



# 2018 PROJECT NIGHTHAWK



## Ossipee Nighthawk Research

By Jason Mazurowski, Field Naturalist Graduate Program, University of Vermont

*In 2018 NH Audubon and the NH Chapter of The Nature Conservancy partnered with the Field Naturalist Program at the University of Vermont to utilize a graduate student to conduct bird and vegetation surveys in the Ossipee Pine Barrens. We were delighted to welcome Jason Mazurowski as that student. Thanks to Jason, we confirmed more Common Nighthawk nests in a single year in the area than we have before. We look forward to his research results.*

– Rebecca Suomala, Project Nighthawk Coordinator

The Ossipee Pine Barrens Preserve represents one of the only known locations in New Hampshire where Common Nighthawks breed in their natural habitat. Although *Project Nighthawk* has been active in the Ossipee area, the ability to confirm breeding and continuously monitor nest activity has been limited. The goals for my 2018 study were to confirm breeding, monitor activity throughout the season, locate each nest site, and then measure habitat features at each nest location. Gathering as much information as possible on the last remaining natural habitat in New Hampshire is crucial to informing management actions on pine barrens habitat.

With the outstanding support of NH Audubon's volunteers, and Becky Suomala's expert guidance, we were able to identify probable nest locations early in the season. Several nights a week, I revisited possible nests to watch for females taking off and landing. These observations allowed me to confirm breeding at every possible site, as well as pinpoint where the nests were located. Behavioral cues from the nest pair, and some knowledge about the timing of nest selection also gave us an idea of which nests may have been successful.

Two confirmed nests and one probable nest were located within the Preserve, and two additional nest sites were confirmed on Depot Rd. in the adjacent town of Tamworth. Two fledged chicks were seen begging for food at one of the Depot Rd. clearcuts, and one fledged chick was observed at the West Branch Pine Barren nest. With the help of Charlie Nims and Tin Mountain's Avian Interns, we were also able to investigate nighthawk activity in the Mt. Washington Valley. As a result, an additional nest was confirmed on Black Cap Mountain, and another possible nest site was suspected near The Nature Conservancy's Bear Paw tract near the Maine border.

In August, after migration was underway and the nests were abandoned, I revisited each confirmed site and collected vegetation measurements. The data I collected will be included in a report to NH Audubon and The Nature Conservancy along with a detailed description of nighthawk nesting habitat and management objectives to improve nighthawk nesting habitat in the pine barrens.



Jason Mazurowski ready to deal with the abundant mosquitos as he begins nighthawk surveys on 5/24/18 at Depot Rd., Tamworth.

Jason recording observations at the Depot Rd. nest site on 7/29/18.



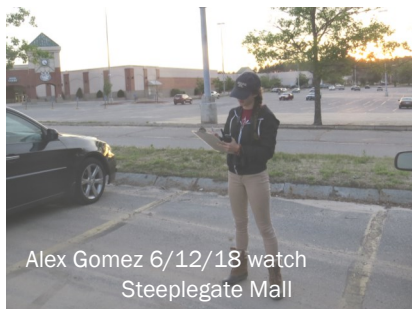
### OSSIPEE— TAMWORTH

#### ACTIVE SITES

- ◆ Depot Road
- ◆ Thicket NE
- ◆ Red Baron Gate
- ◆ West Branch Pine Barrens

Photos by Rebecca Suomala

## CONCORD



Alex Gomez 6/12/18 watch  
Steeplegate Mall

The Concord area had three confirmed nesting locations. A nest on Steeplegate Mall was confirmed thanks to new volunteers Alex Gomez and Bob Reynolds whose many watches allowed us to confirm nesting by behavior.

Clough Mill Rd., a new site just over the border in Pembroke, had a late nest with one chick, estimated hatch date 7/9/18. We could not confirm fledging due to lack of access. Concord Airport had no activity early on, but an adult (female?) was flushed from the

ground by NH Fish and Game personnel. A second bird (undoubtedly a large chick) ran off through the grass.

There was a possible nest at White Mountain Imaging, with a raspy male (same as last year) and female landing on the roof. After a roof check in late June revealed no nest, activity shifted to EJP pipe company, then stopped.

The Broken Ground area had no activity again this year, nor did other sites that were once active (i.e. Downtown, NHTI, Pembroke Sand & Gravel).

Volunteers at Training, 5/31/18 in Concord.



Clough Mill Rd. nest site 7/17/18.



Photos by Rebecca Suomala

## OSSIPEE

The Ossipee area was the bright spot this year with confirmed nesting in four locations, thanks to Jason Mazurowski's many watches.

Depot Rd., Tamworth had two nests, one with two fledged chicks videoed by Jason.

There was a confirmed nest at Thicket NE at the same site as 2016 and 2017, with female and

male behavior confirming nesting.

West Branch Preserve had a nest with a fledged chick on 7/21.

Red Baron Gate had a probable nest with three males on the first watch and a female seen, but behavior changed indicating possible nest failure.

Red Baron newly burned cut, 5/24/18.



Leah Hart almost stepped on a turkey nest while she was watching nighthawks at the Power Plant location in Tamworth on June 7. That's a first for nighthawk volunteers!

Photos: Leah Hart  
6/7/18



Turkey nest had 12 eggs

### Ossipee Results

#### ♦ 3 watches held

*18 Nighthawks*

*12 Males*

*4 Females*

*2 Chicks*

### Active

### Sites

- ♦ Depot Rd. (2 sites)
- ♦ Thicket NE
- ♦ Red Baron Gate



# GRANTHAM 4TH ANNUAL PEENT SOCIAL

## a.k.a. People Enthusiastically Enjoying Nighthawks Together

The PEENT was held on June 29 this year. The only nighthawks were at the Brookside Dr. stump dump, which had a male flyover, and possibly a second bird.

The Rt. 114 log landing had one or two birds early in June (feeding?), but none on the coordinated watch.

Although there was activity at Dunbar Hill Rd. at the end of May, they may have been migrants as there was no further nighthawk activity. There was also no activity at Grey Ledges or the settling ponds near Brookridge.



Carolyn & Dennis Ryan on PEENT, 6/29/18.  
Photo by Rebecca Suomala

## Nighthawks and Wind Turbines

NH Audubon continues to provide expertise with issues related to nighthawks at wind turbine sites. We are in the process of developing guidelines for wind turbine man-

agement at sites with nighthawks. These guidelines will be posted once they are approved by the NH Fish & Game Department.

### Other locations

- ◆ Franklin - no nighthawk sightings
- ◆ Black Cap Mt. - Confirmed nest
- ◆ Bayle Mt. - no activity
- ◆ Marlow - 1 male

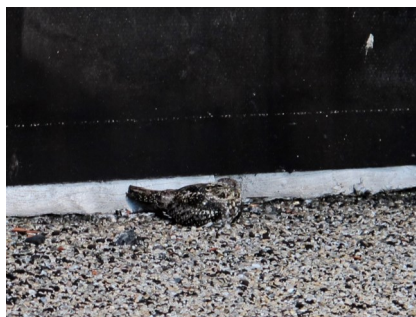
## KEENE

Keene held two watches on 6/14 and 6/26 with a total of three adults seen. There was nesting behavior by a male and probable female at Elliot Hall, but no nest was found despite several roof searches. At West St., there was a female with two newly hatched chicks on 6/22, but they were not present on 6/26. Nest failure may have been due to predation (squirrels were observed on the roof) or possibly flooding from rain most of Sunday, 6/24.



West St. female with chicks on 6/22/18.

Photo by Rebecca Suomala



West St. female on 6/25/18.

Photo by Brett Amy Thelen



Shell fragments & bones, 6/27/18 at West St.

Photo by Brett Amy Thelen

### Keene Coordinated Watch Results

- ◆ Total:
  - 1 Male
  - 2 Females
- ◆ Elliot Hall — Probable Nest Failure
- ◆ Failed nest West St., female with two chicks

## 2018 Volunteers

Thank you to the dedicated volunteers who logged over 382 hours for Project Nighthawk and traveled over 3,046 miles to make this project possible. Volunteers help in Concord, Conway, Franklin, Keene, and Ossipee or may follow up on sightings elsewhere in the state.

Bob Basile	Renee Hocker	Bob Quinn
Siobhan Basile	David Hoitt	Linda Rauter
Judy Bell	Joshua Jarvis	Udo Rauter
Chris Borg	Audrey Kaiser	Robert Reynolds
Deb Brown	Amanda Kallenbach	Marsha Richelli
Sheridan Brown	Jane Kolias	Kris Rines
Russ Cobb	Susan Lee	Carolyn Ryan
Emma Coffey	Connie Linna	Dennis Ryan
Zeke Cornell	Tom McShane	Barbara Skuly
Kara Davis	Charlie Nims	Mark Suomala
Alex Gomez	Ellen Nunes	Brett Amy Thelen
Leah Hart	Bill Parkinson	Robert Vallieres
Lynne Hart	Stephanie Parkinson	Taylor White
Dick Hocker	Lauren Peyser	Rob Woodward

## Good-bye to Connie Linna

Volunteer Project Nighthawk Assistant Connie Linna has migrated to Idaho. Connie took over the nighthawk assistant duties in February 2015 through February 2018, working on every aspect of Project Nighthawk and bringing skills and creativity to the job. Good luck to Connie in Idaho and thank you for all your help!



Welcome Ellen Nunes, who has taken over for Connie and is doing a great job keeping the project and Becky organized.

## Volunteer Gala

Formerly the Goatsucker Gala, this volunteer appreciation and season wrap-up event included volunteers for all the Conserva-

tion Department's field projects in 2018. This year, graduate student Jason Mazurowski filled us in on his nighthawk and bird surveys in the Pine Barrens.



Jason presenting his findings.

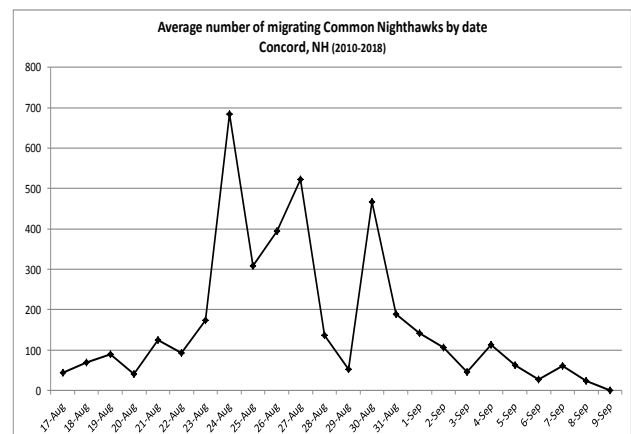
Photo Dyanna Smith

## NIGHTHAWK MIGRATION



Concord Migration watch, 8/25/19.  
Photo by Rebecca Suomala

The Concord Nighthawk Migration count, led by Zeke Cornell, tallied 5,273 nighthawks during the fall 2018 migration. Volunteers counted for 19 days from August 18 through September 5. The peak dates were August 24 with 1,681 nighthawks and August 25 with 761. Thank you to Zeke and all who helped continue this count.



## 2018 DONORS

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We gratefully acknowledge the many hosts who have installed nest patches on their roof tops and the many others who have helped support Project Nighthawk with their donations over the past year.