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ILLUSTRATIONS:

COVER: Northern Hawk Owl by Michael McNelly (See Page 7)
Page 19 - Dave Krueger
We begin our fifth year of PENNSYLVANIA BIRDS. As you are reading this issue the spring migration is winding down, there is no official breeding bird atlas to work on, and it is the time to catch up on things before the shorebirds start returning in mid- to late-July.

SPECIAL PROJECTS

Even though the Pennsylvania Breeding Bird Atlas Project has been completed there is still much to learn about our breeding birds across the state. The Pennsylvania Society for Ornithology (PSO) has instituted a Special Areas Project (SAP). This project has as its ultimate goal the surveying of the birdlife of all State Parks, State Game Lands, local parks and recreation areas, and other areas of particular interest. Birders are asked to quantify their data on forms which are available from Douglas A. Gross, Ecology III, RR 1, Berwick, PA 18603 (717-542-2191). Many bird clubs, Audubon Societies and interested individuals are already participating in this important work. We have adopted SGL 52, which is close to our home, as our area to cover year-round. Try it. You’ll probably like it. And you will be adding to the data desperately needed about many birding areas across the state.

PA BIG YEAR UPDATE

As reported in the last issue, Deuane Hoffman is doing a Big Year in Pennsylvania. The good news is that as of 8 May 1991 he stood at 218 species. He had saved vacation time in order that he could take the rest of the month off to do essentially nothing but birding. Plans were made to spend a lot of time at Presque Isle and various western counties.

The bad news is that on 8 May he broke his ankle and as of 30 May had not been able to do any birding. It is healing well and although he will be limited in his activities for a while he does have the fall migration to try and find those species he may have missed going north. Probably the major miss was Red-necked Phalarope, one each at Green Lane (Montgomery) and Muddy Run (Lancaster), but they also occur in the fall.

We will keep you posted on his progress, both health and species total. He will start rehabilitation once the cast has been removed in mid-June. We hope you get back on both feet soon, Deuane.

COVER PRINT AVAILABLE

When the Northern Hawk Owl appeared in Wayne County, we called Michael McNelly and he volunteered to do a painting for us for this issue’s cover. Because it is so terrific, we are offering signed and numbered limited edition prints of the artwork (not the cover with PENNSYLVANIA BIRDS, etc. on it) for sale for $20.00 postpaid. The prints are 15” x 15” on 80-lb acid-free archival paper and will be shipped flat. The proceeds will go towards helping PENNSYLVANIA BIRDS. What a terrific way to commemorate your Northern Hawk Owl as a lifer? a state bird? a county bird!!! And, you will be helping the magazine through these hard times!

Order yours today!

GRASSLAND SURVEY

The Pennsylvania Game Commission is looking for volunteers to run Grassland Breeding Bird Surveys. Similar to the Breeding Bird Surveys run by the U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service, these routes take about two hours to run and consist of stopping every half mile, listening and looking for three minutes, and recording the number of species observed.

The main differences are that you pick your own route (in farmland or other field habitats) and there are only 30 stops instead of 50. Also, you have to record the habitat along your route. This, however, should be done before or after you do the official survey.

If interested, contact Barb Bondra at Pa. Game Commission,
Dear Editors:

Thank you for publishing my article on owls. The computerized map of Pennsylvania was especially well done and the tables look neat.

I would like to point out that there are two omissions in the tables. I thought you should be aware of them. In Table 2, all the saw-whet owl data were eliminated and the snowy owl total should be 1 instead of 0, no great loss in either case, unless the reader is very interested in saw-whet owl numbers.

The other omission is in Table 6. There are two years of data in this table and it printed as one year. Table 6 should read 1988 and 1989.

I was sorry to read you are operating in the red. Paul Hess believes it is simply due to the economy. With his experience in the news media, he is probably right. Rest assured we'll be taking your suggestions to help get you through the lean period.

I wish you luck in the year ahead. Thanks again for the nice job you did on my article.

Dick Byers
Murrysville, PA 15668

Sorry, Dick, we will have the corrections included for any reprints that we send out. -eds.

Dear Editors:

Enclosed is my check for next year's subscription to PENNSYLVANIA BIRDS. I think it is one of the best bird magazines published. Other publications (including Am. Birds) should take a lesson from you! I thought I should give you an update on the Delaware Big Year attempt. As of yesterday [25 May 1991], Joe Swentzki had tied your [1981] record of 280! En closed is a list of birds he has seen or you had seen but the others had not. He now has 6 months to find 20 species to break 300. Ellen Short is already at 270+ and Colin Campbell, Maurice Barnhill, Joe Rus sell, and I are all 260+. Phil Vanderhost is also well on his way and may be a trump card. Paul DuMont wrote me to say his Delaware list is 265, with a number of species nobody else has seen.

The high point was yesterday [25 May] with a boat trip to Baltimore Canyon. We saw four species of shearwater, N. Fulmar, Red-necked Phalarope, Wilson's Storm-Petrel and Parasitic Jaeger. Not bad, eh! I added two state life birds, Greater Shearwater and Fulmar to make my Delaware list 320. As you can see by the birds Joe has seen, it has been a phenomenal spring. Warblers were fast and furious in early May. We tried for Swainson's Warbler, but missed twice.

In all, it's been a great year!

Andy Ednie Claymont, DE

Although we try to concentrate on what is happening in Pennsylvania, we thought you might be interested in what is happening in a neighboring state. We held the Delaware Big Year record for almost ten years, but knew it would be smashed once some local birders decided to go for it in a good year. Keep up the search and we do hope one or all of you surpass 3001.

Dear Editors:

As you begin PENNSYLVANIA BIRDS' fifth year, I hope you continue to find the satisfaction worth the sacrifice. The enormous labor behind each issue is clear, and your efforts deserve appreciation from all who are interested in the state's bird life.

Your editorial in Vol. 4, No. 3, mentioned dismay at a high rate of non-renewals during the past year and asked for thoughts. Actual reasons would be hard to pinpoint without surveying present and former subscribers, but be assured that this is a normal-if painful-fact of publishing life. Newspaper and magazine circulation people commonly call it "churn," the regular turnover of subscribers requiring continual sales efforts just to stay even. Churn always increases during economic downturns when consumers are forced to cut corners. That was certainly the case in 1990, and many publications felt it acutely. Only one method can combat it effectively: a massive and expensive sales-promotion program obviously inappropriate for Pa. Birds.

Sadly, the economy may point to another distressing year for subscriptions. If you can ride it out, your subscriber list should rise again-though perhaps at the expense of a mailer to former subscribers. Meanwhile, Audubon chapters and other organizations that consider Pa. Birds an important resource might see fit to make a special grant in support in these tougher-than-usual times.

The value of Pa. Birds' detailed reports was emphasized recently as I was researching the great tree sparrow invasion of winter 1989-90. Compilers in all parts of the state, alert to their local situation, told of high numbers in 18 counties and continuing scarcity in 3. A major influx occurred throughout most of the eastern and midwestern winter range, but you couldn't learn that from reading American Birds. Among eight regions where word might have been appropriate, only the Appalachian, Middle Atlantic Coast and Western Great Lakes winter summaries took notice. Mention was conspicuously absent from Hudson-Delaware, which covers heavily invaded New York and eastern Pennsylvania. Am. Birds regional editors can't necessarily be faulted; they can report only the information they receive. Nevertheless, a large gap exists between Pa. Birds' well-informed local reports and the national magazine's spotty, inconsistent regional coverage.

It's encouraging to see the widespread interest in Pa. Birds created by abstracts in Auk (and elsewhere?). I've had several reprint requests from around the country for recent papers, a welcome sign of attention to our still-young state journal.

Paul Hess Natrona Heights, PA

Dear Editors:

Thank you for another year of PENNSYLVANIA BIRDS. I do enjoy it. Keep up the good work.

I wonder if you'd be interested in starting a children's page. Two of my granddaughters (ages 10 and 12) in Lancaster Co. just reported on a walk on New Year's Day in adjacent creek woods and seeing a Great Horned Owl and three Red-
Dear Editors:

Before I begin to tell you about my "mystery bird," I feel it would be wise to defend my mental stability. Did you know that it costs $450.00 to find out if you're crazy, and that they really do give you that ink blot test? As a matter of fact, some of those ink spots look like bodies of water with waterfowl flying overhead. When my testing was completed the good doctor said, "Barbara, different is not crazy; different is just what it is -different." Here is my story.

At 9:30 a.m. on 13 September 1985 I was taking my usual 3-mile walk at Cascade Park in Lawrence County. It was a mild, sunny morning. I heard a bird singing and I thought, how strange, this bird sounds like it's singing as though it were May.

I walked toward the song, which was coming from a 9-foot deciduous sapling. I saw the back of the bird from 100 feet away and instantly knew it was a nuthatch. But, whoa, the bird was charcoal gray, almost black. It was moving away from me on a horizontal branch. Yep, a melanistic nuthatch. No problem. I approached the bird cautiously and when I was 12 feet or so away the bird turned around and my mouth dropped open instantly.

The throat and breast of the bird was off-white. The bird appeared to have a neat whitish bib, but the big shocker was its bill! If this bird were a nuthatch, it should have a nuthatch bill, right? Wrong! Now, brace yourself, because I only want to say this once. That crazy bird had a Bananaquit's bill, only it was a little longer and more curved. The black curved bill looked to be too big for the bird. If it were a nuthatch, then it should sound like a nuthatch, right? Wrong. Its voice had the timbre of a Carolina Wren. I remember the loud song started out on a low note and then just a few notes to a high note. It sang this short, beautiful song three times; then there would be a long pause and it would start over again. The bird stayed on the lower branches and paid little attention to me. It moved along the branches like a nuthatch and was the same size and shape as a nuthatch.

Although I had only been birding on my own for a few years, I knew enough to stand there and study it. The bird was a dull charcoal-gray to black. The wings had a subtle sheen to them. The "bib" was offwhite and the outer edge was neat. It looked as though the bird had a few very slight whitish specks above its left eye.

At that time I was not ready to come out of the closet and declare myself a birder. I had no car, no camera, no confidence and I didn't know a single birder. I decided it was simply an escape. I thought I'd just figure this out for myself, as usual.

On page 189 of the Audubon Society Master Guide to Birding (2nd printing, March 1985) the angle of the Bananaquit in the bottom photograph gives a pretty accurate impression of how the bill looked on my mystery bird. The bill of the Cactus Wren (from the same set of books) looked too short and not thick enough at the base to fit my mystery bird. My bird had a more exaggerated curve to the bill.

If anyone ever sees, or has ever seen, a melanistic nuthatch with a white bib and a deformed bill singing loud, like a Carolina Wren, would you please get in touch with me? If you come across a photograph of a bird that matches this description, would you call me? If you are traveling in another country and you see this bird, it would be a kindness if you would call me collect. I need a name for this "sucker" so I can get on with my life.

Finally, I'd like all of you to remember what "Dr. Feelgood" said. "Nonju, Barbara, the elevator goes all the way to the top floor."

Barb Dean
321 E. Meyer Ave.
New Castle, PA 16105

We're stumped! Do any of our readers have a guess? -eds.

Dear Editors:

Enclosed is the Elk report for January, February and March 1991.

I'm so glad spring is here. We folks in the northern counties don't see the variety of birds you do and it is a treat just to see a returning Turkey Vulture! This past week [mid-April] has been so colorful at my feeder-about 50 Evening Grosbeak, about 30 Am. Goldfinch, 15 Purple Finch -those colors, wow! I was interested to note that the House Finch and Purple Finch are getting along and watched while one House Finch was on one side of the feeder and on the opposite rung was Purple Finch. Too bad I didn't have a beginning birder beside me to show them the difference. I have had maybe 40 or so Dark-eyed Junco at my feeder, but now they are starting to leave. I am noting them on territory in the forest now. Yesterday on my walk I heard a Brown Creeper's song. It was loud for such a little bird. I have not heard or seen any warblers except the Louisiana Waterthrush this spring.

Linda Christenson St. Marys, PA

Dear Editors:

After I made raspberry jelly from my frozen berries, my husband piled the seeds on a stump about 40 feet from our back door. We thought something might eat them, but to our surprise, we looked out on 13 January to see an immature Cooper's Hawk sitting on the stump. Our guess is that the reddish seeds had been mistaken for carrion.

We watched the hawk for more than five minutes by the clock but have no idea how long he had been there before we saw him. This close-up look gave us an excellent opportunity to study the head, referred to as "hooded," the distinct tawny wash, yellow-green care, and to notice fewer streaks on the belly than on the breast.

This sighting was the sixth for our yard since 1979, and includes another for January, the 13th in 1985.

Era S. VanDenburg
West Chester, PA
Keeping Track
by Ken Kitson

Some of us are compulsive record keepers. We keep records of our birding adventures and sightings in notebooks, checklists and field guides. Sometimes faithfully, sometimes not so. And some of us whose memories are not improving wish we had kept better records in the past. The following is a suggestion for a way to keep track of your sightings for a given area. Once set up, it is simple to maintain and it's quite flexible. It can be maintained by hand or put on a computer. And it can provide quite a bit of information for a minimal amount of effort.

Basically it involves recording your sightings by week. Start by making a list of the potential species that you will be most likely to see in the area you've defined, e.g., your yard, a park, nature center, etc. Obviously this list will change over time. On a piece of paper (1/8" graph paper works well) list the columns from 0 to 53. This will help facilitate year to year comparisons. Skip a line to allow for inserting the month, then in the column put in the dates for each Sunday in the year. If the year begins with 1 to 3 days through the first Saturday, begin with the "0" column. If the year begins with 4 or more days through Saturday, begin with column "1." Then list the species down the left side of the page(s).

Now it's quite easy to record the species you've seen each week with a check [or a 0 (zero) if on the computer]. For the first sighting in a season I put in the date. Other information which could be included include: N (or boldface) for nesting, or an * (or underline) to indicate additional notes in a notebook. I also place an A at the top of the column to indicate weeks when we were away and no observations were made.

This system not only works well for one's individual records but has worked well at Peace Valley Nature Center (Bucks) to display the composite record of all who bird there. The chart is displayed at the entrance to the center. A desk with a notebook is provided to record sightings. Also a mail slot is provided to leave a checklist with one's sightings. The sightings, including those from the Saturday morning bird walk, are posted to the chart weekly for all to see. It takes about fifteen minutes per week to maintain.

What can all this provide? First I find it interesting to see the species observed weekly. Monthly seems too long a period of time and daily too short. Each week is a new ball game. Then of course you can track totals by week, month and year-to-date if you wish. And you can see the number or percent of times a species is seen in a year. But I think the best information comes from the pattern that your record makes on the page. At a glance you see the seasonal pattern for each species. In fact we have used the pattern to combine information from a number of years. Using the same chart, I have put the records for nine years into each weekly square by placing a dot for each sighting as follows:

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(See chart on next page)

As you can see, the resulting pattern gives an excellent seasonal and frequency picture for each species. You'll be surprised how punctual some species are.

For more than nine years of data I've used a percentage of times seen rather than the dots. It was this data that gave us the information to produce a more informative checklist for Peace Valley with monthly bar graphs rather than the less definitive quarterly A, C, Rs, etc.

To summarize, recording your sightings weekly can add to your birding enjoyment and provide some useful information. The chart outlined here for that purpose will make the task of keeping track quite easy.

RD 1, Box 60B
Ottsville, PA 18942

We talked with Ken and he would be willing to share copies of data sheets he has compiled with you. Please just send a self-addressed stamped envelope ($0.29 postage) to him. Space does not permit us to reprint blank forms, but it was obvious from the first glance that a lot of data can be stored in a very visual means for retrieval. We welcome comments from you as well. -eds.
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<th>January</th>
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**Note:** The table appears to contain data related to bird species, with columns for specific months and rows likely representing different bird species or observations. However, the specific details of the data are not legible due to the image quality.
Winter woods are woodpecker woods, filled with loud, echoing hammers, muted taps, and a medley of boisterous calls. No matter how cold or inclement the weather, I can always count on hearing or seeing woodpeckers whenever I go walking, and with out the leaves on the trees, it is easy to follow their progress up and down the tree branches.

Our year-round residents are hairy, downy, pileated and red-bellieds, with a smaller winter population of northern flickers. Of all the woodpecker clan, the flickers are the most silent at this time of year. In contrast to their noisy displays of early spring, they prefer to remain mute during their over-wintering. Only a movement high in a tree alerts me to a foraging flicker or I may find several quietly devouring wild grapes in the thicket.

The red-bellieds are comparatively recent mountain residents, their arrival having coincided with both a decade of warmer winters and the advent of gypsy moth caterpillars. Before 1980, to see a red-bellied on our mountain, even in the summer, was a rare and treasured event. But, like Carolina wrens, tufted titmice, northern mockingbirds and northern cardinals, these once predominantly southern birds are slowly extending their range northward, and we seem to have almost as many wintering red-bellieds as we do hairy, downys and pileateds.

The pileated woodpeckers, with their magnificent red crests and crow-sized black bodies, are my favorites. Their loud calls can be heard long before they bounce overhead, flashing the white undersides of their large wings. They are known to be shy birds, but if I remain still I can often watch them working, stripping the bark off dead or dying trees in search of carpenter ants, their favorite food. Many people decry what they interpret as destructive behavior on the part of the pileateds since the trees they attack frequently appear healthy. Subsequent investigation, however, always reveals that carpenter ants have already penetrated the heartwood of the tree.

During winter and early spring pileateds do their heaviest cutting into living and dead trees. They gather easier meals during the winter when food sources such as wild berries, other kinds of insects, acorns and beechnuts are abundant. Apparently pileateds occasionally inadvertently provide gleaning material for downys and hairy. One researcher watched a pileated woodpecker scale off the bark of a dead hemlock tree while a downy picked at the leavings.

In mid-January one day I paused to watch as a male pileated landed on a tree less than 40 feet from where I was standing. As usual, he was calling loudly. I remained frozen in place as he hitched himself up and down the tree, continuing his cries as he moved along. Then he flew to another, closer tree trunk with a large hole 20 feet up its side. Again he called, and after looking directly at me, he quickly zoomed around the back of the trunk directly behind the hole. The next thing I knew he had stuck his head out of that same hole, having sneaked in through a back entrance. Finally, he peered around for a few seconds before taking off across First Field, his calls reverberating in the silent winter woods.

That tree was probably his roosting tree since all the wintering species of woodpeckers have their own special trees in which they spend their nights. Many experts believe that pileated are especially noisy around their roost trees. Their nesting trees are another story. Pileateds tend to keep the same nest tree year after year, and they are so silent near it that I have yet to find one.

Pileated woodpeckers mate for life and keep strong bonds even during the winter months. They remain in the same territory and drum throughout the year. During courtship they engage in a bill-waving dance before settling down to share in the incubation of the eggs and the raising of the young.

There is some evidence that both hairy and downy woodpeckers also maintain pair bonds from at least the autumn before, but unlike pileateds, they remain separated during the winter. Hairys have begun drumming as early as December and downys by the end of January in preparation for courtship, which is usually at its height in March. Both of these species also share in incubating the eggs and raising the young.

Downys always come to our feeder. So do red-bellieds. But hairy rarely have. They prefer to keep to a wild environment and are shyer than the smaller downys. These look-alike species prefer a dry, deciduous, upland woods, but the downys are more likely to wander into towns and occupy backyard shade trees.

Unlike pileateds, which live only in the eastern part of our continent from southern Canada to the southern United States, hairy and downy woodpeckers live throughout the wooded areas of North America from northern Canada to Panama, Nicaragua, and western Guatemala. Most of them remain in the same territory all year although there are at least some hairy woodpeckers that occasionally migrate.
further south during the winter in search of wood-boring beetle larvae, their preferred food.

Downy woodpeckers also put beetles and their larvae at the top of their gustatory-delight list. Like the hairy’s, their secondary preferences are ants and caterpillars. So when I see them working over the rough bark of our oak trees in the winter (their favorites now that the American chestnuts are gone), I know they are keeping our forest trees healthy.

Woodpeckers are endlessly fascinating birds with flamboyant calls, worthwhile eating habits, and exemplary domestic arrangements, at least from a human standpoint. Many a cheerless winter day is brightened by an intimate look at their behavior because, unlike most of our birds, they are on duty all year long no matter what the weather.

Mrs. Bonta is author of the book, Outbound Journeys in Pennsylvania, A Guide to Natural Places for Individual and Group Outings. It is available from The Pennsylvania State University Press, University Park 16802, cloth $22.50, paper $12.75, plus $2.00 S&H. Autographed copies are available from the author at the same price, addressed to Box 68, Tyrone, PA 16686. It can also be purchased at local bookstores.

Mrs. Bonta has two new books which have been published simultaneously. One is Appalachian Spring, which should stir memories for all bird watchers in Pennsylvania. Cloth $19.95, paper $9.95. 198 pp. The other is Women in the Field, University of Pittsburgh Press. Cloth $19.50, paper $13.95. 288 pp. Both are available in bookstores or from the author (plus $1.50 S&H). Both are published by University of Pittsburgh Press. -eds.

BIRD BEHAVIOR:
Great Blue Heron catches snake in January

Rich Lichty

While making an early afternoon visit to a favorite farm woodlot northeast of Lancaster on 21 January 1991, I had an interesting sighting. Although I was there to check out the raptor activity, it was a Great Blue Heron (Ardea herodias) that made the trip worthwhile.

At first notice, the Great Blue was in a hunched position next to a stand of brush. It seemed to be shielding itself from the cold 30°F+ weather. It was standing in snow-dusted grass about ten feet from a pool of water fed by Landis Run that rolls through an unoccupied meadow.

Not having any luck with my raptor hunt in the wooded area, I focused my spotting scope on the heron, which was now moving in a stalking manner. I was standing in the open about 50-60 yards from the long-legged hunter wondering what was on the bird’s menu.

Suddenly it seemed fixed on something in the meadow grass. The head lunged forward and when it recoiled, I anxiously strained to see its prey. Expecting to see a small rodent plucked from the cold ground, I was amazed to see a 12-15” snake (garter?) hanging from its beak.

The captive was gripped about two inches below its head by the spear-like bill. The captor deliberately manipulated its prey for about five minutes before putting it down. Then, repositioning its grip, sucked in the snake-head first. It took about three to four slurps before the throat showed a swallowing motion. Next, the heron stepped to the water and sipped a few times to wash down the meal.

Although it was a real treat to see the heron stalk, catch and devour its prey, I also was amazed at seeing a snake in the middle of January.

741 N. Reservoir St.
Lancaster, PA 17602

About the Cover Artist

Michael McNelly

This is the second cover Michael has drawn for us. The previous one was of a Screech-Owl (Volume 4, No. 1). When the Northern Hawk Owl appeared in Wayne County we contacted him about doing another owl.

Despite his hectic schedule he promised one for this issue. He wrote, “It was an overcast and drizzly September afternoon in Alaska when I saw my first Hawk Owl. He was perched in an old gnarled Black Spruce that rose from a blanket of autumn colored dwarf birch. He seemed to represent the symbol of all wilderness. It’s a sight I won’t soon forget.”

A free-lance illustrator since his graduation from the Russian School of Art in Philadelphia, Michael’s clients include Sun Company, The New York Times, The Franklin Mint, Macmillan Publishing Company, Cigna Corporation, TV Guide, The Jacques Cousteau Society, etc. “Although,” he says, “I find the work to be both exciting and profitable, my real love has been the painting of nature.” He has cultivated his perspective of wildlife from extensive travels in the Americas, from Alaska to the Amazon jungle.

Michael has accumulated an impressive collection of awards and ribbons, such as the Award of Excellence given by the Academy of Natural Science Wildlife Art Expo, The International Association of Business Communicators Gold Quill Awards Competition - Award of Excellence, and many awards from the Art Directors Club of Philadelphia. His work can be found in many private collections throughout the United States, including The Raptor Trust and The University of Pennsylvania.
Well, from the look of your lists you were all very busy birding in 1990. Six years ago when I started Pennsylvania Birdlists, the goal of seeing 300 species in Pennsylvania was a milestone achieved by only six birders. Today those ranks have swelled to 18, the latest addition being Glenna Schwalbe. Congratulations! Some goals remained unattained in 1990, however, as Jerry McWilliam’s 300th Erie County bird continued to elude him. Will Jerry find number 300 in 1991? Stay tuned until next year.

This year both Steve Santner and Merrill Wood submitted lists for all 67 counties in Pennsylvania, although some lists did not meet our thresholds. Still, this is quite an accomplishment. How many of you have even been in every county?

The listing thresholds are as listed last year in Pennsylvania Birds (Vol. 4, No-1) with the addition that no county lifelists under 50 are included. Years in parentheses after a total indicate the last year the total was submitted.

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COUNTY LIFELISTS (TOP 50)

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| CHESTER  | 268 Larry Lewis ('88) | 240 Phillips Street | 235 Barbara Haas | 234 John Ginaven | 203 Al Guarente | 193 Neal Thorpe | 157 Steve Santner | 149 Nick Pulcinella | 111 Terence Schiefer |
| CLEARFIELD | 100 Steve Santner | 87 Paul Schwalbe | 82 Margaret Higbee |
| CLINTON | 235 Paul Schwalbe | 120 Steve Santner | 101 Barbara Haas | 52 Merrill Wood |
| COLUMBIA | 100 Steve Santner |
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| DELAWARE | 289 John Miller ('85) | 254 Barbara Haas | 244 Nick Pulcinella | 241 Al Guarente | 233 Skip Conant | 229 Thomas Reeves | 225 Paul Schwalbe | 219 John Ginaven | 113 Steve Santner |
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- George Malosh 1974
- Don Henise 1990

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- Margaret Higbee 1986
- Margaret Higbee 1987
- Margaret Higbee 1990

#### BEAVER
- George Malosh 1974
- George Malosh 1975

#### BERKS
- Terence Schiefer 1981
- Terence Schiefer 1982
- Matt Wlasniewski 1990

#### BLAIR
- Beryl Sternagle 1990
- Beryl Sternagle 1989

#### BUTLER
- Gene Wilhelm, Jr. 1989
- Gene Wilhelm, Jr. 1989
- Gene Wilhelm, Jr. 1989

#### CHESTER
- Terence Schiefer 1981
- Terence Schiefer 1982
- Matt Wlasniewski 1990

#### CRAWFORD
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- Ronald Leberman 1989
- Geoff Malosh 1990

#### CUMBERLAND
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- Deuane Hoffman 1990
- Deuane Hoffman 1990

#### DAUPHIN
- Deuane Hoffman 1990
- Deuane Hoffman 1990
- Deuane Hoffman 1990

#### ERIE
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- Gerald McWilliams 1990
- Gerald McWilliams 1990

#### FAIRFIELD
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#### MONTGOMERY
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#### MORTON
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#### SCULLY
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#### WASHINGTON
- Deuane Hoffman 1990
- Deuane Hoffman 1990
- Deuane Hoffman 1990

#### WRIGHTSON
- Deuane Hoffman 1990
- Deuane Hoffman 1990
- Deuane Hoffman 1990

#### YATES
- Deuane Hoffman 1990
- Deuane Hoffman 1990
- Deuane Hoffman 1990

### PA. ANNUAL LISTS (TOP 50)

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<td>105 Stephen Lawrence</td>
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WANTED:

Plans to build a bird fountain. Design should include gently falling water with shallow pools for bathing.

Electric hook-up not a problem for aerating or heating. I saw one several years ago that was approximately 24” high and perhaps 2% feet long.

Please send to Rom Schutsky, Box 210, Atglen, PA 19310
Ornithological History

Since the construction of the Maiden Creek Dam in 1929, Lake Ontelaunee (which serves as the only water supply for the city of Reading) has been a magnet for birders. This 1080-acre lake may become irresistible to those for whom exotic locations have lost their charms. The ornithological pioneers of this locality were Dr. Earl L. Poole, former Director of the Reading Public Museum and Art Gallery, and Byron Nune-macher. They worked the area from the late 1920s until the death of Poole in 1972.

Next on the scene came the "Flying Squadron," Warren Kalbach, Paul (Pat) Martin, and Charles Schaich; this trio was active from 1949 to 1972. In the summer of 1977, Maurice Broun, of Hawk Mountain fame, became interested in Ontelaunee; he chose to focus on the Cliff Swallow colonies at both the dam breast and the West Shore Bridge. Unfortunately, Broun's study was cut short by his death in October 1979. On 26 December 1949 as part of the Reading Christmas Bird Count, I made the first of many visits to "The Lake."

Of the 312 species that have been recorded in Berks, 280 have been identified at Lake Ontelaunee. May has produced the greatest variety, but it is low in waterfowl variety. The other good months are (in order): April, September, October, November, December and March. Without a doubt, the best time to visit the lake is after a storm, tropical or otherwise. Most outstanding sightings occur just after severe weather.

In 40 years of birding here I have noticed certain trends in bird abundance.

Species that have increased are: Great Blue Heron, Canada Goose, Wood Duck, Mallard, Common Goldeneye, Common Merganser, Red-tailed Hawk, Ring-billed Gull, Red-bellied Woodpecker, Tree Swallow, Cliff Swallow, Northern Mockingbird, European Starling, Brown-headed Cowbird and House Finch.

Species that have decreased are: American Black Duck, Northern Pintail, Northern Shoveler, Red-shouldered Hawk, Ring-necked Pheasant, Black Tern, Yellow-billed Cuckoo, Hairy Woodpecker, Alder Flycatcher (in the early 1960s both the Alder and Willow could be heard and seen at Peters Creek), Warbling Vireo, Red-eyed Vireo, Yellow-breasted Chat, Rufous-sided Towhee, Grasshopper Sparrow, Eastern Meadowlark, Orchard Oriole and Purple Finch.

Taking the Tour

A typical birding tour of Lake Ontelaunee would proceed as follows:

1) Drive north from Reading on Rt. 61, turn right (east) on Rt. 73, travel northeast for 0.8 mile and park in the lot at the dam breast. This is a fine spot for observing waterfowl, herons, gulls, and other water birds, as well as the large colony of Cliff Swallows nesting under the bridge from late April to August. Walk down the dirt road that parallels the Maiden Creek below the dam. This is a good location for migrating warblers (very good for Palm Warbler).

2) Drive east on Rt. 73 for 0.7 mile to a parking lot on the left side of the road. Stop here and look for waterfowl, Osprey (in migration) and Red-breasted Nuthatch (in fall, winter and spring). On 9 May 1982 all six swallow species were seen from this point.

3) Continue to drive east on Rt. 73 for 0.2 mile to a fork in the road. Keep to the left, and after 0.25 mile turn left down an old rutted road, park at the end and take the very short walk down to the water. This is another excellent site for cormorants, waterfowl, loons, grebes and herons. When the water is low, this becomes prime shorebird territory. For years Warbling Vireo and Orchard Oriole nested here; Willow Flycatcher still does.

4) Drive back up the rutted road, go over the small wooden bridge and turn left toward Peters Creek (about one mile). This is the best all-around birding stop in the entire
Ontelaunee territory. Park in the first lot on the right and explore the walled creek and the five ponds. Birds to be expected include: Black-crowned Night-Heron, Wood Duck, Blue-winged Teal, Common Moorhen, American Woodcock, Belted Kingfisher, Willow Flycatcher, Eastern Phoebe, Tree Swallow, Carolina Wren, Cedar Waxwing, Warbling Vireo, Yellow Warbler, Common Yellowthroat, Indigo Bunting, Field Sparrow, Swamp Sparrow, Red-winged Blackbird, Rusty Blackbird, Orchard Oriole and American Goldfinch. Just about any migrating heron, duck, hawk, shorebird, vireo or warbler can be spotted (in the appropriate season) at Peters Creek. With a bit of luck, you might spot a Sora or Virginia Rail.

5) Continue to travel northeast from Peters Creek past the Campbell’s Plant and the Evansville Cement Plant until you reach Molltown (about 2.2 miles). At the end of the village, turn left on Water Street and drive until you either reach a chain across the road (most times) or reach the back waters of Lake Ontelaunee. If the chain is across the road, it is only a short walk west to the lake. When the water level is low in late summer and fall, this is the best place (has good morning light) to see shorebirds. In any season it is a good general birding spot.

6) Retrace your path back out to the Peters Creek Road, turn left and continue to drive to the “Twin Churches,” (1.25 mile) turning left on the road between them. Take this road to Rt. 662 (1 mile), turn right and drive until you come to the pond at Moselem Springs Golf Club on the left (1.7 mile). Park off the road on the shoulder and scan the pond for waterfowl–this pond is superb for Gadwall from September through April.

7) Turn around and go back (west) on Rt. 662 until you reach a bridge that crosses the Maiden Creek (2.5 miles). Stop here to do some general birding. Here nestled Least Bittern, King Rail and Prothonotary Warbler until this wetland was degraded by many “improvements.”

8) Continue west on Rt. 662 for 1.1 miles, at which point Rt. 662 turns right. Keep going straight ahead until you reach a stop sign (0.6 mile). Turn left onto West Shore Drive and keep going until you reach the lake (2.2 miles). Park in the lot and take either of the two fire lanes—the south lane will take you to the lake for shorebirds and waterfowl; the east lane parallels the lake and is good for warblers and shorebirds (Yellowbreasted Chat nested here in 1987 and 1988).

9) Continue on West Shore Drive until you reach the West Shore Bridge (1.3 mile). Park here and scan for loons, cormorants, waterfowl, gulls and Black Tern. Yellow-throated Warbler attempted to nest here in the early 1970s. Don’t forget to look for Osprey perched in the distant evergreens.

10) Follow West Shore Drive to Ontelaunee Drive (2.5 miles), turn left and drive one mile to Rt. 73, turn left and travel the 0.5 mile back to the dam breast (this stop is always worth a second look).

Certainly there are many discoveries yet to be made at Lake Ontelaunee and its environs. Who will be the first to find a Yellow-crowned Night-Heron, a Sandhill Crane or even a Common Raven at THE LAKE?

In the 62 years of the lake’s existence, Ontelaunee has produced many exciting records. Here are some highlights:

```
12 Leach’s Storm-Petrel 08/24/33
1 White Ibis 07/31/64
1 Glossy Ibis 08/11/68
7 Gr. White-fronted Goose 02/24/85
3 Snow Goose (white) 09/20/81
220 Snow Goose (blue) 03/11/84
19 Brant 11/02/70
16,000 Canada Goose 03/04/84
52 Wood Duck 10/18/88
1 Eurasian Wigeon 01/22/88
292 Black Scoter 10/25/77
419 Bufflehead 05/03/70
1 Masked Duck 06/14/84
1 Gyrifalcon 10/28/41
1 Purple Gallinule (dead) 09/16/83
1 American Avocet 09/24/57
1 Willet 08/24/33
1 Spotted Sandpiper 01/19/47
10 Whimbrel 05/25/30
2 Hudsonian Godwit 08/14/58
10 Ruddy Turnstone 06/06/39
4 Red Knot 08/13/55
1 Red Phalarope 12/29/40
2160 Ring-billed Gull 12/21/86
1 Ls. Black-backed Gull 12/16/90
1 Iceland Gull 02/19/89
1 Iceland Gull 02/28/91
1 Glaucous Gull 01/10/88
1 Black-legged Kittiwake 11/17/35
2 Black-legged Kittiwake 03/31/91
3 Sooty Tern 08/13/55
1 Black Skimmer 10/16/54
1 Black Guillemot 04/06/57
1 Black-backed Woodpecker 12/30/64
1 Say’s Phoebe 12/28/46
1 Western Kingbird 08/25/41
125,000 Am. Crow 12/21/69
1 “Brewster’s” Warbler 09/13/87
1 Pine Warbler 05/08/88
1 Dickcissel 10/17/54
1 Dark-eyed “Oregon” Junco 12/19/82
1 Yellow-headed Blackbird 05/11/84
2 Red Crossbill 08/03/69
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A b s t r a c t e d f r o m T h e D i s t e l f i n k , N e w s l e t t e r o f t h e B a i r d O r n i t h o l o g i c a l C l u b , R e a d i n g , Pa.
First Documented Northern Hawk Owl, Surnia ulula, in Pennsylvania in the Twentieth Century

Franklin C. Haas

On the evening of 18 February 1991, I received a call from Bill Boyle (Regional Editor for American Birds) informing me of a possible Northern Hawk Owl in Wayne County, Pennsylvania. He had just received a call from Dana Knowlton who had been called by Terry Gauld. It seems that Terry, who owns a summer place in Wayne County, had been told in early February by her brother that he had seen a Northern Hawk Owl near there. However, she did not have a chance to go up there until Presidents’ Day weekend in February. When she finally saw the bird, she confirmed that it was indeed a Hawk Owl. Upon arriving home, she called Dana, who in turn called Bill Boyle.

Although skeptical of such a "good" bird (the only confirmed, i.e., photograph or specimen, records for this species in Pennsylvania are from the nineteenth century, see below), Barb and I decided to check it out the next morning. So, along with Deuane Hoffman (who is doing a Pennsylvania Big Year) and Bill Stocku, we arrived at the site about 10:00 a.m., 19 February. The location was approximately four miles west of Lookout, Pennsylvania, in Manchester Township, Wayne County. As we drove up the road, nearing the location from which it had been reported, we saw another birder standing in the road looking up at the top of a small tree. At the top of the tree was a Northern Hawk Owl!

Suffice it to say that the identification did not take a lot of study. It was an obvious owl in general shape and structure. It was crow-sized, had no ear tufts and had a long tail. The only other North American owls with long tails are the pygmy owls which are less than half as large as this bird. The strong barring on the total underside and white spotting on the wings and back also confirmed the identification (We have heard of Northern Harriers and Long-eared Owls being identified as Hawk Owls by inexperienced observers!).

Subsequently, we learned that this bird may have been present at this location since late October 1990. The Wood family, who own some of the property on which this bird was most often seen, reported seeing this bird as early as late October. Not being expe-
Northern Hawk Owl, Manchester Twp., 2/22/91. Photo by Randy Miller.

Northern Hawk Owl specimen, Reading Public Museum. Photo by Franklin C. Haas.

Experienced birders, they did not know what it was, but they did realize it was something they hadn't seen before. In fact, they remember discussing whether it was a hawk or an owl! Their accounts are convincing and this author has no reason to discount their information.

After our confirmation of the sighting and many phone calls, more than a thousand birders flocked to the area over the next few weeks to see the bird. The bird was very cooperative for most observers, but sometimes hid in an evergreen tree. Most of the time it was seen perched on top of the many deciduous trees in the area and was seen hunting, catching and caching prey, regurgitating pellets and calling.

On one occasion it was seen apparently "warming up" some cached prey by putting it in
direct sunlight at the top of a conifer (pers. comm. Bob Schutsky).

The bird was last reported on March 17, 1991.

Northern Hawk Owl records in Pennsylvania are few, and this constitutes the first documented (i.e., photograph, specimen or recording) record for the twentieth century. Previous records are as follows.

Nineteenth Century Records:

Warren (1890) reports "Joseph Krider has a specimen captured some few years ago, near Philadelphia, in mid-winter. Messrs. R.C. Wrenshall, Allegheny county, J.F. Kitcham, Bradford county, and J.G. Bohn, report the capture of stragglers."

Turnbull (1869) reports "One was shot at Haddington, near Philadelphia, in 1866."

Poole (unpublished manuscript, 1969) considered the Krider specimen to be the one mentioned by Turnbull. In addition, he sites a specimen taken by T. G. Gentry on October 15 (no year) mentioned in Gentry's Life Histories of the Birds of Eastern Pennsylvania (1877:212). Poole discounts the reports of Wrenshall, Kitcham and Bohn mentioned by Warren.

Todd (1940) also discounts the Wrenshall report as "unverifiable and unacceptable."

There is a specimen in the Reading Public Museum with the label "Albany, Berks County, January 26, 1887," with the initials of L.W. Mengel. I personally examined this specimen in 1990. This appears to be the only extant specimen for Pennsylvania.

Twentieth Century Records

13 May 1963, Meadville, Crawford County, Mary Leberman and Jean Gills. Sight record reported in Audubon Field Notes (1963) and Leberman (1988).

13-18 January 1979, Erie, Erie County, Stanley Zagorski. This sight record is the one cited in Leberman (1988) and Stull (1985).


References:


2469 Hammertown Rd. Narvon, PA 17555

WANTED:

Fifth Bulletin of the International Committee for Bird Preservation

Approx. 180 pp., paper cover, 6/2" x 9!/4", published approx. 1941 or 1942; possibly compiled by T. Gilbert Pearson.

Please call Allan Keith (201)
First Pennsylvania Record of Ross' Goose
Chen rossii
Lancaster County
Franklin C. Haas

A Ross’ Goose (Chen rossii) was found by Ed and Jo Pederson on 27 February 1991 in Drumore Twp., Lancaster County, near Muddy Run. The bird was with a large flock of Snow Geese (C. caerulescens).

I first saw the bird on 1 March 1991 at the Wentworth farm near the intersection of River Road and Route 272. The bird was in a field with a flock of Snow Geese approximately 200 yards away. Viewing through a Questar scope at 80 power enabled me to see the overall small size, the smaller rounded head and the very small bill, all in direct comparison with the larger Snow Goose. The lack of a “grin” and the small triangular patch at the base of the bill were also noted.

In addition to the Snow Geese, the majority of which appeared to be “Greater,” there were also several “Blue” Geese and small Snow Geese which appeared to be of the “Lesser” race. Although these “Lesser” Snow Geese were noticeably smaller than the other Snow Geese, they did not have the distinctive shape or bill of the Ross’ Goose. The flocks of geese frequently took off, milled around and landed in new locations, making it difficult to relocate the Ross’ Goose each time.

While scanning through the flocks, the “Lesser” Snow Geese would “jump out” at you, but could be quickly dismissed by the features noted above. As with so many other look-alike birds, when you spotted the Ross', you knew it!

The bird was seen by many observers off and on until 26 March 1991. No satisfactory photographs have been submitted as of this date for documentation. The bird tended to stay at a greater distance than the two other Ross’ Geese found at Middle Creek Wildlife Management Area a few days later. If anyone has taken identifiable photographs of this bird, please send them to Pennsylvania Birds for submitting to the records committee and for archiving of the record.

2469 Hammertown Rd.
Narvon, PA 17555

Second State Record of Ross’ Goose
Chen rossii
Lancaster County
Tom Garner

On 3 March 1991 I found a Ross’ Goose (Chen rossii) at Middle Creek WMA in Lancaster County, several days after the first state record was discovered in the southern part of the county. The bird was with a flock of about 800 Snow Geese (C. caerulescens) on the main lake out from Willow Point Trail.

When I first spotted the Ross’s, I immediately noted its very small size and even smaller bill. Unfortunately, about a minute after fording it, the flock flew, but landed again on the lake. After spending 30 minutes trying to relocate the bird with no success, I was starting to wonder if the ten hours that Eric Witmer and I had spent the day before looking at 10,000 Snow Geese in the southern part of the county still had my eyes fatigued, and if I had only imagined the Ross’s. After another ten minutes of searching I again found the bird, so small in comparison to the other geese that it seemed to “jump” right out at me. This time I watched it for several minutes, leaving no doubt in my mind that it was a Ross’ Goose.

Besides its much smaller size I noted its shorter neck and small, rounded head. In comparison to the pink bill of the Snow geese with their obvious grinning patch, the bill of the Ross’s at this distance (about 125 yards) appeared so small that it was very difficult to pick out any marks on it with a 35X scope. The bill could be best described as somewhat triangular in shape and proportionately small, even considering the overall small size of the goose.

The flock once again flew, landed again, and I began wishing another birder would be there to confirm the sighting. I turned away from my scope and was happy to see Randy Miller standing behind me, and when he jokingly asked me if I had seen any Ross’ geese, he was quite startled that the answer was yes. We were able to relocate the bird, agreed on all field marks, and we also independently noted that it had pale gray coloration on the back of the head and neck and also toward the rear of the wings, near the black primaries. We
I saw an immature male King Eider (Somateria spectabilis) in Erie at 10 a.m. on Tuesday, 1 January 1991. This bird occurs in Pennsylvania most frequently on Lake Erie where it is rare but regular (Leberman 1988). Other Pennsylvania records have been on the Delaware and Susquehanna rivers (Poole 1969).

The bird was in the marina on the north side of West Fisher Drive in Presque Isle State Park. I observed the bird for more than 90 minutes. I first saw it on the shore of the marina at a distance of 30 meters. It began to swim away, but it soon returned. The bird submerged frequently and at one point emerged less than 2 meters from a dock on which I was standing. After 15 minutes the bird swam to Pier B where I again observed it at very close range. Then it relocated to the middle of the marina where it associated with a small flock of Common Goldeneyes (Bucephala clangula).

In profile, the bill showed the characteristic extension towards the eye and concave pattern at the base. Head on, the bill was clearly cleaved by the most anterior portion of the dorsal ridge of the forehead. The base of the bill was dull orange, and the tip was dusky. The forehead was not exceptionally sloped.

The bird's head was brown. There was a faint but definite buffy eyering. A faint buffy line extending posteriorly from the eye was also apparent. The bird's breast was quite pale in comparison with its dusky back and wings and sides.

I once saw the bird in flight. The upper wing was dark and unmarked. The wing linings were decidedly paler than the dark primaries and secondaries.

The bird was the same size or slightly larger than the Common Goldeneyes with which it associated. Even at a distance the bird was distinguished by its pale breast, orange bill, and overall shape.

I did not hear the bird.

The only bird with which this bird could have been confused is the Common Eider (Somateria mollissima), for which there exists no currently accepted Pennsylvania record (Kwater 1990). Immature males of these species differ importantly in bill shape and color, and observations of this bird's bill absolutely preclude the possibility of Common Eider.

The bird was observed under fair conditions, frequently at extremely close range, with 8.5X binocular and a 20X telescope. Richard Floyd and Arjun Prabhu also observed the bird. (This bird was seen off and on until 16 March 1991. -eds.)

Literature cited.


Pesticide Research Laboratory Pennsylvania State University University Park, PA 16802

Ninth Record of Harlequin Duck Histrionicus histrionicus for Erie County
Jerry McWilliams

At approximately 11:15 a.m. on Sunday, 17 February 1991, I saw and identified a female Harlequin Duck (Histrionicus histrionicus) at the channel on Presque Isle State Park. The bird was
actively feeding about 150 yards away southeast of the south pier. It remained solitary the entire time, except when other ducks swam past it and when, on one occasion, a female Surf Scoter (Melanitta perspicillata) fed in its company for about five minutes.

The direct comparison with the Surf Scoter and with passing female Buffleheads (Bucephala albeola) gave me excellent opportunities to study them together. The Harlequin Duck was only slightly larger than the Bufflehead, but almost two-thirds the size of the Surf Scoter. The Harlequin was entirely dark gray-black, the same tone as the Surf Scoter. Its head was round with a steep forehead and a small Bufflehead-like bill which was dark, but paler than the rest of the bird. There was a perfectly round white patch directly behind the eye. In front of the eye and at the base of the bill there were two paler patches, one above the other. The lower patch was wedge-shaped, widest at the front of the eye and at the base of the bill. The irregular round upper patch was slightly separated from the bottom patch.

![Harlequin Duck, Presque Isle SP, 2/17/91. Photo by Dave Darney.](image)

The neck was very thick, equal in width to the Surf Scoter’s neck and much thicker than the Buffleheads. The tail was as long as or slightly longer than a Bufflehead’s. The tail was usually carried flat on the surface of the water, but occasionally it was up at about a 45-degree angle. A pale belly patch was exposed when the bird stood erect on the water to stretch. When diving it spread its wings slightly as it submerged in the same way that scoters and King Eiders (Somateria spectabilis) do.

The bird was viewed by me for approximately an hour and a half under good light conditions. The sky was cloudy (stratus), but the cloud cover wasn’t dense. The wind was westerly at approximately 5 mph. The last two days had been stormy with snow squalls, winds in excess of 25 mph, temperatures below 10° F and wind chill factors at 30° below zero. I used a Zeiss 10X40 binocular and a 25X Bushnell spotting scope. My past experience with the species includes four on Presque Isle and one at Pittsburgh. All were females.

Other birders who saw the Harlequin Duck were Joyce Hoffmann, Walter Schaeffer, Geoff Robinson, Linda McWilliams, Dave Darney and Sam Stull. Dave Darney and I both photographed the bird.

3142 W. 12th St.
Erie, PA 16505

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**Third Western Pennsylvania Record of Mississippi Kite**

**Ictinia mississippiensis**

**Erie County**

Jean and Jim Stull

It was 17 March 1991, an unseasonably warm day (high of 78° at 2 p.m.) and overcast. We had been watching birds since about 11 a.m.—mostly Turkey Vultures and crows, but including at least 12 other species, moving from southwest to northeast on strong, gusty southwest winds located about 10 miles south of the Lake Erie shoreline. Our vantage point was in Springfield Township along State Line Road just east of the Ohio border in extreme northwestern Pennsylvania.

By 3 p.m. we had tallied more than 650 birds including Red-tailed, Red-shouldered, Rough-legged, Cooper’s, and Sharp-shinned hawks, kestrels, harriers, a Merlin, and a goshawk. A nice adult Bald Eagle had just flown over us when several more TVs appeared over the horizon. With them Jim spotted “something different.” I saw it immediately and we watched as it moved closer and skulled quickly along almost directly overhead. “It’s a kite!” Those were my words, but neither of us said anything else as it moved eastward with the TVs and disappeared. Rather than going for the books immediately as we were tempted to do, we first described exactly what we had seen to each other: “I should add here that we have seen all of the five North American kites—the first, an Everglades (now Snail) Kite in Florida in 1954, the last, a Hook-billed in Texas in 1986.1

1) Typical shape of most kites: slim body; long, slim tail; pointed wings held flat; effortless flight. (Most of the birds that day were riding the winds fairly low, needing little effort to move across our scope of vision.)

2) Smaller than a Peregrine, larger than a Merlin.

3) Long, slim, completely dark, straight or slightly notched tail contrasting with gray unmarked underbody and head. (The bird did not flare its tail at any time as we watched it.)

4) Pointed wings with dark tips.

Although all of the illustrations of adult Mississippi Kite we found in a subsequent search of the literature showed (from beneath) a value gradation from dark to light from wing tips to body, this bird showed a fairly sharp contrast between the dark and light-the primaries being darkest. We never saw the upper surface.

We are aware that this is not only an unusual sighting (only the third Western Pennsylvania record), but is also quite early. However, all pertinent characteristics were present and accounted for. The dark unmarked tail, particularly, confirmed our identification of an adult Mississippi Kite. It turned out to be almost the last bird of the day, with only five more kestrels to appear by 4 p.m.

661 Benson Rd.
Waterford, PA 16441

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**Mississippi Kite**

**Ictinia mississippiensis**

**Franklin/Fulton Counties**

Charles Brightbill

On Easter Sunday, 31 March 1991, I was hawk counting on Tuscarora Summit on Rt. 30 and Augbrick Rd., at 12:28 EST. A bird thermaled upwards in the east about 100 feet from me.

The following are the notes I wrote at that time:

“immature (brownish); row of light
dots-trailing edge of wings; ‘sharp’ face; shape like harrier-no rump patch; flight ‘buoyant,’ not disjointed; tail squared, slightly notched; 100 ft. above; from 3 -9 [o’clock]; circled in thermal e. of me, crossed above, circled over “The Pulpit,” trebled height in ±2 min.; hazy, filtered light; sky [conditions] “2”; wind [conditions] “2” from SE.

The bird disappeared to the west at 12:30 p.m. The bird had vertical striping on its chest and horizontal barring on its tail feathers and rose effortlessly in the thermals. I called it a Mississippi Kite. I’ve been a hawkwatcher at Tuscarora since 1968 and I’ve never seen a bird like this before. I use Audubon Swift 8.5×44 glasses. There was no photo taken and no other witness.

11986 Buchanan Trail W.
Mercersburg, PA 17236

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**Dark-morph Red-tailed Hawk**

*Buteo jamaicensis*

*Northampton County*

Rick Wiltraut

*See photo in Northampton report.*

On 19 January 1990, I was driving along Richmond Ave. in Forks Township, Northampton, looking for wintering raptors in the area, specifically Rough-legged Hawk (*Buteo lagopus*). I had just finished studying an adult male light-morph Roughleg when I spotted a very dark buteo at the top of a tree which I assumed was a dark-morph Rough-leg. When I scoped the bird, however, I noticed that this bird lacked the light spot on the nape that dark Rough-legs often possess. Before I could check for any other field marks, the bird took off. I was immediately struck by the flight pattern which was quite unlike that of a Rough-leg, but more like that of a Red-tailed Hawk (*B. jamaicensis*). It also lacked the long-winged look of a Rough-leg. Unfortunately, I never got a clear look at the tail and the bird soon disappeared. I reported the bird as a darkmorph Red-tail, but it was never seen again.

On 13 January 1991, I was assisting Steve Boyce with his banding study of American Kestrels (*Falco sparverius*) in the county. We were in the Richmond Ave. area when Steve spotted a dark buteo at the top of a high tension tower directly across the road from where I had seen the dark Red-tail almost exactly a year ago. Steve assumed it was a dark Rough-leg until I mentioned to him that this was the spot where I had seen the dark Red-tail last year.

Eventually the bird flew and landed on a telephone pole close to the road where we could clearly detect unfeathered tarsi and a rufous red tail. I had previously seen dark Red-tails as a raptor counter at Whitefish Point Bird Observatory in Michigan, but never had the opportunity to study one so closely. A beautiful bird.

The bird was seen in the area until 17 January, then disappeared. On 20 January, however, Steve and I were kestrel banding along the Belvidere-Martins Creek Highway about seven miles northeast of the Richmond Ave. location when we sighted a dark-morph Red-tail on a pole next to the highway. Since the other bird had not been seen for three days, we assumed that the bird had moved to this spot. It was seen off and on at this location throughout the winter and was last seen on 30 March.

According to Clark (A Field Guide to Hawks, 1987), dark-morph Red-tails winter primarily on the Great Plains, rarely in the East. He also mentions that even in their normal wintering areas, dark-morph birds are “relatively rare, but can constitute as much as 10% of a local population.” Occasionally, dark or melanistic individuals are reported from hawk lookouts along the Kittatinny Ridge in fall.

205 Washington St.
Nazareth, PA 18064

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**An unusual Lesser Black-backed Gull**

*Larus fuscus*

*Lancaster County*

Bob Schutksy and Jerry Book

While scanning through gulls along the Susquehanna River near Washingtonboro 5 January 1991, we observed what we felt to be a Lesser Black-backed Gull (*L. fuscus*), but it did not match exactly what we remembered for this species, nor was what we saw depicted in Grant’s Gulls, a guide to identification (1982) which we reviewed later.

We took notes at that time and field sketches were drawn. We viewed the bird for approximately three minutes both on the water and at close range, 50 feet, and in the air with scopes and binoculars. The day was cloudy. Both of us are very familiar with the Lesser Black-backed Gull since it occurs regularly on the river.

This bird was larger than a Ring-billed Gull (*L. delawarensis*) and either the same size or minimally smaller than a Herring Gull (*L. argentatus*). Leg color was not noted. Its head was smaller than a Herring Gull, neck narrower at base of head, sort of an Upland Sandpiper look. This was very evident when the bird was sitting on the water next to a first-winter Herring Gull.

The plumage was that of a thirdwinter fuscus, except that the bill was black, and a broken (ragged) tail band was evident. This is what had us going. The bill was proportionately the same as a Herring Gull, but was black with a pale tip. The incomplete (ragged) sub-terminal band is best described as “isolated, complex pattern on each individual rectrix bordered by white.” The back and upperwing surface were the same color gray to the base of primaries, darker than delawarensis or argentatus, the usual color of fuscus not the Scandanavian race. There was no white noted on the upperwing surface.

Although the odds are greater for something aberrant to be found within the more expected species, it is important that notes be taken of any bird, especially gulls, that looks a bit unusual. It had us going until we checked with our local gull guru, Dan Heathcote, who finally convinced us that our original impression was probably correct.

59 Peach Ln.
Ronks, PA 17572

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**Pennsylvania Birds**

22  VOLUME 5 NO.1
Second Record of Iceland Gull
*Larus glaucoides*
for Berks County
Rudy Keller

On the evening of 28 February 1991 I got a call from Ernest Schiefer saying that he had seen a first-winter Iceland Gull (*Larus glaucoides*) late that afternoon at Lake Ontelaunee. I went to look for the bird 2 March 1991 and found it at the dam breast around midday in sunny, calm weather.

It flew in with Herring Gulls (*L. argentatus*), circling and banking repeatedly. I watched it through Nikon 7X35E binocular and a 60 mm zoom scope for about 40 minutes at distances of about 70 feet to 500 yds. At close range, the bird was easy to tell from Herring Gulls by its paler back, whiter wings without black tips and slightly smaller size. Its primaries looked translucent from below.

The Iceland's back, nape, rump and tail were lightly and uniformly barred or speckled buffy brown. The tail had no dark band. The brown wash was most visible in direct light at close range; farther away or in poorer light, the bird looked white. It looked even whiter underneath than above, especially the primaries. The bill was dark except for a barely visible pinkish area at the base where the mandibles join. The eyes were dark. I did not see the legs.

While I watched the Iceland Gull, only Herring Gulls were present for direct comparison. The Iceland was smaller overall and had a smaller, thinner, darker bill. Resting on the water at a distance, the pale Iceland could be distinguished from the grayer adult and much darker brown immature Herring Gulls. Schiefer noted that when the bird was resting on the water, the wings extended beyond the tail. When I saw the bird at rest, it was too far away to see this field mark.

My impression is that the National Geographic Guide contains a much better picture of the first-winter Iceland Gull than either the Peterson or Robbins guides.

This is the second county record of Iceland Gull. The first was also a first-winter bird seen at Lake Ontelaunee 19 February 1989 by Matthew J. Spence (Pa. Birds 3:25).

References:


RD 4, Box 235
Boyertown, PA 19512

Second Record of Black-legged Kittiwake
*Larus tridactyla*
for Berks County
Rudy Keller

As Matt Spence and I were scanning Lake Ontelaunee for waterfowl at about 9:30 a.m. on 31 March 1991, two birds came in high from the southeast that proved to be adult Black-legged Kittiwakes (*Larus tridactyla*) in breeding plumage. At first I called them Bonaparte's Gulls (*L. philadelphia*) because of their small size, buoyancy and fast wingbeats, but as they dropped closer to the water, their pale bills, allwhite heads and lack of contrast between gray mantle and flashing white outer primaries ruled out Bonaparte's Gull. When seen in scale with the Ring-billed (*L. delawarensis*) and Herring Gulls (*L. argentatus*) that were on the lake, the kittiwakes appeared smaller, sligher, smaller-billed and shorter-winged with faster wingbeats and much more buoyant, graceful flight. They did not call.

The birds' behavior was very ternlike, even butterfly-like, as they hovered several feet above the lake, suddenly dropped to the surface and briefly dipped their bills into the water without alighting, then bounced back up to repeat the procedure. They repeated this behavior near a group of loafing Ring-billed and Herring Gulls for 3 to 5 minutes, then disappeared behind a peninsula. A thorough search of the lake failed to relocate the birds. Perhaps they simply paused to drink, or perhaps they tested the waters, found them too fresh and flew away to look for the ocean.

The kittiwakes had unmarked white heads, dark eyes and short bills that seemed very small at a distance because they were so pale. The underparts were white, as were the rumps and tails. The birds' tails were fully fanned the whole time they were in view, and we could see no cleft or fork. Harrison (1983) notes that the cleft tail is less noticeable in adults than in juvenile birds. We also did not see the legs, which the birds kept hidden in their belly feathers.

The underwings were white except for black tips on the primaries, with black extending partway up the leading edge of the first primary. On one bird, the wingtips were solid black; on the other, a subterminal white spot contrasted with the black on perhaps the 4th primary of each wing. The leading and trailing edges of the wings were white up to the black wingtips. The mantles and backs were gray. The demarcation between the black and gray or white of the wings was clear, but more scalloped than straight-edged; it did not 'bleed' into the gray or white as it does on the bibs of some chickadees.

I observed the birds through 7X35 binocular and a 60 mm zoom scope in good light under clear, almost calm conditions at distances of about 200 feet to more than 400 yds.

To my knowledge, this is the first sighting of Black-legged Kittiwake in Berks County since Dr. Earl L. Poole saw one at L. Ontelaunee 17 November 1935 during a severe northeast storm. The species was also listed by J. F. Hofmann in 1890, a record doubted by Poole because Hofmann did not list Bonaparte's Gull, which in winter plumage can be confused with Black-legged Kittiwake.

References:


First Winter Record of Forster's Tern
Sterna forsteri
in Pennsylvania
Erie County
Jerry McWilliams

Date: 13 January 1991
(remaining until 19 January 1991).
Location: Dobbin's Landing at
the foot of State Street in Erie.
Viewing time: 12:30 to 1:00 p.m.
and brief periods thereafter.
Weather: cloudy (stratus),
light westerly wind,
temperature about 35°F.
Optical equipment:
Zeiss Dyalyt 10X40
binocular and 25X Bushnell
Spacemaster Spotting Scope.
Observers: myself, Jim Baxter, Ed
Kwasser, Joyce Hoffmann, Walt
Schaeffer and many others.

Description: I discovered the
bird sitting on the ice among
Bonaparte's Gulls (Larus
philadelphicus). The smaller size than
Bonaparte's, slim body, long thin
primaries, short legs and very pale
overall identified it as a small
sterna.

I identified it as a Forster's Tern
(Sterna forsteri) initially by the
black facial patch. Beginning at
the front of the eye, the dark patch
extended behind and curved slightly
below the eye and ended abruptly
not extending around the head as in
Common Tern (S. hirundo) or Arctic
Tern (S. parasitica). The nape was
light grey with black. The bill
was lightly flecked with gray. The bill
was shorter than the neighboring
Bonaparte's. The folded primaries
were pale gray, not frosty, indicating
Basic I plumage or primary wear.
The outer rectrices extended to the
tip of the primaries. In flight the
inner fork of the white tail was
bordered in dusky gray or brown. In
Common or Arctic tern the inner fork
is white and the outer rectrices
are black.

Ironically, a Forster's Tern was
at Dunkirk Harbor in New York a
week or two prior to this sighting.
Dunkirk Harbor is about a one hour
drive northeast of Erie. I am very
familiar with this species since I
have seen thousands of them in
many areas of the United States in
all plumages. This is the first winter
record of this species in Erie County.
I am not aware of any winter records
elsewhere in Pennsylvania.

3142 W. 12th St.
Erie, PA 16505

First Record of Loggerhead Shrike
Lanius ludovicianus
in Erie County
Jerry McWilliams

This report is the first
Loggerhead Shrike sighting in Erie
County since 1982.

Date: 31 March 1991.
Location: Gull Point on Presque Isle State
Park. Viewing time: periodically
between 8:45 and 9:15 a.m.
Weather: mostly clear (some cirrus clouds),
wind southwesterly to approximately
10 mph, temperature 27°F.
Optical equipment: Zeiss Dyalyt 10X40
binocular and 25X Bushnell
Spacemaster Spotting Scope.
Observers: Joyce Hoffmann, myself,
Walt Schaeffer, Boris Weitzmann
and his friend Dave.

Description: While walking
towards the east entrance of the bird
sanctuary, Hoffmann spotted a
shrike perched in a tree about 100
feet ahead of us. As soon as she said
"shrike" it flew across a pond and
landed in the top of a small
Cottonwood and before I could set
my scope up it flew down into some
Bayberry bushes. We walked around
the pond and it flushed, landing
again in a nearby Cottonwood. We
were able to get two spotting scopes
on the bird before it flew.

It was identified as a shrike by
the horizontal perching profile, grey
back and head with a black facial
patch, black wings and tail with
white outer rectrices, and
whitish-gray under parts. I
identified the shrike as a
Loggerhead by the following
characteristics.

The bird appeared slim and
largeheaded. When the bird turned
its head showing the side of its face,
the shape and size of the bill could
easily be seen. It was entirely black
including the lower mandible, and
was stubby being widest at its base
and tapering to a blunt tip. The
upper mandible was only slightly
hooked and barely reached past the
tip of the lower mandible. Northern
Shrike (L. excubitor) have a longer
and heavier bill which is basically
the same width to at least midway
on the bill. The upper mandible
tapers to a strong hook which
reaches well below the tip of the
lower mandible. The base of the
lower mandible is usually pale in
Northern Shrike.

The facial patch of the
Loggerhead was wide and began
behind the eye and was generally
the same thickness to the base of
the upper mandible. Northern Shrike
has a thinner patch that narrows
and droops slightly where it meets
the upper mandible. I could not
clearly see the black extending over
the top of the bill. The mantle, nape
and head were medium gray with
the head appearing slightly darker.
Northern Shrike is lighter gray on
the mantle with the nape and the
head appearing slightly paler than
the mantle. The rump was not seen.
It did not pump its tail like Northern
Shrike, but did appear to jerk it
slightly in many directions to keep
itself balanced on its perch. I have
seen many Loggerhead Shrikes
throughout the southern United
States and in Erie. I am also familiar
with Northern Shrike since they
winter in Erie every year. I studied a
Northern Shrike for at least thirty
minutes near Edinboro just
yesterday.

3142 W. 12th St.
Erie, PA 16505

Winter Record of Nashville Warbler
Vermivora ruficapilla
Lancaster County
Steve Santner

Date: 17 February 1991.
Location: Chet and Thelma
Kaufman's backyard at the junction
of church and Bowman Roads,
Landisville, Pa. Habitat: Wooded
backyard surrounded by fields and
one other wooded backyard. Some
woodlots nearby. The two backyards
contain feeders, particularly a suet
feeder in the Kaufman's yard, which
appear to be the attraction for the
bird.

Sighting conditions: Seen as
close as 15 feet through a window.
Several short (5-10 seconds) looks.
Total viewing time about 15-30
seconds with naked eye and 9X25
binocular. The weather and sighting
conditions were good to excellent.

Other observers: The Kaufmans
at the time I saw it. Many others
before and since.

Description: At about noon on

17
February 1991, I stopped in the Kaufmans' having heard of this bird from Bob Schutsky. At that time no positive ID had been made, although Thelma had tentatively identified it as a Nashville Warbler (Vermivora ruficapilla). Shortly after arrival (12:30 or so) the bird appeared on the suet feeder in the corner of the yard. It stayed there momentarily, allowing a good look at the gray head with a very narrow eye ring and generally yellow underneath. It then moved, without obtaining any food, chased by another bird.

It landed in a nearby bush and sat for a few seconds during which time it was seen to have pinkish legs and a small light spot in an otherwise all dark bill (the exact location of the spot was not observed). Again the gray head and yellow underparts (less bright than in a breeding plumaged bird, but with no hint of green tint) were seen, the gray being seen to be distinctly separated from the green (no transition of gray to green). The green upperparts and tail (with no trace of wingbars) were also seen.

The bird then hopped and flitted along the ground toward the house, stopping for about five seconds on the ground approximately 15 feet away. No new field marks were observed during this period. The bird then jumped behind the car parked in the driveway and was not seen again that day. The undertail coverts and underside of the tail were never seen.

Elimination of similar species: The eye-ring, gray head, green back and tail and yellow underparts all suggest winterplumaged Nashville Warbler. Connecticut Warbler (Oporornis agilis) is easily eliminated; this bird was almost hyperactive, unlike the relatively slow movements of Connecticut. Also, any Connecticut as bright yellow underneath as this bird (no green tint) would have had some marking on the throat which this bird did not have. Mourning (0. philadelphia) and MacGillivray's (0. tobianl) warblers both should also have markings on the throat and broken, or no apparent, eye-ring. Common Yellowthroat (Geothlypis trichas) sometimes appears to have a very thin eyering, but it is browner and not as cleanly yellow underneath. Finally, perhaps the most likely contender is Orange-crowned Warbler (V. celata).

Some are very yellow underneath, but all that I have seen have some green tint to the underparts. Also, Orange-crowned would have a broken eyering, if any, and probably a black line through the eye. They would not be clear yellow underneath all the way to the base of the bill. The only contra-indication in this bird is the pinkish legs. However, I recall a photo of a bird which appeared on one of the Chicago CBCs a few years back and was identified as a Connecticut Warbler on the basis of bright pink legs. Otherwise the photo appeared to be a Nashville Warbler in all other regards, and was ultimately judged by the Illinois state bird committee to be a Nashville. Unfortunately, I was unable to relocate this photograph.

Experience with this and similar species: Nashville Warbler and Common Yellowthroat-20+ years. Mourning Warbler-10 years. Connecticut Warbler-I've seen only 2, both in the fall of 1989. MacGillivray's Warbler-I've seen a few, back in the spring of 1978. Orange-crowned Warbler-I've seen a few, some in the East and some in California.

3 Overbrook Village Green Apts. Elizabethtown, PA 17022

Brewer's Blackbird
Euphagus cyanoccephalus
Huntingdon County
Greg Grove

This single bird was seen about 2:30 p.m. on 12 January 1991 on a fresh manure strip near McAlevy's Fort, Huntingdon County. I observed it from my car at a distance of 30-40 yards. There was bright sunshine at a 90' angle (on my right) from my line of vision to the bird.

The bird had very light white or yellow eyes. Thus it had to be a Common Grackle (Quiscalus quiscula), Rusty Blackbird (Euphagus carolinus) or Brewer's Blackbird (E. cyanoccephalus).

I ruled out grackle due to size. The bird had a short tail (in comparison to grackles). I was able to compare its length directly with European Starlings (Sturnus vulgaris) and Horned Larks (Eremophila alpestris) in the field of my binoculars at the same time as I observed this bird. Its length was very similar to the starlings and slightly larger than the larks.

I ruled out Rusty Blackbird based on plumage. This bird was black, not "rusty." In the bright sunlight its head had a distinct purple sheen and its body had a green-blue sheen. The bird kept mostly to itself, although starlings, Horned Larks, Mourning Doves (Zenaida macroura), Rock Doves (Columba livia), and one American Pipit (Anthus rubescens) were also on the manure strip.

I observed the bird for 25 minutes through 8.5X44 Swift Audubon binocular.

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Second Report of the PA. Ornithological Records Committee
May 1991
by Ed Kwater, Chairman

Since the publication of the First Report of the P.O. R. C. (Pa. Birds 4:5-9) the Official List of the Birds of Pennsylvania has also been published (Pa. Birds 4:51-53). The Official List clearly identified those species which are classed as rarities in the state. Rarities require documentation in the form of a specimen, photograph, recording or written description in order to be considered for acceptance by the P.O.R.C. Some species are exempt from rarity status in certain counties. For instance, White Ibis is considered a rarity (and therefore needs documentation to be submitted to P.O.R.C.) in the whole state except Lancaster County, where it is of relatively regular occurrence. Observers are urged to consult the Official List (and the update in Pa. Birds 4:100) to determine whether or not a species is a rarity in any particular county.

During the last twelve months, the P.O.R.C. has reviewed twenty-six rarity records (decisions on two of these are pending) compared to twenty-nine during its first year. These numbers do not accurately reflect the number of rare birds being seen. Observers are encouraged to submit documentation for any rarity seen in the state.

On the whole, the quality of documentation received by the committee is improving. Written description are more accurate and this has greatly increased the acceptance rate from 41% in the first year (April 1989 to May 1990) to 71% in the second (May 1990 to May 1991). In several cases however the only documentation received for the submission of a rarity record has been a photograph. Very often this has been insufficient to positively clinch the identity of the bird. However in some instances, photographs have provided inconclusive evidence as to the identity of the species. Either the bird has been too small in the frame or the exposure or clarity has been such that a determination cannot be made. It is often extremely difficult to obtain adequate photographs of a rarity. It is therefore extremely important that full written documentation should accompany all photographs (or recording and specimens for that matter) of rare birds.

Systematic List of Accepted Records, by Class (AOU order)

CLASS I


CLASS II


LAWRENCE’S WARBLER (Vermivora chrysoptera x pinus). Erie Co. One at Presque Isle State Park, 8 September 1991 (J. McWilliams, E. Kwater).

CLASS III

HORNED GREBE (Podiceps auritus). York Co. One on the Susquehanna River at Long Level Road on the extremely late date of 25 June 1990 (A. Spiese).

EARED GREBE (Podiceps nigriceps). Erie Co. One at Presque Isle State Park, 29 October 1990 (J. McWilliams).


HARLEQUIN DUCK (Histrionicus histrionicus). Erie Co. Female at Presque Isle State Park, 11 November 1990 (J. McWilliams).


JAEGER (Stercorarius sp.). Erie Co. One at Presque Isle State Park (either Pomarine or Parasitic), 30 September 1990 (J. McWilliams).

FRANKLIN’S GULL (Larus pipixcan). Lancaster Co. A first-winter bird at Conejohela Flats, Susquehanna River, 9 September 1990. Possibly the same individual as on 6 October 1990 (see above).

WESTERN KINGBIRD (Tyrannus verticalis). Chester Co. One at Nottingham Park, 9 August 1990 (W. Barber).


BREWER’S BLACKBIRD (Euphagus cyanocephalus). Lawrence Co. One at a feeder in New Castle, 28 September 1990 (B. Dean).

List of Records Not Accepted


Ferruginous Hawk - Dauphin Co. 18 September 1990. Details did not conclusively rule out other species.

Prairie Falcon - Mud Level Road, Cumberland Co. 22-24 October 1990. Photographs submitted, but possibility of escape not discounted.

Royal Tern - Sunbury Dam, Northumberland Co. 23 September 1989. Insufficient detail.


Summary of the Season - January to March 1991

It would be easy to concentrate on the rarities that were found this quarter, but that hardly would be a summary of what was happening around the Commonwealth. The "big three" (King Eider, Ross' Goose, and Northern Hawk-Owl) generated excitement, but also, because of their presence, other birds were found in the areas of concentration.

Many birders out looking for the Ross' Goose in the mass of Snow Geese that were in unprecedented numbers in Lancaster were also able to get outstanding looks at Eurasian Wigeon and some were even fortunate enough to view one or two Greater White-fronted Geese (Lancaster only).

We have not had a report from Wayne in many years, so it was beneficial to Pa. Birds to have observations from many birders who visited that site. Maybe this will encourage some of us to go into the seldom-visited areas and turn up who-knows-what.

Both species of expected loons were found, but the Red-throated only in Lancaster. Common Loon were found in all three months somewhere. Red-necked Grebe was located in four counties, Eared Grebe only in Crawford and Erie. The 26 Great Cormorant in Philadelphia were an all-time high count. Four March reports of American Bittern were quite good. Seven counties reported Great Egret, even one walking on the ice in Philadelphia in January! That county produced the only March record of Glossy Ibis!

Thirty-one species of waterfowl were found. Cumberland birders found the only Brant of the season and only Cumberland and Lancaster hosted Eurasian Wigeon this quarter. The Harlequin Duck in Erie was their 5th county record. A Surf Scoter in Cameron was an excellent find.

Turkey Vultures in Westmoreland I February were unprecedented. Were the January Osprey in Bedford, Huntingdon, Tioga, and Westmoreland early or late? Good news was the Osprey nest-building activity noted in Northampton in late March. Not only is the sighting of a Mississippi Kite in Pennsylvania unusual, but seeing one at the end of March in Erie was outstanding. Bald Eagle reports continue to be encouraging in diverse locations around the state. The dark-phase Red-tailed Hawk, more usual in our western states, but found in Northampton was noteworthy. Winter reports of Merlins seem to be increasing. Peregrine Falcon were seen in five counties, all associated with the major river valleys.

Some attention maybe should be directed to quantifying our sightings of Common Moorhen and American Coot. Those of you with historic data may be able to provide summaries for various areas demonstrating any decline and perhaps corresponding it to habitat loss or whatever might be apparent. A Sandhill Crane took refuge for almost two weeks on Haldeman I., Dauphin, a PGC wildlife propagation area closed to the public. What is probably the first winter record of Rudy Turnstone in Pennsylvania was duly recorded by Jerry McWilliams in Erie, as well as their first January record of American Woodcock.

Little Gull were found, as expected in Erie, but also for the second consecutive year in Lancaster. The two adult Thayer's Gull in Erie were a first state record for that age. An Iceland Gull in Berks was only the second county record. Lesser Black-backed Gull were found in the now traditional three counties (Bucks, Erie, Lancaster) but also in Philadelphia, where it was the highlight of their Winter Bird Census. Glacous Gull was reported only in Erie. Great Black-backed Gull numbers were impressive in Erie, with 1000 counted. In almost 30 years of birding in Luzerne, Bill Reid found his first adult Great Black-backed Gull. He has only nine sightings of that species in the county. It was over 50 years between sightings of Black-legged Kittiwake in Berks. In all probability, the sighting of the Forster's Tern in Erie was the first winter record of this species for Pennsylvania.

How is Barn Owl doing in your area? The Delaware/Philadelphia sightings were all of the same birds in the Tunicum area. Mufflin birders were excited to find them breeding there. Snowy Owl was found in five counties.

Word came to us that over a thousand people visited the Northern Hawk-Owl site. The other expected owl species had good reports generally. Lehigh had their best owl winter in years.

Tree Swallows generally came through the last week in March, so the finding of them on the second (Westmoreland) and third (Philadelphia) of that month was quite early. A Northern Rough-winged Swallow in Cumberland 29 March was very early. There were also a few somewhat early Barn Swallows found. For reasons better known to Blue Jays, they apparently wintered farther south this year. Erie hosted a large winter roost of American Crow, unusual. A Fish Crow in Luzerne in mid-January was also unusual. Southeastern Pa. continued to report good numbers of Black-capped Chickadee all quarter, but more peculiar was the Carolina Chickadee in Northampton. Red-breasted Nuthatch were uncommon generally, with only the southeast having reports of any decent numbers. Carolina Wren was widespread and in good numbers. Outstanding was the Blue-gray Gnatcatcher in Lehigh on the last day of the quarter. Good documentation from a non-birder gave Delaware its first Varied Thrush record.

Northern Shrikes were found in 11 counties, with an impressive four individuals in Erie. The one in Westmoreland was excellent for that far south. Adams has been the only county in recent years to consistently have Loggerhead Shrike, so one in Erie and another in Franklin were noteworthy.

In PB's 5 years, viresos have never made this season's report. This year single Solitary Vireo were found in Montgomery (January) and Northampton (March) and were both new "date" records according to Poole's Birds of Pennsylvania (1964). Seven species of warblers were found. Leading the list of unexpected was a February Nashville Warbler in Lancaster, closely followed by a January record of a Palm Warbler in Berks. As in recent years, Am. Tree Sparrow were not found in any significant numbers. The only unusual Icterid was a Brewer's Blackbird in Huntingdon.

And, finally, winter finches. With the exception of Evening Grosbeak, few were noted. And even this species seemed to be concentrated in the northern tier or higher elevations. Crossbill reports were of White-winged Crossbill from Perry and Potter, and Red Crossbill in Centre and Huntingdon.

Com. Redpoll were found only in Erie and McKean. Purple Finch continue their unexplained decline. Sometime soon would be the ideal time for an investigation into the possible reasons.
COUNTY REPORTS - January through March 1991

ALLEGHENY COUNTY

Ted Floyd

Abbreviations: Allegheny R. (AR), Frick Park (FP), Kilbuck Twp (KT), Monongaehala R. (MR), Natrona Heights (NH), North Park (NP), Pittsburgh (PG), Vincentian Home (VH), Whitehall (WH).

A Great Blue Heron was present 2/3 along MR near Homestead, where they are frequently seen in winter (SB,KL). At least 4 Wood Duck had returned to NP by 3/7 (TF). There were 2 Green-winged Teal at NP 1/4 (TF), Single Gr. and Ls. Scap were at NP 3/23 (MF). An Oldsquaw was a good find at NP 3/23 (MF). A Cow. Goldeneye was on MR 2/10 (VD), and 2 Hooded Merganser were on AR 3/23 (MF).

It was a good quarter for raptors. First Turkey Vulture was 2/28 at PG (JM,KM). Accipiter reports included: Sharp-shinned and Cooper's hawks each from 4 locations (v.o.); single N. Goshawk at WH 1/6 (WH) and at NP 3/7 (LF). A Red-shouldered Hawk was at VH 2/1 (AG), and NH's resident pair had returned by 2/21 (PH). A Rough-legged Hawk was a good find at VH 1/7 (AG). The locally famous pair of Peregrine Falcon continued all quarter at PG (CB et al.).

Ring-necked Pheasant was reported from Beechwood Farms (TF), Bethel Park (WH), and WH (WH). An Am. Coot was at NP 3/23 (MF). First Killdeer was not until 3/2 at PG (JM,KM). The only Am. Woodcock was at Greenway 3/23 (JM, KM). There were 80 Ring-billed and 1 Herring gulls along MR 2/10 (VD). Only owls were: 4 E. Screech-Owl at FP 1/4 (TF); 2 Great Horned Owl at FP 1/4 (TF) and I at PG 2/12 (JM,KM); an unusual Barred Owl at KT 2/13 (PB). A Belted Kingfisher wintered near MR (v.o.). Wintering woodpeckers reported: Red-bellied at 6 locations (v.o.); Yellow-bellied Sapsucker at KT (PB) and Schenley Park (SB,KL); N. Flicker at KT (PB), PG (PB), and VH (AG).

The best report was of an astoundingly early E. Kingbird at PG 2/22 (JM,KM); the bird was photographed. Small numbers of Blackcapped and Carolina chickadees were reported throughout the county (v.o.). A Red-breasted Nuthatch at NH 1/4 was the only report (PH). Carolina Wren were widely reported (v.o.), but the only Winter Wren was a single bird at NP 1/4 (TF). A Golden-crowned Kinglet at HP 3/17 was the only report (PH), as was an E. Bluebird at Setterl's Cabin Regional County Park 3/17 (JM,KM). Small flocks of Am. Robin wintered throughout the county (v.o.), and N. Mockingbird were reported from 6 locations (v.o.). A Yellow-rumped Warbler was at FP 3/7 (TF).

Am. Tree Sparrow at NH 1/26 was the only sighting (PH). First Red-winged Blackbird was 2/22 at NH (PH). First Cow. Grackle was 2/20 at NH (PH), and 25 were at VH by 2/26 (AG). There were 2 Brown-headed Cowbird at NH 2/4 (PH).


ARMSTRONG COUNTY

Margaret and Roger Higbee

Abbreviations: Eldersridge (ER), Ford City (FC), Keystone Res. (KR), Kittanning (KTN), Manor Twp (MT), Manorville (MV), Rosston (RST), Tub Mill Run (TMR).

All reports are by ES at RST unless otherwise noted. A Cow. Loon appeared 1/31. One to 2 Pied-billed Grebe were listed between 3/1-23; a singleton was observed on a pond near KR 3/28 (MH,RH). First Horned Grebe was at KR 3/30 (GL); 4 were counted at RST 3/21-22. First Great Blue Heron was over FC 2/2 (GW). 7 Wood Duck returned 2/26 at RST.

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Sharp-shinned; Cooper’s, Red-Tailed and Rough-Legged hawks present on CBC. Red-Shouldered reported 10/12 & 11/11 YT (GH). In BKV a Sharp-shinned regularly checked out the area under a picture window for dead birds during Nov/Dec according to L&MJ. CBC total for Am. Kestrel was 18. Ring-Necked Pheasant and Ruffed Grouse reported from BL (CMc) and YT (GH). Ruffed Grouse found for CBC at SSP (CV). Wild Turkeys 11 on CBC (C&RMc). Only report of N. Bohwite 10/1 BKV (JT). Am. Coot SSP 10/23, 11/17 (GH) and 12/30 (CV). Killdeer last reported 10/16 YT (GH). Spotted Sandpiper SSP 10/23 (GH) and Ring-billed Gull SSP 10/28, 12/14 (GH) and 12/30 (CV). Rock Dove 623 and Mourning Dove 443 on CBC. E. Sreech-, Great-Horned and Barred owls reported from BL and YT all three months (CMc,RMc,GH). Barn Owl observed night of 10/25 on a road-killed rabbit along Rt. 220 s. of BED (TF), Road-killced SreechOwl found 10/26 (JES) near Mens, Chan, and Great-Horned found dead 11/29 along Rt. 30 about 3 mi. e. of BED (JES). Observers/listeners for owls needed in all areas of county. Last Ruby-Throat Hummingbird report was 10/2 YT (GH). Belted Kingfisher 12/15 (BL CMc), and CBC (C&RMc,L&MJ). Red-Headed, Red-Bellied, Downy, Hairy, N. Flicker and Pileated woodpeckers reported from almost all areas by CBC participants. Last Yellow-bellied Sapucker was 12/27 YT (GH). E. Phoebe last seen 11/16 YT (GH). Horndark near Cessna 11/11, 12/5 (GH) and CBC total of 187 (C&RMc,JES). Am. Pipit near Cessna 11/28 & 12/14 (GH). Blue Jay 61 on CBC. Am. Crow 35 at feeder 11/13 BL (TC) and 313 on CBC. Last Com. Raven 11/28 BL (CMc). Last Com. Turkey 10/23 BL (CMc). Black-billed Cuckoo 3/3-10. Two to 6 Bonaparte’s Gull were seen between 3/23-28. Top Ring-billed Gull tallies included 125 at 3/11, 150 at KTN 3/3 (DE), and 133 at RST 3/5. Single Short-eared Owl were found at ER (DE) and 2/3. Two Ring-billed Terns only recorded between 3/10-30. Top Scaup sightings included I on 2/5, 1 at MV 2/12, and 8 on 4/5. Four Harriers were only reported at RST 3/21, and 2 at KR 3/28 (MH, RH). Ten N. Black-capped Chickadees were seen 3/21 (MH,RH). Roger Higbee, RR Box 166, Indiana 280. CBC was held 12/30 with 53 species and 6739 individuals. The CBC was held from 525.1 mi. E. of JK. KLs. Scaup reported 12/30 CBC at SSP (CV). Golden-Crowned Kinglet totaled 16 on CBC, but only 1 Ruby-crowned was reported; 10 Ruby-crows handed in Oct. BL (JES). Flock of 15 E. Bluebird 11/24 BL (CMc) and CBC total was 52. Hermit Thrush last reported 12/1 BKV (JT). Pack of 100+ Am. Robin observed 10/31 BV (JAS); CBC found only 25. Gray Catbird 10/20 YT (GH), but 18 N. Mockingbird were still around for CBC. Cedar Waxwing 11/25 BL (CMc) and CBC (JT). E. Starling on CBC totaled 2365.

We sincerely apologize to the Bedford birders for not including their report in the last issue. We did receive it in time, but through our own mistakes, did not include it in the final printout. Hereewith is the report.

Fourth Quarter 1990

Abbreviations: Bedford (BED), Bedford Valley (BV), Beldin Bay (BV), Clearville (CL), Hopewell (HO) Shawnee SP (SSP), Yount (YT). CBC was held 12/30 with 53 species and 6739 individuals.

**BEDFORD COUNTY**

Janet Shaffer


Turkey Vultures 10 present 11/5 YT, and GH indicated it was time for them to leave. Osprey BED (JES) 10/16 and in YT (GH) 10/7 & 11/23. Bald Eagle reported from YT (GH) 11/13, Golden Eagle 11/4 w. of Cessna (GH) and on Wills Mt. CBC period (TF). N. Harrier frequently seen at BL (CMc) during Oct. and various Nov/Dec dates in YT (GH). CBC total was 6

Almost all observers reported raptors from various locations. Earliest Turkey Vulture was BKV 2/24 (MJ). Osprey at (TC) BL 1/28 was the only report (TC). An imm. Bald Eagle at YT 3/17 (GH); also 5 or more Golden Eagle Oldsquaw, Com. Goldeneye, and Red-Breasted Merganser (GH) pair 3/18 (GH). Hooded Merganser reported 2/27 (GH) and 3/6 (CV).

High counts of several waterfowl spp. at L0 were recorded 3/24, including 14 Green-winged Teal, 1 Mallard X Black hybrid, 40 Am. Wigeon, 10 Ring-necked Duck, 5 Gr. Scapau, 32 Ls. Scapau, 11 Red-breasted Merganser and 30 Am. Coot (RK,BP,BS,MS). A pair of Redhead, a sp. not seen every year, was at a farm pond near LO all of Feb. and was joined by a 2nd d 3/3 (RK,BS,MS). No Canvasback reported. Other highs at LO were 4 Com. Goldeneye 2/17 (BS,MS) and 3 N. Shoveler and 5 Bufflehead 3/31 (RK). Hooded Merganser was widespread, with highs of 16 at LO 2/24 (MS) and 18 at Grace Mine 3/22 (MW). A new record high of 990 Com. Merganser was set at LO 2/10 (BS,MS).

An Osprey at Hamburg 3/24 was the earliest spring record there (KG). A Bald Eagle was at LO 2/19 (fide LG). KG found 4 Cooper's Hawk in mid-Late-Mar., including a likely breeding pair. An imm. N. Goshawk was at Big Spring Farm 1/19 (HJS) and an ad. migrating over Hamburg 3/16 (KG). A 100+ chicken pickin' Red-tailed Hawk were seen at 3 Berks poultry farms 1/27 (RK,HJS). 6 Rough-legged Hawk were in Marion Twp in Jan. (HJS), and the last was reported there 3/9 (KG). A Merlin was near Shartlesville 1/12 (DK). Two Am. Woodcock were performing courtship flights in Pike Twp 2/24, the earliest date in 25 years of birding that location (RK). The Penn Twp Long-eared Owl roost had 5-8 birds in Jan. and Feb. (HJS). Two Short-eared Owls were near Leesport 1/22-26 (DK).

The only Red-breasted Nuthatch report was of 2 birds wintering at a feeder near Bechtelsville (JK). A Hermit Thrush was in that same yard eating holly berries 1/16-20 (JK). A Palm Warbler at Peters Cr. 1/27 (MW) was unprecedented. A flock of 18 White-crowned Sparrow near Niantic 3/10 (GLF) was the only large group reported. A Lapland Longspur and 200 Snow Bunting were seen with 1000 Horned Lark in Marion Twp 1/12 (HJS). A Rusty Blackbird, probably wintering, was in Bern Twp 1/19 (EB), and 8 migrants were in Hamburg 3/20 (KG). A Purple Finch at Hawk Mt. Sanctuary 3/25 (LG) and 2 Pine Siskin that wintered at a Plowville feeder (HL) were the only northern finches reported.


BLAIR COUNTY

Marcia Bonta

Abbreviations: Brush Mt. (BM), Canoe Creek SP (CC), L. Altoona (LA), Sinking Valley (SV). All BM reports by the compiler unless otherwise noted.

CC and LA were the places to find early migrating waterfowl. The first Pied-billed Grebe was reported at LA 3/18, followed by 3 more 3/25 (BK). A Horned Grebe in basic plumage was diving at CC 3/17 (DK). A Great Blue Heron was at CC 2/2 (SAK) and 5 Tundra Swan flew over BM 1/13. Tundra Swan numbers were high in Mar. with 350 at LA 3/8 (BK), 600 flying over BM in groups of between 125 and 150 from 10:30 a.m. until 11:00 on 3/10, 500 at LA 3/11 (BK) and 142 over BM 3/20. The first flock of Canada Goose heard going over BM the night of 3/1 (SB). Two Green-winged and 2 Blue-winged teal at CC 3/27 (DK), as well as a d. Am. Wigeon 3/6 (SM). I Canvaskabac and 5 Redhead 3/18 (BK), 2 Ring-necked Duck 3/6 (SM). 4 Gr. Scapau and 7 Ls. Scapau 3/18 (BK). Homer Gap Res. produced 17 Oldsquaw and 1 White-winged Scoter 3/27 (BK). A 6 Com. Goldeneye appeared at CC as early as 2/9 (DK), while 3 Bufflehead 3/18 (BK), 3 Hooded Merganser 3/6 (SM), 3 Com. Merganser 3/18 (BK), and a d Red-breasted Merganser 3/6 (SM) completed the first waterfowl sightings for the period. BK commented that except for Canada Goose and Tundra Swan, waterfowl...
was scattered and in very small flocks.

Two Turkey Vulture on BM 3/2 (SB) were the first back. DK watched an Osprey at CC 3/27 with an 8" Brown Trout in its talons. A 4 Sharp-shinned Hawk was seen in the grape tangle outside our back door near our bird feeder on 1/2 by SB, returned 1/8 to walk around the ground in the grape tangle while the small feeder birds remained still. She grabbed a hiding junco and flew off (SMB). On the first day of the year, I watched an imm. N. Goshawk screeching and jumping up and down on the ground in the woods of BM near dusk, an example of play, according to N. Goshawk researcher, Tim Kimmel. Other raptors include 3 Red-tailed Hawk in SV 1/4 (BK), 1 Rough-legged Hawk, also in SV 1/4 (BK), an imm. Golden Eagle flying high over a valley 20 mi s. of Altoona which the observer watched for 10 minutes 3/11 (RW) and 7 Am. Kestrel in SV 1/4 (BK).

SAK heard a Ruffed Grouse on BM near Elberta drumming 3/3 as well as a gobbling Wild Turkey. I watched 12 turkey foraging along the trail ahead of me for over half an hour without, Linda Leonard, sticking on the wet ground. At CC, SMB saw 1 Am. Coot 3/6. Killdeer were present all period with 5 seen in SV 1/9 (BK), 5 at Altoona Water Treatment Plant 2/24 (BK), and 1 in SV 3/1 (RW). DK found 2 Com. Snipe in SV at a farm spring runoff 1/9 while SAK spotted 1 at CC 3/9. First Am. Woodcock on BM at seep 3/3. DK saw 3 Bonaparte’s Gull at CC 3/27 and 9 Ring-billed Gull flew over BM 2/10. A Belted Kingfisher perched on a snag at CC 3/17 (BK) and the first E. Phoebe, also at CC, 3/18 (BK). A large flock of Horned Lark was seen in SV 1/24 (BK). After an absence of 2 months, the first E. Bluebird appeared on BM 2/3. BK spotted the first Hermit Thrush at Mill Run 3/14 and BW watched 50 Am. Robin feeding in a juniper in SV 3/1. The first Drous-n-sided Towhee reported on BM 3/28 (MAB) as well as the first Field Sparrow. GJ reported the only Fox Sparrow at CC 3/26 and 2 Swamp Sparrow, while BK recorded the first Red-winged Blackbird and Com. Grackle in SV 2/22. Finally, a 4 Purple Finch was seen at our feeder 1/10, and she stayed through 1/12. Otherwise it was once again a sparse year for the finches.

OBSEVERS: Marcia Bonta, PO Box 68, Tyrone 16686 (814-6 3 4-1133), Mark Andrew Bonta, Steve Bonta, Steve & Marcia Bonta (SMB), Bill King, Gary Koch, Stan & Alice Kotala, Dave Kyler, Bill Wertz, Ray Winstead.

BRADFORD COUNTY

Bill Reid

Three dark-phase Rough-legged Hawk were at Coryland 3/26 (RY). It was a banner season for Short-eared Owl, with a single bird at New Era 1/22 (DG,TG); 4-5 in both the Burlington and Canton areas in early Feb. (v.o.); and 5 at Coryland 3/8 (RY). Horned Lark were reported as scarce all quarter (RY). A Yellow-naped Sapsucker was at Fassett 3/11 (L). An imm. N. Shrike was at Spring Hill 3/18 (EB,WR). Evening Grosbeak numbers were very low, but a flock of up to 14 was present at Spring Hill through the period (EB).

OBSEVERS: Elizabeth Beebe, Doreen Gerlach, Trudy Gerlach, Linda Leonard, Bill Reid, 72 W Ross St, Wilkes-Barre 18702 (717-8362525), Ronald Young.

BUCKS COUNTY

Ron French

Abbreviations: Bedminster Twp (BD), Buckingham Twp (BT), Doylestown (DY), E. Rockhill Twp (ERT), Five-Mile Woods (FW), New Hope (NH), Nockamixon SP (NSP), Ottswell (OT), Peace Valley Park (PVP), Revere (RV), Springtown (SP), Tyler SP (TS). A Pied-billed Grebe was at NH 1/28 (BH) & also at PVP 3/2 (AM,MO) & NSP 3/4 (SF). A Horned Grebe was at NH 1/28 (BH) & another at NSP 3/11 (SF) & 2 at NSP 3/29 (HR,JC). A Red-necked Grebe was at NSP 3/14-17 (SF,GF). 9 Great Blue Heron kettled over NSP 3/17 (GF) and 2 Tundra Swan were in a field near Quakertown 3/9. 2 Pintail settled periodically with a blue-morph at NSP 1/27 (D&EM) and I at PVP 2/9 stayed 3 weeks (RF et al.); a flock of 200+ Snows was noted over TSP 3/26 (JH). Earliest Wood Duck were 3 at RV 3/1 (SF). The Eurasian race of Green-winged Teal reported at PVP for several winters now, was again present for most of the period (DA et al.). (Would someone please try and get a photo of this bird? -eds.) As many as 4 N. Pintail were at PVP from 2/24-3/24 (RF et al.) & 3 at the swamp near NH 3/1 (BH). Two pair of N. Shoveler stopped at PVP 3/4 and 2 Gadwall at L. Warren 3/1 were noteworthy (SF). A few Canvasback were at NH, 3 at NSP 1/22 (SF), and I d at PVP periodically (RF et al.). 2 Redhead at NSP 1/23 (SF). Ring-necked Duck were reported widely, with 82 at Ingham Springs NH 1/1-2/3 the largest flock (BH). A Gr. Scap was at PVP 3/1 (AM) and 13 Ls. Scap at NSP 3/2 (SF). As many as 32 Com. Goldeneye were active on the Delaware R. n. of NH 1/4-3/13 (BR); were at RV 2/9 (SF), and 1 at PVP 3/4 (SF). Ruff were present during a PVP birdwalk 2/16 were a special treat (RF et al.). A Y Hooded Merganser celebrated the New Year at PVP (RF) and another at NSP 2/13 (SF). Cow. Merganser widely reported with 300+ at NSP 2/12 (SF). A Red-breasted Merganser at PVP 3/22, 10 on 3/24, and 2 on 3/27, & 7 at NSP 3/27 (SF).

7 Black Vulture were at PVP 2/9 (BH), 3 at NSP 2/5 (SF), and I over Rt. 413 at Pipersville 3/9 (RH). Earliest report of Osprey was at NH 3/26 (BH). An ad. Bald Eagle was at NSP 1/24 (DA), another 2/1115 (SF), and 2 ad. there 2/23 (GF). A roost of N. Harrier in BD was known to contain at least 17 birds (DMc,AB). An explosion in the Meadow Vole population in the area was noted. A Cooper’s Hawk was at PVP most of the period (KK et al.), another n. of NH from 1/23-2/9 (BH). HR & JC observed a N. Goshawk in Durham Twp 1/5, and I was found taking a feeder in OT 2/11 (KK). JH reported an imm. Red-shouldered Hawk at TSP 1/4, 1 at RV 2/9 (SF), and I at NSP 3/2/15 (RH), and I ad. 3/15 and an imm. 3/24 at NSP (GF). Only Rough-legged Hawk report was at PVP 1/13 (JdH). A Merlin was at PVP 1/13 (P&AG) and a Peregrine Falcon was in DY 3/9 (JS).

A flock of 14 Wild Turkey was in SP 1/21 (RH); I indiv. at PVP 3/9 (JS), and I at RV 3/26 (SF). 2-4 Com. Snipe at TSP 3/12,16 (DO); I at ERT 3/25 (HR,JC). A very early Am. Woodcock was in DY 2/12 (RH). A lone Bonaparte’s Gull was at NSP 3/30 (BH). 2 Great Black-backed Gull settled at PVP for the 2/16 birdwalk (RF et al.), and 49 at NSP 2/27 (SF). Ls. Black-backed Gull was seen periodically at NSP 2/2-3/1 (SF,RH); 2 at Penn Manor 2/21 (NSP). 2 Long-eared Owl remained in the PVP area all period (RF,MR); and 6 (plus I found dead) at TSP (DO). As many as 7 Short-eared Owl in BD, first noted by DMc, also enjoyed the vole explosion (ob.). Three separate reports of N. Sawwhet Owl received; I seen and heard at RV 1/10 (SF); I at ERT 2/2+ (HR,JC); and I at PVP 3/9 remained about a week (ST).

OBSEVERS: Bill Reid, 5384 Executive Dr, Easton 18045 (570-750-6200), Robert Schaff.

A Yellow-billed Sapsucker was at PVP 2/9 (BH). A Pileated Woodpecker at RV 1/30 (SF), and I in SP 2/7 (RH). Earliest E. Phoebe was 3/16 at BT (KW). NW & BMc observed 40 Horned Lark in a field off Rt. 413 near Carversville 2/20. Earliest Tree Swallow was at NSP 3/22 (SF). High count of Fish Crow was 65 along the river 3/26+ (BH). A Red-breasted Nuthatch visited at BT feeder all period (KW). 4 Brown Creeper 1/29 and the only Winter Wren report, 1/4, were at TSP (JH). A House Wren in TSP 3/17 (DO). E. Bluebird reported widely. A Hermit Thrush was in BT Jan/Feb (KW); I in DY 2/16 (RH); and FW 3/13 (DO). Over 1000 Am. Robin were in Hilltown Twp 3/11 (HR,JC).

A small flock of Am. Pipit at PVP (RF et al.) during a snow squall 3/30 was enjoyed by the 2/16 birdwalk group. A N. Shrike, first seen at NSP.
2/14 (SF) appeared 3/20 (DA) in the same area and the next week (m.o.b.).

GF found a Pine Warbler at NSP 3/17. A Louisiana Waterthrush arrived at Carversville 3/30. A Savannah Sparrow was at ERT 1/12 (HR, JC); small flocks of this species wintered at PVP (AM et al.) and Chalfont (RF). A Fox Sparrow was at RV 2/24 (SF) and a White-throated Sparrow at ERT 3/30 (HR, JC). 6 E. Meadowlarks were in OT 1/13-27 (KK) and 3 at TSP 3/25 (DO), 3 Rusty Blackbird were at RV 3/28 (SF). A leucistic Cow. Grackle accompanied a large flock of this species in a field in BD 3/3 and 1 Brown-headed Cowbird was at ERT feeders 1/12 (HR, JC). 

EXOTIC: A Ear. Goldfinch was at a feeder in Upper Makefield Twp 1-15 (JK).

OBSERVERS: Don Alman, Alan Brady, Jewel Cummings, Devich Farbottik, Steve Farbottik, George Francheois, Ron French, 3469 Limeklin Pike, Chalfont 18914 (215-997-1765), Anita & Paul Gursis, Ray Hendrick, Jeff Herbst, Bill Hoehne, Jason Horn (JaH), Ken Kitson, Joan Kurtz, Don & Elaine Mease, Don McNaught, Bruce McNamara, Masso O'Brien, Don Orris, Nick Pulcinella, Hart Rufe, Margie Rutbell, Joe Siegel, Jeanne Stroup, Shelly Taylor, Kathy Wannemacher, Nancy Wotruch.

**BUTLER COUNTY**

**Paul Hess**

**Abbreviations:** Butler City (BC), Cherry Twp (CT), Glades SGI (C&GL), Greentown (GT), Marion Twp (MT), Moraine SP (MSP), Slippery Rock Twp (SRT).

Despite warm temperatures and snowfall far below normal, few early arrival dates were reported. Killdeer, woodcock, phoebe, towhee, Field Sparrow, red-wing, grackle and cowbird, for example, returned about on time. Storm systems in the southern U.S. may have prevented much early movement.

Two Cow. Loom at LA 3/29 (CL) were first, as were 2 Pied-billed Grebe at SRT 3/20 (GB,SB,RC). Single Horned Grebe at LA 3/1-17 (CL, BD) and 5 there 3/29 (CL) were the only reports. Great Blue Heron was listed at MSP 1/1, SRT 2/26+ and GSG 3/3 (BD,GB,SB,RC). 47 Tundra Swan were near MSP 3/5 (TF) and the main passage came 3/11 with thousands over the county (fide MG). The low duck maxima and few reports of interest, at LA unless noted, include: 2 rather early Wood Duck pairs at SRT 3/7 (GB,SB,RC); an early Blue-winged Teal near MSP 3/5 (TF); 60 Ring-necked Duck at GSG 3/28 (DB); a Gr. Scaup 3/24 (PH); 300 Ls. Scap 3/29 (CL); 3 Oldsquaw, a White-winged Scoter, and 2 Cow. Goldeneye 1/20 (DD, EH); 54 Bufflehead 3/29 (CL, MG); 19 Hooded Merganser 3/1 (CL); 4 Cow. Merganser 3/8 (CL); 300 Redbreasted Merganser 3/29 (MG), and a Ruddy Duck 1/1 (CL, MG).

First Turkey Vulture appeared 3/14 at SRT (GB,SB,RC). One of GSG's Bald Eagle pair was seen at the old nest 3/31 (MG). N. Flicker was back at SRT 3/31 (GB,SB,RC). Among very few reports, N. Flicker was back at SRT 3/31 (GB,SB,RC). About 20 Bonaparte's Gull were at LA 3/25 (PH). Three Short-eared Owl were found along Fisher Rd. near MSP 3/5 (TF). Belted Kingfisher returned to SRT 3/8 (GB,SB,RC) among very few reports. N. Flicker was back at SRT 3/3 (GB,SB,RC). Pileated Woodpecker was listed at SRT (GB,SB,RC) and BC (MG). First E. Phoebe date was 3/20 at SRT (GB,SB,RC). About 50 Horned Lark were near MSP 3/5 (TF). A Tree Swallow at SRT 3/22 (GB,SB,RC) was slightly early, then 200 were at GSG (DB) and 175 at LA (CL) by 3/28-29. Two Golden-crowned Kinglet at SRT 3/5 (GB,SB,RC) was the lone report.

A Rufous-sided Towhee at MSP 3/7 (MG) perhaps over-wintered; first dates of 3/29-30 at MSP and SRT (CL,GB,SB,RC) were more usual.

**Top Am. Tree Sparrow counts were 65 at MSP 1/1 (BD) and a dozen at an SRT feeder (GB,SB,RC). First Field Sparrow report came 3/31 at SRT (GB,SB,RC). White-throated Sparrow remained scarce. 10 E. Meadowlark near MSP 3/5 (TF) was a good count by recent standards. A Rust Blackbird was found at SRT 3/9 (GB,SB,RC). Up to 7 Purple Finch were counted at SRT in Mar. (GB,SB,RC), but just 1 other at MSP 1/1 (BD) was noted. A Pine Siskin at SRT 3/17+ (GB,SB,RC) was the only report. The few Evening Grosbeak reports were led by 15 at GSG 2/3 and up to 13 at SRT (GB,SB,RC).


**CAMBRIA COUNTY**

**Georgette Syster & Gloria Lamer**

**Abbreviations:** Duman L. (DL), Hinckston Res. (HR), Patton area (PA), Prince Gallitzin SP (PG).

All waterfowl reports from PG unless otherwise noted. 3 Cow. Loom were present 3/25 (DG), as well as 4 Pied-billed and 2 Horned grebes. Great Blue Heron seen 3/21-22,27 (DG). The first Great Egret appeared 3/27 (DG). Tundra Swan numbered 3 on 3/17 (GL,GS) and sent there 3/25 (DG). Top Wood Duck count was 8 on 3/26 (DG) with 3 listed at HR 3/25 (C&GL). 10 Green-winged Teal were 3/20 (DG) and 20+ and GSG 3/17,17 and only 2 could be found at DL 3/7 (GL,GS). Am. Black Duck numbers were good with 27 on 2/19 (C&GL). A nice tally of 20 Am. Wigeon reported at HR 3/24 (C&GL) and 3 at PG 3/29 (DG). A lone Canvasback was noted 2/10 (C&GL). First report of Ring-necked Duck was 22 on 3/7 (GL,GS) increasing to 155 on 3/17 (C&GL) and 100+ reported 3/21 (DG). To count of Ls. Scaup at PG was 13 on 3/7 (GL,GS) and 29 at HR 3/24 (C&GL). Lone report of Oldsquaw showed 12 on 3/29 (DG). Cow. Goldeneye moved through from 2/10-3/17 with top count of 6 on 3/7 (GL,GS). Bufflehead numbers were low with only 2 at HR 3/24 (C&GL) and highest 8 at PG 3/21 (DG). Hooded Mergansers were present at PG, 6 on 3/29 and 9 on 3/27 (DG); 2 were at DL 3/7 (GL,GS). Only 3 Cow. Mergansers were found 3/29 (DG); but 4-27 Redbreasted Merganser appeared intermittently from mid-Feb-3/23 (DG, C&GL, GS). 8 Ruddy Duck were found 3/27 (DG).

Only 1 Sharp-shinned Hawk was reported, in PA 3/7 (GL,GS). The highlight of the quarter was a Rough-legged Hawk seen 7 times from mid-Jan/mid-Feb (DG). Fresh Wild Turkey tracks in the snow at PG 3/17 provided the only report (C&GL). Earliest Killdeer reports were 1 each at PG and DL 3/7. High counts of Ring-billed Gull were 84 on 2/3 (C&GL) and 100 on 3/21 (DG). Rough-legged Hawk was reported, in PA 3/7 (C&GL) and Chalfont (RF). A Fox Sparrow was at RV 3/17 (MG); 3 Redwinged Starlings were at RV 3/17 (MG) with 1 noted at PG 3/27 (DG).

OBSERVERS: Arlene & Larry Brown, Dave Gobert, Clayton Lamer, Gloria Lamer, RR 1 Box 183C, Penn Run 15765 (412-3491159), Georgette Syster, RR 1 Box 183C, Penn Run 15765 (412-3496293).
CAMERON COUNTY

Bill Hendrickson

Jan. started interestingly with a N. Shrike in the Hicks Run area 1/6 (RF). The shrike was again seen in the same area 1/25, 26 (MH, RH). A Golden Eagle also over-wintered in that area (MJ, RH). On 1/20 a Surf Scoter was seen on the Driftwood Branch (BH, RF). An E. Bluebird was heard 2/3 (MJ, BH). N. Saw-whet Owl were heard by RF at his house. On 2/24 a Sharp-shinned Hawk appeared at my feeder. It landed on the ground and walked around as if it were looking for something. After a few minutes of this behavior, it flew away (BH, MJ).

OBSEVERS: Randy Flamet, Ralph Harrison, Bill Hendrickson, RR 1 Box 265B, Emporium 15834 (814-486-1546), Marsha Jeffrey.

CARBON COUNTY

Bernie Morris

All sightings from Beltzville SP unless otherwise noted.

Com. Loon were seen 1/6 (JF). A Snow Goose and 8 blue morph were found 2/5 (BB). Two Com. Goldeneye were seen 1/13 (JH). 20+ Com. merganser were counted 1/5, and a N. Harrier 2/24 (JF). A Pileated Woodpecker was noted 1/19, and a Hermit Thrash 1/26 (IF). A flock of 100+ Horned Lark was at the Hickory Run service plaza on the Pa. Turnpike 2/9 (KC). A flock of 15-20 E. Bluebird was present throughout the season (m.ob.). A single Snow Bunting was seen along the Pa. Turnpike 2/19 (BR). A group of 25 + Evening Grosbeak was seen in Jan. and Feb (JF).


CENTRE COUNTY

John & Becky Peplusi

Abbrivations: Bald Eagle SP (BESP), Colyer L. (CL), Tofteens Gamelands (TG).

Four Horned Grebe were at CL 3/21 (K&JJ) and 9 at BESP 3/23 (TF). One Am. Bittern was at Tofteens 3/23 (TF) and 3/27 (GG). Other reports of waterfowl include: 4 N. Pintail at CL 3/1 (K&JJ); a d N. Shoveler at Centre Furnace Pond 12/26+ (MW); 8 Am. Wigeon at CL 3/21 (K&JJ) and 26 at BESP 3/23 (TF); numbers of Ring-necked Duck noted at CL 2/24+, peaking at 43 on 3/31 (K&JJ), while 34 were at Tofteens and 55 at BESP 3/23 (TF); a single Gr. Scaup and 101 Ls. Scaup were reported at BESP 3/24 (G&PS); 22 Bufflehead at BESP 3/23 (TF). Peak reports of mergansers at BESP include: 17 flooded (TF), 93 Common 3/23 (TF), and 12 Red-breasted 3/24 (G&PS).

A Turkey Vulture near Linden Hall Rd. 2/22 (K&JJ) was slightly early. An ad. Bald Eagle was at BESP 1/5, and 2 ad. were also there 2/24 (D&BB). One N. Goshawk was observed in the TG 3/17, 23 (TF). An ad. Golden Eagle observed flying S along Bald Eagle ridge 1/13 was apparently a very late migrant (KS); another Golden Eagle was seen in the Barrens 3/24 (TK).

A Sandhill Crane, 1st county record (No details, -eds.), was reported by two birders 2/2 near CL (EB, MR). It was seen flying SE about 50-100 ft high, but unfortunately was not seen by others who searched for it. 4 Pectoral Sandpiper seen on the mudflats below the overlook at BESP 3/2 were extremely early migrants (HH). A Great Black-backed Gull was at BESP 1/15 (MW). Two Long-eared Owls were present in a pine stand just w. of Unionville all quarter and another at the TG 3/2 (TF). Two N. Saw-whet Owl were heard at Bear Meadows 3/9 (GY, HH, SCPT). Earliest reported arrival date for E. Phoebe was 3/18 (MW).

Although E. Bluebird are not uncommon in the winter, finding 20 on 2/2 in the CL area is (EB, MR). A wintering Gray Catbird was seen in TG 1/12 and a Brown Thrasher was also there 3/17 (TF). The N. Shrike near fished at the in that area on Jan. (MW, MC, m.ob.). Another N. Shrike was near Rockspings 1/20 (J&BP). Two Yellow-rumped Warbler were seen in SGL 17/4 (JF&K). First reported Chipping Sparrow was 3/21 near Fairbrook (J&B). A Fox Sparrow was seen in TG 1/12 (TF), while another (presumably an early migrant) was near Fairbrook 2/25 (J&BP). Five Snow Bunting were along Nixon Rd. 1/19 (J&BP). Three E. Meadowlark were near Rockspings 1/11 (CY). The TG continue to see good for good for Rusty Blackbird during the fall and early spring, with 41 there 3/23 (TF). Redwings Blackbird and Cruck. Grackle apparently entered in force in the State College area 2/20 as several birders reported them on territory on that date. A flock of 24 Red Crossbills was near Unionville 2/3 (TF).

OBSEVERS: State College Field Trip, Dorothy & Blanche Bordner, Edward Budd, Mary Coleman, Tim Floyd, Greg Grove, Harry Henderson, Katherine & Jennings Jones, Tim Kimmel, John & Becky Pepelski, Box 364, Pennsylvania Furnace 16865 (814238-6541), Mark Roberts, Glenn & Paul Schwalbe, Karl Striedieck, Merrill Wood, Chuck Yohn, George Young.

CHESTER COUNTY

Jerry Pasquarella

Abbrivations: Honey Brook (HB), Hibernia Park (HP), Kurtz’ Fish Farm (KFF), Marsh Creek SP (MC), Octorara Res. (OR), Struble L. (SL).

Most birders reported that many species arrived earlier than usual this year. For example, large flocks of blackbirds and grackles which usually occur towards the middle of Feb. appeared in early Jan.

Com. Loon was first seen 3/27 at MC where 3 were present. Piedbilled Grebe showed up at MC on a rather early date 1/8, with as many as 4 there 1/17. They were observed periodically all quarter at MC. 4 Horned Grebe were there 3/24. Two Red-necked Grebe in winter plumage were at MC 3/11 (NT).

First Tundra Swan was at SL 1/15. Scattered indv. were reported at SL & MC until early Mar. The height of their migration seemingly occurred 3/4 when 150 were at OR, 125 of which were flyovers. On 3/4 a Greater White-fronted Goose was at OR keeping company with a rather oddy-colored Canada Goose (GS). Like most spp. this season, Snow Goose appeared in the area earlier than usual. An estimated 800 were near Cochranville 2/1 and 200 were at SL 2/2.

A Wood Duck in with a raft of Mallard was a surprise find at MC 1/13+; there were 3/29. A N. Shoveler was at MC 1/14. At least 2 Gadwall were at MC 1/15. Although E. Bluebird are not uncommon in the winter, finding 20 on 2/2 in the CL area is (EB, MR).

PESSASIA BIRDS 34 VOLUME 5 NO.1
Pleasant View Rd. near HB have not been seen at all since mid-Dec.

The earliest E. Phoebe was in W. Pikeland Twp 3/20. Horned Lark were found in fields near HB in Jan. At least 13 were along Given Rd. 1113. Three Winter Wren were observed along lower French Cr. (W. Vincent Twp) 3/23-24. A total of 8 Am. Pipit were in HB Twp. 1/14. Small flocks of White-crowned Sparrow were reported in E. Pikeland Twp and near HB along Supplee Rd. & Dampman Hill Rd. in mid-Mar. The latter is usually reliable spot for this sp. at this time of year. Five Snow Bunting were seen near Tel Hai Retirement Center near HB 2/18. Purple Finch showed up at feeders towards the end of the season in very small numbers. I had 1 Pine Siskin at my feeder 2/15.

OBERVERS: Barry Blust, John Ginaven, Jerry Pasquarella, 2209 Cranberry Lane, Coatesville 19320 (215-486-6440), Grier Saunders, Brian Swifssford, Neal Thorpe.

CLARION COUNTY

Margaret Buckwalter

Abbreviations: Curtwilla (CV), Kahle L. (KL), Leeper (LP), Mt. Zion (MZ), Shippenville (SV), Wentlings Corners (WC).

Tundra Swan were heard going over in the small hours of 3/10. Later that day a flock of ±500 was observed on KL (W&AF). Wood Duck returned to the Beaver Cr. ponds 3/17 (WF,MB). A pair of Hooded Merganser swam on a pond at LP 3/21 (LC). 6 Cowbirds were on the CV near Cooksburg 2/10. 4 Red-breasted Merganser 3/12, and 54 on 3/24 stopped at KL (WF). N. Harrier continued at various reclaimed strip mines all quarter. The first Red-shouldered Hawk was at LP 3/1 (LC). A pair acting aggressively toward a pair of Red-tailed Hawk all during Mar. seemed to indicate they were breeding again (location deleted, -eds.) (LC). A very melanistic (no white at all) Rough-legged Hawk was observed 3/3 in Limestone Twp (TK,JW).

The first Am. Woodcock was reported from LP 3/19 (LC). A Long-eared Owl roost containing at least 4 birds was found 2/24 (W&AF). C&RR,MB) just off Dunlap Rd w. of Callensburg. One owl was still there 3/27 (MB). Short-eared Owl increased in abundance and range: 1 in Limestone Twp (JF); 3 at ZM 2/17 and 3/25; 4 at the Ritts Farm 1/13, with a high there of 9 on 2/17 (C&RR,EM); a pair with the d observed in “clapping flight” at CV 3/9; and 2 at Mt. Airy 3/17 (WF). The first N. Flicker was seen at LP 3/21 (LC). E. Phoebe were back 3/21 at LP (LC) and 3/26 at SV. Horned Lark were at CV 2/28. Carolina Wren seemed to be over-wintering in several places. The first E. Bluebird was reported from Strattonville 2/23 (KP), later arrivals at LP 3/16 (LC). A Yellow-rumped Warbler fed on peanut butter/corn meal all winter at a feeder in WC (C&RR). A N. Saw-whet Owl sat on a 2-lane private stocking of pheasant clouds this picture. A Grav Catbird popped out of some brush near Millville to top off the CBC 12/22 (DH,J). The northern tip of the CBC reaches raven country; RW successfully found 3 Cow. Raven on count day. Blue Jay seemed less common than in previous years, perhaps due to the gypsy moth-induced mast depletion (DG). Although it gave a good showing for the CBC overall count, Tufted Titmouse was less common than usual in n. Columbia (DG,SL,RS). Unlike last year, Red-breasted Nuthatch was very uncomm on all quarter. Only 1 Winter Wren was found during the CBC, near Orangeville (DG). Carolina Wren were expanding up creek valleys and into higher elevations than usual (DG,RS). Golden-crowned Kinglet was uncommon. The E. Bluebird continued to enjoy success in the area; now this bird is a pleasantly common sight along most rural roads, especially where Staghorn Sumac and Multiflora Rose abound. Fewer Am. Robin were present than might be expected in such a mild Dec. A Grav Cathbird popped out of some brush near Millville to top off RW’s very successful CBC day. Cedar Waxwing were irregular and uncommon, stopping at DG’s house only occasionally for Red Cedar “berries.” For the second straight year, 2 “Myrtle” Warbler lingered near DG’s house through Dec., foraging on berries. Darting from Dunlap Rd, 4 “Myrtles” continued to enjoy success in the area; now this bird seemed to rebound somewhat this year. Surprisingly, there were very few E. Meadowlark in the county in Dec; although spotted count week (ND), none was found count day. A few Red-winged Blackbird persisted near the Esyp Bog in Dec (DG). Brown-headed Cowbird was rare in the BL area this winter because some farmers abandoned their large silage storage.

OBERVERS: Margaret Buckwalter, RR 2 Box 26, Shippenville 16254 (814-782-3925), Lois Callahan, John Fedak, Walter & Annabelle Fye, Tim Kimmel, Evelyn Myers, Kathy Pokriffka, Carl & Ruth Rowe, John Williams.

COLUMBIA COUNTY

Douglas A. Gross

Fourth Quarter 1990

Abbreviations: Bloomsburg (BL), Berwick (BK), Roehrborn (RB).

It was a fairly quiet and uneventful quarter. Many bird populations seemed lower than normal. A mild Dec. led us to believe that the CBC (12/22) would be a huge success. However, dense fog, especially on high open ground, kept CBC teams from finding many species observed in recent counts. On 1/24 it was singing a “muted” song. First Fox Sparrow was reported 3/28 at LP (LC). A flock of ± 100 Red-winged Blackbird was at ZM 2/28 (MB) and 4 were at a feeder in LP 2/24 (LC). First Brown-headed Cowbird turned up 1/27 at WC (C&RR). Evening Grosbeak were around all quarter in flocks of 25-40 birds.

OBERVERS: Margaret Buckwalter, RR 2 Box 26, Shippenville 16254 (814-782-3925), Lois Callahan, John Fedak, Walter & Annabelle Fye, Tim Kimmel, Evelyn Myers, Kathy Pokriffka, Carl & Ruth Rowe, John Williams.

It was due mostly to the increasingly thorough coverage by the North Branch Bird Club (NBBC). General statements were based on observations shared by NBBC members; unless otherwise noted, specific observations by compiler.

Great Blue Heron was fairly common along the Susquehanna R. and Fishing Cr. Over 150 Canada Goose stayed near BK through Dec, going back and forth between Columbia and Luzerne (DG,ND). Canada Geese were found all quarter near BL and Esyp, as well as near open farm ponds where “semi-domestica” nest regularly. Ducks were less common than usual. Rough-legged Hawk was scarce, but Red-tails common. Cooper’s Hawk was again frequently sighted, even in communities. N. Harrier was decidedly less common than last fall (DG). An adult Merlin found near BL (DH,JF) was one of the CBC highlights.

Ring-necked Pheasant continues to be uncommon and found only in pockets where there is adequate cover. Persistent private stocking of pheasant clouds this picture. Wild Turkey continues to do well very throughout the area in a variety of habitats. Reports of Ruffed Grouse populations were mixed (JF,DG,DH). While searching the manured fields for larks and buntingS, DG and SL found 7 Killdeer near RB for the CBC.

The BL area team also scored another good find when it flushed out an Am. Woodcock near BL for the CBC. No Short-eared Owl was found for the CBC, but I was flushed from the road in front of DG’s house 12/3 1. A N. Saw-whet Owl sat on a 2-lane highway near Millville and surprised RW while he was going to his CBC area early 12/22.

Amazinigly, a Horned Lark was found for the CBC, but there were 150+ near BK in the last week of Dec (ND). There were 3 Fish Crow sighted along the Susquehanna R. near BL for the CBC 12/22 (DH,JF). The northern tip of the CBC reaches raven country; RW successfully found 3 Cow. Raven on count day. Blue Jay seemed less common than in previous years, perhaps due to the gypsy moth-induced mast depletion (DG). Although it gave a good showing for the CBC overall count, Tufted Titmouse was less common than usual in n. Columbia (DG,SL,RS). Unlike last year, Red-breasted Nuthatch was very uncomm on all quarter. Only 1 Winter Wren was found during the CBC, near Orangeville (DG). Carolina Wren were expanding up creek valleys and into higher elevations than usual (DG,RS). Golden-crowned Kinglet was uncommon. The E. Bluebird continued to enjoy success in the area; now this bird is a pleasantly common sight along most rural roads, especially where Staghorn Sumac and Multiflora Rose abound. Fewer Am. Robin were present than might be expected in such a mild Dec. A Grav Cathbird popped out of some brush near Millville to top off RW’s very successful CBC day. Cedar Waxwing were irregular and uncommon, stopping at DG’s house only occasionally for Red Cedar “berries.” For the second straight year, 2 “Myrtle” Warbler lingered near DG’s house through Dec., foraging on berries. Darting from Dunlap Rd, 4 “Myrtles” continued to enjoy success in the area; now this bird seemed to rebound somewhat this year. Surprisingly, there were very few E. Meadowlark in the county in Dec; although spotted count week (ND), none was found count day. A few Red-winged Blackbird persisted near the Esyp Bog in Dec (DG). Brown-headed Cowbird was rare in the BL area this winter because some farmers abandoned their large silage storage.

OBERVERS: Margaret Buckwalter, RR 2 Box 26, Shippenville 16254 (814-782-3925), Lois Callahan, John Fedak, Walter & Annabelle Fye, Tim Kimmel, Evelyn Myers, Kathy Pokriffka, Carl & Ruth Rowe, John Williams.

It was a very open, mild, and quiet winter. Some Mar. migrants seemed behind schedule. Great Blue Heron found open water along more small streams than usual (NBBC); this included Huntingdon Cr. near Jonestown (SK). Canada Goose continues to climb in numbers in the area with many paired up in early Feb, defending potential nest sites (DG, ND). Other waterfowl were less common than in most winters. Resident
Red-tailed Hawk and Am. Kestrel were common. There were few reports, however, of open-field migrant raptors. For instance, only one N. Harrier wintered at RB where usually there are several (DG). An unusually early Broad-winged Hawk was clearly seen near BK 2/20 (ND, HB). The bird may have been observed for a week previous (HB) but not afterwards, and was well-described by veteran hawk-watcher, N. Dennis, to editor. Unfortunately, no photo was taken. A few Killdeer over-wintered in fields, several seen in BK 2/24 (ND). Gulls were more persistent along the Susquehanna this winter than most, with Ring-billed Gull most common and Herring following (no black-backs, though). Only one Short-eared Owl was regularly seen at RB throughout quarter (DG). In Mar., DG witnessed the peculiar sight of a Pileated Woodpecker clinging onto and feeding from a staghorn sumac fruit cluster near Orangeville. Red-bellied Woodpecker was not as widespread in uplands as past recent winters (DG); I did persist near Jonestown 2/5 (SK).

Considering the mild March weather, E. Phoebe seemed late in some locations, not reaching RB until 3/24 (DG), but earlier elsewhere (HB,ND). Tree Swallow was observed as early as 3/25 at RB (DG). For the most part, Horned Lark has been poorly represented lately, but DG found 10+ foraging at Waller 2/10, with 3+ singing vigorously from manure piles. Am. Crow was common all quarter despite widespread persecution with many appearing to form family groups (DG). The first Fish Crow of season was heard 2/4 at BK (ND). Red-breasted Nuthatch was essentially absent this winter. White-breasted Nuthatch and Goldencrowned Kinglet numbers were low. Carolina Wren spread into more upland and upstream areas than it is usually found-after several consecutive mild winters, this semi-hardy species continues a local increase (DG, RGS). Considering the mild March weather, there were not many Am. Robin in the county, even species an unreliable harbinger of spring.

Species # Loc. Date
N. Pintail 25 KL 3/2
Am. Wigeon 30 SR 1/5
Canvasback ±125 WF 3/18
Redhead ±75 WF 3/18
Ring-necked Duck 11 KL 3/27
Gr. Scapu 6 BP 3/10
Ls. Scapu ±175 WF 3/18
Oldsquaw 7 KL 3/27
Com. Goldeneye ±100 WF 2/3
Red-breasted Merg 1 PFG 3/27

First Osprey, 2, at OL 3/29 (BG). High of 2 Rough-legged Hawk at ML 3/21,24 (DHe) and I near Middlesex 1/8 (DC). Both yellowlegs were seen 3/28, with Greater at BS and Lesser at ST (DHe). Fectoral Sandpiper were 5 strong at ST 3/29 (DRHe,DH). A good population of Am. Woodcock enjoys the SGL area, with DHe having 4 performing males on the evening of 3/16. A good total, for KL, was the 4 Bonaparte's Gull 3/28 (DHe). Another, good ?, total was the 250 Ring-billed Gull there 3/10. A high of 4 Short-eared Owl was at ML 1/9; singles were noted at 3 other locations in the w. half of the county (DHe).

CRAWFORD COUNTY

Ronald F. Leberman

Abbreviations: Conneaut Marsh (CM), Pymanutang SP (PSP)

An Eared Grebe in winter plumage was seen with several Horned Larks for good comparison at Conneaut L. 3/30 (RFL). About 200 Tundra Swan were at PSP 3/10 (AM). A Snow Goose was at PSP 1/19 (RFL). 105 Canvasback were at Woodcock L. 3/10 and the 860 Ringnecked Duck at CM 3/30 was a very good number (RFL).

A N. Harrier was at CM near Geneva 3/9 (RFL) and 1 N. Goshawk was at Cambridge Springs 1/19 (RFL). The Snowy Owl was still present at Pymanutang Causeway 1/19 (RFL). A Short-eared Owl was found n. of Woodcock borough 12/27-31 (J&JS). About 50 Tree Swallow were at PSP 3/29 (RR).

Deuane Hoffman

CUMBERLAND COUNTY

Abbreviations: Big Spring (BS), Brackhill Pond (BP), Green Springs (GS), Huntsdale Fish Hatchery (HF), Kuhin L. (KL), Mud Level Rd. (ML), Opoomum L. (OL), Pine Grove Furnace SP (PGF), SGL 169 (SGL), Stoughtown Rd. Pond (ST), Stumpstown Rd. (SR), W. Fairview Boat Launch (WF).

Both species of loons made an appearance: Red-throated at WF 1/1 (DHe); Common were at OL on numerous occasions, mostly singles by IS had 2 on 3/25. High count Pied-billed Grebe was at OL 3/29 (DHe) and high for Horned Grebe was 8 on 3/27 (DHe). First Great Egret was at OL 3/23 and 12 Black-crowned Night-Heron at HF 3/24 (DHe).

Waterfowl migration was fair. Is this a sign of our declining water bird populations? A few "good" birds were seen, however. A high of 147 Tundra Swan was at WF 3/18 (DHe). Also 3/18 was a flock of ±20 Brant at WF (fide RK). Highlight was an Eurasian Wigeon at HF found 2/23 (DH) and seen 2/24 (DRHe), but not after. Other ducks with highs and locations:

First Osprey, 2, at OL 3/29 (BG). High of 2 Rough-legged Hawk at ML 3/21,24 (DHe) and I near Middlesex 1/8 (DC). Both yellowlegs were seen 3/28, with Greater at BS and Lesser at ST (DHe). Fectoral Sandpiper were 5 strong at ST 3/29 (DRHe,DH). A good population of Am. Woodcock enjoys the SGL area, with DHe having 4 performing males on the evening of 3/16. A good total, for KL, was the 4 Bonaparte's Gull 3/28 (DHe). Another, good ?, total was the 250 Ring-billed Gull there 3/10. A high of 4 Short-eared Owl was at ML 1/9; singles were noted at 3 other locations in the w. half of the county (DHe).

A Red-headed Woodpecker was found along ML 2/4 (DHe). E. Phoebe was a little late this year, with first at BS 3/24 (DHe). ML was a great place for Horned Lark. Thanks to the local farmers! A high of 500+ was seen 1/9,12 (DRHe). Two extremely early N. Rough-winged Swallow were at SGL 3/29 (DRHe,DH,Tc) and 2 later in the day at WF (RK,DH,Tc)! The following day 6 were at WF (RK,DH,Tc) along with 1000+ Tree Swallow. 5 Am. Pipit were along ML 1/8 (DHe). A Louisiana Waterthrush was at PFG 3/27 (CG). DC had 20+ Am. Tree Sparrow at his feeders 1/19 and good numbers all quarter. Henise's home played host to good numbers of White-crowned Sparrow, with a high of 17 on 1/7. Two Lapland Longspur were at ML after a snow storm 1/13, along with a good total of 8 Snow Bunting (DH,DC). Fox Sparrow reports were 1 at a feeder 1/22 (DC) and 2 at PFG 3/27 (CG). 50 Rusty Blackbird were feeding at a watercress farm near GS 3/10 (DHe). Pine Siskin were a rare sight this quarter, with only singles or small groups found in the South Mt. area. The only Evening Grosbeak blessed the home of Pat Dietz, who lives on the South Mt. They were there all quarter, with an average of 35-45 birds.

Deuane Hoffman

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DAUPHIN COUNTY

Steve Rannels

Abbreviations: Haldeman I. (HI), Harrisburg (HBG), Hershey (HR), Susquehanna R. (SR), Wildwood L. (WL).
The entire quarter was mild with lots of open water for waterfowl. Wood Duck were first reported 3/2 at Ft. Hunter (RW), increasing to 20 by 3/30 (JR). Spring Cr. in HR held large groups of Mallard (250), 4 N. Pintail and up to 50 Am. Wigeon from 1/1 through mid-March (SR). HI yielded 14 sp. of waterfowl 3/17 (DH, m.ob.) including 56 Tundra Swan, 8 N. Shoveler, 15 Green-winged Teal and 10 Gadwall. Also observed were N. Harrier, E. Phoebe and Tree Swallow. Groups of 60 and 75 Tundra Swan were seen moving up the SR 3/18-21 along with Bonaparte’s and Ring-billed gulls (EC).

Great Egret arrived by 3/11 at WL (EC) with 2 more along 1-81 e. of HBG 3/17 (RW) and another near HR 3/27 (CG). Clearly the best of the long-legged species was an ad. Sandhill Crane on HI first discovered by SB 3/5 and seen at least until 3/17. This bird obviously overshadowed any possible excitement of an early E. Phoebe on the same date (3/5;SB)!

The following is a transcript of my field notes of a Sandhill Crane observed at Haldeman’s I. 3/6: 3:05. Large, gray bird observed flying over corn field; pale brownish area at base of primaries; flying with neck extended. 3:10. Standing on ground. Red forehead and crown; white cheek patch, gray body, long legs and bill. Conditions were good. Observed standing, through IOXX40 Zeiss optics from range of about 50 meters. Dan Brauning

Diurnal raptor reports were few, with both Sharp-shinned and Cooper’s hawks around HR (WE). Am. Woodcock (4) were on territory in the HBG area by 3/5 (DH), the same date that Red-winged Blackbird moved into the HR area (SR). Com. Grackle and Am. Robin had arrived by 2/20 (SR, RW). It was a good quarter for owls, with a resident Great Horned at the Hershey Hotel 1/4 (RW). A roost n. of HR held 1 Shorteared and 6 Long-eared owls 2/10 (SR, ShR). Subsequent counts through March totaled a possible high of 10-12 birds (EC, SB, WE). Short-eareds were also found near Gratz 3/5 (SB).

A flock of 250+ Horned Lark worked the fields of HR all period. On 1/13 they were joined by 50 Snow Bunting and I Lapland Longspur (SR, ShR) and on 3/3, 250 Snow Bunting dominated our interest. A high of 3 longspurs was present 3/10. Horned Lark were also spotted in more unusual places 3/14, when 45+ rested along the steps of Riverside Park in HBG (EC). E. Meadowlark were seen along Rt. 39 n. of HR until 1/13, later returning by 3/10 (RW). On 2/3 RW observed 15 E. Bluebird and 20 Am. Tree Sparrow in the same area. On 2/4 DH noted a good day in Stoney Creek Valley with 2 Con. Raven, 1 Redbreasted Nuthatch, 20 Golden-crowned Kinglet and 3 Purple Finch.


DELWARE COUNTY

Al Guarente

Abbreviations: Ridley Creek SP (RC), Tyler Arboretum (TA), Smedley Park (SP), Springfield Res. (SR), Tinicum NE (TNV).

A Pied-billed Grebe was present at SR 1/4-5 (SC, AG). Also present were Horned Grebe 3/5-30 and I Double-crested Cormorant 3/10 (NP). A Great Egret was at TN 1/17 (JCM, TR). A Mute Swan was in Concord Twp 1/1 (WT). A flock of 250+ Snow Goose flew over Swarthmore 3/17 (NP) including 2 blue-morph, and another flock of 100+ was over Media 3/24 (EK). 500+ Green-winged Teal were in TN during Mar. (JCM). A Hooded Merganser was found at SR 1/1 (RM). NP’s survey of SR for the quarter found: 1 Tundra Swan 3/5; 8 Green-winged Teal 1/5; 2 Redhead 3/28; a high count of 52 Ring-necked Duck 3/10; 3 Oldsquaw 3/28, and 3 Hooded Merganser 1/5 and 1 on 3/28. Other species noted were: Mallard, Gadwall, Am. Wigeon, Gr. Scaup, Bufflehead, Red-crested Duck, and an average of 25 Com. Merganser on 3/17 and 3/28. Only 1 Black Vulture was reported, at TA 1/14 (JG). A N. Harrier made an appearance in Bethel Twp 1/1 (WT). A Red-shouldered Hawk was at Rose Tree Park 1/21 (AG). An appearance in a Swarthmore backyard by a Merlin 3/15 (HMc) was quite a treat. The 2 Peregrine Falcon were in the Chester area all quarter (JCM). A Cow. Moorhen was at TN 2/23. At TN 130+ Cow. Snipe were located 3/21 (JCM).

Barn Owl were reported all quarter (v.o.). Unfortunately, all reports were of the same owls at TN. JCM had a high count of 3 on 1/5. N. Saw-whet Owl were brought out of hiding by many observers tracking down whitehash or pellets; 2 were at TN all period and I at TA 3/25 (DS). In the same area of TN, a Long-eared Owl was reported in Jan. (JF) and 2 Great Horned Owl (NP). It was amazing that at TN 4 species of owl were occupying the same acre of land and not having the Great Horned owl out the other species. At least to my knowledge. Two Shorteared Owl at the Phila. Airport in Jan. (JCM) represent the only record this season. Pileated Woodpecker were found in Swarthmore and Media (HMc, NP). Another was found at RC 2/26 (BB) and at Delco Community College 2/5 (EK). A Fish Crow at TA 2/2 (JG) represented an uncommon find for that area. A Black-capped Chickadee was still at TA 3/28 (NP). Red-breasted Nuthatch were quite common throughout the county this winter. Hermit Thrush seemed to be more prevalent this year than in past winters.

A report came to John Ginaven from a non-birder of a Varied Thrush. It came to our attention too late to find this bird, but a very good written description was received. The bird came to a Media feeder just one day, 1/11. Bonnie Mainwaring’s description leaves little doubt that the bird was indeed a Varied Thrush.

A Brown Thrasher spent the winter in the Folcroft area of TN (NP). Pine Warbler were found all winter at TA, apparently lingering due to the warm weather. Also lingering into winter were 3 Rufous-sided Towhee at TA 1/25 (JG, AG). Another late bird was a Chipping Sparrow at SR 1/5 (NP). A lot of Fox Sparrow were being reported in Jan. and more than the usual numbers of Swamp Sparrow were present in various location. Six Purple Finch were at SP 3/24 (EK).

OBSEVERS: Bob Bodine, Skip Conant, John Frieberg, John Ginaven, Al Guarente, 421 S Old Middletown Rd, Media 19063 (215)566-8266, Evelyn Kopf, Rob Megraw, Helen McWilliams, John C. Miller, Nick Pulcinella, Tom Reeves, Drew Schmidt, Walt Thurbur.

ELK COUNTY

Linda Christenson

Abbreviations: Benzinger Twp (BT), Lake City (LC), Owl’s Nest (ON), SGL 28 (SGL).

Nothing unusual reported for Jan. or Feb., but March brought a sighting of a Bald Eagle (H) over LC 3/14. Two Pied-billed Grebe noted at SGL 3/31 (DW). Great Blue Heron was noted in early March and were seen in various locations: Hallton & BT (DD, DW). On 3/3 a flock of ±100 Tundra Swan and a flock of ±80 Snow Goose flew over at BT yard-one flock heading NE and the other NW! (J&LC). DW mentions that at ON 3/31 there were 20 Canada Goose with several pair nesting. Included was the gray-collared bird once again returning to nest. DW watched a pair of Wood Duck at ON 3/31 and a pair on SGL the same day, as well as 3 Ring-necked Duck and a pair at SGL, and a pair of Hooded Merganser at SGL. Cow. Merganser seem to be increasing (DW). Only I Bufflehead landed on
P&DD's BT pond, 3/24.

Turkey Vulture returned 3/2 (DS). LC's BT yard has daily visits by a Sharp-shinned Hawk, while Cooper's Hawk is seen in other areas (PD,DS). 2 Red-shouldered Hawk at ON 3/31 (DW). 18 Wild Turkey walked the road in front of DW 3/24 at LC. DW reported 12 Ringbilled Gull visited downtown Ridgway 2/22, and states that this event may be more common than not. This has happened in Feb. at least 3 times in the last 5 years! Am. Woodcock reported in various locations (PD,DS, DW).

E. Phoebe arrived in BT 3/22 (LC). The Am. Crow in a BT yard 3/12 really looked funny with its mouth filled with popcorn. On 2/23 DS observed a Com. Raven in BT. PD found I nesting, DW saw several on ON 3/31. LC watched I flying over her house and also had an interesting time listening to 2 indiv. at SGL 25. Some of the sounds were something like "took, took, took" and a bell-like sound. These birds are fascinating to watch and hear. The Red-breasted Nuthatch and 2 Carolina Wren coming to a BT feeder disappeared during mild weather in early Feb. (LC). DW saw several of Golden-crowned Kinglets, 1 of 8 and the other 14, working spruce stands at ON. E. Bluebird returned 3/22 (DS) and several pair were at ON 3/31 (DW). Again this year, Am. Robin overwintered (DS).

Only I Am. Tree Sparrow reported, 1/29, in BT (LC). Song Sparrow returned 2/15, and 1-3 Fox Sparrow were at a BT feeder 3/2-29. Few White-throated Sparrow all winter (LC). Dark-eyed Junco doing well. Red-winged Blackbird returned 3/2 (DW). 2 Rusty Blackbird made a quick stop at a wet area in a BT yard (LC) 3/6. First Com. Grackle 3/2 and first Brown-headed Cowbird were at 86 in Ridgway (DW). The first Purple Finch, a d, showed up 3/12 in BT (LC). The bird of the season had to the Evening Grosbeak which showed up in the fall and continued ... and ate and ate and ate (DS,DW,LC).

Evening Grosbeak which showed up in the fall and continued ... and ate and ate and ate (DS,DW,LC).

The bird of the season had to the Black-crowned Night-Heron 3/22 (BC). Three Snow Goose are detailed here.

The birds may have been wintering somewhere n. of Pa. end of Feb. to make the only appearance of this species for the reporting period.

In an area 4-mi square n.e. of EDN, many birders discovered a multitude of birds of prey. Following the report of a Snowy Owl and 4-5 Short-eared Owl on 1/31 by ID, these grasslands became a target for local birders and for those from farther afield. At dusk as many as 16 N. Harrier, 8 Red-tailed Hawk, 10 Rough-legged Hawk (5 dark-morph), 12 Am. Kestrel and 15 Short-eared Owl were recorded along with 1 N. Shrike. Increasing numbers of N. Harrier and Short-eared Owl were being reported at the time of this writing.

Am. Tree Sparrow moved into the region in fair numbers, but were not followed by many northern finches. Very few Evening Grosbeak were reported and <20 Pine Siskin came from feeder watchers. A couple of Com. Redpoll waited until the end of Feb. to make the only appearance of this species for the reporting period.

This season proved to be quite interesting with lingering late migrants and early spring arrivals, including a few record breakers. The usual rarities appeared along with the unexpected are detailed here.

A flock of about 400 Horned Grebe arrived during the night of 2/15. The birds may have been wintering somewhere n. of Pa. and forced south by reduced open water. Since numbers of this magnitude are unprecedented before early Apr., they were not likely to be spring migrants (JM). A Red-necked Grebe was seen 2/16 (JM,DI-1). An Eared Grebe (carry-over from Dec.) was found 1/1 (JM,KE). 2-3 Doublecrested Cormorant were noted all quarter (JM). A Great Egret was seen 3/30 (WS) and a Black-crowned Night-Heron 3/22 (BC). Three Snow Goose (blue-morph) were at UCD 3/15 (DT,JM). A Green-winged Teal was seen 2/17 (WS). A basic I d King Eider was seen 1/1-27 and 3/3,16 (TF,et al., ph. JM). A 4 Harlequin Duck was found 2/17 and 3/2 (JM,WH,WS,ph. DD) for our 9th record. A total of 5 Black Scoter was seen 1/1-26 and 3/30 (TF,JM,KE); a moribund bird was delivered to the Erie Zoo from Harborcreek (JH). As many as 14 Surf (JM) and as many as 9 White-winged scoters were noted to 3/9 (JM,KE).

The Turkey Vulture seen w. of Erie 2/24 was 8 days earlier than our earliest record (JM). Ad. Bald Eagle were reported on PI and in the Erie area, with 2 birds showing wing tags. A white left wing tag on 1 indiv. and a yellow left wing tag on another (m.ob.). A spectacular find for JGS and JHS was the ad. Mississippi Kite that was seen well, migrating along the L. Erie shore at the Roderick Wildlife Reserve on the extremely early date 3/27 (JHS). A N. Goshawk was w. of Erie 2/24 (JM) and 1 at the Ohio/Pa line 3/27 (JGS,JHS). Several Rough-legged Hawk were reported from many areas, particularly the w. half of the county. Rarely seen in winter was a Merlin 2/16 w. of Erie (JM), and the same or possibly a different bird was on PI 2/22 (JHS,JGS).

ERIE COUNTY

Jerry McWilliams

Abbreviations: Edinboro (EDN), Presque Isle SP (PI), Union City Dam (UCD). Sightings from PI unless otherwise noted.

Enormous flocks of Red-breasted Merganser were seen from midMar. to end of the quarter, with daily estimates of 20,000 to 30,000+ individuals. Gull numbers peaked at near 100,000 late in the season, with the first appearing 1/12 and at least 3 Ls. Black-backed Gull were recorded for 3/24 at LC. DW reported 12 Ringbilled Gull visited downtown (DW). 18 P&DD’s BT pond, 3/24.

Increasing numbers of N. Harrier and Short-eared Owl were recorded along with 1 N. Shrike. Ad. Bald Eagle were reported on PI and in the Erie area, with 2 birds showing wing tags. A white left wing tag on 1 indiv. and a yellow left wing tag on another (m.ob.). A spectacular find for JGS and JHS was the ad. Mississippi Kite that was seen well, migrating along the L. Erie shore at the Roderick Wildlife Reserve on the extremely early date 3/27 (JHS). A N. Goshawk was w. of Erie 2/24 (JM) and 1 at the Ohio/Pa line 3/27 (JGS,JHS). Several Rough-legged Hawk were reported from many areas, particularly the w. half of the county. Rarely seen in winter was a Merlin 2/16 w. of Erie (JM), and the same or possibly a different bird was on PI 2/22 (JHS,JGS).

Long-eared Owl, Presque Isle SP, 2/17/91. Photo by Jerry McWilliams.

Quite unexpected was the discovery of a Ruddy Turnstone feeding among gulls along the edge of the ice on the unusual date 1/26 and represents the 1st winter Erie record and possibly the state (tIM). A Dunlitt was noted 1/1 (TF), and the one 3/9 (EK) was the earliest spring record by 27 days. BW was surprised to flush an Am. Woodcock 1/2 for a 1st winter record. Up to 3 Little Gull were found 1/12-21 and 3 were seen 2/10 (JM). Five Thayer’s Gull were recorded between 1/31-3/23 (JM,KE); 2 were ad., which are the 1st birds of this age recorded in Pa (JH,TF).

At least 6 Iceland Gull were present from 1/6-3/23 (JM,JHS, ES) and at least 7 Ls. Black-backed Gull were recorded for the season, with the first appearing 1/12 and at least 3 remaining to the end of the period (JM,KE). A bird in alternate definitive plumage was at Siegel Marsh 3/16+ (JH,JGS,JHS) for the 1st record away from L. Erie. Glaucous Gull were present in good numbers beginning 1/5+, with a season total of no less than 20 indiv. (JM,KE). Most remarkable was the appearance of a Forster’s Tern 1/13 that remained until 11/29 (JM,KE). This is the 1st winter Erie record and possibly for the state.

Owl reports were excellent. A Snowy was in EDN 1/31-3/20 (JD et al.; ph. JM); and the 1 at PI 3/23 (EK) may have been the indiv. from EDN. The Short-eared 3/23 was the only 1 reported away from the EDN.
area (KE). Up to 3 N. Saw-whet Owls were found 1/13-26 and I or 2 3/9-16 (DD). A roost of about 140 Am. Crow were seen again this winter in late Jan. and early Feb. near EDN (DS). Winter roosts of this number are rare in Erie.

As many as 5 Carolina Wren wintered on PI, which is the most recorded there in many years. For the second winter in a row, E. Red-winged Blackbird had a winter roost through the period. They were reported from Albion (SH), EDN (DS), w. of McKeans, and in Greene Twp (JHS,JGS). A more than usual number, 4, of N. Shrike was noted, with the usual single bird wintering on PI (m.ob.). The Loggerhead Shrike found 3/31 (JH,jdM,WS) was the 6th record since 1979; the last record was 4/10/82. A Field Sparrow successfully wintered at a feeder w. of Erie (GR). Six Lapland Longspur were found 1/17 in Franklin Twp (JGS,JHS). The 2 Com. Redpoll seen 2/23 & 3/5 were the only ones of the season (JB,TF). Evening Grosbeak were scarce again this winter, with birds reported from Union City (DT) and EDN (DS).

OBSERVERS: Jim Barker, Bill Callista, Dave Darney, Julie Dell, Ted Floyd, Shayne Hochlander, Deana Hoffman, Ed Kwater, Jerry McWilliams, 3142 W 12th St, Erie 16505 (814-833-3169), Geoff Robinson, Walt Schaeffer, Don Snyder, Jean (JHS) & Jim (JGS) Stull, Dorothy Thomas, Brenda Watts.

FAYETTE COUNTY
Cindy Cook

Abbreviations: Deer L. (DL), Greenlick Dam (GD), Mill Run Res. (MRR), Normalville (NV), Springfield Twp (ST).

1-2 Horned Grebe were at GD 3/20/21 (M&E,WC). A Great Blue Heron and a Great Egret were at DL 4/3 (WS). 8 Wood Duck at DL 3/5 (M&E) and 4/3 (WS), with 13 at MRR 4/3 (WS). 4 Am. Black Duck at MRR 3/12 (WC); 2 Blue-winged Teal at DL 4/3 (WS); 3 Gadwall 3/28 (M&E), 6 W. Goose 3/11 (M&E), 3 Redhead 3/18 (WC), and 25 Ring-necked Duck 3/28 (M&E), 6 Gr. Scaup 3/21 (WC), 10 Ls. Scaup 3/23 (M&E), I Com. Goldeneye 3/21 (W), 7 Bufflehead 3/21 (WC), 2 Hooded 2/24 and 2-14 Red-breasted Merganser (M&E,WC), and all at GD. 4 Bufflehead 3/25 (WC) and 7 Hooded Merganser 3/8 (M&E, WC) were at DL.

A N. Harrier was in NV 3/12 (WC). A Ring-necked Pheasant was in NV 3/16 (CC). A Gr. Yellowlegs was at MRR 4/3 and 4 Com. Snipe were at DL 4/3 (WS). 18 Ring-billed Gull were at GD 3/18. An E. Screech-Owl in NV 1/12 (CC). Belted Kingfisher were noted in NV 3/27 (CC) and MRR 4/3 (WS). 2 Horned Lark were in ST 3/12 (WC). A Chipping Sparrow 3/27 and a Fox Sparrow 3/5 were in NV (CC). 40 Evening Grosbeak were at ST 4/3 (WS).

OBSERVERS: Cindy Cook, RR 1 Box 259A, Normalville 15469 (412-455-7356), Wes Cook, Walter Shaffer, Mike & Evalene Watko.

FOREST COUNTY
April D. Walters

Abbreviations: Church Hill (CH), Tionesta Creek (TC).

Due to a mild winter, the Allegheny R. never froze over, resulting in some observations of relatively common birds here that normally winter further south. Six Tundra Swan flew over CH 3/2 (RAW). About 60 Canada Goose stayed all winter at Hunter Station (RAW,ADW). Com. Merganser were seen occasionally throughout the quarter (RAW,ADW).

An ad. and imm. Bald Eagle were observed frequently all quarter (RAW,ADW). A Cooper’s Hawk frequented our feeder in Jan. and did catch a grosbeak (RAW,ADW). A Yellow-bellied Sapsucker was seen at Fool’s Cr. 1/13 (TG et al.). A pair of Pileated Woodpecker started coming to suet 2/26 (RAW,ADW) on CH and a Corn. Raven was seen there 1/23 and 2/7 (RAW). E. Bluebird arrived on German Hill 3/2 (WK). A flock of 23 Am. Robin came to our feeder area 1/19 and robins were seen in parts of the county the rest of the winter (RAW,ADW). A pair of Rusty Blackbird was seen along TC 3/30 (GW,RAW). No Pine Siskin was seen, but Evening Grosbeak were plentiful this winter.


FRANKLIN COUNTY
Carl L. Garner

Abbreviations: Bender’s Pond (BP), Letterkenny Res. (LB), Quarry Rd. (QR). All observations by compiler unless otherwise noted.

Two Pied-billed Grebe were at LR 3/21, and 4 Horned Grebe at BP near Upper Strasburg 3/21. Eight Great Blue Heron were along QR 1/23-3/6 (m.ob.). Twelve Tundra Swan were at BP 3/22. A Greenwinged Teal was at Falling Spring Rd 1/26 and 8 at BP 3/22; 2 N. Pintail along QR 1/24 and 2 at BP 3/21; 2 Gadwall at BP 3/21; 11 Am. Wigeon at BP 3/22; 5 Ls. Scap at BP 3/21; 4 Hooded Merganser at BP 3/21 (CG), plus 2 at Caledonia SP 3/21 (JB), and 3 at LR 3/21 (CG); 1 Red-breasted Merganser at LR 3/21 (CG).

Eight Broad-winged Hawk were at Waynesboro 3/26 (R&LS). A Red-tailed Hawk nest was found 3/6 along McKinley St; both birds were seen going to and from the nest. They were observed from 3/6+ and the nest will be monitored for the next quarter (JB). An Am. Woodcock was seen 3/1 (JB) and 3 at Woodstock Rd 3/5 (CG). Two Great Horned Owl nests were found; on 1/22 near Duffield (JB) and 3/23 near Shippensburg 3/23 (RC). Both had a bird sitting on the nest from date found through end of quarter and also will be monitored.

An E. Phoebe was at BP 3/22 (CG) and I in Chambersburg 3/28 (JB). Four Tree Swallow were at BP 3/28. Ten Am. Pipit were at Cook Rd. 3/15 (KG). A Loggerhead Shrike was near Waynesville 1/11 (CB). A Black-and-white Warbler was at the Waynesboro Fish & Game Association 3/28 (R&LS). And 25 Snow Bunting were near Lemasters 1/15 (B&HH).

OBSERVERS: Joan Bowen, Charles Brightbill, Ken Gabler, Carl L. Garner, PO Box 391, Marion 17235, Bill & Betty Hayden, Randall & Lista Snuff.

GREENE COUNTY
Ralph K. Bell

There were no periods of deep snow or below zero readings during the quarter. March was generally mild with temperatures reaching the 70s on 3/2,23 and 27. Unless otherwise noted, all observations were on the Bell farm near Jefferson.

The first Turkey Vulture was noted near Waynesburg 3/17 (BB). Wild Turkey are really increasing all over the county; 42 observations were on the Bell farm near Jefferson during the quarter. March was generally mild with temperatures reaching the 70s on 3/2,23 and 27. Unless otherwise noted, all observations were on the Bell farm near Jefferson.

Two Tree Swallow were noted 3/23 and a Rufous-sided Towhee arrived here the same day. A lone Bank Swallow was noted 3/26, but it soon left and no more seen during the period. The first Chipping Sparrow was noted 3/27, but the earliest arrival ever was 3/21/1979.

House Finch are very numerous at most feeders. Some people love them, but others are beginning to complain that they are taking over their feeders. If they start taking over

OBSERVERS: Betty Bell, Ralph Bell, RR 1 Box 229, Clarksville 15322 (412-883-4505).

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HUNTINGDON COUNTY

David Kyler

Abbreviations: Aitch Access (AA), Alexandria (AL), Brumbaugh Access (BA), Cornprop Mills (CM), Huntingdon (HU), L. Raystown (LB), McKey’s Fort (MF), Raystown Dam (RD), Stone Valley L. (SVL). All records by compiler unless otherwise noted.

Unusual species reported include: Osprey, N. Saw-whet Owl, Ruby-crowned Kinglet, Brewer’s Blackbird and Red Crossbill.

Waterfowl reported include: 1 Com. Loon on LIZ during the 2nd annual Mid-winter Bald Eagle censushold 1/11 (RC). Tundra Swan, 111, were down at BA, in a sheltered backwater 3/11 (RC) and Wood Duck were found in good numbers, 23, near He斯顿 3/22 (RC). A large flock of Bufflehead was located just above RD 1/10 (RC) and numbered 40+.

A mixed flock of fowls was located above HU 2/22, with 15 Black and 54 Turkey. A late Osprey was seen at RD 1/1, hunting from hover (GQ). In addition to low numbers of waterfowl, this year’s censusheld yielded 2 ad. and 1 sub-adult Bald Eagle. Two Red-shouldered Hawks were carrying nesting material (location deleted) 3/30, while the first report of Broad-winged Hawk was made 3/29 near CM (EB). Two late season Rough-legged Hawks were observed near MF 3/3 (GG). Ten Com. Snipe were in a Petersburg farm slough 3/21 (ML). Am. Woodcock were displaying 2/25.

The highlight of Feb. was a single ad. N. Saw-whet Owl found near AL 2/4 (ML). This fearless raptor was seen by over 40 observers, at close range, from 2/4-8. A small colony of Red-headed Woodpecker was located near HU 1/1 and the 3 remained active all quarter. Yellow-bellied Sapsucker reports came from Piney Ridge 2/15 (RC) and Petersburg 1/15, with 1 found at each location. Both Golden-crowned, 2, and Ruby-crowned kinglets were seen near the Juniata R. at HU 2/6. A single Am. Pipit was found feeding at a manure spread near MF 1/12 (GG).

A Pine Warbler returned to SVL 3/23 and was singing on a warm, sunny day (GG). Yellow-rumped Warbler were found along the river 1/23 feeding in low shrubs. Blackbird reports range from early Redwinged in AL 1/15, 4 Rusty near MF 3/2, and 1 Brewer’s near MF 1/12 (tGQ). Two Purple Finch and 15 Pine Siskin were at SVL 1/1 and 80 Evening Grosbeak made their appearance at a backyard feeder in time for a Cornell-sponsored FeederWatch program (DG). DK had 7 Red Crossbill at Shavers Creek 1/1.

OBSERVERS: Ellen Benner, Rob Criswell, Deb Grove, Greg Grove, Dave Kyler, RR 4 Box 159A, Huntingdon 16652 (814-643-6030), Melvin Lane.

INDIANA COUNTY

Margaret and Roger Higbee

Abbreviations: Clarksburg (CKG), Creekside (CS), Indiana (IND), Margus L. (ML), New Florence (NF), Penn Run (PR), Robinson (RB), Shelotta (SHL), Timber L. (IL), W. Lebanon (WE), Yellow Creek SP (YC).

Highlights of the season were Snow Goose and N. Shrike, both at YC. All waterfowl reports are from YC unless otherwise noted.

One to 2 Com. Loon were listed after 3/24 (v.o.). Pied-billed Grebe had been present through the season with best count of 7 on 3/31 (GC). Horned Grebe arrived 1/15 (BB,MH,GL), but numbers peaked at 27 on 3/21 (GL). A single Double-crested Cormorant was observed 3/29 (C&GL). Tundra Swan arrived 2/28 (BP,TF,GL) with top count of 298 on 3/10 (C&GL). Two different flocks of Snow Goose were reported—6 at ML 1/20 (GS) and 7 at YC 1/22 (GL). Wood Duck first listed 3/7 (GC), but best count was 31 on 3/32 (C&GL). One Green-winged Teal was present 1/15 (BB,MH,GL), but up to 14 counted 3/12 (MH,GL). Up to 14 N. Pintail were recorded 3/5 (BB,BF,MH,GL). Best Blue-winged Teal tally was 14 on 3/31 (ES). N. Shovelier was listed on only 2 dates—5 on 3/21 (GL) and I on 3/29 (C&GL). 4 Gadwall were found 1/15 (BB,MH,GL) but were not reported again until 3/19 (MH,GL). Top Am.

Wigeon count was 102 on 3/21 (GL). 8 Canvasback were at Nolo 3/10 (C&GL), but 13 at YC 3/18 (GL) was the largest raft reported. 10 Redhead observed 3/19 (MH,GL). Small numbers of Ring-necked Duck were listed consistently all quarter; a large influx began 3/3 (GC) and peaked at 329 on 3/22 (GL). One Gr. Scaup was listed between 1/9 (MH,GL) and 1/15 (BB,MH,GL); 1-3 were found from 3/10+ (GC,C&GL). Ls. Scaup max. was 74 on 3/21 (GL). Top Oldsquaw tally was 11 on 3/21 (GL). Com. Goldeneye were present all quarter with best count 10 on 3/17 (C&GL). Bufflehead reports, all after 3/1, included 32 on 3/19 (LH,MH,GL) and 27 on 3/31 (C&GL). Hooded Merganser counts included 18 on 2/21 (MH,GL) and 17 on 3/21 (LH,GL). 2 Com. Merganser were found 2/21 (MH,GL) and a singleton was listed 3/12 (MH,GL). Top Red-breasted Merganser tally was 96 on 3/10 (C&GL). A single Ruddy Duck was seen 2/25 (LH) but the only other report was of 2 indiv. 3/29 (C&GL).

Turkey Vulture arrived at YC 3/1 (GL). Single N. Harrier were found at 4 locations (JB,MH,GL,GS). Six Sharp-shinned and 5 Cooper’s hawk reports were received. Red-shouldered was listed only at YC 1/12 (GL) and 3/10 (C&GL). A pair of Broad-winged was well-observed at YC 3/18 (GL). Am. Coot arrived at YC 3/14 (GL) with best count 27 on 3/31 (D&ES). First Killdeer was 2/26 (BB,BF,MH,GL). 1-5 Com. Snipe were found consistently at YC and on adjacent property 3/1+ (v.o.); 2 were listed at PR 3/18 (GS). First Am. Woodcock was 1 near Ernest 2/4 (DF).


E. Phoebe arrived at YC 3/19 (MH,GL). Horned Lark were found at 3 localities with best count 10 near Brush Valley 3/24 (GC). Tree Swallow arrived at YC 2/23 (TBC). Red-breasted Nuthatch only at SHL, where I was present after 2/12 (M&RH). Hermit Thrush was at YC 1/29 (MH,GL), 2/15 (GL), and 3/31 (C&GL). Four reports of N. Mockingbird were unusual. A Brown Thrasher visited an IND feeder 1/24 (NM), then not listed until 3/28 near Elders Ridge (DC). 12 Am. Pipit appeared at TL 3/22 (GL), and 2 seen at YC 3/30 (C&GL), the lone reports. A N. Shrike made its appearance at YC 2/21 (MH,GL) and was last seen 2/20 (GL).

Two Yellow-rumped Warblers, feeding primarily on Poison Ivy berries, were present at SHL all quarter (M&RH). Pine Warbler was first seen at YC 3/26 (BB,MH). First Rufous-sided Towhee at Nolo 3/25 (GL). Chipping Sparrow arrived at Robinson 3/3 (GC). A Field Sparrow at YC 1/29 (MH,GL) accompanied a flock of Am. Tree Sparrow. Fox Sparrow was reported 1/7-14 at CKG (MC), at Nolo 3/6 (GL), and near SHL 3/14 (MH). Up to 6 Swamp Sparrow wintered at YC (MH,GL). A flock of 70+ Red-winged Blackbird 1/22 near NF was first seen. E. Meadowlark returned to Nolo 3/9 (GL,GS). Rusty Blackbird 3/12 (MH,GL) and 3 Com. Grackle 1/15 (GL), both at YC, were first reports. Brown-headed Cowbird arrived near IND 1/13 (BM). Purple Finch were found in numbers from 1-4 all quarter at CKG (MC), Nolo (GL), YC (MH,GL), and SHL (M&RH). Evening Grosbeak reports were sporadic with the only consistent flocks near Nolo (GL) and YC (v.o.). An Nolo flock peaked at 33 indiv. 2/24 (GL). Up to 24 were counted at Alverda 3/16 (FM).

OBSERVERS: John Beaulle, Becky Byerly, Greg Cook, Dan & Mary Cunkel, Betsy & Tom Fetterman, Don Frew, Jack Heim, Margaret and Roger Higbee, RR 2 Box 166, Indiana 15701 (412-543-3493), Leon Hue, Clayton & Gloria Lamer, Beth Marshall, Mary McClure, Norms McHarey, Frances Michny, Pat Petersen, Dorothy & Ed Sloskensky, Dan & Georgette Syster, Todd Bird Club.

JUNIATA COUNTY

Linda Whitesel

Abbreviations: Casner’s Crossing (CC), Clearview Res. (CR), Millinton Access (MA), Muskrat Springs Access (MS). First Am. Grebe were seen twice, at CC 3/25 and at MA 3/30. Tundra Swan made an early appearance 2/24 (DF) with stragglers seen.
through end of quarter. MR told of watching one flock flying into the west just as the sun was setting. A beautiful sight. Migrating ducks were more difficult to find this year; the river was high most of the quarter. Wood Duck were the exception and were often present in easily visible areas. While not as numerous as last year, Red-breasted Merganser were present in good numbers with 5 at CR 3/18 and 1 at CC 3/24; the latter merganser was keeping company with 1 of the Horned Grebes. An Am. Coot at CC 3/24/30 was welcome sight this year. He kept company with 4 Wood Duck until 3/31. 3 Cow, Snipe were seen near Oakland Mills 3/27 (AT). Ring-billed Gull flocks made an early appearance; ± 100 were seen near Thompsontown 2/4 (DW) and stayed around a few weeks. It was warm then with insects stirring. In contrast, Herring Gull, which are usually found in low numbers along the Juniata R. were very scarce. A Great Horned Owl was first seen on nest 1/21 near the intersection of Rts. 75 and 222; 2 owlets were produced and fledged 3/31 (DW). Purple Martin returned to boxes near MS 3/21 (MR); 7 Tree Swallows were noted to MA 3/23; and 3 Barn Swallow returned to the Renno farm near Van Wert 3/28 (MR). A Cow. Raven was in the valley 2/17 near Rts. 75 and 222 (DW). There seems to be a pattern of brief winter visits to this area by the ravens.

Golden-crowned Kinglets were consistently seen in good numbers all quarter. This year they came into my feeding station with a mixed flock, but not partaking. The only report of Evening Grosbeak was on 13 at Troyer’s feeder 3/29.


LACKAWANNA COUNTY

Gerald Klebaskas

Abbreviations: Blakely (BL), Clark’s Summit (CS), Covey’s Swamp (CO), Dalton area (DA), Factoryville area (GA), Glenburn Pond (GP), L. Scranton (LS), Olyphant (OL), Scranton (SC).


Earliest Turkey Vulture was seen at CO 3/3. An ad. Bald Earle flew over OL 1/2. A Sharp-shinned Hawk was at DA 1/16. A Cooper’s Hawk at FA 1/12, at a BL feeder 1/23, and seen at all quarter at CS. Ruffed Grouse were at FA 3/5, 27 Killdeer were at CS 3/6 and Am. Woodcock seen at DA 3/1. About 100 Ring-billed Gull were at GP 1/20 and 13-50 at IS from 3/30+, and 2 Herring Gull at SC 3/2 with 24 there 3/15+

First E. Phoebe were: DA 3/25; BL 3/28; CO 3/31. Our Blue Jay population dropped noticeably. Fish Crow at BL 3/8. Red-winged Nuthatch was not reported at all; an incredible decrease from last year, but Carolina Wren were present all quarter. An Am. Robin was at a SC feeder reportedly eating mixed seeds from mid-Mar. on. Cedar Waxwing were at DA 2/2. Two Fox Sparrow were at DA 3/2. White-throated Sparrow numbers were down from last year. Purple Finch were at CO 3/3, 31. Eight Evening Grosbeak at BL was the only report.

OBSERVERS: Derry & Nancy Bird, Rosann Bongey, Arlene & Marie Jarocha, Gerald Klebaskas, RR 2 Box 2821, Factoryville 18419 (717-945-3949), Mike Freidlin, George Mozurkewich, Jane Shulenberger, Sue & Tinka Zenke.

LANCASTER COUNTY

Eric Witmer

Abbreviations: Elizabethtown (E’town), Muddy Run (MR), Middle Creek WMA (MC), Octoraro L. (OL), Safe Harbor Dam (SHD), Susquehanna R. (SR), S.R Conejoheala Flats (SRCF) and adjacent waters.

Highlights of the period include outstanding numbers of Snow Goose, along with Pennsylvania’s Ist Ross’ Goose, with a total of three different birds in the county. At least 4-5 Eurasian Wigeon, 2 Little Gull, N. Shrike, and a Nashville Warbler.

The only reported Red-throated Loon was at MR in early Jan. (RMS et al.). A Red-necked Grebe was at MR 2/11-12 (RMS,JV, HM). An ad. Double-crested Cormorant was below SHD 1/5 (RMS et al.) for the only Jan/Feb record. Single Am. Bittern were found 3/30 at SRCF (JB,TG) and at MC (JH). An ad. Black-crowned Night-Heron was seen regularly in Jan/Feb along Lititz Run near Oregon and joined by others in Mar. (EW). Tundra Swan made another impressive showing again this year, with 42 birds at MC already 1/6 (EW), numbers building to 2500 by 2/2 (RMS,EW), and up to 5000 later in mid-Feb (m.ob.). An apparently “wild” Mute Swan was at MC 2/21 (FH,PM). Two Gr. White-fronted Goose were at MC 1/20, 27 & 2/17 (TG et al.) and other single birds were at MR 3/2 (RMS et al.) and at OL 3/6 (JS) and 3/17 (GS).

A small Canada Goose thought to be of the race “minima” was at MC in a large flock of Snow Goose 3/3-16 (m.ob.); another (same bird?) was at MR 3/26 (RMS). A d Wood Duck found on the SoLanCo CBC wintered through the period at the mouth of Peters Cr. (RMS et al.;

Unprecedented were 10,000 Snow Goose (only 20+ blue morph) flying over the MR area 7/5 (JB,RMS et al.). The birds did not remain in the area but reappeared 2/7 in Drumore Twp (RMS). Under close observation later in the day an ad. Ross’ Goose was found (J&EP). This ad. was seen almost daily in the MR area from 2/27-3/21 & 3/26 (m.ob.) with the larger flocks of Snow Goose. An imm. Ross’ Goose was found at MC 3/3 with about 800 Snow Goose (TG). An ad. Ross’ Goose was found at MC 3/5 (JB). Ross’ Goose sightings were made almost daily since 3/3 with the last report of the ad. 3/16 (TG). There was no report of the two birds seen together, however photographs of each bird do exist. The ad. at MC was a different bird than the one at MR.

Peak counts of 20,000 Snow Goose were made 3/3-5, with 4000 at OL, 9000 at MR, 5600 at Washington Boro and 2000 at MC (RMS et al.). A major movement through the county was 3/19-21. The last concentrations of Snow Goose was 600 at MC 3/17 (TG) and 500 at MR 3/30 (CH).

According to RMS, he was able to read the neck collars of 10 Snow Goose. All 10 birds proved to be individuals that had wintered on the Delmarva Peninsula. “A possible reason for the sudden influx into s.e. Pa. is the growth of the Snow Goose population. According to Michael Hill, a graduate student of Eastern Kentucky University who is conducting the Delmarva study, the population has gone from a low of 30,000 to a current level of 360,000. Half of these winter in and around Bombay Hook [NWR]. It seems logical that as the numbers swell, flocks will fan out in search of food-which the Lancaster farm fields can amply supply.”

Ross’ Goose, Middle Creek WMA, 3/9/91. Photo by Jane Schreffler.

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Wood Duck were at MC 1/1 (EW). N. Shoveler and Gadwall wintered at MC in larger numbers than in the past, most likely due to a mild winter (EW,SS et al.). A N. Shoveler rarely seen at MR, was reported there 3/2 (RMS et al.). Eur. Wigeon sightings include 1 at Mt. Joy along the Chickies Cr. 2/8 (tJH) and the previously reported d and 2 4 (tufosurface). Eur. Wigeon remained at several farm ponds in Fulton and Drumore Twp. at least until Mar (RMS et al.); 2 d were reported from the “Wentworth pond” 3/3 (D&RH). 20 Am. Wigeon were on a pond at Penryn 3/22-26 (B&L). A Canvasback was at MC 2/4 (LH); 2 d Redhead were at MC 2/8-3/10 (RM et al.) and another at a pond in Manheim Twp 2/3 (LH). A Gr. Scaup was at MC 3/16 (m.ob.). A 4 White-winged Scoter was at SRCF 1/12 (JB,TG,EW) and again 1/13 (SS). Somewhat unusual away from the SR was a 4 Com. Goldeneye at MC 1/6 (EW). 1500+ Com. Merganser were at SRCF 1/11 (JB,TG,EW). 20 Red-breasted Merganser were at MR 3/23-26 (RMS et al.).

An ad. Peregrine Falcon was seen flying downriver over MR 1/3 (RMS). A Snowy Owl was at MC 2/8-9 (RM et al.). A high count of 50 Cow. Snipe was at Habecker Church Rd. (Manor Twp) 3/31 (JD). Am. Woodcock were found in Conoy Twp 3/2 (LC,BS) and courtship displays noted at MC 3/5 (LS).

Two Little Gull (No details, -eds.) in basic plumage were seen flying downriver over several Bonaparte's Gull on the York side of the SRF 3/30 (D&LH). This is the 2nd consecutive year in Mar/Apr that a Little Gull has been found along the SR with Bonaparte's. The only reported Ls. Black-backed Gull was at SRCF 1/5,29 (JB et al.). A Barred Owl was near E'town 2/24 and 4-7 Long-eared Owl were in the MC in several locations (m.ob.) and 1-2 Short-eared Owl were at MC most of the quarter.

Two separate imm. Red-headed Woodpecker wintered in the s. portion (MS,CP,J&EP). An E. Phoebe was found at MC 1/22 (JB et al.). A Nashville Warbler was at SRCF 1/5,29 (JB et al.) and again 1/13 (SS). Somewhat unusual away from the SR was a Nashville Warbler (tSS) seen at a feeder in E'town at least through 2/26 (LC).

White-bellied Sapsucker was seen almost daily in a yard near the High Bridge Dam 2/2 (JC,MC). Snowy Owl, Lebanon, 2/21/91. Photo by Barbara Haas.

Remarkable was a Nashville Warbler (tSS) seen at a feeding station near Landisville 2/12+ (CT,K,SS). A Pine Warbler was at a feeder in E'town 1/10 (LC). A Com. Yellowthroat was found in a wet area near Quarryville 2/9 (RMS). Savannah Sparrow were found all quarter in Upper Leacock Twp (LC) and Clay Twp (m.ob.). E. Meadowlark were found in a number of areas. A Rusty Blackbird was at SHD 1/5 (D&LH).


LEBANON COUNTY

Steve Santner

Abbreviations: Memorial L. (ML), SGL 145 (SGL).

The extremely mild weather allowed greater numbers of waterfowl than usual to winter over. ML froze for only about a week in Feb. and even then there was a little open water. There were no heavy or lasting snowfalls and probably wintering birds fared well. This was not a year for irruptive species generally, although Black-capped Chickadee moved in numbers. There were few winter finches. The bird of the season was the Snowy Owl which spent most of the period in a trailer park on the w. side of Lebanon.

Snowy Owl, Lebanon, 2/21/91. Photo by Barbara Haas.

LEHIGH COUNTY

Bernie Morris

Abbreviations: L. Muhlenberg (LM), Leaser L. (LL).

Despite an almost complete lack of the winter finches, this was one of the better winters in recent years. The most noteworthy family was owls, with 8 species seen in our area in Jan. Jason Horn had 7 species on 1/1! Several unusual waterfowl, unseasonal warm-weather birds (undoubtedly due to the unusually warm weather), rounded out the season.

2 Snow Goose were at LM 1/7 (SS,BLM); A flock of 8 Gr. Scap was at the Fogelsville Quarry 3/24 (PE). A count of 54 migrating Turkey Vulture was noted near Alburtis as early as 2/4 (CRE). A Red-shouldered Hawk was present all season at Applewood (PE). A flock of 5-6 Wild Turkey was near LL 1/20 (PE,BLM). An early Gr. Yellowlegs was on a pond near LL 3/30 (FBa,PE,BLM).

A Red-headed Woodpecker was in Kistler Valley 1/1 (m.ob.). Good numbers of Golden-crowned Kinglet were noted, but only a few Ruby-crowned were found. An extremely early Blue-gray Gnatcatcher was at Jordan Park 3/31 (AJ). A flock of 8 Gr. Scap was at the Fogelsville Quarry 3/24 (PE). A count of 54 migrating Turkey Vulture was noted near Alburtis as early as 2/4 (CRE). A Red-shouldered Hawk was present all season at Applewood (PE). A flock of 5-6 Wild Turkey was near LL 1/20 (PE,BLM). An early Gr. Yellowlegs was on a pond near LL 3/30 (FBa,PE,BLM).

A Red-headed Woodpecker was in Kistler Valley 1/1 (m.ob.). Good numbers of Golden-crowned Kinglet were noted, but only a few Ruby-crowned were found. An extremely early Blue-gray Gnatcatcher was at Jordan Park 3/31 (AJ). Three E. Bluebird were at Walnutport 2/21 (DG,JG). A Fox Sparrow was seen at Applewood 2/2 (PE), and a Whitecrowned Sparrow was there 2/9 (PE). A single Evening Grosbeak was at the Trexlertown Pines 1/27 (BLM).

This was the year for owls. Two Snowy Owl were resident at the ABE Airport through 3/3 (DGer, m.ob.). One was decidedly whiter than the other and perhaps an ad. male. Both birds kept somewhat apart, but both frequented fields right next to the heavily used runways. How did they stand the noise of the jets? These were the first cooperative (i.e., that stayed around for more than 1-2 days) Snowy Owls in our region in over 15 years. The Snowy Owls were gone by early March, but their place was taken by 3 Short-eared Owl seen from a taxiing plane at the airport 3/12 (FBa). Another great pair of owls was the Barred Owl first found 12/30 in Lynn Twp (FB,PE,JH). They were seen in a pine woods with 15-20 Long-eared Owl throughout the quarter. Another pair of Barred Owls was near Alburtis (CRE). At least 4 different N. Saw-whet Owl were found in the county. Birds were seen on Emmaus T/ST and 2/15 (JSk), at the Walter Tract 2/10 (FB, m.ob.), and in Coopersburg 1/9 (DA&EM). This is probably a record number of sightings.

Snowy Owl, ABE Airport, 3/2/91. Photo by Jeff Kaboly.


LUZERNE COUNTY

Bill Reid

Abbreviations: Berwick (BK), Dallas (DA), Harveys L. (HL), Kirby Park (KP), Susquehanna Riverlands (SR), Wyoming (WY).

A Great Blue Heron was at Wilkes-Barre 2/15 was the 1st Feb. record of the species that the compiler has recorded in over 40+ years of birding in n.e. Pa. Six Wood Duck were at BK 3/2 (A&MG); a N. Pintail was at WY 1/12 (JSh); 2 Blue-winged Teal were at HL 3/30 (JSk); an Am. Wigeon at BK 3/17 (A&MG); 7 Gr. Scaup were at HL 1/8 and 2 remained through the month (WR); 12 Corn. Goldeneye were at WY 2/18 (TB); 6 Hooded Merganser at HL 1/8 (WR); 56 Com. Merganser at Huntsville 3/8 (WE); A Ruddy Duck was at HL in early Jan. (v.o.).

The first Turkey Vulture flock was spotted 2/22 at Shickshinny (TS). N. Harrier reports came from WY 2/18 (TB) and Conyngham 2/28 (A&MG). A Cooper’s Hawk was seen daily in late Mar. at WY (JSk). The only Red-shouldered Hawk report was at DA 3/27 (WR).

The 20 Am. Coot wintering was well below the 34 of the previous winter and the 50-60 of earlier years. A Com. Snipe was observed at KP 3/1 (WR). There was an increase in Herring Gull reports. There were 2 Great Black-backed Gull noted at HL: an imm. 3/2 and an ad. 3/23 (WR). Of the 9 Great Black-backed Gull that the compiler has noted in Luzerne since the 1960s, the 3/23 record was the first ad. bird seen. In KP at dusk on 1/1, JM and JL called in 6-7 E. Screech-Owl at the same time.

In a winter in which Horned Lark numbers were low, the only report was of 200 at BK 1/27 (A&MG). For the 1st time in 15 years, spring migrant Tree Swallow preceded E. Phoebe at SR (DG,JF); the swallow arrived 3/18 and phoebe was a late 3/20. Next E. Phoebe report was from W. Pittston 3/25 (JSh). A Fish Crow at WY 1/12 was very unusual for the date (JSh). 3 Red-breasted Nuthatch were daily visitors to a DA feeder (FJ).

DG found Blue Jay, Black-capped Chickadee, Tufted Titmouse, and White-breasted Nuthatch to be less common near SR and WP than in most winters, including 2 resident-bird study plots. DG wonders about the relationship between the latter three small resident hole-nesting species and the large gypsy moth infestation of 1990. All of these species fared well during the nesting season, but seemed to decline in late summer. Were small caterpillar populations affected by the large-scale defoliation? More research needs to be done on this subject.

Carolina Wren continue to be reported from many locations. A flock of 20 Am. Pipit was seen at WY 3/26 (JSh). Up to 16 Cedar Waxwing were noted on various occasions at Conyngham (A&MG). Yellow-rumped Warbler was noted at BK 2/18 (A&MG) and at least 2 over-wintered in SR’s Wetlands Nature Area (DG,AG); and 3 Pine Warbler were at Huntsville on the early date 3/30 (TB). Male Red-winged Blackbird were teaming over SR, setting up territories by 2/25. 20 Snow Bunting were at DA 1/27 (JH,JSh).

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**LYCOMING COUNTY**

Wesley Egli

**Abbreviations:** Antes Fort (AF), Muncy area (MA), Picture Rocks area (PR), Rose Valley L. (RVL), SGL 252 (SGL), Upper Fairfield Twp (UFT), Washington Twp (WT).


**Turkey Vulture** first near RVL 3/16 (WE). Osprey at Lycoming Cr. ±3/25 (DD) & RVL 3/28 (A&LB). An ad. and imm. Bald Eagle were at Little Pine SP 3/30 (J&SW). A d N. Harrier was hunting in UFT 1/31 (WE,ER). A pair of Red-shouldered Hawk was at SGL 3/21 (DB). Rough-legged Hawk were found all quarter in UFT (E&TR). Am. Coot was found on RVL 3/28 (A&LB). Killdeer first seen in PR 3/2 (WE). An. Woodcock was first reported 2/26 in WT (DB). Ring-billed Gull were at RVL 3/16 (WE). 4 Short-eared Owl were seen hunting late 3/17 in Muncy Twp (WE,ER). E. Phoebe was reported 3/25 in MA (WE) and 3/29 in WT (DB). 40 Horned Lark noted in UFT 1/14 (E&TR). A flock of 15 Fish Crow from the Milton I. crow roost was seen in WT 2/27 (DB). Cow. Raven were in PR 1/13 (WE).

A Winter Wren was singing at SGL 3/29 (DB). A 4 Rufous-sided Towhee at SGL 2/27 (DB). Field Sparrow were first heard 3/30; Fox Sparrow first at SGL 3/21 (DB). 3 Red-winged Blackbird were at the Reish’s feeders 1/13, then a singing d was seen and heard 3/30; 3 Am. Redpoll were near the spring 3/30 (WE,ER). E. Meadowlark were noted 1/17 in Muncy Twp (WE,ER). A dozen Rusty Blackbird at SGL 3/29 (DB). A lone Purple Finch was at DB’s home in WT 2/25 (DB). Pine Siskin and Evening Grosbeak were sparcadic all quarter; siskins reported in UFT early, grosbeaks at more locations in numbers ranging from 1-3 in WT, ±50 at a Slate Run feeder 3/23+ (BR), and ±60 at feeders in PR (WE) and UFT (E&TR).

**OBSERVERS:** Peggy Bigger, Dan Braunning, Arlene & Larry Brown, Dennis Dusza, Wesley Egli, PO Box 381, Picture Rocks 17762 (717-584-2222), Jim Jacobs, Ed & Tink Reish, Glenna & Paul Schwalbe, Bob Ross, Fred Stiner, JoAnn & Sonya Wolfe.

**MC KEAN COUNTY**

Linda D. Ordiway

**Abbreviations:** Eldred Swamp (ES), Knowldie (KL), Red Bridge (RB), Sugar Bay (SB), Willow Bay (WB).

This quarter went too quickly with not enough field time to do the season or the county justice. This also will have to be my last report. (Frank & Barb, you will have to find another compiler who sends things late!) I will be attending graduate school at Marshall University in W. Virginia come 6/7. Thank you for allowing me to be a part of Pa. Birds, I love it! A big thanks also to those observers who sent me some reports.


**OBSERVERS:** Dr. Frank Bray, Deuane Hoffman, Madeleine Miles, Linda Ordiway, 72 Gilbert Ln., Bradford 16701 (814368-7464). Thanks again, PENNSYLVANIA BIRDS is going to WV also!

Our thanks to Linda for her reports (they were never that late) and the extra notes she sent along. Good luck in Grad School, Linda. If anyone is interested in being compiler, please contact us. -eds.

**MERCER COUNTY**

Marty McKay

**Abbreviations:** Grove City area (GC), Hermitage area (HA), Limber Rd (LR), Saguallas Ponds (SP), Shenango R. Res. (SRR). A Pied-billed Grebe was at SP 3/30 (HB). The first 2 Great Blue Heron returned to the Brucker Sanctuary on the same date as last year: 2/19. In the annual pre-season count, 238 nests were tallied.

**Two Wood Duck were at HA 3/19, and 5 on the same pond 3/25. The following waterfowl were at SRR in singles or pairs: N. Pintail 3/2; Blue-winged Teal 3/26; N. Shoveler 3/2; Gadwall 3/26; Am. Wigeon 3/17; 6 Am. Wigeon were at SP 3/30 (HB). “Wall to wall” (200-300) Ring-necked Duck were at SP & Willow Pond 3/30 (HB); 20 Gr. Scaup showed up 3/26 at SRR, and 2 Bluefizzles were there 17/17 and 25 on 3/26. At SRR there were 8 Hooded Merganser 1/17 and 12 on 3/26, and 6 at SP 3/30 (HB). SRR always hosts many Red-breated Merganser in Mar: 75+ on 3/17 and 60 on 3/26.

A N. Harrier was at LR 2/3 (NR). A Sharp-shinned Hawk continues to be a feeder predator at GC (SM), as does a Cooper’s Hawk at HA. An Am. Kestrel was near SP 3/30 (HB), and a Merlin was again at SRR propagation ponds 1/6. Two Wild Turkey were unexpected at HA 1/5, and 3 seen getting ready to roost the evening of 3/30 about 75 ft up in a group of oaks was even more unusual. Most thrilling was to see 4 leave this same roost at 6 a.m. the following morning. Killdeer began arriving 2/20. An Am. Woodcock was seen and heard “doing his thing” 3/20 at HA.

Great Black-backed Gull has now reached Mercer, with a sighting 2/21 at SRR. It was a stand-out among hundreds of Ring-billed Gull. A
Pileated Woodpecker was at HA 2/3. E. Phoebe arrived at HA 3/22, and 10 Tree Swallow returned to SRR 3/26 and 100 at Celery Swamp 3/30 (NR). The single Red-breasted Nuthatch, which arrived at the HA feeder last Nov., left the first week of March, and the GC feeder pair was last seen 3/23 (HB). The HA pair of Carolina Wren survived the winter, but the single GC bird was not seen after 3/17 (HB). Individual Golden-crowned Kinglets were seen at various sites all quarter, and a good movement was noted beginning the last 10 days of Mar. A pair of E. Bluebird had their nest box staked out 2/2 at SRR. Rufous-sided Towhee returned 3/30 to LR (HB). Am. Tree Sparrow and Dark-eyed Junco remained scarce all quarter. Field Sparrow returned 3/22 at HA. Two E. Meadowlark were at LR 3/30 (HB). No report of Purple Finch, Cow. Redpoll or Pine Siskin, and only one report of Evening Grosbeak: 6 at GC 2/17 (HB, LW).

OBSEVERS: Harriett Bauer, Shirley McCarr, Marty McKay, 2220 Valley View Rd, Sharpsville 16150 (412-962-7476), Nancy Rodgers, Lorraine Weiland.

MIFFLIN COUNTY
Margaret Kennepp

Abbreviations: Juniata R. (JR), McVeytown area (MV), Newton Hamilton (NH).

All sightings by compiler in MV unless otherwise noted.

An excellent count of 22 Great Blue Heron was made at a pond in Ferguson Valley 3/21 (TM, LB). Two Tundra Swan were on the JR near MV 2/15. Two pair of Wood Duck went over 3/30 and 3 Am. Black Duck were on JR near Ryde 3/18. Cow. and Hooded mergansers were found on JR above Ryde and near NH 3/7, 8, 10, while 3 Red-breasted Merganser were near Ryde 3/8.

Three Black and 35 Turkey vultures were observed near Lewistown 3/4; many "TVs" were noted migrating in late March. Our local Redtailed Hawk are conspicuous by their absence since late-Feb. and may not nest nearby this season! We were delighted 3/18 to hear and see at least 4 Woodcock displaying over the farm field and the creek area across the road from us. Especially since their original habitat was cleared and they have adapted to this area close to our home.

The owners at Dunmire Sons Dairy, MV, wanted to start using the silage from their silo and discovered that Barn Owl had a nest with 5 eggs already in it. Tim Marks, PGC, put a box in place and moved the nest and the plastic which held the nest into it. They later discovered that there were 7 eggs and the 4 was incubating them. The Dunmires (as does everyone else) hope they are successful in raising their young.

Red-bellied Woodpecker were nest building by 3/18. Downy were in good numbers, but Hairy woodpecker numbers seem especially low. N. Flicker were noted 3/4, 5 (MB, BK).

Pileated Woodpecker have been seen near Granville all season (RM). An E. Phoebe arrived in full voice 3/3. One of our 3 Carolina Wren appeared 1/10 minus its tail and was not seen after 1/12. Another Carolina Wren is busy constructing a nest just above the kitchen door in Burnham (RS).

E. Bluebird over-wintered in good numbers. They fed on rose hips and honeysuckle berries with some supplements of currants and raisins. Many neighbors also reported them. 1/19 (CS), 2/18 (TK), during Feb. and Mar. (GM), and all quarter (SS). The local House Sparrow has tried to fill our 2 closest boxes as well as the 10 that we had cleaned and repaired and left on the picnic table. He was so busy stuffing grasses into many of the cleaned out boxes. Well, he'll be busy for quite a while, as I'll probably clean them out several more times before the bluebirds can claim them. Best one wins! A wintering Am. Robin was noted 1/21, with next sighting 3/1 (AM), TK saw "a flock of 17 in their yard really hunting for food and flying about."

An almost completely leucistic N. Cardinal was regular at a Mattawan feeder during Feb. (MM). There was a bit of color just under the wings. Song, White-throated and White-crowned sparrows and Dark-eyed Junco were regulars all quarter. Both Red-winged Blackbird and Cow. Grackle arrived the same day, 2/23; usually the Red-wings arrive first. E. Meadowlark first noted 3/15. Brown-headed Cowbird were in large numbers at the feeders 3/5. House Finch had begun nesting in early Feb., with a hanger dropping in 3/18; they still had nesting all winter. Only 2 Pine Siskin were noted at a local feeder this winter, 3/5. Am. Goldfinch were in good numbers all season.

OBSEVERS: Larry Baker, Thelma Kanagy, Bill Kaufman, Margaret Kennepp, RR 2 Box 343, McVeytown 17051 (717-399-8253), Dan Scarp, Grace Miller, Mary Miller, Ron Moon, Ruth Selmeter, Sara Snook.

MONTGOMERY COUNTY
Neal Thorpe

Abbreviations: Green Lane Res. (GLR), Evansburg SP (ESP), Ft. Washington SP (FWSP), Schuykill R. (SR), Upper Peridomen Valley Park (UPVP), Valley Forge National Historical Park (VFNP).

The quarter's more interesting birds were 2 Bonaparte's Gull at GLR one day only, 1/24 (GAF); a N. Goshawk well seen at ESP 1/26 (FH); a Barred Owl at GLR, both heard and seen from 3/5-13 (GLF); another Barred Owl calling and visible at FWSP at 9:45 a.m. 3/1 (W&NM); a N. Saw-whet Owl at GLR 2/26 (GLF) and a surprising Solitary Vireo in FWSP 1/6 (W&NM).

Pied-billed Grebe were scarce everywhere, although a single finally turned up at GLR in Mar. A Horned Grebe was at GLR 3/9-16 (KC, GLF); Tundra Swan came through late Feb/early Mar., with a max. of 17 at GLR; Snow Goose were low in numbers, with 3 blue-morph at GLR 3/2 and I that lingered between GLR and UPVP 3/16-27 (KC, NT). The vigorous Wood Duck population at UPVP seemed secure with 6 arriving there 3/5 (GAF). Other Mar. waterfowl records at GLR & UPVP include: small numbers of Green-winged Teal (max. 5) first seen 3/3 (GAF); N. Pintail numbers were up a little this year, although nothing like the hundreds once seen at GLR; an early pintail sighting was 2/3 at GLR (KC), but from 3/2-17 numbers swelled to 60; 3 Blue-winged Teal had arrived at GLR by 3/30 (GAF); about 20 Gadwall were at UPVP all quarter; Am. Wigeon had arrived by early Mar.; a Canvasback was at GLR 3/2 (GAF), from Feb.+ Ring-necked Duck were at GLR in good numbers (50+), and smaller numbers at UPVP and in the SR at Betzwood. L. Scaup max. was 14 on 3/24 (GAF). There were fewer Cow. Goldeneye in the SR at Betzwood this winter than in past years, at most 30, but numerous Bufflehead (NT). The large wintering population of Hooded Merganser was at UPVP, with 50+ there all winter. Red-shoulders were regulars, 26-strong, is doing well. A tom was gobbling in the valley near the range from Church Rd. at GLR 3/9-16 (KC, GLF); Ruffed Grouse may have reached the UPVP area: a single Sharp-shinned and Cooper's were also noted at UPVP 3/16 (GLF). By late Mar. as many as 5 Cow. Merganser numbers were very low in the SR, never more than 12 (NT), and seemed sparse at GLR except for a peak in Feb. of 140+ (KC). Missing altogether was Ruddy Duck.

An imm. Bald Eagle was at GLR 1/24 (GAF) and a N. Harrier was seen several times in Jan. and Feb. On the same 1/26 visit to ESP in which FH saw the N. Goshawk, he also saw a Sharp-shinned, Cooper's and a Red-shouldered. He points out that ESP has been under-reported by birders, and that it has good possibilities. Single Sharp-shinned and Cooper's were also glimpsed at GLR (GLF); an imm. Cooper's wintered at FWSP (W&NM). The pair of Red-shoulders that bred last year (location deleted -eds.) was present through the winter, becoming more vocal 3/2+ and I was seen regularly in Jan. and Feb., over the SR (BF). GLR's Merlin was also seen twice in Feb. (GLF).

No less than 17 Ring-necked Pheasant were counted at GLR 1/13 (KC); Ruffed Grouse may have reached the UPVP area: a road-kill was found 3/30 (RG); and GLR's Wild Turkey population, 26-strong, is doing well. A tom was gobbling in the UPVP 3/16 (GLF). By late Mar. as many as 5 Cow. Snipe could be seen from Church Rd. at GLR, grazing in a wet field. Am. Woodcock were on schedule in scattered locations.

The Red-headed Woodpecker in Providence Twp stayed through Jan., but Hairy Woodpecker seem to be becoming harder to find.
Piliated Woodpecker are still in the UPV, and I occasionally visited RG’s yard, but there has been no report of any s. of there for years. Earliest E. Phoebe report was along the SR 3/23, earliest Tree Swallow in same area 3/20 (BF). Red-breasted Nuthatch were still evident at quarter’s end, with 12 in one stand of pines in FWSP 3/31 (W&NM), overlapping the arrival of singing Golden-crowned Kinglet. E. Bluebird were doing well at GLR, ESP and FWSP, as were wintering Yellow-rumped Warbler. Earliest Pine Warbler were 3 in UPV 3/28 (GLF).

Reports of 1-2 Fox Sparrow at feeders were widespread, and several White-crowned Sparrow spent the quarter in a roadside hedgerow in the SR valley in Upper Providence Twp. E. Meadowlark seem to have come back to GLR to stay, with a max. of 24 counted 1/4 (GLF). Purple Finch counts there, however, were “much lower than last year” (RG).

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William & Naomi Murphy, Francois, Gary L. Freed, Ron Grubb, Frank Hohenleitner, were “much lower than last year” (RG). Of 24 counted 1/4 (GLF).

Meadowlark seem to have come back to GLR to stay, with a max. roadside hedgerow in the SR valley in Upper Providence Twp. E. and several White-crowned Sparrow spent the quarter in a roadside hedgerow in the SR valley in Upper Providence Twp. E. Meadowlark seem to have come back to GLR to stay, with a max. of 24 counted 1/4 (GLF). Purple Finch counts there, however, were “much lower than last year” (RG).

OBSERVERS: Kevin Crilley, Bob Fetterman, George A. Franchois, Gary L. Freed, Ron Grubb, Frank Hohenleitner, William & Naomi Murphy, Neal Thorpe, Box Q, Mont Clare, PA 19453 (215-933-2127).

MONTOUR COUNTY

Allen Schweinsberg

A warm winter and some open water enabled a Great Blue Heron to visit Montour Preserve 2/9 (A&MG). Five Hooded Merganser were at the mouth of Roaring Cr. 1/2 (CS). A shrike sp. was seen on three occasions from 1/25-2/13 (CS).

OBSERVERS: Alan & Monica Gregory, Allen Schweinsberg, 1200 Zeigler Rd, Lewisburg 17837 (717-524-0432), Christine Smull.

NORTHAMPTON COUNTY

Rick Wiltraut

Abbreviations: Albert Rd. Ponds (ARP), Delaware R. (DR), E. Bangor Dam (EBD), Forks Twp (FT), Craurer’s Hill (GH), KGecknersville Pasture (KP), Martin’s Cr. (MC), Minsi L. (ML), Wind Gap (WG). All observations by Dave DeReamus unless otherwise noted.

A Horned Grebe was at ML 3/29 (SB,DD,WR). 3 Tundra Swan were in FT 2/10. A flock of 150 Snow Goose was seen at MC 3/17 and 8 others were at ARP 2/22. 22 Green-winged Teal were counted at MC 3/17 and Blue-winged Teal were at MC 3/29 & KP 3/30. 8 N. Pintail were at MC 3/17 and a N. Shoveler was there 3/29. 55 Ring-necked Duck were at EBD 3/29 (SB,WR) and 2 Redhead at ARP 2/22-27. 8 Ls. Scap at ARP 3/24 and a Gr. Scap there 3/29. 18 Com. Goldeneye and 10 Bufflehead were on the DR above Easton 2/2. An excellent count of 80 Com. Merganser noted at ML 3/23 and sightings of Red-breasted included 2 at ARP 3/24 and 1 at ML 3/29 (SB,DD,WR).

The most heartening sighting this quarter was a pair of Osprey building a nest on a telephone pole at MC 3/29 (DD,AK). The d was observed doing a courtship flight with a fish in its talons. An ad. Bald Eagle was at ML 2/23 (SB). A leucistic Red-tailed Hawk was again present at WG where I (the same?) has been seen for at least 4-5 years in a row (m.ob.). A dark-morph Red-tailed Hawk was at Richmond R. in FT 3/13 (SB,WR) and later at MC/Beildere Hwy until 3/30 (SB,WR). Only 3 Rough-legged Hawk were reported.

A Pectoral Sandpiper was at KP 3/15. 3 Com. Snipe were still present at KP 1/5 and 24 were counted there 3/30. Single Great Black-cked Gull were seen on the DR at Frost Hollow 2/2 and at MC 3/29. A dead Long-eared Owl was found in Williams Twp 1/13 (SB,WR). A Piliated Woodpecker was in Williams Twp 2/2 and a very early E. Phoebe was found at MC 2/24 (SB). A Carolina Chickadee (No details, -eds.) was seen being chased by Black-caps at EBD 3/17 (DD) and another was seen in Williams Twp in Jan. (AK).

The first Am. Pipit was at Arrowhead Rd. 3/23 (WR) and an extremely early singing Solitary Vireo was observed at MC 3/24 (SB). Poole (Pennsylvania Birds, 1964) has an “extreme date” of 4/3. Two Savannah Sparrow were still present at GH 1/12 and 4 White-crowned Sparrow were at Yeska’s 1/1. 2 Lapland Greenspurs were at GH 1/12.

OBSERVERS: Steve Boyce, Dave DeReamus, Arlene Koch, Rick Wiltraut, 205 Washington St, Nazareth 18064 (215-759-5184).

PERRY COUNTY

Deuane Hoffman

Four Canvasback and 2 Great Black-backed Gull were along the Juniata R. near Newport 1/15 (DC). 12 Wild Turkey were near Liverpool 1/18 (DC), 2 Hermit Thrush, 25+ Am. Robin, and 12 Yellow-rumped Warbler were near Mannsville 1/2 (DH).

After a 1/2-hour search, DH finally relocated 27 Red Crossbill near Dunkleberger Rd. 1/2. Evening Grosbeak continued to use Ron Sober’s feeders near Ickesburg, although there numbers had decreased to a high of only 8 on 1/6.

OBSERVERS: Dick Colyer, Dentine Hoffman, 3406 Montour St, Harrisburg 17111 (717-564-7475).

Corrigenda: The Purple Fmch high on 12/22/90 should be 3 not 30! And the low of 5 Pine Siskin should be 15, not 5!

PHILADELPHIA COUNTY

Ed Fingerhood


The annual Mid-winter Bird Census (WBC), once again, was the event of the season. Coordinated and compiled by Keith Russell, the count was held 1/13 and fielded 41 birders who reported a remarkable 96 species, an all-time high. Highlights follow. A detailed report is available from Keith at 71 W.

Washington Ln., Phila. 19144.

A Com. Loon on the WBC was the only report. Likewise, Piedbilled Grebe was found on the WBC, with found 2 at TN that day (KS); I at TN 3/3 (SS) and 4 on 3/21 (JCM). Two Horned Grebe, unusual for PHL, were at PPD 2/21 (NP). It seems established now that Double-crested Cormorant are in before Great Cormorant leave. Two imm. Greats were at FM 1/2 (RR). An all-time high of 26 Great Cormorant was noted on the WBC; 10 remained as late as 3/12 at PPD (KS) and latest was at the Tacony-Palmyra Bridge 3/28 (CD). Two Double-crested noted on the WBC, but 20+ at GPB 3/28 (KS).

One Great Egret was “walking on ice” at FM 1/2 (RR) and 1 for WM 1/6. 2 BC; 12 were at TN 1/15 (NP). 2 Black-crowned Night-Heron found.

Photo by Rick Wiltraut.
on WBC. Glossy Ibis, 14, was first seen flying N over the DR 3/26 (KS) and I settled into TN 3/29 (JCM). Only I Snow Goose, good for PHL, was on the WBC.

The census produced 18 species of ducks. WBC had just I Wood Duck; 2 at TN 3/4 (NP) increased to 6 by 3/28 (KS). While scouting for the WBC 1/6, EB, KR & CW counted 200 Green-winged Teal in a s.w. PHL, but only 14 a week later. By 3/3 there were 200-250 (NP) and last reported 3/28 when KS saw 14 at GPB. 87 N. Pintail at PSP 2/28 dropped to 35 on 3/7 (EF). At least 600 were flying N along the river 3/17 (CD). First report of Blue-winged Teal at TN was 3/24 (KS). A Gadwall keeping company with a Y Mallard in WFP 1/12 (EF,EB) was not found the next day, although the WBC did produce 2. Another of these scarce PHL ducks was seen 2/24 at PSP (EF). Only 1 Am. Wigeon on the WBC, but 50+ at TN until 3/10 (NP,KS).

Canvasback at PPD dropped from 150 on 2/21 to 4 by 3/18 (PPD). Only report of Redhead was I on WBC. TN had 8 Ring-necked Duck 3/3 (NP,SS). 4 Gr. Scapau rested at TN 3/3 (NP); EB saw 2 on the • 12. There were 50 Ls. Scapau were counted. DC found a rare PHL Oldsquaw to enhance the WBC, likewise I Hooded Merganser. Com. Merganser numbered 112 for the WBC and lingered in smaller numbers until 3/23 at TN (JS); Red-breasted Merganser were seen there the same day (JS). JCM writes that Ruddy Duck had "low numbers on the Delaware R. again this year." Several specific counts confirm that observation. Scouting for the WBC only 60 were on the river 1/6 (EB,KR,CW); the count produced 224, and a mere 20-40 were at PPD from 2/21-3/18 (KS).

Three Turkey Vulture made the WBC and 1 over CW 2/2 (SL). 5 N. Harrier were counted; 2, 3 I Y were at the NE PHL Airport 1/21 (EF) and I at TN 3/28 (KS). 4 Cooper’s Hawk on the WBC, along with 2 Red-shouldered Hawk; another of the latter was in CW 3/19 (MD). As usual, numerous Red-tails were seen (70 for the WBC); an imm. in Independence Park 1/14 (Tim McFadden), and courting at Morris Arboretum 2/3 (MD). Am. Kestrel were in various locations. On 2/20, 2 were in w. PHL (EB). A Merlin was found on the WBC (Michael Darcy).

A careful study by Chris Dooley for the Pu. Game Commission of Peregrine Falcon nesting on the DR has resulted in some remarkable findings. On 3/8 he found pairs at the GPB, the Walt Whitman (WWB) and Tacony-Palmyra (TPB) bridges, all on the Pa. side. Later that month a pair was found at the Betsy Ross Bridge (BRB). By the end of the month he had confirmed nesting pairs at the GPB, WWB and BRB (in this case, on the New Jersey side, despite numerous prey carcasses found on the Pa. side). By month’s end the TPB pair was not yet confirmed nesting. We look forward to the next report on breeding from Chris. Please report any sightings of juv. Peregrine Falcons.

A low number of just I Killdeer found on the WBC, but 4 at PPD 3/25 (KS). A Com. Snipe was first found at TN 3/1 (JS) and numbers peaked at 110+ by 3/21 (JCM). Am. Woodcock were already displaying at TN 2/28 when DM found 5. A Ls. Black-backed Gull was found at the Belmont Ave. Res. (DC) for a highlight of the WBC. The count produced just I Barn Owl but at least 2 wintered at TN (JCM). Another was found late Mar. under the GPB (CD). 17 Great Horned Owl were found on the WBC. Three Long-eared Owl, increasing rare in this area, were at TN 3/21-31 (JCM).

Only 2 Yellow-bellied Sapsucker were counted 1/13, but I ad. over-wintered in n.w. PHL (RR). I appeared in CW 2/13 (SL), and I there 3/27 (EB,MD). A Y Hairy Woodpecker was in CW 2/4 (EB). A Pileated Woodpecker wandered from the woods onto Greene St. in WMA 1/5 to the delight of EB. Only I found on the WBC. An E. Phoebe wintered in the area, and earliest migrant was 3/22 (EB) in n.e. PHL. Five Tree Swallow were early at TN 3/3 (DM,SS).

Fish Crow are doing very well; an all-time high of 114 on the WBC and KS noted them all season at PPD. One wit remarked that Fish Crows were eating Blue Jays. A few Black-capped Chickadee were found; 5 on the WBC and I at TN 3/4 (NP); RR reported 2 all winter in n.w. PHL.

A good count of 20 Red-breasted Nuthatch on the WBC; at least 3 wintered in n.w. PHL (RR). House Wren were back by 3/26 when JS found I in Franklin Square. The real wren story, however, is the relative abundance of Winter Wren. I’ve never received so many reports spanning all three months. First one reported in CW 1/6 (SL). WBC produced 5; 1 at TN 3/3 (SS) and 3/29 when JCM found 2; JS had 3 at TN 3/24.

Two reports of Ruby-crowned Kinglet, I at TN 3/24 (KS) and 2 over-wintered in n.w. PHL (RR). Am. Robin were scarce (RR). The WBC found only 101. A Hermit Thrush appeared at ANC 3/31 (KS).

The only warbler report was of 1 Pine Warbler “singing” at TN 3/29 (JCM). Nine sparrow species were reported: 3 Savannah in s.w. PHL 1/6 (EB,KR,CW) and 5 on WBC. "Low numbers again this winter" of Am. Tree writes JCM. RR found 8 at FM 1/2, but added "the only place I ever seem to find this declining bird." WBC found 40. The last report, 1, comes from a WMA feeder 2/14 (SL). 2 Fox were noted on the WBC and I appeared in n.w. PHL 2/23 and remained, sometimes with a second bird, through late Mar. (RR). 4 imm. White-crowned were in fields near FM 1/2 (RR) and 3 found 1/6 in s.w. PHL (EB,KR,CW) were relocated for the WBC 1/13. A Rusty Blackbird helped the WBC’s species count, but 2 more were uncounted that same day at TN (KS). Peak was 15 at TN 3/21 (JCM), but only 3 there 3/29 (JS). Although not a “finch year” by any means, the WBC managed 2 Purple Finch and 1 Pine Siskin.

OBSERVERS: Erica Brendel, Dave Cutler, Chris Dooley, Michael Drake, Edward Fingerhood, 541 W Sedgwick St, Philadelphia 19119 (215-843-5818), Steve Lawrence, Doris McGovern, John C. Miller, Nick Pulcinella, Robert Ridgely, Keith Russell, Sandra Sherman, Jack Siler, Kate Somerville, whom we welcome as a new contributor, Chris Walters.

POTTER COUNTY

All sightings were 3/5 by DH. Two Com. Raven were near Carter Camp. Seven Black-capped Chickadee, 1 Red-breasted Nuthatch, 2 Brown Creeper, 8 Golden-crowned Kinglet, and 12 Evening Grosbeak were found at Lyman Run SP. Exciting were the 9 White-winged Crossbill (5d, 4v) found at Cherry Springs SP.

OBSERVER: Deuane Hoffman.

SCHUYLKILL COUNTY

Dan Knarr

Abbreviations: New Ringgold (NR), Port Clinton (PC).

Reports by compiler unless otherwise noted.

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SNYDER COUNTY

Allen Schweinsberg


OBSEVERS: Allen Schweinsberg, 1200 Zeigler Rd, Lewisburg 17837 (717-524-0432), Richard & Patricia Williams.

SOMERSET COUNTY

Ruth and Glenn Sager

Abbreviations: Camp Soles L. (CSL), Central City (CC), Cranberry Glade L. (CGL), High Point L (HPL), Hooversville (HV), Jennerstown (JT), Jennerstown (SS), S. Glade Creek (SGC), Stoughton L. (SL), Quehannah Dam (QD), Rockwood (RW), Samii’s Swamp nr. Jennerstown (SS), S. Glade Creek (SGC), Stoughton L. (SL), Yougothiyngh Dam (YD), Yougothiynghy R. (R)

Many days were spring-like, such as 2/3-4, when temperatures in the 60s tricked a grouse into drumming; chickadees, cardinals and titmice into spring songs; and honey bees into buzzing at the Sager’s feeders.

A black Scoter 1/20 (GRS) and a 4 Surf Scoter 1/15-16 (RM) took advantage of QD’s open water for a resting place. An unusually large concentration of Mallard was noted at SS, where 1300-1400 were counted in the swamp and nearby cornfields 1/5 (AS), and 500-600 on 1/12 (AM). Most migrating waterfowl arrived on schedule and with numbers in the average range for the last 4-year period. Single sightings of waterfowl included a Common Loon at LS 3/30, 8 N. Shoveler at QD 3/21, and 2 Com. Merganser at LS 3/11. Shown below are high counts for each species, other locations (OL) where seen, and period covered.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Species</th>
<th>#</th>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Locations/OL</th>
<th>Period</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Pied-billed Grebe</td>
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<td>39536</td>
<td>LS/BD,CSL,SD</td>
<td>1/3-3/30</td>
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<tr>
<td>Horned Grebe</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>39528</td>
<td>LS/SD</td>
<td>3/8-3/28</td>
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<td>Wood Duck</td>
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<td>39534</td>
<td>LS/SL/OL</td>
<td>3/3-3/30</td>
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<tr>
<td>Gold-winged Teal</td>
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<td>LS/SL</td>
<td>3/1-3/27</td>
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<tr>
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<td>39509</td>
<td>CG/L/LS,SD</td>
<td>12/3-1/19</td>
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<td>DS/SL/YR,TS</td>
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<td>LS</td>
<td>3/24-326</td>
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<td>LS/SL/PL,SL,SD</td>
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<td>Canvasback</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>39525</td>
<td>LS/SL,SD</td>
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<td>LS/SL</td>
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<td>C. Goldeneye</td>
<td>sev.</td>
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<td>QD/LS,SL</td>
<td>1/7-3/19</td>
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<td>39525</td>
<td>LS/YR,QL</td>
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<td>39464</td>
<td>QD/LS/SL</td>
<td>1/1-3/27</td>
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<td>39</td>
<td>39526</td>
<td>LS/OL</td>
<td>3/6-3/30</td>
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<tr>
<td>Ruddy Duck</td>
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<td>39524</td>
<td>LS/SL</td>
<td>3/8-3/24</td>
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</table>

The first 2 Turkey Vultures were at RW 3/6. QD had 2 Osprey 3/7 and LS had 1 on 3/26. Harrier were at NC 1/32,30 & 3/4; and I at QD 3/3. Single Rough-legged Hawk were at Black Twp 1/4,25; MT 2/2; and NC 3/25. Single Golden Eagle were at CC 3/12,3. Am. Coot was very low again, seen only at LS 3/11.

The forested areas near Lopez have been a haven for the Sapsucker. Well-established as a wintering bird; a Yellow bellied Sapsucker seen feeding regularly from beginning of quarter was found weak and died 3/11 MT; and N. Flicker were seen irregularly in numbers from 1-8 at HV. First E. Phoebe arrived 3/22 at SL & HV. It was a great year to find Horned Lark in the Boswell, IT, Davidsville & HV areas all quarter in manure-spread fields and cornfields, and high of 300 was at HV 1/14. No Red-breasted Nuthatch reported and only single Brown Creeper at HV 2/22 and MT 3/29. A pair of Carolina Wren roosted for the second winter in AM’s unheated basement garage at MT, and singles were at Hidden Valley 1/8-9 and all quarter at Thomas Mills.

A few Golden-crowned Kinglet were at RV irregularly until the last week of March, when a good movement of 3-10 was observed daily. E. Bluebird did well due to the mild weather; Am. Robin could be found in sheltered spots all quarter and many small flocks of up to 100 began the migration 3/6-7; but the lone Cedar Waxwing reported was at HV 3/5. A Yellow-rumped Warbler at HV 1/19 was doing a customary behavior for that location, feeding on cluster flies around windows. Rufous-sided Towhee were at Whipkey Dam 3/31 and HV 3/29. Up to 30 Am. Tree Sparrow were at HV feeders 1/30, then 2/8-28; and I at MT 3/22. First Chipping Sparrow arrived at HV 3/20, Field 3/26, and Fox 3/4. 4 Red-winged Blackbird were first at HV 2/16; E. Meadowlark were first at NC 3/14; 5 Rusty Blackbird were at NC 1/11 and 1 remained to 1/21; a few Cow. Grackle were at HV 1/7 to mid-March, when many migrants passed through; and the first Brown-headed Cowbird was at HV 3/24, 6-12 Purple Finch were at HV feeders all quarter; up to 10 Pine Siskin were near Dalton Run Dam 1/1-20; only a few Am. Goldfinch were at HV feeder from I/1+ and numbers reached 10 in mid-Mar. Evening Grosbeak were at HV 1/2-21, reaching a high of 17 on 1/7; 2 were at MT 1/23; and RW had 10 on 3/12 and 7 on 3/13.


SULLIVAN COUNTY

Douglas A. Gross

Abbreviations: World’s End SP (WESP), Wyoming SF (WSF). As usual, both seasons found very few observers in this county.

4th Quarter 1990

Since I have received many unverified reports of Bald Eagle in Sullivan through the years, I was very pleased to receive an acceptable record of an imm. or subad., flying near Ricketts over SGL (n. of Ricketts Glen SP) 11/28 (SS). According to other sources, a bird was seen in the general area (over and near SGL 57 in both Sullivan and Wyoming) for a prolonged period during the quarter. Undocumented reports also reached DG of Bald Eagles at Eagles Mere L.

Although forest birds seemed generally sparse, DAG found an unusually large number of Black-capped Chickadee when he tromped through WSF wetlands through the quarter. Com. Raven stayed the winter in WSF near WESP, on North Mt. near Northmont (DG, DAG). This species has increased dramatically in the area near Lopez (SC,TS); Conant saw over 15 in early Oct. and Soyza frequently saw 6 or more flocking together in Nov. and Dec. SS spotted 7 Snow Bunting along Rt. 487 at Ricketts 11/15. The forested areas near Lopez have been a haven for the declining Purple Finch, so SC was alarmed to hear that House Finch arrived in the Bellasyrva area in late Oct.
1st Quarter 1991

More Red-tailed Hawk were seen in agricultural sections than in previous winters. **Com. Raven** and Am. Crow were both fairly common in their appropriate habitats; a raven was being mobbed by crows over a field near Shunk 2/3 (DG). Tufted Titmouse may be increasing here, with more being sighted near homes and in wetlands (DG,SC). Red-breasted Nuthatch was much less common in WSF this winter. **Dark-eyed Junco** and **Am. Tree Sparrow** were quite common. Since juncos are common to abundant breeders here, I wonder if some wintering juncos (Junco h. hyemalis) are local breeders, especially in mild winters. Winter finches seemed absent, but there were few reports to substantiate this.

**OBSERVERS:** Skip Conant, Donald Gross, Douglas A. Gross, RR 1, Box 147, Orangeville 17859 (717-542-2191), Terry Soya, Stanley Stahl.

**TIOGA COUNTY**

Bob Ross

**Abbreviations:** Beechwood L. (BL), Crooked Cr. (CC), Grand Canyon Airport (GCA), Hills Creek L. (HCL), Hamilton L. (HLL), Knoxville area (KA), Liberty area (LA), Millerton area (MA), Marsh Cr. (MC), National Fishery Laboratory (NFL), Nessmuk L. (NL), Pine Cr. (PC), Sabinsville area (SA), Stony Fork (SF), The Muck (TM), Wellsboro area (WA), Westeld (WE), Welsh Settlement (WS).

Lakes remained ice-covered later this year than last, perhaps contributing to generally later observations and fewer numbers of water birds. Winter-plumaged **Pied-billed** and Horned grebes were first noted on NL 3/24,28 respectively (RMR,JW). Three Double-crested Cormorant flew over WA 3/20 (DS). A few Great Blue Heron over-wintered, with observations of single birds at MC 1/13,20 (RMR,JW), WE 1/20 (HR), & TM 1/27, 2/24 (RMR). A fly-over was seen at WA 3/18 (MC), but a known active heronry near TM was not reoccupied by end of quarter (RMR). Tundra Swan were found again in low numbers with only 2-9 per sighting at HCL (cornfield), BL, CC, & WA 3/8-9 (RMR,JW,HR). Twenty Snow Goose flew S over WA 1/1 (MC).

Though greater species diversity was observed this year than last, total numbers were not much greater, as the following table shows:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Species</th>
<th>#</th>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Location</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Wood Duck</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>3/4-31</td>
<td>LA,WA,TM,NL,SA</td>
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<tr>
<td>Gr-wing Teal</td>
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<td>VL,LM</td>
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<td>Mallard</td>
<td>43</td>
<td>1/6-3/9</td>
<td>NL,TM</td>
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<td>Bl-wing Teal</td>
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<td>3/24-31</td>
<td>NL,HLL,SA</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Am. Wigeon</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>3/24-28</td>
<td>NL</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ring-necked Duck</td>
<td>194</td>
<td>3/7-31</td>
<td>NL,CC,HCL,SA</td>
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<tr>
<td>Gr. Scaup</td>
<td>19</td>
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<td>MA,NL,HCL</td>
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<td>Ls. Scaup</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>39530</td>
<td>NL,HCL</td>
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<tr>
<td>Com. Goldeneye</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>39510</td>
<td>LA</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bufflehead</td>
<td>2</td>
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<td>WA</td>
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<tr>
<td>Hooded Merganser</td>
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<td>3/24-28</td>
<td>HCL,NL</td>
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<tr>
<td>Com. Merganser</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>3/13-28</td>
<td>BL,PC,HCL,NL</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The first reported **Turkey Vulture** returned 3 days later than last year to LA, 3/18 (JR). A mid-winter Osprey hovered over fish race-ways at NFL 1/29 (GP), but first seasonal sighting was at SF 3/3-5 (JoS), an imm. Bald Eagle was identified near MA 2/15 (JoS).

**N. Harrier** were in good numbers with sightings of 1-6 birds at various locations in n. Tioga from 1/1-3/10 (m.ob.). Single Sharp shinned Hawk were seen at WA & TM 2/1 and 3/16 (C&J&RMR). Cooper’s Hawk were also present at TM 1/2 & MA 3/18 (RMR,A&LB). Rough-legged Hawk hunted the same farmlands as harriers in n. Tioga in good numbers from 1/7-3/15 (m.ob.). **Am. Kestrel**, observed at LA 2/8 (JR), appeared in greater numbers at WA 3/17+ (MC). A Merlin was reported from LA 3/13 (JR).

Killdeer returned to NFL 3/1 (GP), 9 days ahead of last year. Four Com. Snipe fed in a pasture seep at WA 1/27 (MC,DS); 2 remained 1/29 and were observed at length (MC,DS,RMR,JW); and others at SA 3/31 (HR). Several snipe wingned at/after sundown 3/31 + at TM. **Tioga’s largest wetland** (RMR). Single Am. Woodcock were flushed at WA & MA 3/10,21 (RMR,A&LB). “Seagulls” invaded n. Tioga 3/3-5 with sightings of 1-150 Ring-billed at 6 locations (m.ob.) and 3 Herring at MA (A&LB). A pair of Barred Owl killed a grouse at Colton SP 3/29 (F&RC). Short-eared Owl wintered at 3 locations: 6 at WS 1/6-3/4 (v.o.); at least 1 pair near GCA 1/26-3/13 (v.o.); and 12 at MA 3/3-21 (A&LB). All of these owls occupied high-plateau active-farmland habitat. A N. Saw-whet Owl vocalized near MA 2/20-3/9 (JoS,A&LB).

A few Belted Kingfisher over-wintered at LA & MC from 1/6-3/3 (JR,RMR). F. N. Flicker were first reported back at WA 3/3 (MC). E. Phoebe returned 3/23 on PC (RC,RMR), I week later than last year. Flocks of 12-30 Horned Lark were seen at GCA, Antrim, WS, & LA 1/26-31 (RMR,JW, JR). Tree Swallow returned to LA 3/29 (JR), nearly 2 weeks later than last year’s sighting at HCL.

**Carolina Wren** over-wintered successfully with singing heard at WS 1/6 (RMR,RC), TM 1/12 (RMR), and WA (F&RC). E. Bluebird (1-4) were not reported until 3/5-25 (m.ob.). One Am. Robin was reported mid-winter (1/12) at TM (RMR), but large numbers did not return until 3/5-7 at LA & MC (JR,RMR). Single N. Mockingbird were at MA & HLL 2/28 and 3/25 (A&LB, MC). An imm. N. Shrike was observed near MA 2/15 (JoS), Probably the most unlikely winter sighting was a Yellow-rumped Warbler at an MA feeder 1/5 (ph. A&LB).

Yellow-rumped Warbler, Job’s Corners, January 1991. **Photo by Arlene Brown.**

Am. Tree Sparrow wintered in abundance at TM all quarter (RMR) and were reported at feeders in LA & MA (JR,A&LB). Fox Sparrow (1-2) were observed 3/6,9 at LA & TM (JR,RMR). Swamp Sparrow either over-wintered or migrated early to breeding habitat at TM, with singing heard 2/23 (RMR). Only I White-throated Sparrow was reported (1/12; TM,RMR). Dark-eyed Junco were numerous throughout the county (m.ob.). Small (7) to large (100+) flocks of Snow Bunting were seen at NFL, GCA, & WA 1/13-2/29 (RMR,C&JC,MC).


**Tioga’s resident pair** of Bald Eagle has rejected the wooden platform placed in their former nest site and were observed carrying sticks to a new location N on 3/23 + (CD). A second pair of ad. Bald Eagle was observed in the canyon to the south during the same period (JS,TP). The partitioning of this narrow corridor of eagle habitat into two adjacent territories would be a strong indication of recovery in Pennsylvania.

**Pennsylvania Birds** 49  VOLUME 5 NO.1
Two E. Meadowlark were sighted 1/3 at WA (MC), but spring arrivals were not seen until 3/6-20 at TM, MA, & NFL (RMR, A&LB). Both Rusty Blackbird and Cow. Grackle arrived in large mixed flocks with red-wings at TM 2/23-24. Grackles, however, were not reported at LA & MA until 2/27 and 3/2 (JR, A&LB). A single d Brown-headed Cowbird also arrived with mixed blackbird flocks and used a TM feeder 2/2 (RMR). Only 1 Purple Finch was seen this quarter at MA 2/1 (A&LB). It was a good winter for Evening Grosbeak, though, with reports of up to 54 birds at MA, TM, PC, & LA feeders 1/4-2/17.


UNION COUNTY

Allen Schweinsberg

With birding activity at a seasonal low, the only report of note is of a pair of Wood Duck at the Holman Sanctuary 2/24—the earliest date ever at that locale.


VENANGO COUNTY

Gary Edwards and Russ States

Abbreviations: Allegheny R. (AR), Barkeyville area (BA), ClintonWile area (CA), Kahle L. (KL), Oil City area (OCA), Oil Creek SP (OC), Two Mile Run Park (TMR).

Following a Jan. of average temperatures and snowfall, Feb. and Mar. temperatures were again above and moisture levels were below normal. Highlights were a Rufous-sided Towhee that spent the winter in the Cooperstown area (AM); a Lapland Longspur in a group of Snow Bunting at KL 1/12; 2 Hermit Thrush at OC 1/22 (NK); 3 Snow Goose in the OCA 1/24; a Gray Catbird at OC 2/3; 3/10 was a particularly exciting day when the AR, KL, and ponds in the CA and BA produced over 1000 Tundra Swan, over 100 Ring-billed Gull, about 20 Canvasback, and a total of 21 species of waterfowl.

Data kept over the last 5 years reveal the following: Jan. 1991 produced a total of 62 species and aggregate total for Jan. is 82. In Feb. 54 species were recorded and that month’s total now stands at 75. For Mar., 83 were found this year and the Mar. total now stands at 100.

The first Cow. Loom of the year was at KL 3/31. Waterfowl migration was considered good with N. Pintail and Am. Wigeon present on the AR at Franklin as early as 1/26. 22 Hooded Merganser were at OC 3/21 (NK). Along with the regular waterfowl species, the quarter produced sightings of more uncommon N. Shoveler 3/3, Oldsquaw 3/9, and White-winged Scoter 3/9 at TMR.

Turkey Vulture were present 3/2 (DE). N. Harrier wintered over at several locations but Rough-legged Hawk was scarce. Killdeer first made its appearance 3/9. Ls. Yellowlegs was a split in the CA 3/29. Several Cow. Snipe were calling 3/29 in the CA and AM. Woodcock was heard 3/20 at OC (NK). Several Bonaparte’s Gull were at OC 3/24. At least 3 Short-eared Owl were at their normal winter location in the BA all quarter. A high of 9 was recorded 2/17. First reported E. Pheobe was 3/23. Cedar Waxwing, as in the past three years, were not seen after the first week in Jan. A Fox Sparrow was recorded 3/31 in the BA. Northern finches, with the exception of Evening Grosbeak, were not recorded.


WARREN COUNTY

Ted Grizez

Abbreviations: Barnes (BA), Irvine (IR), Kinzua Dam (KD), Lander (LA), Saybrook (SA), Starbrick (ST), State Line Rd (SLR), Warren (WA).

A Com. Loom was seen in WA 1/6 (DD). A flock of Tundra Swan was heard flying through the overcast near LA 1/12 (BH) and several flocks were reported returning 3/5. A d Wood Duck and a Green-winged Teal were still with 200+ Mallard along the river in front of the WA Hospital through Jan. (TG). Six Am. Black Duck flew from the river near IR 1/20 (DW). Four Oldsquaw were at ST 3/29 (BDW). A Redbreasted Merganser was at KD 2/7 (TG).

An early Osprey was at Akeley Swamp 3/30 (TG). It was a good winter for Bald Eagle both KD. The best was seen 3/1 (m.o. through Jan. with max. 6 on 1/28 (DD,BH) and 7 or 8 (2-3 imm. and 5 ad.) 29 (CMN,TNG). In Feb. top counts were 3 ad. and 2 imm. 2/3 (TS) and 5 ad. and 1 imm. 2/11 (RL). Only 1 ad. could be found late in Feb.-2/23 (TG,BH) and 2/27 (TNG). But 2 ad. and 2 imm. were seen 3/15 (DD,BH) and an ad. 3/16 (BH). An ad. was seen in WA 1/26 (DP) and in ST 1/26 (DD). An ad. was at Webb’s Ferry on the reservoir 3/31 (DP). N. Harrier were seen near LA 1/12 (DD,BH) and 2/16 (DW); 2 were on SLR 3/30 (DW) and I at Akeley Swamp 3/31 (KC). A Sharp-shinned Hawk spent much of the winter near their feeder at SA (CMN). Cooper’s Hawk were seen at four locations in Jan. (4 observers) and 3 in WA 2/24 (DW). A Rough-legged Hawk was near LA 1/13 (DD,DW) and 1 w. of WA 3/30 (BU). A Golden Eagle was at KD 1/28 & 3/15 (DD,BH) and again 3/16 (BR). About 60 Ring-billed Gull fed on the handouts for waterfowl in WA and rested on the river at ST in Jan. A Short-eared Owl was discovered near LA 1/12 (DD,BH) and again 1/13,20 and 2/24 (TS).

A Red-bellied Woodpecker came to a feeder in WA the last week of Mar. (MC). There was a Carolina Wren in BA 1/13 (BDD), 1 in WA 1/19 and 2 1/24 (DD). A N. Mockingbird was at his feeder near Garland from Dec. through 1/6 (DD). A Brown Thrasher came to a feeder in WA in late Dec. and stayed through Jan. (PS) and the third location (including Dec.) this winter was 1 at the Newbold Estate near IR (TG). Fifteen Am. Pipit were at SA 3/18 (MN). A N. Shrike returned to the same location on SLR as last winter and was seen 1/5,13,20, on 2/27 and 3/31 (DW, BD,DD,TNG,BDW). An ad. and an imm. were seen near LA 1/19 (DW).

A Rufous-sided Towhee used his feeder near WA from Dec. to 1/15 (GB). The first Fox Sparrow report was at SA 3/5 (CMN). A flock of 74 Snow Bunting was counted near LA 1/13,14 (DD,DW), 50 there 2/16 (DW) and 10 next to the Seneca Pumped Storage Res. 3/2 (BDW). Three Rusty Blackbird were at SA 3/3 (CMN). A Y Brown-headed Cowbird came to his feeder in WA 2/27 (TG). A Pine Siskin came to their feeder in BA 1/13 (BDD), and ± 10 was the high count at SA in Feb. (CMN). Fifty to One hundred Grosbeak were regular at their feeder in SA all Jan. (CMN), 35-100 through Feb., and 15-20 still coming at the end of Mar. About 20 were coming to a feeder in WA through late Mar., although none had been there through winter (MC).

OBSERVERS: Greg Burkett, Merle Caldwell, Dan Doherty, Brita & Don Dom, Nancy & Ted Grizez, 8 Belmont Dr, Warren 16365 (814723-9464), Bill Highhouse, Rick Lyle, Chuck & Marjorie Neel, Dave Ostrander, Doug Palmer, Jim Palmer, Tom Simmons, Patty Smith, Brenda & Don Watts.

WAYNE COUNTY

Bill Reid

All observations were in the Lookout area unless otherwise noted. The big news for the county was the first twentieth century documented record in Pa. for N. Hawk-Owl. It was seen by over a thousand birders from when it was first reported 2/18 until it was last seen 3/17 (WR). Read the separate article for more details.

Four Rough-legged Hawk were seen 2/20 (NP). Several observers...
reported flocks of Wild Turkey, up to 37 in number, along Rt. 191 n. of Honesdale. Several observers saw a N. Shrike near the Hawk Owl area, and on one occasion was chased by the owl. About 25 **Evening Grosbeak** were also in the area 2/20 (NP).

**OBERVERS:** Nick Pulcinella, William Reid.

**WESTMORELAND COUNTY**

Robert Leberman & Robert Mulvihill

*Abbreviations: Beaver Run Res. (BR), Donegal L. (DL), Ligonier Valley (LV), Mammoth Park (MP), Powdermill Nature Reserve (PNR), Ross Mountain Park (RMP), Trout Run Res. also called Latrobe Res.) (TR), Twin Lakes Park (7LP), Youngwood Swamp (YS).*

Mid-winter records of **Pied-billed Grebe** are unusual in this area, since open water is generally not available at this season, but this year I was seen at TR between 1/7-15 (RCL). A **Horned Grebe** was found at TR from 1/1-15 (RCL); migrants were at DL 2/22 (MEW) and BR 3/25 (DB). A very early Am. Bittern was at PNR on 3/24 (TR, RSM).

A good mid-winter count of 36 Tundra Swan was made at RMP, n. of Ligonier, 1/11 (HO); 15 were at TR 3/10 (AS); 13 on DL 3/12 (RCL), and 29 there 3/16 (RCL, RFL). The first Wood Duck had returned to TR by 3/1 (MEW), to Murphysville by 3/25 (DB), to YS by 3/26 (DS), and to PNR 3/29 (RSM). A **Green-winged Teal** at TR 1/4 (RCL) was unusual for this season. Counts of up to 25 Am. Black Duck were made at TR all quarter (RSM). The first Ring-necked Duck was at DL 3/30 (DC); 2 were at YS 3/31 (DS). The season’s first Gadwall was at DL 3/26 (MEW). Three Am. Wigeou at Keystone L. from 1/6-20 (DF) were unusual for mid-winter; best wigeon count was 17 on DL 3/3 (DK). Three Redhead, always a scarce species in this area, were seen at DL 3/19 (RCL). Up to seven King-necked Duck spent the winter on TR (RCL); 24 were on DL 3/26 (MEW). Five Gr. Scaup were on DL and 6 at TR 1/19 (RCL). A single Ls. Scaup was at TLP 1/19 (DS), and a flock of 25 on DL 3/22 (RCL, RSM, LB). Two Oldsquaw at BR were a good find 3/25 (DB).

Single wintering **Bufflehead** were at TR 1/15 and 2/25 (RCL), and at TLP 1/19 (DS); 4 at BR 3/21 (VC). Four Com. **Merganser** at TR 1/7 is probably a 1st mid-winter occurrence of this species for the county (RCL). **Ruddy Duck** was first seen at DL 3/19 (RCL).

A mid-winter **Turkey Vulture** at PNR 2/1 was unprecedented for the LV (RSM, RCL, CW); another seen 2/21 (RSM) was probably an early migrant. By early Mar. vultures were much more common than usual, and a roost of 25 was observed (CM) at Linn Run SP 3/5-6 a date somewhat earlier than that on which the first vultures are normally found in this area; another roost of at least 15 vultures had formed near TR by the end of Mar. (RSM, BM). An extremely late **Turkey Vulture** was first seen at TR between 1/7-15 (RCL). A **Red-shouldered Hawk** was seen nr. Murphysville 1/14 (DF, LB) for the 1st local winter record. The only N. Harrier of the season was near TR 2/27 (RSM, BM). A mid-winter **Red-shouldered Hawk** was seen near Murphysville 1/14 (DB); a trio of these birds had returned to PNR, where none was known to have wintered, by 2/24 (RCL, RSM). Always rare along the more westerly mountain ridges in s.w. Pa., an imm. Golden Eagle was a good find at PNR 3/24 (TR, RSM).

An **Am. Coot** was seen at TR 1/1-7, for one of few LV winter records (RCL). A scattering of wintering Killdeer was seen on various lakes throughout the county, with as many as 7 at DL 1/4 (RCL). The first two migrant Killdeer were seen (DS) at Greensburg 2/22; 1 was at MP 3/3 (VC). The first Am. Woodcock of the season was heard nr. Rector 2/24 (TGR). The first Bonaparte’s Gull of the spring was at DL 3/23 (MEW). An early flock of **Ring-billed Gull** was at DL 2/4 (RCL), and a flock of 25+ was there 3/17 (TR, BB). There were 4 **Herring Gull** at TR 2/5 (RCL); this species is infrequent in the LV.

At least four different Brown Creeper frequented a suet feeder near Stahlstown during much of the winter (LB), but they were reported as less common than usual in some more westerly parts of the county (VC). Of the usual number of reports coming from the mountainous e. half of the county. Always rare this far south, a N. Shrike was a good find at DL 3/2 (DK); the bird was located again 3/5 (RSM, TR) and 3/9 (DK, TP). Another sign of this spring's quickened pace was a Louisiana Waterthrush near Stahlstown 3/31 (LB), only the 2nd March record of the species for the LV.

Wintering Rufous-sided Towhee were found near PNR (JW) and TR (RCL), and the first migrant was banded at PNR 3/25 (RSM). The first Chipping Sparrow had returned to PNR by 3/26 (RCL), and Fox Sparrow by 3/2 (RCL). The first E. Phoebe of the spring was found nr. PNR 3/2 (RSM). Rusty Blackbird had returned to PNR by 3/2, and a "large flock" was seen or. MP 3/3 (VC). We had no reports of wintering Pine Siskin. **Evening Grosbeak** were present only in scattered small flocks, making the third consecutive winter that this species has not staged an "invasion."


**WYOMING COUNTY**

Bill Reid

*Abbreviations: Sordoni’s Farm (SF).*

A N. **Harrier** over-wintered at SF (v.o.). A **Red-shoeredered Hawk** was at L. Carey 3/29 (JS). A dark-phase and a light-phase **Rough-legged Hawk** wintered at SF (v.o.). A flock of 22 Wild Turkey was noted on numerous occasions in Eaton Twp (WR), and 29 were at Factoryville 3/15 (JS). Two Am. Woodcock were in flight at Stevens L. 3/2 (WR). The 7 Short-eared Owl reported last quarter remained until 1/11, but not seen after the snow storm of that date (v.o.). Horned Lark were generally scarce, but 75 were in Meshoppen Twp 2/18 (WR). A **Red-breasted Nuthatch** was at a feeder in Tunkhannock 2/18 (RD). Two Am. Pipit were in Lompton Twp 3/27 (WR). Two Fox Sparrow were at Beaumont 3/14 (FR). Two Lapland Longspur and 200 Snow Bunting were in Meshoppen Twp 2/18 (WR). The only Pine Siskin report was of 7 birds at L. Carey 1/1 (WR). **Evening Grosbeak** were scarce; 6 at Centermoreland 2/8 (PR).

**OBERVERS:** Robert Daniels, Penny Reid, Bill Reid, 73 W Ross St, Wilkes-Barre 18702 (717-836-2255), Jerry Skinner.

PNESASNYA BIRDS 51 VOLUME 5 NO.1
YORK COUNTY

Al Spiese

Abbreviations: Brunner’s I. (BI), Codorus SP (CSP), Gifford Pinehot SP (GP), Impounding Dam (ID), Long Arm Dam (LAD), Sheppard Myers Dam (SMD), Spring Grove (SG), SGL 416 (SGL), Wrightsville (WR).

Many days of prevailing NW winds created undesirable conditions for small birds and birders. None of the lakes completely froze, but the normal larger numbers of most ducks didn’t appear until about mid-Jan. Most notable were the Redhead and Ring-necked ducks.

1-3 Com. Loon were found on the 3 s.w. corner lakes through early Mar. (DH,RR,AS et al.). A Double-crested Cormorant was at BI pond 1/19 (J&LD). First migrating N. Pintail arrived BI 2/1 (AS); 14 N. Shoveler at CSP 1/12 (D&LH) and 6 at LAD 3/21 (AS); 2 d Canvasback, 1 at CSP 1/2 and 1 on SG lake 1/16 (RR); 8 d and 6 4 Com. Merganser at LAD 1/12-22 (RR) and ±165 at GP 2/21 (AS); 1 d Redbreasted Merganser at CSP 3/9 (RR); only 2 Ruddy Duck, at GP 3/9 (JP,JeP). On 3/19 Bald Eagle sightings were near SMD (BD) and SG (BL, RL). The 100+ Am. Coot wintered at CSP until 3/23 and 9 Bonaparte’s Gull noted there 1/31 (RR).

From the middle of Feb. to 3/5 a Snowy Owl was seen and studied by several yard workers at BI. Its favorite evening perch was the top of a coal pile. One evening feathers were seen floating to the ground and flying away was the owl with a pigeon in its talons. A farmer n. of York Haven reported seeing it in a field one evening.

A Barred Owl reported at Muddy Creek access area 2/4. BS states this is a favorite and regular location. The Prescott’s saw I in a tree 3/2 near Lewisberry. 2 Short-eared Owl were at LAD 3/19-20 (RR). DH counts this as a very profitable wintering area. Only sighting of Horned Lark was 10 at Lauxmont Farms 1/10 (AS). A Barn Swallow was at CSP 3/24 (RR). The only Black-capped Chickadee was 1 at a home n. of WR 1/1 (J&LD). A total of 3 Ruby-crowned Kinglet: 1 on Gut Rd. 1/6 (JP,JeP), 1 at Lock 12 2/12 (BS), and 2 at BI 3/25 (AS). Hermit Thrush above average, with best count 5 at Lock 12 on 2/14 (BS et al.). Cedar Waxwing were elusive, with no reports after 1/5. A 4 Am. Robin with a pure white head, nape and throat was at BI from 1/3+. Its breast was a brilliant red. After molting the white turned to a light grayish color.

Yellow-rumped Warbler reports showed continued low numbers from Jan. to early Mar. Am. Tree Sparrow were no better than previous recent winter counts, a max. of 20 at Stewartstown 2/19 (AS). A Savannah Sparrow at LAD 3/20 was early (RR). Fox Sparrow were seen each month, with best records 3 each at ID 3/9 (BD) and CSP 3/17 (RR). 4 Swamp Sparrow in SGL 2/1 (AS). A Snow Bunting at LAD 1/15 (RR, AS). Finch reports were miserable: 2 Purple Finch, no Pine Siskin, a very few Am. Goldfinch, and no Evening Grosbeak.

OBERVERS: Bill Del Grande, Jack & Lil Downs, Dan & Lori Heathcote, John & Jean (JeP), Ben Lease, Ron Lease, Russell Ryan, Al Spiese, 4086 Old Orchard Rd, York 17402 (717-755-8309).