up of top left photo).

Bottom: Nighthawk female and fledged chick.



Photo by Rebecca Suomala

New Nest Location at Smokey Bear Boulevard

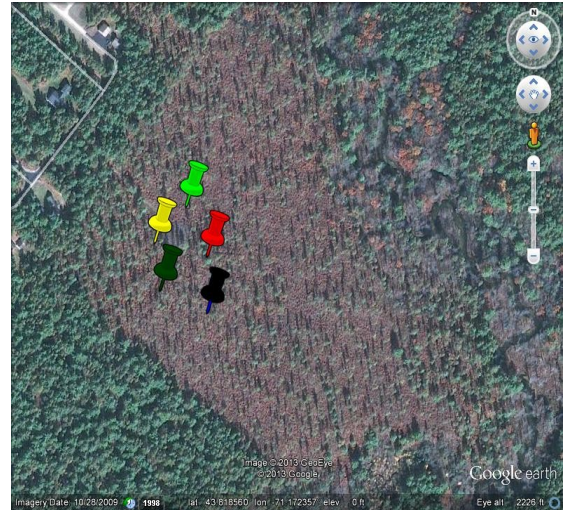
During one of this year's coordinated nighthawk watches volunteer, Robert Vallieres noticed a male displaying in a new location near Smokey Bear Boulevard off Rt. 106. Upon further observations we saw a male and female active at the site. The pair were observed flying to the ground and lifting off indicating an active nest. We did not have direct access to the site but could watch from the nearby roadway. From what we were able to observe the male and female were actively feeding at least one chick. All indications are that this was a successful nesting attempt.

Ossipee Highlights

On June 30 the first ever coordinated watch was held in the Ossipee area. A crew of 10 watchers spread out to eight different locations across the West Branch pine barrens where Ossipee, Madison, and Freedom meet. The most activity was at the Red Baron Gate (the 2011 nest site) and the West Branch Pine Barrens Preserve/Thicket area. The pine barrens are one of the only known natural nesting sites for nighthawks in the state of New Hampshire.

Coordinated Watch Totals

Red Baron Gate: 4 males, 1 female (probable)
West Branch Preserve: 3 males
East Shore Drive: 1 male



Left: Red Baron Gate area of the pine barrens.

Above: Red Baron Gate area close up with locations of Common Nighthawk observations.

Photos from Google earth



Photo by Cheryl Child

For the first time since Project Nighthawk's inception a nest was confirmed in Keene. Brett Thelen of AVEO confirmed a nest on Elliot Hall at Keene State College. This is only the second indication of successful nighthawk breeding in Keene in the last six years. It is also the first confirmed successful rooftop nest in the state of New Hampshire since 2007. (The other two confirmed rooftop nests in Concord did not produce chicks). The nest location was a bit unusual. Even though the female chose a gravel rooftop to nest on, she deposited the eggs on top of a bare section adjacent to gravel.

Two coordinated watches were

Keene Highlights

held. A total of five birds were seen: four males and one female. Although small, this number is exciting because this is the first year we've been able to identify more than four individual birds during the breeding season in Keene since Project Nighthawk began in 1997.

Top left: Mom and chick.

Top right: Fledged nighthawk chick on window ledge.

Bottom right: Nest location on roof

Bottom: Keene coordinated watch volunteers, June 21.



Photo by Brendan Bosquet



Photo by Siobhan Basile



Photo by Brett Amy Thelen

Other Highlights

STATEWIDE REPORTS: Observers from four different towns reported nighthawk activity during the breeding season (June and July). Reports were received from the towns of Marlow, Grantham, Lempster and Antrim.

SURPRISE VISITOR: In late August Project Nighthawk Coordinator, Becky Suomala received a phone call from an employee at a warehouse in Franklin, NH who said she thought there was a nighthawk trapped in the warehouse. Apparently the bird had been there for several days and attempts at freeing it were unsuccessful. Becky went to the site and confirmed that it was indeed a nighthawk, either a female or young of the year. Attempts to capture the bird were unsuccessful but two

days later a worker found the bird, still alive. It was brought to Maria Colby at the Wings of Dawn Wildlife Rehabilitation Center who provided hydration and nutritional support. The bird was later released to continue its migration southward. It is not known why the bird entered the warehouse. Most likely she was feeding on insects that were attracted to the building's exterior lights and inadvertently entered the building.



Google earth map showing nighthawk reports in New Hampshire outside of the Concord, Keene and Ossipee areas.

Unusual Nest Site Location



Photos by John-Michael Sungur



Project Nighthawk has generated inquiries about nighthawk nest patches from around the country and in Canada. We also get emails with questions about nighthawks and were very excited to get an email from Jessica Leslie in Brookline, MA asking if the photo (far left) was a nighthawk. To our great surprise—it was. This Common Nighthawk female decided the perfect nesting spot would be on a rooftop deck atop a discarded charcoal bag! Dubbed “charcoal mom” the female incubated two eggs. Homeowners were later able to capture this picture of one of the chicks running around the deck. The chick was affectionately named “charcoal chick”.

Nighthawks at the NAOC



Project Nighthawk Coordinator, Becky Suomala presented a poster on Project Nighthawk at the 5th North American Ornithological Conference. The conference was hosted by the University of British Columbia in

Vancouver, August 14-18, 2012. The conference had 1,478 attendees and was the largest ornithological meeting ever held in Canada or the U.S.

Plans for Next Year and Beyond

Each year brings exciting challenges and opportunities for gathering information on nighthawk activity. We plan to continue our monitoring efforts in Concord and Ossipee, and in Keene in partnership with Ashuelot Valley Environmental Observatory. We will also monitor the two East Concord nest site locales for nesting activity. We would like to expand our monitoring efforts to include

new areas where nighthawk activity has been reported. These include the towns of Franklin, Grantham, Lempster and Antrim. If you have an opportunity to be in these areas and would like to spend a little time looking for nighthawks please contact Becky Suomala for location details. Volunteers will

continue to enter data from nighthawk observations which is vital in helping us interpret the observation data.

Volunteers: Volunteers are needed to help monitor locations around the state for presence of nighthawks. If interested please contact Becky Suomala 224-9909 ext. 309.

Volunteers



Volunteers gather for an evening of nighthawk watching in Keene.

Project Nighthawk could not happen without the help of our many dedicated volunteers. This year volunteers logged 1023 hours observing and recording nighthawk behavior and traveled 3487 miles to do so! Thanks to all who spent many hours braving the weather and mosquitoes to watch nighthawks.

Siobhan Basile
Chris Borg
Alan Boyer*
Judy Boyer*
Sara Cairns
Timothy Caspersen*
Russell Cobb*
Roberta Collins
Zeke Cornell
Andrew Geffert*
Kathy Gunther
Lindsay Herily
Stephanie Herily
David Hoitt*
David Howe
Pam Hunt
Ken Klapper*
Jane Kolias
Jeannie Lacey

Lisa Lapierre
Susan Lee
Tyler Maikath
Sharon Meany*
Chele Miller
Melissa Miller
David Moon*
Steve Muniford
Kathleen Murphy*
Kamal Nath
Gail Page
Kathie Palfy
Bill Parkinson
Stephanie Parkinson
Carol Plato
Joe Quinn
Bob Quinn
Linda Rauter
Udo Rauter

Jane Rice
Sylvie Rice*
Marsha Richelli
Barbara Skuly*
Sharon Stout*
Mark Suomala
Rebecca Suomala
Laurel Swope*
Brett Amy Thelen*
Robert Vallieres
Jennifer Wiley
Emily Wilson*
Sarah Wilson*
Rob Woodward
Mary Wright*

* Ashuelot Valley Environmental Observatory volunteer

Supporters/Sponsors

A big thank you to our supporters and sponsors for their donations of time, funding, space, and expertise. A special thank you to the folks at Seacoast Scaffolding who kept an eye on mom and chick at the nest site and allowed volunteers to access their property.

Antioch University New England
Ashuelot Valley Environmental Observatory
Leslie Casey
Charter Trust Company
Mark Ciborowski
Claremont School District
Concord Public Library
Kathleen Connors

Cracker Factory
Filtrine Manufacturing
Hannafords
Town of Hanover
Havenwood Health Service Center
Harris Center for Conservation Education
Dave Howe
David & Patricia Immen
Interface Stereo
City of Keene
Keene Cinemas
Keene High School
Keene Housing Authority
Keene State College
Lyme Timber Company
Monadnock Affordable Housing

NH Dept. of Environmental Services
PC Connection
Mike Reynolds
Linda & Udo Rauter
St. Paul's School
Seacoast Scaffolding
Smith's Medical
Stevens High School
Arthur & Dawn Stavros
Solloway & Hollis, PLLC
USA CRREL
CherylAnne Williams
Woodsville High School
Mary Wright

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

Project Nighthawk, NH Audubon, 84 Silk Farm Road, Concord, N.H. 03301



Photo by Mark Suomala

PROJECT NIGHTHAWK – A PARTNERSHIP

Use this form for donations and to request information.

- ☐ I would like to volunteer ☐ I would like gravel patch information
☐ I would like to support Project Nighthawk with a contribution of:
☐ \$50 ☐ \$100 ☐ \$500 ☐ \$1000 Other _____

Name _____ **Phone** _____
Address _____ **Email** _____
City _____ **State** _____ **Zip** _____

Payment is by: ☐ Check enclosed. Make check payable to NH Audubon. ☐ MasterCard ☐ Visa

Signature _____
Card # _____ **Expiration Date** _____

Return this form with payment to: New Hampshire Audubon, Membership Department, 84 Silk Farm Road, Concord, NH 03301.