



## PROJECT NIGHTHAWK KEENE, NH PROJECT SUMMARY 2008

Project Nighthawk is a community-based research project aimed at conserving an endangered bird species, the Common Nighthawk (*Chordeiles minor*). Most active at dusk and dawn, the “peent” call of Common Nighthawks was once a familiar sound in cities and towns throughout New Hampshire, where they nest on flat, peastone gravel roofs and feed on insects attracted to city lights. In recent years, rubber and PVC have largely replaced peastone roofing, and nesting nighthawks have disappeared from many New Hampshire towns; in the few towns where they remain (including Keene!), their numbers have declined dramatically. Biologists are trying to determine if the disappearance of the nighthawks is linked to the disappearance of peastone roofs. As part of this effort, Ashuelot Valley Environmental Observatory (AVEO) has trained over fifty volunteers to monitor nighthawks on summer evenings in Keene. In both 2007 and 2008, Nighthawk Patrol volunteers detected no more than **four nighthawks in Keene** during the June and July breeding season. In 2008, Nighthawk Patrollers were also treated to **numerous spectacular booming and diving displays** above 33 West Street and the Keene Cinema parking lot on Key Road.

### NEST PATCHES

In addition to monitoring existing nighthawk populations, Project Nighthawk researchers are investigating the potential for restoring nighthawk nesting habitat by creating gravel "nest patches" on flat rooftops in Keene, Concord, and Hanover. If results suggest that nest patches are a promising strategy for nighthawk conservation, New Hampshire Audubon will expand restoration and monitoring efforts to other New Hampshire cities that once supported nesting nighthawks. In 2008, AVEO and Antioch University New England graduate student Ken Klapper installed **eight additional nest patches on rooftops throughout Keene**, for a total of **fifteen nest patches citywide**. No nighthawks have nested on these patches just yet, but we observed courtship behavior in the vicinity of several patches in 2008, so we remain cautiously optimistic!



photo: Matt Walter

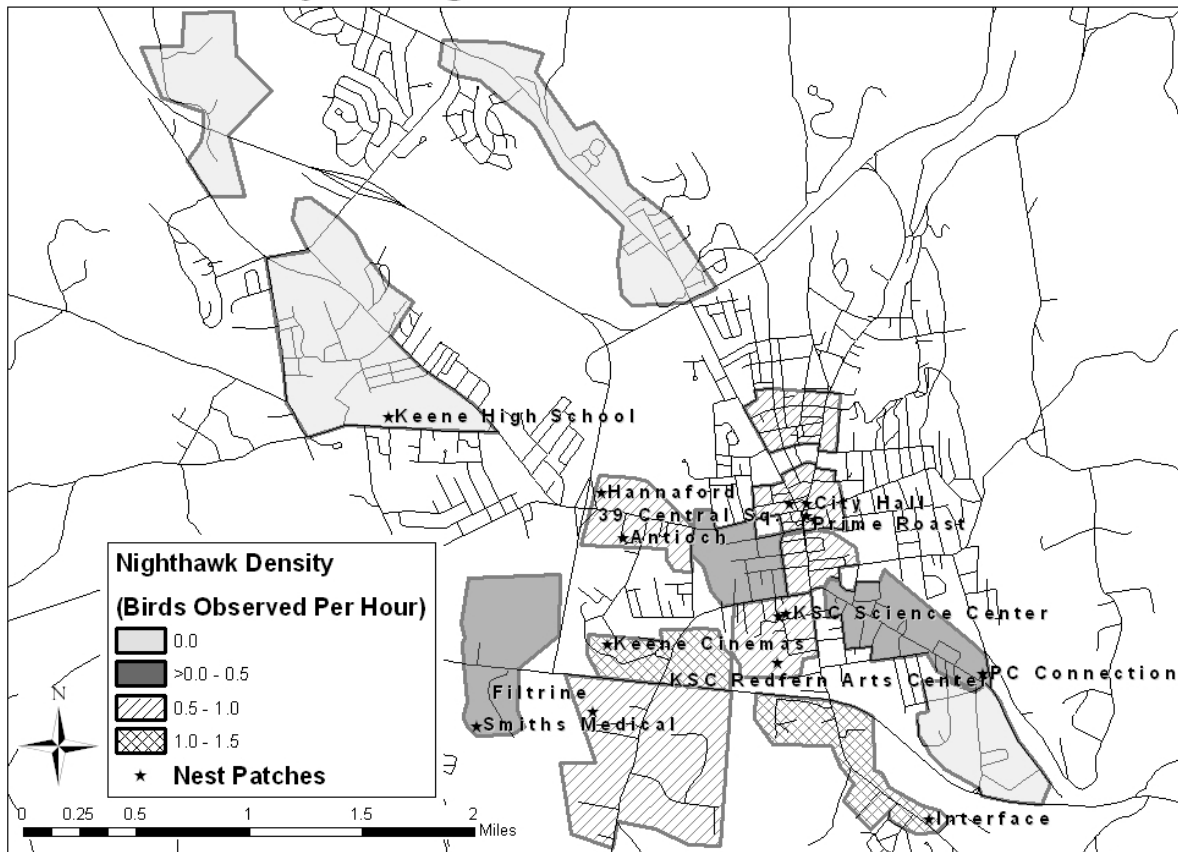
### PROJECT PARTNERS

Project Nighthawk is a statewide research initiative initiated by **NEW HAMPSHIRE AUDUBON** and led locally by **AVEO**, in partnership with Ken Klapper. The **MELANSON COMPANY**, **KEENE STATE COLLEGE**, and **ANTIOCH UNIVERSITY NEW ENGLAND** have generously donated time, expertise, and materials for the project in Keene.



*nighthawk drawing by Bob Hines.*

# Project Nighthawk in Keene - 2008



**NIGHTHAWKS NOW ENDANGERED IN NEW HAMPSHIRE.** In October 2008, the State of New Hampshire upgraded the Common Nighthawk's conservation status from "Threatened" to "Endangered," underscoring the severity of this species' decline in the state. AVEO submitted our Nighthawk Patrol data in support of this up-listing, which was also strongly supported by New Hampshire Audubon.

## VOLUNTEERS

IN 2008, the following people contributed time, energy, and expertise to Project Nighthawk in Keene.

Jean Amaral	Emily Hague	Jack Marsden	Kathleen Murphy	Brett Amy Thelen
Jon Atwood	David Hoitt	Kelly Marsden	Cindy Myers-Long	Russ Thomas
Katy Burchett	Peter Howe	Susan Marsden	Polly Pattison	Matt Walter
Auralee Burchett	Annie Jacobs	Molly McMillan	Scot Reagan	Lacie Westbrook
Russ Cobb	Cary Jardine	Byard Miller	Larry Reynolds	Emily Wilson
Peter Davenport	Barb Johnson	Wayne Miller	Jen Rost	Sarah Wilson
Kim Dupuis	Ken Klapper	David Moon	Barbara Skuly	Chris Wood
Joel Friedlander	Gordon Leversee	Lindsay Moon	Norm Spicher	Mary Wright
Tim Garceau	Marcy Leversee	Rory Moon	Deb Stevens	
Stu Goldberg	Dave Mallard	Ruby Morrison	Lance Tanino	

## SPONSORS

Project Nighthawk in Keene was generously supported in 2008 by the **MELANSON COMPANY**, **THE SWITZER FOUNDATION**, and the **ASSOCIATION FOR FIELD ORNITHOLOGISTS**.

**FOR MORE INFORMATION OR TO VOLUNTEER IN 2009**, visit AVEO on the web at [www.aveo.org](http://www.aveo.org) or contact Science Director Brett Amy Thelen at [brett@aveo.org](mailto:brett@aveo.org) or (603) 358-2065.