

PENNSYLVANIA BIRDS



Volume 23, No. 3
Jun - Jul 2009
Issued December 2009





PENNSYLVANIA BIRDS

Journal of the Pennsylvania Society for Ornithology

Volume 23 Number 3 June - July 2009

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Cover: **Grasshopper Sparrow (*Ammodramus savannarum*)**. This bird was found taking advantage of grasses around a new housing development in *Northampton*, an all too familiar—and short-lived—habitat type in Pennsylvania. 13 June 2009. (*Dustin Welch*)

... from the Editor

A Word on Field Guides

I'd like to take this opportunity, if I may, to gripe about field guides. So many things have undergone an exponential expansion in scope and market saturation in recent years—everything from the pervasiveness of the cell phone to the incomprehensible popularity of televised poker championships. For decades, two brands of baseball cards occupied a market that is now littered with dozens of offerings. What used to be a televised half-hour nightly review of the day's events has become a dozen cable news networks, full of overstuffed and overexposed screaming heads beamed across the solar system 24 hours every day.

Now it seems that field guides to the birds of North America are no exception either, and a new offering from yet another source is served up on the shelves of bookstores across the country every year. Every birder knows the story of Roger Tory Peterson and his famous *A Field Guide to the Birds*, and how Peterson with that book pretty much single-handedly created what we call "birding" today. Peterson is considered a legend, revered in birding circles, and justifiably so. That was 1934... and so it was for the next 50 years: birding in North America was done with a Peterson in hand. Sure, there were eventually other successful field guides, most notably the Golden Guide, which made its debut in 1949 and eventually found its niche by catering to a more serious audience than it originally sought, and by countering the split east-west Peterson Guides with a single volume covering all of North America. It wasn't exactly revolutionary, but it did take its place next to Peterson on every birder's bookshelf. Two major guides—that's all—and life was simple in those days, if a bit quirky. Peterson had an odd habit of painting only the heads of some species, and the Golden Guide (at least the two I owned) had a curious way of falling completely apart at the seams, but together, they had all the answers birders were looking for.

Then in 1983, National Geographic made a grandiose assault on the aged duopoly, and published the first of what became five editions (and counting) of their highly successful *Field Guide to the Birds of North America*. National Geographic combined all the best features of its two primary predecessors, and showed that success could be had in this market outside of the Peterson and Golden brand names. In the same year, the Audubon Society published their three-volume, photo-oriented *Master Guide to Birding* series, which they billed as "the first field guide to North American birds specifically designed to satisfy the interests of the serious birder". (Each of the three volumes sits on my bookshelf still today, trophies of an audacious eight-year-old billing himself as a serious birder.) Suddenly, the race was on. Today, one can walk into any mainstream national-chain bookseller and browse their choice of a dozen different field guides to the birds of North America. Online shoppers can double that count of choices with a few clicks at amazon.com. Even field guides with the scope of one state, province, or region began to spring up across the continent.

But while all these new field guides have hit the market, the scope of Peterson's original blueprint has changed very little. Most field guides of today are nothing more than dressed up Golden Guides, if the truth is to be put bluntly. On balance, the artwork is better these days (or at least more accurate), and the text is perhaps more concise. But at its foundation, every field guide clings to a few basic guidelines: to show as many birds and as much information as possible in as small and lightweight a format as is practical, without sacrificing usability. There are dozens of field guides now on the market, and each of them takes this same approach. Ironically, none of them brings anything new to the table at all other than a different set of photographs or watercolors. For my part, I greet each new field guide I see on the shelves anymore with a yawn. (Here I make an exception for the

seminal *The Sibley Guide to the Birds*, a book that is truly one of a kind and perhaps the greatest Peterson-style reference to the birds of North America ever published; however do note that Sibley's tome isn't a field guide in the truest sense, since it's too big to carry into the field without a forklift. And the two east-west Sibley guides, each truncated in scope and depth compared to the original, are each, well, just a little better than being just another field guide too.)

So this begs the question, where does the "industry" go from here?

Maybe it goes nowhere. And maybe that's OK. Maybe the science has been solved, and there is nothing more to explore in a field guide.

But I think there is more. How many times, despite all the wonderful picture books on the market today, do even the most experienced birders come away from a field encounter totally befuddled by the feathered creature they just witnessed? How often is there simply no match to what was just seen to be found anywhere in any of the stacks of field guides? It happens every day, of course.

So try this idea on for size: *The Field Guide to the Unidentifiable Birds of North America*.

Yes, I'm serious.

Peterson was revolutionary, of that there is no doubt. Peterson opened the eyes of entire generations to the wonderment of the lives of birds in ways that had never been imagined before. But he did it with a volume which at least implied that every bird could be identified if only enough field marks could be found. Small bird + bright wing bar + stout bill + olive upperparts + weak eyeline + broken eye ring = Bell's Vireo. Every bird had its own formula, every individual had a solution. Peterson is a legend, but that way of thinking—that every bird could be solved in such a manner—is becoming passé. Of course even today, Peterson's field-mark approach is the basis for every successful identification. It is subconscious rote for every birder of every skill level, and it works too... except when it doesn't. It is this very

PENNSYLVANIA BIRDS (ISSN 0898-8501) is published four times a year by The Pennsylvania Society for Ornithology. Editorial and business offices are located at 2469 Hammertown Road, Narvon, PA 17555-9730. Subscriptions, all in US\$: One year U.S.A \$28.50, Canada \$40, Foreign \$45. Library rate \$30. Single copies: \$5.50. Checks and money orders in U.S. dollars only should be made payable to PSO. Copyright © 2009 by The Pennsylvania Society for Ornithology. **SECOND CLASS POSTAGE PAID AT NARVON, PA 17555.**
POSTMASTER: Send address changes to **PSO**, 2469 Hammertown Road, Narvon, PA 17555-9726.

idea, that sometimes there just isn't a formula available to explain what is being seen, that Peterson's followers (i.e. all of us birders) sometimes have a very hard time coming to grips with. The seduction of the Peterson approach is to spur us into naming everything, and thus we push ourselves to name even the un-nameable. In my view, that's as gross an error as making a provably incorrect identification. The irony is that Peterson himself surely saw things this way: unidentifiable birds should be left unidentified. Unfortunately that mindset didn't translate very well into the myriad field guides that followed *The Field Guide to the Birds*.

I do not wish to digress into a polemic of the Peterson way, much less into a philosophical discussion of species boundaries and epistemology. Peterson is one of my heroes and deservedly so, much as he is for most birders, I think. No, my gripe about field guides is much shallower than any of that, and doesn't involve any form of iconoclastic dressing down of the giants of the past. I simply wish to point out that unidentifiable birds are found all the time, and the issue of the unidentifiable bird is a subject very poorly explored in today's field guides. Whether it's a small *Calidris* sandpiper that looks to be both Semipalmated and Western, or a juvenile egret that looks a "Little Snowy", or an *Empidonax* species that might be Least or Pine (that one's for you followers of the Texas listserv), or a young gull that just looks like a total mess, the birds we can't identify with certainty are all around us every day. How can a field guide be complete if this issue is not addressed head on?

Of course, just about all the field guides *do* address this issue, but only by invoking a feeble "some individuals are not identifiable" in small print at the end of the species account. Unfortunately, this is not addressing the issue, it's avoiding the issue completely. Which individuals are unidentifiable, specifically? Especially in this age of photographic guides, I think great utility could be found in a compilation of images of birds best left unidentified, with discussion as to why. It really isn't useful to show a picture of a Common Redpoll next to picture of a Hoary Redpoll, and then say in the text that "there is much overlap and some individuals should be left unidentified". How about actually showing some of those individuals?

There are quite enough field guides already on the market that show crisp pictures of for-sure Common Redpolls and for-sure Hoary Redpolls, so another field guide that repeats the exercise accomplishes nothing. What we need is an author bold enough to produce a field guide that shows a for-sure "redpoll sp." labeled as such, and then defend the non-identification against the legion of birders still looking in vain for the solution to every equation. Unidentifiable birds are very much a part of the field experience. They should not be excluded from what is purportedly a guide to the field experience.

So all you would-be field guide authors out there, I'm giving this idea away for free. Consider it a gift. Now please do us all a favor.

Pennsylvania Birdlists

Here's my annual reminder to all of the state's listers: be sure you get your updated totals as of the end of 2009 to Peter Robinson for inclusion in the next installment of Pennsylvania Birdlists. The paper form will arrive as usual with the next issue of *The PSO Pileated*, but participants can also email their totals to Peter at <pabirder@hotmail.com>. Make sure your totals are as of December 31, 2009.

Compiler News

There was a bit of activity among the ranks of the compilers recently. Beginning with the bad news—Bob Leberman has decided move on from his post as *Westmoreland* compiler. Though bad for us, we are nevertheless thrilled to have had Bob as a contributor to the journal and wish him all the best as he moves on to new endeavors. *Westmoreland* is currently vacant; of course it should go without saying that if you are interested in compiling for this storied county, please contact the chief editor.

On the plus side of the ledger, I am pleased to announce that **Stephen Tirone** has agreed to compile for *Lawrence*, doubly good since this will both solidify reporting from this unique area and free the chief and spring editors from feeling obligated to creating last-minute reports for the county! Please see Stephen's contact information in the Local Notes and support this fledgling compiler by sending him your sightings.

Finally, **Greg Grove** has taken over as *Huntingdon* compiler (replacing the outgoing Doug Wentzel), and **Dan Brauning**, who also serves as summer season editor, has officially been listed as *Lycoming* compiler, after a few seasons of submitting informal reports. Many thanks to all of our compilers for their continued diligence.

Geoff Malosh
Editor-in-Chief

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Status and distribution of Lesser Black-backed Gull (*Larus fuscus*) in Pennsylvania

Cameron Rutt

Few birds speak “Pennsylvania” as uniquely as the Lesser Black-backed Gull. The first Pennsylvania sighting of this Old World gull was from Penn Manor, Bucks County, on 7 February 1960 (McWilliams and Brauning 2000). In the half-century since then, Lesser Black-backed Gulls have exploded in numbers, with the epicenter still residing, inexplicably, in Bucks County. Massive congregations have become both an expected and annual occurrence, chiefly in the southeast, with individuals now radiating across increasing amounts of Pennsylvania real estate. When McWilliams and Brauning (2000) noted that “the number of birds in the state has been steadily increasing,” they could not have predicted the extent of this increase. In the years since that account was authored, Lesser Black-backed Gulls are no longer regarded merely as “rare regular visitors from late fall to early spring in the Coastal Plain” (McWilliams and Brauning 2000). This article provides an up-to-date look at the history and current status of Lesser Black-backed Gulls in Pennsylvania, North America, and Europe.

World distribution at a glance

Two recent books that detail gull identification recognize three distinct subspecies of Lesser Black-backed Gull, representing a continuum in mantle color from lightest to darkest: from dark slate (*graellsii*), to sooty-black (*intermedius*), to velvety-black (nominata *fuscus*) (Olsen and Larsson 2003, Howell and Dunn 2007). Of these, *graellsii* is the only expected visitor to North America, accounting for all New World specimens and a vast majority of all sightings (Post and Lewis 1995a). *Fuscus* remains unrecorded in North America, but apparent *intermedius* individuals have occurred (Post and Lewis 1995b, Howell and Dunn 2007).

The range and population of *graellsii* Lesser Black-backed Gulls have increased significantly in Europe

during the twentieth century, shifting closer to the United States and Canada. From its traditional breeding grounds in the British Isles, *graellsii* colonized Iceland during the 1920s (Olsen and Larsson 2003), southwestern Greenland in 1990 (Boertmann 2008), and the Macaronesian Archipelago off northwestern Africa in 2001 (Grande and Palacios 2002). The number of overwintering Lesser Black-backed Gulls in Ireland has increased dramatically, from maximum counts of approximately 300 in the late 1970s and 1980s to more than 12,300 during the winter of 1992/93 (Crème et al.



Image 1: Lesser Black-backed Gull at Tullytown, Bucks County, 7 January 2008. Most individuals in Pennsylvania are adults, like the bird pictured here. (Tom Johnson)

1997). Meanwhile, a mid-1990s estimate of Lesser Black-backed Gull pairs in Iceland showed a 150% increase in just 25 years (Olsen and Larsson 2003). In southwestern Greenland colonies, a conservative estimate of 700 pairs, made in 2003, suggests that this population has quickly blossomed as well (Boertmann 2008).

This expansion has extended farther into the New World, with numbers increasing dramatically in the Western Hemisphere over recent decades. The first Lesser Black-backed Gull recorded in the United States was an apparent adult found with a flock of gulls in Ocean County, New Jersey on 9 September 1934 (Edwards 1935), and the second was reported four years later in Key West, Florida (Sprunt

1938). Post and Lewis (1995a) summarized records through mid-1994, which included sightings from every eastern state except West Virginia, a number of western states, all ten Canadian provinces, and the Northwest Territories. The past 15 years only accentuate this far-flung expansion and certainly call for a revised synopsis of this species' current North American status. Away from the U.S. and Canada, Lesser Black-backed Gulls have been noted from the West Indies (Raffaele et al. 1998), Panama (Ridgely and Gwynne 1989), Venezuela, Guyana (Hilty 2002), French Guiana (Tostain 1989), and Ecuador (Ridgely and Greenfield 2001).

Though speculation continues about the possibility of yet-undiscovered breeding in North America, only two individual hybrid pairs have been reported: one at Juneau, Alaska in 1993 (van Vliet et al. 1993) and the other at Appledore Island, Maine, in 2007 and 2008 (Ellis et al. 2008, Ellis 2009). In all three summers, the Lesser Black-backed Gull was paired with a Herring Gull, although confirmation that the Lesser Black-backed Gull actually sired the four Appledore chicks is still pending genetic analyses (Lesser Black-backed Gull x Herring Gull; van Vliet et al. 1993, Ellis 2009). No evidence was gathered to verify whether the Alaska Lesser Black-backed Gull was a successful parent (van Vliet et al. 1993).

Pennsylvania

For whatever reason, the Lesser Black-backed Gull has taken a liking to Pennsylvania, and has since become one of Pennsylvania's avian claims-to-fame. For those of us like me who have grown up birding in the state primarily within the past decade, it is difficult to fathom this species' spectacular upswing in recent times. Not long ago, Lesser Black-backed Gulls were a genuine rarity, particularly away from southern Bucks County. Now many

observers take this species for granted and are no longer impressed by this species now commonplace status.

Christmas Bird Count (CBC) data provide a meaningful picture of this species' exponential increase in the state (Figure 1). Nearly 20 years after the first Lesser Black-backed Gull was recorded in Pennsylvania (1960), they began showing up on CBCs in Erie in 1978 and Southern Bucks County in 1979 (Bolgiano 2008). Cumulative double-digit numbers on Pennsylvania CBCs were first achieved in 1986 and not annually until 1990. It was then nearly a decade later (1998) when a total of more than 100 Lesser Black-backed Gulls was exceeded on Pennsylvania CBCs (116 in 1998).

Table 1. Number of records and single-day high count by county.

County	# Records	High
Allegheny	7	2
Beaver	1	1
Berks	15+	9
Bucks	15+	456
Butler	1	2
Carbon	5	2
Chester	12	15
Crawford	2	2
Cumberland	1	2
Dauphin	13	4
Delaware	11	1
Erie	15+	10
Huntingdon	1	1
Jefferson	1	3
Lancaster	15+	12
Lebanon	15+	12
Lehigh	15+	12
Mercer	1	1
Monroe	15+	2
Montgomery	15+	19
Northampton	15+	332
Philadelphia	15+	7
Somerset	2	7
Tioga	1	1
York	4	1

Initially, the stronghold was unequivocally in southern Bucks County, the site of major landfills in Tullytown, which attract massive numbers of gulls. The summation of all historical Lesser Black-backed Gull totals on Pennsylvania CBCs through 2000 (641 individuals) reveals that 83.8% (537) were from the Southern Bucks County count circle. Since then, the species has begun to creep northward in the county, with Pennsylvania's high counts coming from circles in Central Bucks County (2005, 2006) and Upper Bucks County (2007).

In all but one of the past ten years (2004), a Bucks County CBC has outstripped all other North American CBC circles in numbers of Lesser Black-backed Gulls (data are incomplete for 2008/09 as of this

writing). During this timeframe, Pennsylvania CBCs have averaged a little over a third (36.3%) of all North American Lesser Black-backed Gulls, including 47.0% (617) of North America's all-time collective high count (1314 in 2006). The past 30 years show identical increases in both Pennsylvania and North American CBCs (Figure 2). All historical CBC data were extracted from the National Audubon Society's CBC website (Christmas Bird Count 2009).

Within the state, the Lesser Black-backed Gull has an interesting distribution, heavily weighted toward the southeast, but encompassing 25 of Pennsylvania's 67 (37.3%) counties (Figure 3, Table 1). Most notably, this distribution includes the state's entire southeastern corner, essentially a triangle with Philadelphia, the lower third of the Susquehanna River, and the mid-point of the Delaware River as its corners. In only ten counties does this species occur every year: nine in the southeast, and only Erie County away from the southeast. Oddly, this regularity does not occur in Delaware and Chester counties, despite their being surrounded by counties where Lesser Black-backed Gull occur annually. Intriguingly, Lesser Black-backed Gulls have been detected in six counties along the western border of the state, from Erie County south to Allegheny and Beaver counties. In these latter two counties, it has been seen a total of eight times, with each sighting coming from one of the large rivers: Allegheny River (twice), Ohio River (four times), and the convergence of the Allegheny and the Monongahela Rivers (twice). In fact, away from Lake Erie, this species' distribution suggests that perhaps it is drawn to the state's major river systems: the Delaware and Susquehanna, and to a lesser degree, Allegheny and Ohio in the west.

Aside from these two regions of the state, records from four additional counties don't seem to fit the pattern. These include records from Huntingdon and Somerset counties (both 2008 additions), two counties which seem to bridge the gap between southeastern and western concentrations. More peculiar were occurrences in Jefferson (1998) and Tioga (2001) counties, relatively old records in light of this species' more recent expansion from the southeast. Table 2 details Lesser Black-backed Gull sightings in the counties where this species is most unusual (5 or fewer records). Of these

20 sightings from 11 counties, 11 (55.0%) were made in March and April, apparently the best time to search for out-of-range Lesser Black-backed Gulls within the state. March and April of 2008 was particularly productive for wandering Lesser Black-backed Gulls, with rare sightings from Crawford and York counties, and first county records for Butler, Huntingdon, and Somerset counties. In fact, that period's uptick in vagrant gulls was a trend for the entire Upper Ohio River Valley, with 11 interior spring sightings from the state of Ohio (including three first county records) and one from Preston, West Virginia (Fazio, III and Wiltraut 2008). The prospect of additional far-ranging Lesser Black-backed Gulls is likely only to increase in years to come.

Table 2. Detailed sighting information for counties with 5 or fewer records.

Location	Date	#
Beaver		
Industry (M. Vass)	11/19-20/2005	1
Butler		
Moraine S.P. (D. Darney)	3/28-29/2008	2
Carbon		
Beltzville S.P. (D. Hawk)	3/13/2002	1
Beltzville S.P. (D. Welch)	4/2/2002	2
Beltzville S.P. (R. Rehrig)	3/9/2006	X
Beltzville S.P. (D. Welch)	2/9/2007	2
Beltzville S.P. (D. Hawk)	2/26/2008	1
Crawford		
Pymatuning (R. Leberman)	8/16/2001	1
Pymatuning (S. Kinzey)	3/24/2008	2
Cumberland		
Mud Level (D&R Henise)	2/23-3/24/1998	2
Huntingdon		
Huntingdon (A. Wilson)	3/29/2008	1
Jefferson		
Kyle Lake (J. Fedak)	3/2/1998	3
Mercer		
L. Wilhelm (Troyer)	4/8/2003	1
Somerset		
Somerset L. (C. Wild)	3/23-4/2/2008	7
Somerset L. (L. Payne)	4/9/2008	1
Tioga		
Hammond L. (B. Israel)	12/30/2001	1
York		
Brunner's Is. (unknown)	7/15/1989	X
York Mall (D. Heathcote)	11/28/1998	1
Codorus S.P. (A. McGann)	1/17-2/9/2008	1
Codorus S.P. (P. Robinson)	3/30/2008	1

Among the 25 Pennsylvania counties where Lesser Black-backed Gulls have occurred, the density of birds is far from uniform. Of the ten counties where it occurs annually, single-day high counts range from 2 to 19 individuals, averaging just over 10, for the majority (8 of 10) of the counties (Table 1). The only exceptions are

Bucks (456) and Northampton (332) counties, far surpassing all others in terms of magnitude, with a pronounced decrease in abundance in neighboring counties (Philadelphia, Montgomery, Berks, and Lehigh). The bulk of Lesser Black-backed Gull flocks have developed an interesting progression in recent springs, with large numbers staging and working their way northward from Bucks County to Green Pond, Northampton County. Most recently, this phenomenon has taken place primarily in late March and early April, with hundreds of birds involved (Green Pond: 237 on 13 April 2004; 84 on 9 April 2005; 200 on 30 March 2007; 332 on 27 March 2008).

The 456 amassed in Bucks County on 17 March 2007 is very near the single-day high count for this species in the New World. Though undocumented reports exist of ~500 from Fort Lauderdale, Florida (Tom Johnson pers. comm.), 466 were tallied in Jacksonville, Florida, 24 October 2007 (Bob Richter pers. comm.). The latter total is likely the current North American high count. However, if recent trends in Pennsylvania continue, that record is destined to be short-lived. For quantitative proof, a simple glance at yearly state high counts reveals marked growth (Table 3).

Table 3. High count dates by year, 1998-2008 (CBCs excluded, single-sites only).

Date	Location	County	#
12/7/98	Unknown	Bucks	73
11/21/99	Unknown	Bucks	152
12/17/00	Churchville Res.	Bucks	158
9/30/01	Newtown	Bucks	80+
1/18/02	Churchville Res.	Bucks	81
10/24/03	Newtown	Bucks	272
11/14/04	Richboro	Bucks	245+
3/12/05	Peace Valley Pk.	Bucks	305
3/23/06	Nockamixon S.P.	Bucks	~410
3/18/07	Nockamixon S.P.	Bucks	~450
3/27/08	Green Pond	Nrthamptn.	332

Why Bucks County?

Unfortunately, the answer to this intriguing question is firmly rooted in speculation. The combined effects of multiple landfills and ice-free water in southern Bucks County (particularly Van Sciver Lake and the adjacent Delaware River) provide a natural haven for gulls. Therefore, it is no surprise that this region boasts the largest concentrations of wintering gulls in the state, especially rich in Herring Gulls (145,249 were tallied on the 2004 CBC alone). Although conventional wisdom might predict

that Lesser Black-backed Gull numbers would mirror the similar Herring Gull, this does not actually appear to be the case. Most recently, Lesser Black-backed Gulls have shown a particular affinity to lakes in upper Bucks County, namely Lake Nockamixon and Lake Galena (Peace Valley Park), sites that often have relatively few Herring Gulls. In fact, it is not at all uncommon for Lesser Black-backed Gulls and Ring-billed Gulls to be the most abundant gulls at those sites.

Perhaps, then, it is the tri-fold combination of interior lakes (and perennially ice-free waters), heaps of refuse, and *agricultural* fields, in addition to hordes of other gulls that create just the right recipe for Bucks County. More than other large gulls, sometimes significant gatherings of Lesser Black-backed Gulls have been found in open fields. A school ball field in Richboro consistently attracted high counts (245+ on 14 November 2004; Adrian Binns, pers. comm.), and I can personally recall a flock of 132 in agricultural fields just outside of Blooming Glen, 14 April 2004. Compared to the majority of eastern sites with aggregations of Lesser Black-backed Gulls (i.e. Nantucket, MA, Jacksonville, FL), Pennsylvania is unique as an inland location. Thus, Bucks County's added position at the head of the Delaware Bay probably acts as a funneling agent, drawing birds in from more coastal regions. However, much remains to be learned about the provenance of North American Lesser Black-backed Gulls. Learning how and from where these birds arrive in Bucks County could further shed light on the still mysterious popularity of this otherwise ordinary region.

Summering Lesser Black-backed Gulls

Lesser Black-backed Gulls are primarily a visitor to Pennsylvania from fall through spring. However, in the past decade, Lesser Black-backed Gulls have been located in June and July, which are arguably the two most challenging months to find this species in the state (Table 4). Beginning in 2002, relatively small numbers have been detected annually in the summer, primarily in Bucks County, but there are also a few summer records from Northampton, Lancaster, and Erie counties. The summer of 2004 saw an unusual quantity of lingering gulls, with as many as 19 in Northampton

County (13 July 2004) and 35 in Bucks County (24 July 2004). A large percentage of summering birds appear to be sub-adults, with full adults a genuine rarity, although at least a few such sightings exist. Summering Lesser Black-backed Gulls cloud the arrival of true fall migrants to the state, but limited evidence seems to suggest that the first returning adults appear in August.

Table 4. June/July sightings since 1999.

Date	Location	County	#
6/3/02	Bradford Dam	Bucks	1
7/11/02	Nockamixon S.P.	Bucks	1
7/13/02	Peace Valley Pk.	Bucks	2
6/5/03	Martins Creek	Nrthamptn.	16
7/15/03	Peace Valley Pk.	Bucks	1
7/22/03	Nockamixon S.P.	Bucks	3
7/11/04	Penn-Warner	Bucks	17
7/13/04	Martins Creek	Nrthamptn.	19
7/21/04	Presque Isle S.P.	Erie	1
7/24/04	Penn-Warner	Bucks	35
6/4/05	Peace Valley Pk.	Bucks	14
6/5/05	Nockamixon S.P.	Bucks	5
7/1/05	Nockamixon S.P.	Bucks	5
6/9/06	Presque Isle S.P.	Erie	1
6/1/06	Nockamixon S.P.	Bucks	1-3
7/20/06	Tullytown	Bucks	11
6/16/07	Conejohela Flats	Lancaster	1
7/21/07	Peace Valley Pk.	Bucks	1
6/1/07	Tullytown	Bucks	~6
6/1/08	Penn Warner	Bucks	few

Age breakdown

The breakdown of the differing age classes is often omitted from reports of large flocks, making it difficult to determine the various average percentages. This is likely due both to the complexity of aging Lesser Black-backed Gulls as well as identifying individuals that lack a gray mantle (first-cycle birds). A quick analysis of ten congregations of 30 or more that were aged and reported by the observer(s) found adults comprising an average of 83.8% of all Lesser Black-backed Gulls, corroborating Bill Etter's stated 85-90% figure (pers. comm.). This is in stark contrast to the aforementioned summer situation, when sub-adults (particularly first and second cycle birds) predominate. Not unexpectedly, the proportion of adults was noted to wane as spring progressed. A ratio of 2:1 sub-adults to adults was noted at Green Pond, Northampton County, on 22 April 2008, and increased to 9:1 on 3 May 2008 (Dave DeReamus pers. comm.).

Lastly, it is worth noting that hybrid Lesser Black-backed x Herring Gulls have been reported with regularity in Bucks County, and likely elsewhere (August Mirabella pers. comm.).

The data presented here were gathered through the summer of 2008. Therefore, sightings from the 2008/09 winter season have not been included in this analysis. Although the mention of county records and single-day high counts seems definitive, the collected data certainly contain omissions, perhaps numerous. The county data were accumulated from a variety of sources, with some datasets better than others. Thus, the snapshot presented in this article may not be wholly accurate, but, subject to scrutiny from others, should lead to a better understanding of Lesser Black-backed Gull status in the Commonwealth, providing a stepping stone for any further treatment of this species.

Conclusion

Few species of European breeding birds regularly cross the Atlantic Ocean to winter in North America, and none as plentifully as the Lesser Black-backed Gull. It is the most abundant trans-Atlantic migrant not known to nest regularly in North America. Unfortunately, while the numbers and frequency of this species is waxing, the interest in the species among the birding community is waning. With fewer birders going out of their way to seek out Lesser Black-backed Gulls, tally large flocks, or ponder over their compelling explosion, we are sure to lose information about this peculiar avian phenomenon. As Post and Lewis (1995a) so aptly charged readers more than a decade ago, "Every effort should be made to assess the...changing status of this species in the New World. The increase in numbers presents an opportunity to critically identify the distribution and movements of a fascinating species as it possibly colonizes another continent."

Acknowledgements

Although this review is by no means air-tight, it would have been far from complete without the following contributions. I would like to thank: John Fedak (Jefferson), Peter Robinson (York), Dave Hawk (Carbon), Dustin Welch (Carbon and Lehigh), Linda Freedman (Lehigh), Rick Wiltraut (Monroe), George Franchois (Montgomery), Geoff Malosh (Allegheny, Beaver, and Butler), Cole Wild (Somerset), Jerry McWilliams (Erie), Jerry Book and Jonathan Heller (Lancaster), Dick Williams (Dauphin),

Doris McGovern (Delaware and Philadelphia), David Eberly (Delaware), Ramsay Koury and Don Henise (Cumberland), Rudy Keller (Berks), Randy Miller (Lebanon), Northampton (Dave DeReamus), Nick Pulcinella (Chester), August Mirabella and Bill Etter (Bucks). In particular, the author and this article greatly benefited from the invested energy and thoughtful discussions of Adrian Binns and Bill Etter. Throughout the past decade or so, these two individuals have possessed a peculiar affinity for Lesser Black-backed Gulls, adding much to the subject in Pennsylvania. Special thanks also go to Dave DeReamus and August Mirabella who provided personally compiled sightings of Lesser Black-backed Gulls for my edification. Additionally, I would like to thank Tom Johnson, Paul Hess, August Mirabella, and Geoff Malosh for comments on previous drafts of the manuscript. Finally, thanks go to Joshua Stone for creating Figure 3 using GIS and to Tom Johnson for kindly sharing his portrait of Lesser Black-backed Gull.

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Figure 1: Lesser Black-backed Gull CBC totals for Pennsylvania, 1977-2008

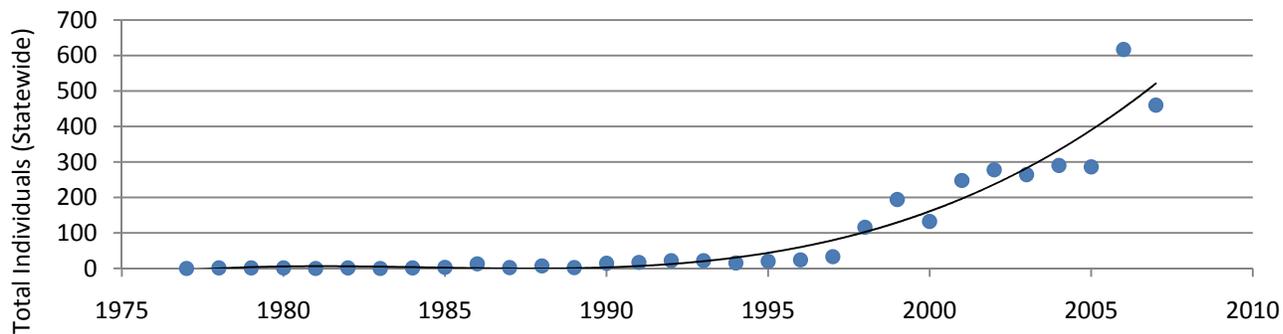


Figure 2: Lesser Black-backed Gull CBC totals for North America and Pennsylvania, 1997-2008

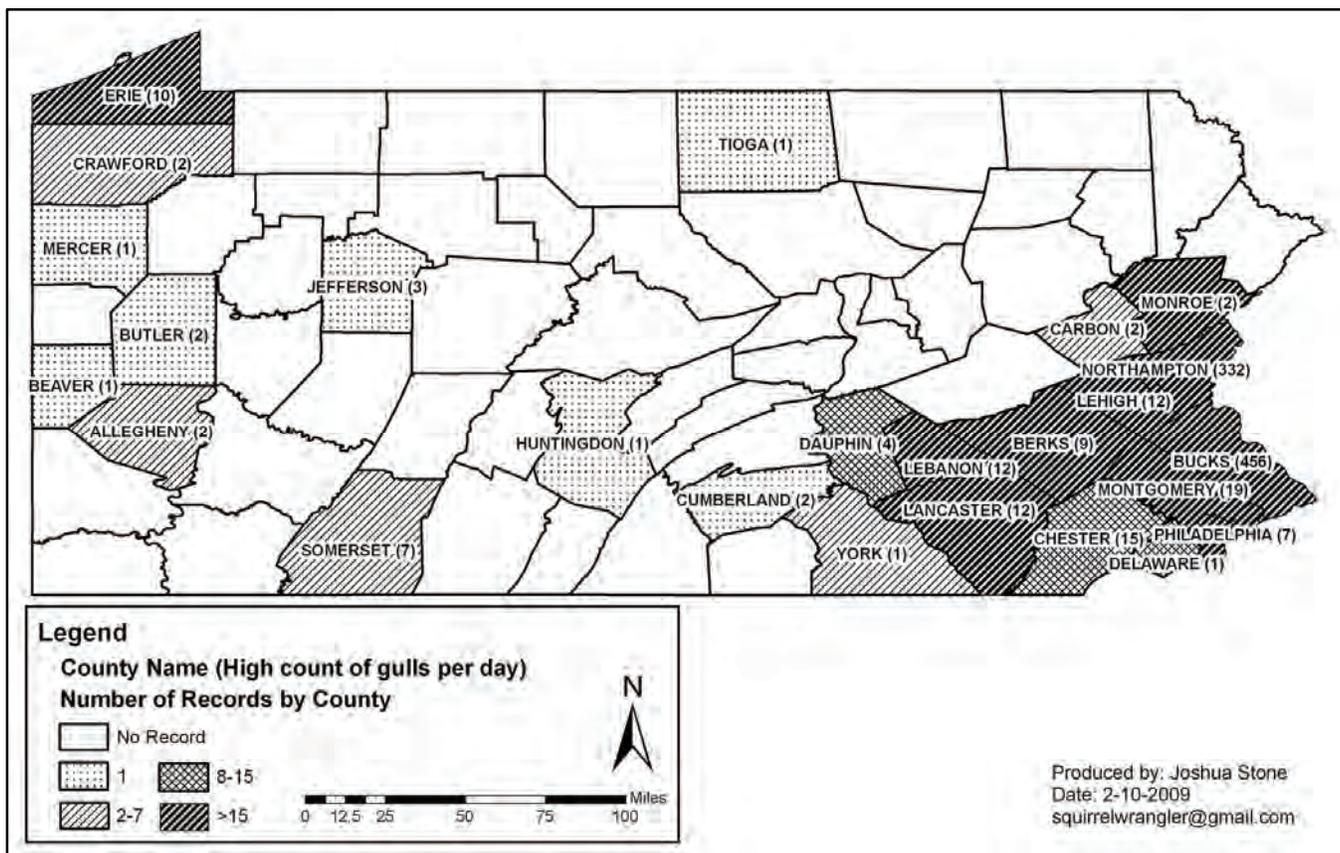
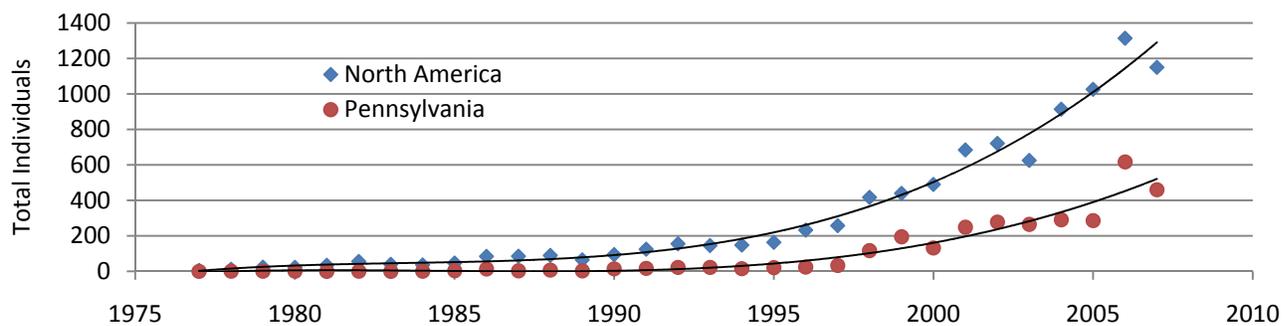


Figure 3: County-by-county Lesser Black-backed Gull records and single-day high counts, through summer 2008.

BOOK REVIEW

Gene Wilhelm

EASTERN PENNSYLVANIA BIRDING AND WILDLIFE GUIDE

by F. Brock, S. Fordyce, T. Fenchel, and D. Kunkle; production by Dean Design of Lancaster, PA, cover design by Susan Fordyce; scores of color photographs; same regional map of thirteen eastern Pennsylvania counties inside the front and back covers; 130 pp., published in 2009 by the Pennsylvania Department of Conservation and Natural Resources, Harrisburg, PA; ringed soft cover; contact Lehigh Gap Nature Center, P.O. Box 198, Slatington, PA 18080, phone 610-760-8889 for free pickup copy, or send \$10.00 to the center for mailed copy.

This wonderful and concise guide welcomes birders, naturalists, outdoor enthusiasts and the traveling public to visit the natural areas of eastern Pennsylvania, the "Birthplace of American Birding". Although primarily focused on bird watching in thirteen counties encompassing the watersheds of the Lehigh, Schuylkill, and Delaware rivers, the book stresses that avian habitats also support a rich diversity of other wildlife and provide for outstanding nature experiences.

The guide opens, after a Table of Contents, Acknowledgements, and Partners, with "Making the Most of Your Birding" which lists 12 time-tested techniques, four potential hazards in the field, and eight birding ethics and conservation measures for beginning birders. A short but accurate Seasonal Timeline suggests what avian groups are most likely to be seen in each season (pp. 6-7).

"Introduction: The Birthplace of American Birding", by Scott Weidensaul, follows, and is especially informative about Pennsylvania's role in American ornithological history. "Mile for mile, the Schuylkill and Delaware rivers may be the most important waterways in the history of American bird study, just as the lands they frame remain a treasure-trove for modern birders," he states. In fact, three outstanding pioneer ornithologists had their beginnings along the Schuylkill River. The first is William Bartram, who left his father John's famous home site Bartram Gardens, to explore and research the southeastern United States, and in the

process collected many new avian species for science. The second is Alexander Wilson, who purposely came to Bartram Garden seeking help from William and received it. Wilson eventually wrote and illustrated the first comprehensive ornithological text on the birds of the New World, and because of this massive nine-volume work, became known as the Father of American Ornithology. The third was John James Audubon who lived just twenty-five miles upstream on an estate called Mill Grove with its abundant bird life. Here it was that Audubon started his lifetime career as avian artist, improviser, and field ornithologist. Yet, he never met Bartram nor encountered Wilson until many years later in Kentucky. However, "As the two rivers connect the landscape, so too does a continuous thread connect the lives of their great ornithologists," says Weidensaul. Indeed, other renown ornithologists followed in the footsteps of Bartram, Wilson, and Audubon, such as Spencer Fullerton Baird, Levi Menzel, Earl Poole, George Miksch Sutton, Dick Pough, and Rosalie Edge. Weidensaul concludes: "Today, it's still possible to walk the same paths, and see many of the same species, that the giants of early American ornithology saw." In fact, despite its large human population and their giant footprint on the landscape, eastern Pennsylvania still protects tens of thousands acres in municipal, county, state, federal and private forests, parks, and preserves. This guide introduces the reader to most of them.

The bulk of the guide (pp. 18-123) is devoted to each of the thirteen counties' wildlife sites, with a few special locales interjected here and there. Each county has a map showing the location of these sites, major highways, communities, and water bodies. At the bottom of each county map is a legend depicting five international symbols for handicapped accessibility, hiking trails, biking trails, restrooms, and whether dogs are allowed. Each site lists location, owner and contacts, directions, access, parking, description, through the seasons, and other comments.

At the end of Carbon County sites is "Exploring Audubon's Lehigh" (p. 46), which suggests travelers take a 53-

mile auto tour of the dense forests and swamps of the upper Lehigh River watershed, where Audubon journeyed in 1829. The Palmerton Superfund Site (p. 47) describes the zinc smelters that operated from 1898 to 1980 in Palmerton, Carbon County, giving off horrible air pollution that destroyed 3,000 acres of vegetation and contaminated the top soil with its toxic heavy metals, rendering it sterile. It was designated a Superfund Site in 1983. The nonprofit Wildlife Information Center in 2003 purchased 750 acres, created Lehigh Gap Nature Center, and established native, warm-season grasses on the site. Today the area is becoming green again.

Other special site descriptions include the Kittatinny Ridge and Hawkwatching" (pp. 66-67), Pocono Mountains and the Delaware Water Gap National Recreation Area (pp. 74-75), John James Audubon Center at Mill Grove and the Academy of Natural Sciences (pp. 90-91), the Fairmount Park System (p. 101), Heritage Areas and Regional Trails (pp. 106-107), the latter two sites including a map of each. The book ends with a Guide to specialty birds (pp. 124-125), Resources, My Birding Notes (for personal comments) and a Site Index.

In sum, this guide is a **must have** birding item for all Pennsylvania birders and outdoor enthusiasts. The many color photographs, with a few exceptions, are excellent and the site descriptions succinct and accurate. One possible improvement, if the guide is reprinted, would be to switch the positions of Scott Weidensaul's Introduction and "Making the Most of Your Birding". The historical story of the eco-region should be read before what to do, how to do it, here and now that logically fits a niche before the wildlife sites.

Hats off to the cooperative partnership of public and private organizations that produced this guide. Every birder living or visiting eastern Pennsylvania should keep this guide in the glove compartment of his or her vehicle. If only there was a western Pennsylvania version that emulated this model.

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Prolonged incubation of a hybrid-zone chickadee nest

W.P. Brown¹, M.E. Zuefle, T.J. Underwood

ABSTRACT – Prolonged incubation of non-viable eggs has been reported in many bird species. Here, we report on prolonged incubation in the hybrid zone of Black-capped Chickadee (*Poecile atricapillus*) and Carolina Chickadee (*Poecile carolinensis*) that continued for an unusually long time. Incubation of five chickadee (*Poecile spp.*) eggs near Kutztown, Pennsylvania began on 11 May 2008 and continued for 25 days. No eggs hatched. The chickadee nest failed between 5 and 6 June, apparently destroyed by another cavity-nesting species, the House Wren (*Troglodytes aedon*). To our knowledge, the duration of this prolonged incubation exceeds the maximum reported for the Black-capped Chickadee (17-20 days) and the Carolina Chickadee (24 days).

Introduction

Prolonged incubation of non-viable eggs has been described for many bird species (Holcomb 1970). In extreme cases, incubation periods of greater than 100% of the average incubation time have been described (e.g., Golden Eagle [*Aquila chrysaetos*], 161% longer than average [Brown 1976]; Shag [*Phalacrocorax aristotelis*], 175% longer than average [Skutch 1962]). Holcomb (1970) suggested that prolonged incubation may be adaptive, allowing for the success of eggs that take longer than normal to hatch.

Here, we describe observations of prolonged incubation of a chickadee (*Poecile spp.*) nest that occurred for a longer period of time than any other record for either Black-capped Chickadee or Carolina Chickadee. It was not possible for us to determine the species of chickadee under observation because our study site in Kutztown, Pennsylvania was in the hybrid zone of these two species (Reudink et al. 2007).

Observations

As part of an on-going research project, 60 Peterson-style nest boxes on Kutztown University's study forest and campus (40.517N, -75.780W) were checked nearly every day from 30 April to 15 August 2008. A nest box eventually used by chickadees initially contained approximately 15 twigs, presumably added by House Wrens

between 30 April and 4 May. On 6 May, a completed chickadee nest was observed on top of the twigs. The first chickadee egg was laid on 7 May and egg laying continued through 11 May, for a total clutch size of 5 eggs. On 12 May, a chickadee was flushed from the nest box and the eggs were warm. Because Black-capped chickadees and Carolina Chickadees begin incubation with either the penultimate egg or the last egg of the clutch (Smith 1993, Mostrom et al. 2002), we conservatively estimated that 11 May was the start of incubation.

On 15 May, the eggs were still being incubated but the clutch had been reduced to 4 eggs through unknown causes. Between 21 and 23 May, the clutch was further reduced to 3 eggs. We suspected that a House Wren nesting approximately 4 m away as of 10 May was the cause of clutch reduction, but we have no direct evidence for this. The chickadee was observed on the nest or flushed from the nest box during every daily nest check through 5 June. On 6 June, there were no eggs remaining in the nest box. The nest was intact and several twigs had been added to the top of the failed nest, presumably by a House Wren. No additional material was added to the failed chickadee nest in subsequent days. The chickadee female spent from 11 May to 5 June incubating eggs, a conservative total of 25 days of incubation. Using 13 days as an estimate of a typical incubation period in chickadees (Smith 1993, Mostrom et al. 2002), the chickadee incubated approximately 85% longer than normal.

Discussion

Our observations represent the maximum reported duration of prolonged incubation by either species of eastern chickadee or potential hybrids. The typical incubation period for Black-capped Chickadees is 12-13 days (Smith 1993). Incubation is typically 12-15 days for Carolina Chickadees with an average of 12.9 days (Mostrom et al. 2002). The longest reported duration of incubation for a Black-capped Chickadee was 17-20 days (MacKenzie 1996) and 24 days for a Carolina Chickadee (Odum 1942). A pair of chickadees in a hybrid zone in

Illinois abandoned unhatched eggs after 20 days of incubation (Brewer 1961). If the nest under observation had not been destroyed, incubation may have continued for an even longer period of time than we recorded.

As a percentage of normal incubation, maximum recorded prolonged incubation in non-passerines is generally greater than that of passerines; in absolute terms, some seabird species have incubated unviable eggs for two months or more (Holcomb 1970). Holcomb (1970) suggested that prolonged incubation of a few days longer than normal was adaptive, allowing for late developing eggs to hatch. Maximum reported prolonged incubation periods are in the general range of 50-175% of typical incubation periods, however, and it is not clear how such extreme behavior could be adaptive, especially for some passerine species that may have multiple broods. Extremely prolonged incubation, especially if it occurred early in the season, would negatively affect reproductive potential of species that re-nest after failure or those that have multiple broods.

Reasons for non-viability of the chickadee eggs are unknown. Adverse weather was not a factor during the period that the chickadee nest was under observation and the female was on or near the nest during each nest check. Possibly, human interference around the nest could have caused improper incubation behavior of the female, House Wrens from nearby nest boxes could have interfered with the nest and caused the same result, or the eggs could have been infertile. We were unable to determine if the female chickadee abandoned the nest or if House Wrens displaced her from the nest. Displacement seems the most likely explanation as no eggs were left on the nest and twigs were added to the nest after it failed. House Wrens may remove the nest contents of other species and add their own nest material (Johnson 1998).

The prolonged incubation period reported here for chickadees, approximately 85% longer than the normal incubation time for either Black-capped Chickadees or Carolina Chickadees, is comparable to the maximum reported percentages for other species (Nice 1937, Holcomb

1970). Outside of the suggestion that incubating a few days longer than normal is adaptive (Holcomb 1970), there is no proximate or ultimate explanation for periods of prolonged incubation that are substantially greater than normal.

Acknowledgements

We thank an anonymous reviewer for commenting on an earlier draft of this manuscript.

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**United States Postal Service
Statement of Ownership, Management, and Circulation**

1. Publication Title: **Pennsylvania Birds**
2. Publication Number **0898-8501**
3. Filing Date **10/01/2009**
4. Issue Frequency **Quarterly**
5. Number of Issues Published Annually **4**
6. Annual Subscription Price **\$28.50**
7. Complete Mailing Address of Known Office of Publication: **2469 Hammertown Rd, Narvon, Lancaster, Pa 17555-9730; Contact Person Franklin Haas; Telephone 717-445-9609**
8. Complete Mailing Address of Headquarters or General Business Office of Publisher: **2469 Hammertown Rd, Narvon, Lancaster, Pa 17555-9730**
9. Full Names and Complete Mailing Addresses of Publisher, Editor, and Managing Editor
 Publisher: **Pennsylvania Society for Ornithology, 2469 Hammertown Rd, Narvon, Lancaster, Pa 17555-9730**
 Editor: **Pennsylvania Society for Ornithology, 2469 Hammertown Rd, Narvon, Lancaster, Pa 17555-9730**
 Managing Editor: **Pennsylvania Society for Ornithology, 2469 Hammertown Rd, Narvon, Lancaster, Pa 17555-9730**
10. Owner: **Pennsylvania Society for Ornithology, 2469 Hammertown Rd, Narvon, Lancaster, Pa 17555-9730**
11. Known Bondholders, Mortgagees, and Other Security Holders Owning or Holding 1 Percent or More of Total Amount of Bonds, Mortgages, or Other Securities. If none, check box: **X None**
14. Issue Date for Circulation Data Below **09/30/09**

15. Extent and Nature of Circulation		Average No. Copies During Preceding 12 Months	No. Copies Published Nearest to Filing Date
a. Total Number of Copies (Net Press Run)		490	480
b. Paid and/or Requested Circulation	(1) Paid/Requested Outside-County Mail Subscriptions Stated on Form 3541.	413	438
	(2) Paid In-County Subscriptions Stated on Form 3541.	19	20
	(3) Sales Through Dealers, etc.	0	0
	(4) Other Classes	0	0
Total Paid and/or Requested Circulation		432	458
d. Free Distribution by Mail	(1) Outside-County	0	0
	(2) In-County	0	0
	(3) Other	2	2
e. Free Distribution Outside the Mail		2	2
f. Total Free Distribution (Sum of 15d. and 15e.)		4	4
Total Distribution (Sum of 15c. and 15f.) g.		436	462
h. Copies Not Distributed		54	18
Total (Sum of 15g. and 15h.) i.		490	480
Percent Paid and/or Requested Circulation j.		99	99

16. Publication of Statement of Ownership
Publication required. Will be printed in the Vol 22 No.3 issue of this publication.
17. Signature and Title of Editor, Publisher, Business Manager, or Owner Date
Franklin C. Haas, Membership Manager, 10/01/09

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Summary of the Season – June to July 2009

Dan Brauning, Summer Season Editor

A limited 2nd Breeding Bird Atlas field season encouraged some fieldwork in limited locations this summer, but nothing like the effort of 2008 was directed to breeding birds this past year. As a result, fewer breeding records were noted in county summaries. Also, fewer counties reported, but even with this reduced activity a similar cast of characters appears in local notes and the resulting Birds of Note. A total of 41 counties provided notes, down from 44 in 2008. Observations gleaned from the PABIRDS listserv and the Atlas database from counties not reporting complemented data for this season.

An unusually wet summer may have contributed to some waterfowl lingering into the summer season. Most of the notable waterfowl were observed in *Crawford* and *Bucks*, including species potentially breeding, like **Green-winged Teal** and **Blue-winged Teal**. Others, with no nesting history, also lingered as happens every year like **Greater Scaup** and **Canvasback**. Though waterfowl typically make up a large portion of notable bird reports, an increase again in the number of **Snow Geese** remaining into the summer may be an artifact of the burgeoning Arctic population that winters along the Atlantic coast. But the reports from *Bucks* and *Mercer* of **Snow Geese** hybridizing with **Canada Geese** raise new questions and challenges. The resulting young are not likely to be fertile, if they even survived.

Formerly a nesting resident of Pennsylvania, the **Cattle Egret** has now become sporadic and rare. This year's sole report in *Berks* highlights this decline. A recent nesting arrival, the **Merlin**, was reported at one of last year's locations in *McKean*, but other sites might not have been checked, so our expectation is that this species will continue to expand in year-round occurrence. Regular observations of **Glossy Ibis** in *Chester* this season are believed to be birds ranging from the nesting colony in Delaware at Pea Patch Island, 17 miles to the southeast.

Shorebirds are another group that comprises a substantial component of notable summer records. Since shorebird habitat is limited within the state, these species often don't linger as they move between coastal migration

routes to Arctic breeding sites. Widespread species, like the yellowlegs, may be seen in any county, but many shorebirds, including those that are abundant on the Atlantic coast, like **Sanderling**, dowitchers, **Willet** and **Dunlin**, typically end up being reported in less than 5 counties during their spring and fall migrations (both of which can overlap this two-month summer season). Presque Isle State Park, *Erie*, and the Conejohela Flats of the Susquehanna River, *Lancaster*, are the most reliable locations for these species. Rarities such as **Whimbrel**, **Hudsonian Godwit**, and **Black-necked Stilt** typically are reported almost annually at one of these locations by the diligent shorebirders. Beyond these standard shorebird sites, smaller habitat patches which receive lots of attention also have a steady stream of shorebirds. Other sites which receive considerable attention this year also have notable shorebirds, include *Imperial*, *Allegheny*, this year featuring **Willet**, the Penn Warner Tract, *Bucks* with **White-rumped Sandpiper**, and ponds in the Pymatuning wetlands complex which served up this year's annual **American Avocet** record. Shorebirds also use fly-ash ponds, shorelines, and other scattered patches of wetland habitat, and may be overlooked due to access or because of their habit of making brief, weather-related stopovers.

Almost every season has exceptional surprises, and this is no exception. The **Long-billed Curlew** reported from *Erie* would be a possible second state record if accepted by PORC. The **Arctic Tern** observed by many on the Susquehanna R. in *Lancaster* in May lingered to become the state's first June observation, if accepted. Similarly, two **Glaucous Gull** observations within two weeks in June, first *Bucks* then *Erie*, and a **Rufous Hummingbird** in *Allegheny*, are among historic summer records for these species.

Though the vast majority of species begin nesting in May, the summer season reports the majority of breeding records. These contribute to our understanding of nesting distribution and status. This year, reports of state-listed (endangered or threatened) species such as **American** and **Least bitterns**, **Upland Sandpiper**, **Sedge**

Wren, and others fit the patterns compiled during the 2nd Breeding Bird Atlas. Most of **Prothonotary Warbler** reports were within known locations, but the first confirmation of nesting in *Beaver* since the 1970s may suggest a range expansion. Continuing expansion of **Clay-colored Sparrows**, although not into new counties this year, suggests this species is here to stay. No new breeding species or out-of-range nesting records came to our attention, with the exception of **White-winged Crossbill** (see below).

Several species were reported commonly enough this year that they didn't make the cut of the Birds of Note section (generally, 5 or fewer counties). Notable is the **Caspian Tern**, reported in 9 of 39 counties in 2009 compared with 5 of 44 counties the previous year! **Dickcissel**, similarly, was reported in at least 6 counties when reports to the Atlas and Listserv are included. Was this a small invasion year? Several of these observations were at sites occupied last year (*Chester*), or traditional habitat occupied for many years (*Cumberland* and *Franklin*). **Sandhill Crane**, long expanding its range in the state, was found in 6 counties including a pair for the first time in *Somerset*!

Considering the scarcity of observations of nocturnal birds in general, the June report of **Chuck-will's-widow** in *Bucks* provides further hint that this species may nest within the state, at least sporadically. Similarly, the **Short-eared Owl** observed in *Clearfield* was the only report in 2009, but few of the expansive reclaimed surface mines were probably checked this year.

Continuing the finch invasion from the previous winter, a few **White-winged Crossbills** lingered until at least June, with observations in the east (*Lehigh*, *Monroe*, *Northampton*, and *Tioga*) at least through June. **Pine Siskins** were seen in the majority of counties. Evidence may suggest that some of the **White-winged Crossbills** in this major irruption may have remained to nest locally, but without any reports of an active nest, these observations will require careful review to determine whether they support the state's first ever documentation of breeding of this species.

Birds of Note – June through July 2009

This report summarizes unexpected species reported in Pennsylvania for this period. As a general rule birds must have been recorded in five or fewer counties to qualify for inclusion here, but rare species recorded more frequently, or irregular species exhibiting an unusual seasonal occurrence, are also included. "Listserv" indicates records deemed credible which were gleaned from the PABIRDS listserv for counties with no reporting compiler. "Atlas" indicates valid records deemed credible which were entered into the PBBA database but which do not appear in the county reports.

An * denotes species on the Pennsylvania Ornithological Records Committee (PORC) Review List. Details or descriptions that are submitted for species on the PORC Review List will be reviewed by the committee. The terms "no doc" and "doc submitted" indicate whether documentation has been submitted on reports of Review List species listed herein; "no doc" indicates that no documentation was known to have been submitted as of the time of writing. The PORC Review List can be found at the PSO web site <<http://www.pabirds.org>>.

Birds in *Italic* typeface are uncommon or rare, but occur during this time period in most years.

Birds in Underlined typeface occur at least 4 to 7 out of 10 years during this time period.

Birds in *Italic and Underlined* typeface occur fewer than 4 to 7 out of 10 years during this time period.

Birds in Normal typeface are noteworthy for rarity, but are recorded annually, usually in more than one county.

Snow Goose – *Berks*: A few lingered until the end of June (Kerry Grim, Rudy Keller, Matt Spence); *Bucks*: Two immature birds with 2 adults at Nockamixon State Park, joined by a third adult 6/9 (Devich Farbotnik), possible escapees. Another at Morrisville 7/15 (Dave Long); *Lebanon*: About 20 spent the summer at Middle Creek; *Lehigh*: Four continued into summer at Lake Muhlenburg; *Luzerne*: One at Wyoming on the Susquehanna R. on 6/6 (Jim Shoemaker) and was still present on 7/21 (Kevin Ripka).

Tundra Swan – *Erie*: One lingered to 6/6 at Edinboro Lake (*vide* Don Snyder), and one at Presque Isle State Park remained well into the summer and was last seen on 7/23 (Jerry McWilliams).

Trumpeter Swan – *Crawford*: Two first-year birds were noted at Geneva Conneaut Marsh 6/6.

Blue-winged Teal – *Crawford*: One to 5 at various areas at Pymatuning (Robert C. Leberman, Mark Vass, Anthony Bledsoe).

Northern Pintail – *Crawford*: A lone male, in molt, was noted at Pymatuning Goose Management Area 7/13.

Green-winged Teal – *Crawford*: A pair was seen at Pymatuning Goose Management Area 6/13 and 6/15 (Anthony Bledsoe).

Ring-necked Duck – *Berks*: Two males lingered from spring, one until 6/14 at Peters Creek, Lake Ontelaunee (Mike Slater) and the other until 7/4 at Gotwals pond, Oley (Rudy Keller).

Greater Scaup – *Snyder*: A single male was found on a pond along Decker Rd, south of Port Ann, 6/15, very likely the first "summer" season report for this county (Richard and Patricia Williams).

Lesser Scaup – *Berks*: At Grace Mine pond, Morgantown 6/30 (Frank Haas).

Bufflehead – *Bucks*: Male was at Giving Pond 6/10 (Erich Boenzli).

Red-breasted Merganser – *Berks*: A female was at Lake Ontelaunee 6/5 (Matt Wlasniewski); *Lawrence*: a female was at New Beaver 6/12 (Mark Vass).

Ruddy Duck – *Bucks*: At US Steel, Bristol 6/13 (Devich Farbotnik); *Chester*: Single, not breeding, at Chambers Lake 6/10 and 6/20 (Rick Robinson) and Somerset Lake 7/29 (Andrew Leidig); *Crawford*: One to 3 at Pymatuning Spillway and Ford Island 6/13-30 (m.obs.); *Lebanon*: An immature male was at Mt. Pleasant Rd. on 6/2 for a new late date (Chuck Berthoud); *Lehigh*: Lingered at Dorney Landfill through at least 6/6 (Billy Weber).

Pied-billed Grebe – *Allegheny*: At Imperial 7/25 (Mark Vass) where it remained up to 7/29 (Mark Vass, Shawn Collins, Paul Johnston); *Chester*: Chambers Lake 7/31; *Crawford*: Noted at Fish Hatchery 6/11 (Robert C. Leberman) and one at Geneva 7/28.

Least Bittern – *Bucks*: Two were heard at Quakertown Swamp 6/9-11 (Devich Farbotnik); *Cumberland*: At SGL169 on 7/26 (Vern Gauthier); *Erie*: Continued to be reported at Presque Isle State Park through the period (m.ob.).

Snowy Egrets – *Berks*: Three juv. were seen at close range along the Schuylkill River during a kayaking trip 7/26 (Steve Fordyce); *Bucks*: At Rohm and Haas 7/31 (Devich Farbotnik).

Little Blue Heron – *Adams*: One immature at SGL 249 at the restored wetland on Gun Club Rd. 7/30 (Dan Richards); *Bucks*: An imm. at Bradford Dam 7/11 (Gail Johnson), one at LaSalle College, Newtown 7/16, and 3 at Core Creek Park starting 7/27 (Bill Keim); *Lancaster*: Two at the Conejohela Flats 7/28 (Chuck Chalfant).

Cattle Egrets – *Berks*: Two were photographed in a rain pool in a Topton field 6/12 (Steve Fordyce).

Yellow-crowned Night-Heron – *Dauphin*: At least 8 fledglings observed in Bellevue neighborhood colony 6/29 (Julie Moffitt), and one along the Swatara Creek near Hummel Park in Hummelstown 7/5; *Chester*: An adult at Chadds Ford 6/19 (Larry Lewis) and 7/1 (Brian Byrnes); *Lancaster*: A juv. was on Conestoga River 7/17 (Tom Amico, Chuck Chalfant).

Mississippi Kite* – *Berks*: A sub-adult was seen flying over SGL 106 on 6/10 (Tom Clauser, *no doc*); *Lancaster*: Two seen flying over the Susquehanna R. just south of Three Mile Island near the Lancaster county line on 7/4 (Dick Cleary, *no doc*).

Northern Goshawk – *Carbon*: Nest with 2 young and imm. female observed on 6/21 and 6/23 in Hickory Run State Park (Megan Taylor, atlas); *Clarion*: Nest near Gravel Lick along the Clarion River 6/4 was later predated; *Luzerne*: Nest with young 6/13 (Rob Nietz, atlas).

Merlin: *McKean*: One was observed in Bradford 6/13 (John Fedak, listserv).

Glossy Ibis – *Chester*: Found again in Landenburg with single birds reported 6/4 (Kevin Fryberger) and 7/10 (Andrew Leidig).

Common Moorhen – *Bucks*: Continued at the Penn Warner Tract to at least 6/6 (Devich Farbotnik); *Crawford*: A new location for a breeding pair was found 6/14 on a

- pond across the road from the old PPG plant south of Geneva (Ron F. Leberman, Robert C. Leberman), 4 were noted there 6/18 and 6/21, one adult and 2 young on 7/4. *Dauphin*: Reported at Tobias Lake near Halifax 6/12 (Jenni & Barry Horton).
- American Coot** – *Washington*: one spent another summer at the AMD Pond on Hahn Road in North Strabane Twp.; *Lehigh*: At Dorney Landfill through at least 6/6 (Bill Weber).
- Sandhill Crane** – *Bradford*: Two adults 6/24 with an imm. were in a hayfield near Hollenbach (Trudy Gerlach, Randy Walker), and 7/20 in the Wyalusing vicinity (LouAnn Kilmer, Mike Kilmer); *Crawford*: Six at Hartstown Marsh 6/29 (Mike Fialkovich) and 2 in a field on Brooks Road 7/25; *Lebanon*: Near adult at Lake Duffy on 6/15 (Anne Annibaldi), seen almost daily until 6/30 and 5 times in July; *Somerset*: A pair at BC 6/15 continued through the period with no obvious signs of nesting (Jeff, Chris, and Laurreta Payne); *Sullivan*: Confirmed nesting (Rob McGraw).
- Black-necked Stilt*** – *Lancaster*: Two at Susquehanna R., Conejohela Flats 6/10 (Chuck Chalfant, m.ob., *doc submitted*).
- American Avocet** – *Crawford*: An adult at Pymatuning Goose Management Area 7/17 (Mark Vass).
- Willet** – *Allegheny*: One at Imperial 7/23-26 (Dave Wilton, Shannon Thompson); *Erie*: At Gull Point on Presque Isle State Park 7/16 (Jerry McWilliams), and 4 there 7/22 (Tim Ludwick).
- Upland Sandpiper** – *Butler*: Twelve observed in Marion Twp. 6/13 (Gene Wilhelm); *Clarion*: Pair seen several dates from 6/6-7/3 at Mount Airy; *Crawford*: One or 2 at Pymatuning Goose Management Area 6/4-30 (Mike Fialkovich, Chris Heckel); *Erie*: North East Twp. 7/25 (Tom Wasilewski); *Somerset*: Three individuals observed on Cooney Bros. strip mine in Gallitzin State Forest 6/22 (Robert Criswell, Atlas).
- Hudsonian Godwit** – *Lancaster*: 7/29 at the Conejohela Flats (Chuck Chalfant, Bob Schutsky).
- Whimbrel** – *Erie*: Gull Point at Presque Isle State Park 7/31 (Jerry McWilliams).
- Long-billed Curlew*** – *Erie*: Observed circling over the lake off Beach 11 at Presque Isle 7/26 (James Hill, III, *doc submitted*). If accepted by the Pennsylvania Ornithological Records Committee, it would represent the second state record.
- Ruddy Turnstone** – *Bucks*: A flock of 143 heading north passed over Peace Valley Park 6/1 (Devich Farbotnik).
- Sanderling** – *Lancaster*: Conejohela Flats 7/29.
- White-rumped Sandpiper** – *Bucks*: Three 6/5 at Penn Warner Tract (Devich Farbotnik); *Crawford*: Seen at the Fish Hatchery 6/15 (Luke Musher, Anthony Bledsoe); *Washington*: One in Bentleyville 6/2 (Andy Berchin).
- Dunlin** – *Lancaster*: Conejohela Flats 6/5.
- Short-billed Dowitcher** – *Crawford*: Up to 5 were located at Pymatuning Goose Management Area 7/17-7/24 (Mark Vass, Craig Holt); *Lancaster*: One at the Conejohela Flats 7/15.
- Wilson's Snipe** – *Allegheny*: A surprise at Imperial 7/2 (Mark Vass); *Crawford*: A pair found at Pymatuning Goose Management Area 7/16-18 (m.ob.).
- Glaucous Gull** – *Bucks*: One at Penn Warner Tract 6/12 provided a new spring late date, assuming it was actually still going north (Devich Farbotnik); *Erie*: Gull Point at Presque Isle State Park 6/24 (Julie Dell).
- Common Tern** – *Allegheny*: one late bird flew past Dashiels Dam on the Ohio River 6/24 (Mike Fialkovich).
- Arctic Tern*** – *Lancaster*: Two or 3 still being seen from the "Rocks" on the Susquehanna River just south of Columbia 6/2 (Amy Davis, Jeffrey Davis, Drew Weber, *no doc*).
- Least Tern** – *Lancaster*: One-day wonder at the Conejohela Flats 6/7 (Bob Schutsky, Eric Witmer, m.ob.).
- Short-eared Owl** – *Clearfield*: Single, vocal individual seen several times at a reclaimed strip site at LaJose (Dave Gobert, John Salvetti).
- Chuck-will's-widow*** – *Bucks*: Bird found in May at Penn Warner Tract continued to at least 6/6 (Devich Farbotnik, *no doc*).
- Rufous Hummingbird** – *Allegheny*: Reported visiting a feeder in Mount Lebanon 7/5-6 and 7/19 (*fide* Rob Protz).
- Olive-sided Flycatcher** – *Centre*: Seen on the trail by the pond at Scotia Barrens 6/5 (Melissa May *fide* Kenny Frisch), and one was seen on the Moss Hanna Trail off Rattlesnake Pike at Black Moshannon S.P. 6/6 (James Dunn, Scott Lewis).
- Scissor-tailed Flycatcher*** – *Clarion*: Spotted on a wire outside Lucinda 6/21, photo was taken with cell phone (Shawn Collins, from Listserv, *doc pending*).
- Marsh Wren** – *Delaware*: Twenty-four singing at TI 6/9 (Brian Byrnes); *Crawford*: Present all period at Conneaut Marsh and Geneva Marsh.
- Sedge Wren** – *Crawford*: At Erie National Wildlife Refuge along Rt. 173 on 7/19 (Ron Leberman).
- Prothonotary Warbler** – *Beaver*: A pair nested at Montgomery Lock and Dam (Mark Vass), first noted 6/14, and the female was seen feeding young 7/3, the first county breeding record since the 1970s; *Bucks*: one at Bradford Dam 6/8 (Ron French), one at Peace Valley Park continued to 6/6 (August Mirabella); *Crawford*: 6/7 at McMicheal Marsh (Mark Vass), 2 on Philps Road Pymatuning 6/13 (Robert C. Leberman), and one 6/10 Pymatuning Area (Richard Nugent); *Lancaster*: Reported nesting in good numbers at the Conejohela Flats; *York*: One 6/24 at Brunners Is. (Barry and Jenni Horton).
- Swainson's Warbler*** – *Fulton*: heard along Harmon Road 6/14 at 5:13 a.m. (Daniel Snell, *no doc*).
- Summer Tanager*** – *Cumberland*: One reported at SGL230 on 6/10 (Andrew Markel, *no doc*).
- Clay-colored Sparrow** – *Clarion*: Confirmed breeding in a new area of Mount Zion on Stockdill Rd. 6/9 and 6/30 (Andy Markel, Harvey Tomlinson, Mike Weible), increasing to 6+ singing males (m.ob.); *Clearfield*: Singing 6/6 on the reclaimed strip mine on Troy Hill Rd. (Scott Lewis, James Dunn, Atlas).
- White-crowned Sparrow** – *Erie*: Adult at Presque Isle State Park on the unusual date of 6/29 (Jim Flynn).
- White-winged Crossbill** – *Berks*: The last reported as a flyover in District Twp. 6/24 (Rudy Keller); *Lehigh*: At least 4 very vocal flying from a small stand of Norway spruce on SGL205 in Lowhill Twp. 6/12 (Bill Etter); *Northampton*: At least 5 still around at Nazareth Boro Park 6/5; *Tioga*: Approximately 35 on 6/14 during BBS route (Ben Israel, listserv).

PHOTOGRAPHIC HIGHLIGHTS



Goose sp. Interesting was this bird, paired with a Canada Goose and one parent of the hatchling in tow, which appeared much like a blue goose but with a medium brown back like a Canada. This suggests hybrid origin of the adult between a Canada Goose and a (probably) escaped Snow Goose. Photographed at Lake Wilhelm, Mercer, 1 June 2009. (Scott Kinzey)



Yellow-crowned Night-Heron (*Nyctanassa violacea*). Adult at Chadd's Ford, Delaware, 21 June 2009. (Sharon Pulcinella)



Merlin (*Falco columbarius*). This recently fledged Merlin was photographed at Promised Land State Park, Pike, 17 July 2009. This species continues an unexpected expansion into Pennsylvania as a breeder. (Rick Wiltraut)



Cattle Egret (*Bubulcus ibis*). This bird was one of two at Topton, Berks, 12 June 2009, the county's first since 2004. (Steve Fordyce)



Peregrine Falcon (*Falco peregrinus*). McElhatten, *Clinton*, 4 June 2009. Nesting on the underside of a bridge over the Susquehanna River, this pair is thought to be the first to nest in *Clinton* in nearly 60 years. (Wayne Laubscher)



Willet (*Catoptrophorus semipalmatus*). This worn adult at Imperial, *Allegheny*, was the county's fourth, amazingly all since 2004. It was also the 30th shorebird species to appear in the Imperial area. It stayed from 23 to 27 July 2009 (here 25 July). (Geoff Malosh)



Peregrine Falcon (*Falco peregrinus*). Nesting on the Scudder Falls Bridge on the state line between *Bucks* and New Jersey. Photographed in early June, 2009. (Art McMorris/Pennsylvania Game Commission)



Barn Owl (*Tyto alba*). A beautiful portrait made during a banding session at Rehresberg, *Berks*, 29 June 2009. (Rick Wiltraut)



Sandhill Crane (*Grus canadensis*). Another species on the rise in Pennsylvania is Sandhill Crane. This bird spent the entire season at Lake Duffy, *Lebanon*, photographed here 15 June 2009. (Anne Annibaldi)



Barn Owl (*Tyto alba*). It's hard not to anthropomorphize these six young Barn Owls which, despite what must have been their true psychological state during this photo, appear to be enjoying a good laugh. Rehresberg, *Berks*, 29 June 2009. (Rick Wiltraut)



Red-headed Woodpecker (*Melanerpes erythrocephalus*). Quite unexpected was this Red-headed Woodpecker, half of a pair that fledged at least one young near a Bentleyville, *Washington* backyard, providing a rare breeding record for this southwestern Pennsylvania county. Shown here in July, 2009. (*Andy Berchin*)



Eastern Bluebird (*Sialia sialis*), albino. This full albino fledgling was identified to species when it was observed being fed by Eastern Bluebird adults. It was photographed in a *Clarion* backyard 23 July 2009. (*Cindy Stephens*)



Golden-winged Warbler (*Vermivora chrysoptera*). This beautiful female was photographed in Delaware State Forest, *Pike*, 2 June 2009. (*Dustin Welch*)



Eastern Bluebird (*Sialia sialis*). A more traditional-looking juvenile Eastern Bluebird, at East Allen Township, *Northampton* 5 July 2009. (*Dustin Welch*)



Prairie Warbler (*Dendroica discolor*). Piney Tract, *Clarion*, 6 June 2009. (Steve Gosser)



Blue Grosbeak (*Passerina caerulea*). This singing male was photographed at Settlers Ridge Road, *Lehigh*, 6 July 2009. (Dustin Welch)



Prairie Warbler (*Dendroica discolor*). This tailless fledgling, probably not more than two or three days out of the nest, obligingly posed at the Imperial Grasslands, *Allegheny*, 26 July 2009. (Geoff Malosh)



Indigo Bunting (*Passerina cyanea*). Western Pennsylvania birders, unlike their eastern Pennsylvania-based friends (see above), have only one bright blue bunting they can expect to enjoy in the summer months, but a male Indigo Bunting is never a disappointment. Imperial Grasslands, *Allegheny* 8 June 2009. (Geoff Malosh)



Dickcissel (*Spiza americana*). This bird was one of two males that returned to a capped landfill at the Penn Warner Tract, *Bucks* for the second summer in a row, photographed here 27 June 2009. (Devich Farbotnik)



Henslow's Sparrow (*Ammodramus henslowii*). A singing male beautifully photographed at Piney Tract, *Clarion* 6 June 2009. (Steve Gosser)



Orchard Oriole (*Icterus spurius*). Fresh hatchlings on nest at Rote, Clinton 16 July 2009. (Wayne Laubscher)



House Finch (*Carpodacus mexicanus*). A female gathering nesting material in an Allegheny backyard 12 June 2009. The photographer was forced to hang halfway out a window 15 feet above the ground in order to make this image! (Geoff Malosh)



Pine Siskin (*Carduelis pinus*). Following their massive invasion this past winter, the appearance of a few juvenile siskins, such as this one at Phoenixville, Chester 21 June 2009, is not surprising. (Vince Smith)

Answer to Photo Quiz #25

Rick Wiltraut

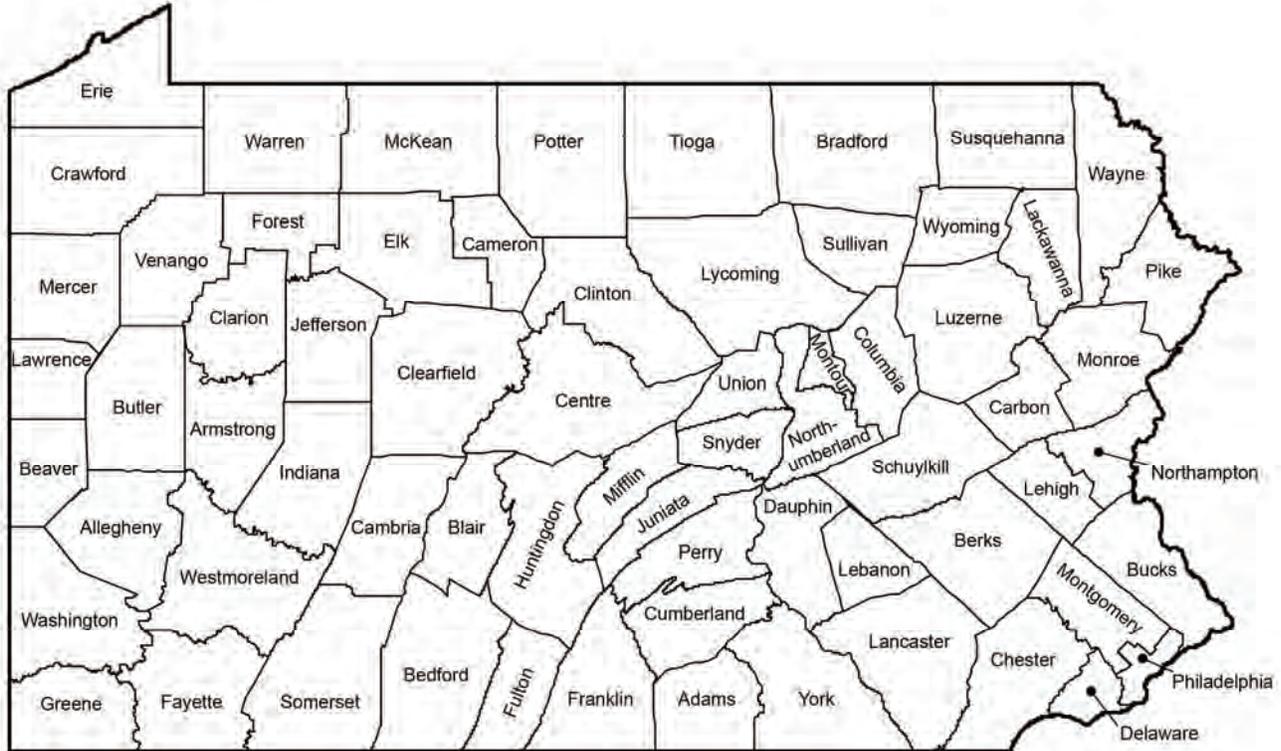
Note the round looking head on this bird suggesting an owl. Also note the proportionately long wings that are whitish underneath and that the body has a buffy appearance. Both Long-eared Owl and Short-eared Owls have rather long wings that are pale underneath, but both species have prominent dark “wrist” marks.

This Barn Owl was photographed exiting a silo during a nest check in Berks County this past summer. Berks County is at the eastern edge of their present range in Pennsylvania. Formerly a fairly common to uncommon resident in the Delaware River basin of southeastern Pennsylvania, the species has been practically extirpated from that area due to habitat loss and other reasons. I believe collisions with vehicles also contributed to their demise. During the 70’s and early 80’s my brother Doug often brought me road-killed Barn Owls he found along Route 22 in Lehigh and Berks counties. During this period I encountered Barn Owls in the Lehigh Valley on many occasions, including several during the winter roosting in evergreens. By far the main reason for their demise in this area was the loss of pasture habitat where they could find their favorite prey, the Meadow Vole (*Microtus pennsylvanicus*). In addition, the loss of nesting sites (e.g. old barns, silos) contributed to their demise. The last stronghold of Barn Owls in Pennsylvania is on hay farms and other grassland habitats in the Susquehanna River basin of south-central Pennsylvania.



Land preservation, grassland enhancement projects, and nesting boxes placed in suitable habitat will greatly benefit this species. If you would like to help with our efforts to the bring the Barn Owl back into the Delaware River basin of Pennsylvania, contact the Lehigh Valley Greenways Grasslands Partnership at (610) 746-2810 or email rwiltraut@state.pa.us.

Local Notes – June to July 2009



ABBREVIATIONS

B.B.S.	Breeding Bird Survey	max	maximum	R.B.A.	Rare Bird Alert
C.A.	Conservation Area	min	minimum	Res.	Reservoir
C.B.C.	Christmas Bird Count	m. ob.	many observers	Rte.	Route
C.P.	County Park	Mt. (Mts.)	Mount/Mountain/Mountains	S.F.	State Forest
Cr.	Creek	N.A.	Nature Area or Natural Area	SGL	State Game Land
et al.	and others	N.F.	National Forest	S.P.	State Park
Ft.	Fort	N.M.	National Monument	S.T.P.	Sewage Treatment Plant
G.C.	Golf Course	N.P.	National Park	subad(s).	subadult(s)
G.P.	Game Preserve	N.W.R.	National Wildlife Refuge	Twp.	Township
Hwy.	Highway	PAMC	Pennsylvania Migration Count	vr.	voice recording
imm(s).	immature(s)	ph.	Photographed	vt.	videotape
Jct.	Junction	Pt.	Point	W.A.	Wildlife Area
juv(s).	juvénal [plumage]; juvenile(s)	R.	River	W.M.A.	Wildlife Management Area
L.	Lake	R.A.	Recreational Area	W.R.S.	Winter Raptor Survey

Adams County

An immature **Little Blue Heron** was at the SGL249 restored wetland along Gun Club Rd. 7/30 (DR). A **Black-crowned Night-Heron** was found 6/15 during a walk along a creek in Fairfield (MOB)

A **Blue Grosbeak**, quite uncommon in the county, was singing from a perch on a wire on Hostetter Rd. 6/13 (PJR). Also singing from a perch on a wire was a **Dickcissel** found 6/14 along Sells Station Rd. (RH)

Observers: **Peter J. Robinson, P. O. Box 482, Hanover, PA 17331, (717) 542-8341, pabirder@hotmail.com**, Rob Hilton, Bob Keener, Mike O'Brien (MOB), Dan Richards.

Allegheny County

Locations: Dashields Dam on the Ohio River (DASH), Imperial (IMP).

A few out of season species are the highlights from the summer season which normally consists of reports of typical breeding species.

A **Common Loon** continued from last season at DASH at least up

to 6/19 (MV).

Nesting **Great Blue Herons** are an expected sight at the known rookeries in the county. Unusual for this colonial nesting species was a single nesting pair in Allegheny Cemetery in Lawrenceville 6/10 (AB, CB), which is the only known isolated pair in the county. A **Great Egret** at North Park 6/9 was probably a late or lingering migrant (PL, SL). Another unusual member of the heron family present at the same location were 2 **Black-crowned Night-Herons** (an adult and juvenile) 6/5 (BVN). In June 2006 an adult was discovered at this park which is interesting because this species is unknown to breed anywhere in western Pennsylvania and is rarely detected during migration. A juvenile continued 7/11-19 (MV, PL, SL, DW, ST).

An immature **Peregrine Falcon** was a surprise visitor to a backyard in Pine Twp. 7/19 (PL, SL). The observers were alerted to its presence by an alarmed family of **Wild Turkeys**. An **Osprey** at DASH 6/10 (MV) was probably one from the breeding site nearby in *Beaver* and another was at Boyce Mayview Park 8/15 (RT). A **Pied-billed Grebe** was an unusual visitor to IMP 7/25 (MV) where it remained up to 7/29 (MV, SC, PJ). **Double-crested Cormorants** are usually around rivers in *Allegheny* during the summer. Two were present at DASH 6/1 with one remaining 6/27 (MV). One on a pond in Findlay Twp. 7/18 was unexpected and was joined by another 7/28 (MV) and were probably

roaming further away from the rivers than expected.

Two late spring migrant **Semipalmated Sandpipers** lingered at IMP 6/2 (MV). A **Wilson's Snipe** was a surprise at IMP 7/2 (MV). Breeding (or even flight displays) has never been confirmed at this location, or anywhere in the county. Interestingly, there is another summer record from 30 June 1997.

The first migrant shorebirds of the fall were at IMP 7/12 including a **Lesser Yellowlegs** and 3 **Least Sandpipers** (GM). A **Greater Yellowlegs** was there 7/14 (MV). Both species of yellowlegs continued through most of July. A **Solitary Sandpiper** was at North Park 7/16 (MV); the first at IMP was noted 7/18 (MV). Up to 4 were present at IMP through July. Two were at Barati's Ponds in Jefferson Borough 7/19 (SSn). A **Semipalmated Sandpiper** was present at IMP 7/20-27 (MV, DW, ST, MF). **Least Sandpipers** were present through July with a high of 6 on 7/20 (MV, et al.).

A **Willet** was a surprising find at IMP 7/23 (DW, ST). Normally arriving during storms, this bird was discovered during a calm summer evening and was the first fall migrant noted in the county (all other known records are from spring). Another unusual aspect of its visit was the length of its stay. All other birds were present for a day, but this bird stayed to 7/27 (m.ob.). On the heels of this bird, another was noted calling as it flew over Beechwood Farms Nature Reserve in Fox Chapel 7/27 (BSh). It was headed in the direction of the Allegheny River; the site of other records in Allegheny. These visitors provided the fourth and fifth records for the county.

Herring Gull breeding observations 6/27 include a juvenile at DASH and nearby Emsworth, and 3 juveniles at the Highland Park Bridge on the Allegheny River where 74 birds were counted (MV).

A **Caspian Tern** and a **Common Tern** flew past DASH at the late date of 6/24 (MV). Three **Forster's Terns** were seen just upriver at Emsworth 6/27 (MV). Interestingly, a Caspian Tern was seen in the same area 6/23/2003. Whether these birds are late migrants or wanderers remains a mystery.

One or two **Whip-poor-wills** were heard at SGL 203 in Marshall Twp. 6/20 (MF, BM). **Common Nighthawk** reports include 2 in Springdale 6/2 (DH), one in Squirrel Hill 6/9 (JS, SS), 15 in Tarentum 6/20 (DH), one in Sewickley 6/21 (MV), one in Oakmont 7/13 (MF), and 22 at the same location in Tarentum as above on 7/28 (DH). The gathering of birds in Tarentum outside of migration seemed unusual.

A **Rufous Hummingbird** was reported visiting a feeder in Mount Lebanon 7/5-6 and 7/19 (*fide* RP). Although this seems early, last year a bird started visiting a feeder in Crafton in Aug. **Fish Crows** were heard calling during the first week of July in Blackridge (TS, JSh). **Common Ravens** were confirmed breeding again this year. Two adults and three juveniles were observed daily in July at Wood's Run along the Ohio River a few miles downstream from Pittsburgh (ABe). Single birds were seen in the Lawrenceville area 7/8 and 16 (PB).

A **Purple Martin** at IMP 7/12 was interesting because there are no known colonies anywhere near the site (GM). A **Veery** was found at Pine Township 6/19 (PL, SL), which is near North Park, a known breeding location.

An **Ovenbird** was singing at SGL 203 in Marshall Twp. 6/20 (MF, BM). This species is a local breeder in the county and this is one of the sites to find them during the breeding season. A **Blue-winged Warbler**, a **Hooded Warbler**, and two **Kentucky Warblers** were also present at the gamelands that day (MF, BM). Two **Yellow Warblers** were still at IMP 7/27 (SC).

The IMP area continues to be developed, although it's still in the early stages. As of this writing two warehouses are in the process of construction near the locally famous Bald Knob. There is still ample habitat supporting grassland sparrows and they continue to breed at the site including **Vesper Sparrow**, **Savannah Sparrow**, **Grasshopper Sparrow**, and **Henslow's Sparrow**. Unusual was a singing **White-throated Sparrow** at West Mifflin Park 7/1 (JV).

Two **Purple Finches** were present in Pine Twp. in June (PL, SL). A male continued at that location 7/8 and 7/31 (PL, SL). An adult **Pine Siskin** was observed feeding a begging juvenile in Pine Twp. 6/1 (PL, SL). At least two birds continued at this location up to 6/11. One visited a feeder in Leetsdale 6/23-24 (BS), two were in the West End 7/20 and one 7/21 (CM, FM).

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Protz, Kate St. John (KSJ), Judy Schryer (JSh), Tony Schryer, Brian Shema (BSh), Sam Sinderson (SSn), Becky Smith, Jack Solomon, Sue Solomon, Chuck Tague, Amy Taracido, Shannon Thompson, Jim Valimont, Bob VanNewkirk (BVN), Mark Vass, Dave Wilton.

Armstrong County

Locations: Crooked Creek Park (CC), Keystone Reservoir (KR), Kittanning (KT), Margaret (MG), Rimer (RM), Sherrett (SR).

Eight young **Common Mergansers** trailed behind a hen along Plum Creek near Elderton 6/3 (MH); this is the first time they have been spotted at this location. Three Common Mergansers flying overhead at a stop on the KT BBS 6/7 (MH, RH) were a welcome surprise. Adult **Bald Eagles** were sighted 6/5 (MH, JV, MVT) at CC and 6/11 (BF, MH) near Templeton. A **Cooper's Hawk** and 3 **Broad-winged Hawks**, and 3 **Red-tailed Hawks** were all at KR 6/13 (KB).

The MG BBS 6/6 (MH, RH) and the KT BBS 6/7 (MH, RH) each yielded only 4 singing **Acadian Flycatchers**. An **Alder Flycatcher** on the KT route 6/7 (MH, RH) was a good find.

Blue-headed Vireos were found 6/4 (BF, MH) across the river from RM and 6/11 (BF, MH) near RM. **Yellow-throated Vireo** records, among many, included an individual across the river from RM 6/4 (BF, MH), one at CC 6/5 (MH, JV, MVT), and one at KR 6/13 (KB). One **Warbling Vireo** was spotted at Templeton 6/11 (BF, MH). By 7/16 (DS) the **Purple Martin** colony near Elderton contained 40 pairs that had produced 163 young, up significantly from last year. One gourd on 6/24 (DS) contained 7 young. Many birds were saved by the feeding of scrambled eggs 7/2 (DS) while die-offs were occurring elsewhere across the state.

A **Common Raven** was sighted near Worthington 6/19 (MH, RH). **Northern Rough-winged Swallows** were on nest near SR 6/4 (BF, MH). Four **Cliff Swallows** were listed at KR 6/13 (KB). A **Veery** was singing near KT 6/7 (MH, RH) and 2 **Hermit Thrushes** were singing near SR 6/4 (BF, MH). The MG BBS route yielded 23 **Wood Thrushes** 6/6 (MH, RH); 12 was a good count at KR 6/13 (KB). A **Brown Thrasher** was carrying food near RM 6/11 (BF, MH).

Two **Blue-winged Warblers** were found near SR 6/4 (BF, MH) and at CC 6/5 (MH, JV, MVT), and the MG BBS yielded 4 on 6/6 (MH, RH); the RM area also harbored 4 on 6/11 (BF, MH). A **Northern Parula** was singing 6/11 (BF, MH) near RM. **Yellow Warbler** BBS counts included 23 on the MG route 6/6 (MH, RH) and 17 on the KT 6/7 (MH, RH), both down from last year. **Chestnut-sided Warblers** included 3 near SR 6/4 (BF, MH), 2 on the MG BBS 6/6 (MH, RH), and 3 on the KT BBS 6/7 (MH, RH). A **Magnolia Warbler** near SR 6/4 (BF, MH) and a **Yellow-throated Warbler** at RM 6/11 (BF, MH) were the only reports for these species. **Cerulean Warblers** included one across the river from RM 6/4 (BF, MH) and one near Brick Church 6/6 (MH, RH). Among many reports, **Black-and-white Warblers** included 3 near SR 6/4 (BF, MH) and an equal number near RM 6/11 (BF, MH). At least 6 **American Redstarts** were noted near RM 6/4 (BF, MH). An agitated **Louisiana Waterthrush** was noted carrying food across the river from RM 6/4 (BF, MH). The only **Kentucky Warbler** reported was one on the MG BBS 6/6 (MH, RH). June 4 (BF, MH) yielded 10 **Hooded Warblers** and a **Yellow-breasted Chat** near SR, and 5 Hooded Warblers and a chat across the river from RM.

Scarlet Tanagers were seen nest building across the river from RM 6/4 (BF, MH) and carrying food near RM 6/11 (BF, MH). **Savannah Sparrows** included single birds 6/3 (MH) near Elderton and 6/11 (BF, MH) near Widnoon. **Grasshopper Sparrow** reports included 2 across the river from RM 6/4 (MH), 3 on the MG BBS 6/6 (MH, RH), one near Widnoon and another near RM 6/11 (BF, MH). A singing **Henslow's Sparrow** was a good find near SR 6/4 (BF, MH). Three **Orchard Orioles** along the MG BBS were the only ones noted. CC yielded 2 Purple Finches 6/5 (MH, JV, MVT).

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Beaver County

Locations: Ambridge Reservoir (AR), Independence Marsh (IND), Montgomery Lock and Dam (MLD), Raccoon Creek State Park (RCSP).

For the second summer in a row, a **Common Merganser** spent the breeding season on the Beaver R., this time first appearing 6/12 (MV) through at least 7/12 (GM). A **Double-crested Cormorant** at AR 6/14 (MV) was out of place. **Green Herons** were located at MLD, IND, RCSP, and Big Beaver Wetlands, where they are potential breeders at each location.

Following a slow start in the spring, when the nest was believed to be abandoned, the **Osprey** nest at Midland held at least one young by 6/26 (MV). The new nest at Aliquippa similarly hatched at least one young, which was seen 7/11 (MV). The long-standing Potter Twp. nest was also successful again this summer. **Broad-winged Hawks** were found in RCSP in early July (MV, KSJ). The Monaca **Peregrine Falcon** pair fledged one young by 6/12 and another by 6/14 (SG), but the fate of the third chick that was banded at the site last season is unknown.

A **Sora** was a nice find at Big Beaver Wetlands 7/19 (MV). First **Solitary Sandpiper** returned to the county 7/23 when one was spotted at IND (MV). An early **Ring-billed Gull** was in the parking lot of the Chippewa Town Center in Chippewa Twp. 7/17 (MV).

The only **Black-billed Cuckoo** reported this season was one at IND 7/12 (MV). **Yellow-billed Cuckoos** were widespread, however, with observations from five locations throughout the season, including "many" at RCSP 7/13 (KSJ). Two **Common Nighthawks** were over Ambridge 6/22 (MV).

Acadian Flycatcher (7/12, GM) and **Eastern Wood-Pewee** (7/3, MV) were observed feeding young along the MLD access road this season. A **Least Flycatcher** there 7/3 was a bit unusual for the season and location. **White-eyed** and **Yellow-throated Vireos** were visible at MLD throughout Jul as well (MV, GM).

A **Common Raven** was spotted near Ellwood City 6/17 (DK). The **Bank Swallow** colony near MLD was active again this summer (MV) as was the one across the county line in *Lawrence* near Darlington.

A **Veery** was reported from an undisclosed location 6/4 (RN), and another was at MLD 7/3 (MV), a potential new breeding area for the species. **Wood Thrushes** were especially thick at MLD this season, a traditional stronghold and breeding site for the species (GM, et al.). A **Brown Thrasher** at IND 7/12 (MV) was the only report.

Warblers provided the best highlights of the season in *Beaver*. A **Black-throated Green Warbler** was singing at AR 6/14-19, and two males were there 6/26 (MV). Another Black-throated Green was singing at RCSP 7/5-12 (MV). The species is not known to breed in the county but singing males have been noted frequently in the county during recent summers. They were recorded at AR in 2006 and 2007 during Breeding Bird Atlas surveys (GM), and at SGL 285 in 2007 (GM). To these sightings now can be added another AR record, and the first summer record for RCSP. The other warbler highlight was a pair of **Prothonotary Warblers** which nested at MLD (MV). They were first noted 6/14, and the female was seen feeding young 7/3. This was the first breeding record of this species in *Beaver* since the 1970s. MLD actually still proved to be quite a birdy place this summer, despite recent habitat disturbance. The location held a few **Kentucky Warblers**, **Cerulean Warbler**, a **Black-and-white Warbler** 7/3 (MV), and **Louisiana Waterthrush**. The Black-and-white represented the first mid-summer record at MLD in some time; the species bred at this location many years ago and was recorded there during the first BBA. MLD also continues to be a good spot for **American Redstart** with at least four pairs this year, including one seen feeding young 7/12 (GM). Elsewhere, notable warblers included a **Northern Parula** in RCSP 7/5 (MV), many **Chestnut-sided Warblers** with young at traditional sites on SGL 173 in late Jun (KSJ), a characteristically early **Northern Waterthrush** at IND 7/23 (MV), and, for the second summer in a row, a **Yellow-breasted Chat** at a somewhat unexpected location in Midland, recorded this year on 7/11 (MV).

Scarlet Tanagers did well this year at both SGL173 (KSJ) and MLD (m.ob.). **Grasshopper** and **Henslow's Sparrows** were back at SGL285 this year (MV, GM). **Rose-breasted Grosbeaks** were in evidence in July at SGL 173 (KSJ), IND (MV), and MLD (GM).

Bobolink was reported from SGL 285 on 6/28 (KSJ). **Orchard Orioles** bred successfully at MLD (MV, GM), where 5 was the top count of **Baltimore Orioles** for the year (7/3, MV). Three **Purple Finches** at IND 7/2 (MV) was an intriguing sighting. No **White-winged Crossbills** persisted past May, but **Pine Siskin** was reported in Daugherty Twp. 6/6 including a possible juvenile, and in North Sewickley Twp. 6/18 (DK).

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Bedford County

No Report.

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Berks County

Locations: Blue Marsh Lake (BML), French Creek State Park (FCSP), Lake Ontelaunee (LO).

June and July temperatures averaged among the coolest on record. Rainfall was well above average in June and somewhat above average in July.

A few **Snow Geese** lingered till the end of June (KG, RK, MS). Two male **Ring-necked Ducks** lingered from spring, one till 6/14 at Peters Creek, LO (MS) and the other till 7/4 at Gotwals pond, Oley (RK). A **Lesser Scaup** was at Grace Mine pond, Morgantown 6/30 (FH). A female **Red-breasted Merganser** was at LO 6/5 (MW). All of these ducks have previously been recorded in summer. Two female **Common Mergansers** were in the Maiden Cr. below LO 6/16-20, but no ducklings were seen (RK, MW). **Ruffed Grouse** hens and chicks were seen at SGL 106 near Eckville 7/14 (RK) and SGL 110 7/19 (KG), both locations on the Kittatinny Ridge, probably the last grouse refuge in Berks. A late brood of about 10 recently hatched Wild Turkeys was in Pike Twp. 7/25 (RK).

Three juv. **Snowy Egrets** were seen at close range along the Schuylkill River during a kayaking trip 7/26 (SF). This has always been a rare heron in *Berks*, with long intervals between sightings. The most recent previous records are from 2003 and 1999. Two **Cattle Egrets** (last reported in 2004) were photographed in a rain pool in a Topton field 6/12 (SF). Up to 12 **Black-crowned Night-Herons**, presumably from the rookery near Reading, could be seen fishing at the base of the LO dam spillway all period (RK, MS, MW). In June, first-summer birds predominated, with breeding adults increasing later. The first juvs. were there 7/24 (RK). Birds were also seen at BML (JS).

Each of two nests of **Black Vulture** found on the Kittatinny Ridge fledged two young (RB). An **Osprey** was fishing at LO 6/11, 24 (RK, MW). A sub-adult **Mississippi Kite** was seen flying over SGL 106 on 6/10 (TC). Two juvenile **Bald Eagles** were making heavy, clumsy flights in the presence of one of their presumed parents at LO in late July (RK, MW). A **Sharp-shinned Hawk** pair that returned to nest in a Norway spruce grove in District Twp. fledged three young, which dispersed 8/7 (RK). At least three of the four male chicks produced by Reading's **Peregrine Falcon** pair were conspicuous and noisy in downtown Reading in late July. They forced down a juvenile **Red-tailed Hawk** on Court St. 7/30 (fide BU).

The only non-breeding shorebird reported in this high water year was **Solitary Sandpiper** at Shartlesville 6/1 and 7/31 (MW). Six **Caspian Terns** at BML 7/11 (JS) and five at LO 7/12 (MW) were associated with rain. A **Barn Owl** box in Rehrersburg fledged six young and a box in a silo near Daniel Boone Homestead fledged five young (RB). All these owl chicks were banded by PGC's Dan Mummert 6/29. **Red-headed Woodpeckers** were at nesting locations near Bowers (fide PS), Shoemakersville (MW), and in Marion Twp. (RK), but the long occupied site on Kauffman Rd., Oley Twp. was vacant. Two **Alder Flycatchers** (not a recent breeder in *Berks*) sang in a brushy clearcut at SGL 106 5/22-7/30 (TC, RK). Breeding was not confirmed, but that is a long time for an unmated male to defend a territory. **Willow Flycatchers** were widespread, but some birders remarked that they were late in coming to their territories. **Blue-headed Vireo** was found at SGL 110, Northkill Gap 6/21 and 7/4 (KG). The Kittatinny is their only breeding area in *Berks*. It isn't surprising that the second breeding bird atlas shows a consolidation of the breeding range of **Fish Crow** in southeastern Pennsylvania that was shown in the first atlas. These birds are now ubiquitous in summer. Two **Common Ravens** were heard gronking over the Pagoda in Reading 7/30 (BU). Horned Larks were heard singing in most of the major farming areas of *Berks* during CREP surveys in June (RK). The new **Bank Swallow** colony at the Haines and Kibblehouse quarry on Hay Creek south of Birdsboro had 20 burrows 6/6 (KL). (See spring 2009 report for details.) At their colony

on the LO dam, **Cliff Swallows** were hunted by a predatory **Common Grackle** 6/8 and by an **American Kestrel** 6/16 (MW). A Winter Wren at Hay Creek 6/6 (KL) was late.

A male **Brewster's Warbler** (which at first look resembled a Golden-winged Warbler in most plumage details) was feeding a fledgling in the plumage of a first fall male Brewster's Warbler at SGL 106 on 7/14 (RK). The adult was also seen 7/18 (TC). This is the first confirmed breeding record of this hybrid in Berks. **Black-throated Blue Warbler** apparently did not nest at SGL 110 at the southeastern edge of its range in Pennsylvania this year (KG), but the similarly edge-of-range **Black-throated Green Warbler** was found at several places on the ridge in June and July (TC, KG). Late male **Blackburnian Warblers** were singing in hemlocks at North Lookout, Hawk Mnt Sanctuary 6/6 (BM) and in VA pines at SGL 110, Stony Creek 5/27-6/8 (TC). **Cerulean Warbler** was again on territory at Hay Creek 6/6 (KL) and on the Schuylkill River south of Port Clinton 7/4 (KG). The LO **Prothonotary Warbler** was not reported after May. One or two **Kentucky Warblers** were singing as usual at SGL 106 in June and July (TC, RK).

Vesper Sparrow, here annually but seldom reported, was feeding young in Maxatawny Twp. 6/10 (RK). **Savannah** and **Grasshopper Sparrows** were singing in typical habitat near Lyons, Hamburg, Centerport and Mohrsville in June (SF, RK, MW). **Eastern Meadowlarks** were at scattered places in Marion, Oley, Centre and Amity Twps. and at BML (SF, RK, JS). The last reported **White-winged Crossbill** of the 2008-09 irruption in Berks was heard as a flyover in District Twp. 6/24 (RK). A **Pine Siskin** was still at a Henningsville feeder 6/7 (PS). Suspicions of breeding were aroused but not confirmed by the sudden appearance of a flock of seven Pine Siskins, including some birds in very fresh, bright plumage, at a feeder near Knauers 6/5. The group left, and the last sighting there was of a single siskin 7/24 (MS).

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Blair County

No Compiler.

Bradford County

Locations: Peck Hill (PEH), Susquehanna River (SUR), Trudy Gerlach farm near New Era (TNE), Wysox Boat Access (WBA).

The summer here was very wet and cool, for the most part. The Susquehanna River was quite high much of the time, resulting in the absence of many birds that frequent the river and river edges. Also, there were considerably fewer sightings reported, now that the Pennsylvania Breeding Bird Atlas is essentially at an end.

A **Northern Bobwhite** was heard 7/7 calling (and calling for a number of days previously) at a farm near Rienze (JA). A **Great Egret** was seen on 6/6 at the Ulster Bridge (DA, NA). As has been the case for the past few years, **Green Herons** were most probably breeding at TNE, although a nest was not located: on 6/9 one was giving its squawking call behind a beaver pond, on 6/25 one was calling near an adjacent beaver pond, and on 7/14 there were 3 at one of the ponds, all at TNE (TG); 2 were reported on 7/5 at PEH (AV, GV).

This summer a fair number of **Osprey** sightings occurred in the county, hinting that the species might be nesting here, but so far no nest has been reported. One was seen on 7/12 near the Towanda Creek on Woodside Rd. (BF, MF); one was also sighted on 7/14 on the SUR at Echo Beech Rd (DN, KN); and on 7/15 5 flying Osprey were seen from a boat on SUR from Standing Stone to the confluence of the Chemung River and SUR (TD).

Bald Eagles are becoming almost commonplace in the county: on 6/29 4 adult and 2 juvenile eagles were at the WBA on the SUR (SC, TM); on 7/14 one adult and one immature were over the SUR at Echo Beech Rd (DN, KN); on 7/15 four were seen flying from a boat on the SUR from Standing Stone to the confluence of Chemung River and the SUR (TD), and on 7/20 an amazing total of 16 eagles (both mature and juvenile) were observed on the SUR from the Terrytown boat ramp downstream about three miles during a fishing expedition (PM).

Six pairs of **American Kestrels** were seen 7/29 on a 4 mile section of SR 4003 near Ulster (RG). **Sandhill Cranes** are expanding into the county: on 6/24 2 adults with an immature were in a hayfield near Hollenbach (TG, RW), and on 7/20, 2 adults with an immature were near a pond in the Wyalusing vicinity (LK, MK).

On 6/3 an **Acadian Flycatcher** was singing in the morning, and then singing its twilight song in the evening in cool woods near a beaver pond. It was singing in this same location also on 6/9, 6/19, 6/21-23 and 6/25. It appeared for the first time last year in this location, at least five miles from the nearest location it had previously been found in the county. This is the first time an Acadian Flycatcher has been reported in the county not close to a mountain stream. On 7/16 one was singing in new location near another beaver pond about 1/2 mile from the location mentioned above, all at TNE (TG).

On 7/27 a notably large number of **Tree Swallows** were seen: about 300 were on a power line and bare trees between Ackla's and an unnamed pond at Marshiew (TG). A nice colony of 50-75 Bank Swallows was found 6/29 on the west side of the SUR about seven and a half miles north of WBA (SC, TM). A **Louisiana Waterthrush** was heard singing 6/8 in a new location, along Crane Swamp Creek near Hollenbach (TG). Usually observed in the higher mountainous elevations of the county, a **Canada Warbler** was observed on 6/29 along the SUR near Wysox (SC, TM). Infrequently reported, a male **Purple Finch** was at PEH 6/2 (AV, GV).

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Bucks County

Locations: Churchville Park (CVP), Maple Knoll Farms, Buckingham (MKF), Morrisville (MVL), Nockamixon State Park (NSP), Peace Valley Park (PVP), The Penn Warner Tract (PWT), Upper Makefield Township (UMT).

A total of 120 species was reported on the breeding bird chart submitted with this report. Of these, 82 were confirmed, 27 were tagged as probable, and 11 were indicated as possible. Weather was probably the most noteworthy item to report for the season. Temperatures averaged about 2.5 °F below normal for both months. Rainfall was high both months, with a total of almost five inches above normal, but rainfall varied as expected for this season. Some observers thought the wet cool weather did cause some nesting failures, as evidenced by direct observation of nests or lack of post breeding family groups. Shorebirds were barely noticed due to the high water levels at lakes.

As usual, historical references are from *Birds of Bucks County* by Ken Kitson (1998), and subsequent updates recorded in this journal. Weather statistics are from NOAA at Trenton, New Jersey. All reports from PWT are from Devich Farbotnik unless otherwise noted.

Again this year, out of season waterfowl were reported. Continuing from late May, 4 **Snow Geese** including 2 immature birds continued at NSP (DFa). A third adult joined them 6/9 (DFa), and by 6/22 one immature vanished (DFa). The four remaining birds stayed through Jul as they molted. Although the bird that vanished was suspected of hatching this year, expert opinions varied, but both young were probably in their second year. Due to their apparent tameness and fidelity to the site, it is believed these are an escaped or released group. Another **Snow Goose** was at MVL 7/15 (DL). An **American Black Duck** was at Bristol 6/6, providing an annual but rare breeding season report (DFa). A late male **Bufflehead** was at Giving Pond 6/10 (EB). A late **Ruddy Duck** was at US Steel, Bristol 6/13 (DFa). Two **Common Loons** in non-breeding plumage were noted at PWT 6/12-13, and another was at Giving Pond 6/12-26 (EB, AM, EN).

Up to 2 **Least Bitterns** were heard at Quakertown Swamp 6/9-11 (DFa), probably indicating breeding there. One was at PWT 6/11. **Great Egrets** were more common than usual in Jun, with a total of 7 from four sites (BK, VD, HD, DFa). One of these was unusual for continuing from May and remaining through the breeding season at CVP (m. ob.). The highest single site count for Jul was 14 at Rohm and Haas, Bristol 7/31 (DFa). A **Snowy Egret** at Rohm and Haas 7/31 was the only report (DFa). An immature **Little Blue Heron** was at Bradford Dam 7/11 (GJ),

one was at LaSalle College, Newtown 7/16 (BK), and 3 were at Core Creek Park starting 7/27(BK). An adult **Black-crowned Night-Heron** was at CVP throughout the season (MC, BK, GJ, MF). A heard only bird was a fly-by at NSP 6/19 (DFa). One immature bird stopped at PVP 7/11-13 (HM, HE).

Black Vulture was confirmed breeding in an unused barn in Buckingham Twp. (RS, HS). One young was observed. **Turkey Vulture** nested again this year under the same fallen tree at MKF (RS). The Riegelsville **Osprey** nest had 3 young ones (JP). A replacement buoy in the Delaware River at Bristol apparently was attractive to **Ospreys** that were building a nest on the late date of 7/31 (DFa). The New Britain Twp. **Bald Eagle** nest apparently is one of only five or fewer nests in the state to use a man made structure (DG). Experience indicates these nests are often abandoned (DG), but 3 young fledged this year (RFo, JMr), including the Philadelphia Zoo hatched bird that was placed there. **Sharp-shinned Hawk** is rarely reported in breeding season each year, so a report of 2 at Solebury Twp. 6/11 is noteworthy (DFa). **American Kestrels** fledged 2 or 3 young at a box in New Britain Twp. (AM). Well-managed boxes can help this species.

Two **Virginia Rails** were noted at Buckingham Wetlands 6/2 for the first known occurrence there (RH, DFa). A **Sora** was heard at Quakertown Swamp 6/9 (DFa). Surprising was a well-described **Sora** at PVP 7/6 (TV), where it is not known to breed. The 2 **Common Moorhens** present in spring at PWT continued to at least 6/6, but their impoundment was drained causing them to leave. Shorebirds were hardly noticed, probably due to the lack of mud at their normal stopover locations. Seven northbound **Semipalmated Plovers** continued at PWT until at least 6/4. A **Lesser Yellowlegs** at Bradford Dam 7/22 (GJ) was the first southbound report. A flock of 143 **Ruddy Turnstones** heading north passed over PVP 6/1 (DFa). A flock of 38 **Semipalmated Sandpipers** visited the low tide mud near Mud Island 7/31, provided the first fall report (DFa). The last northbound **Least Sandpiper** was at PWT 6/5, and 2 at Quakertown 7/16 were the first southbound birds noted (DFa). Three **White-rumped Sandpipers** 6/5 at PWT were the last spring migrants.

An adult **Ring-billed Gull** at PVP 7/8 (AM) was the first probable return from its breeding grounds. A few non-breeding birds remain all summer at the PWT. A late spring or non-migrating **Iceland Gull** was at MVL on the Delaware River 6/6-6/12 (DFa). A few **Lesser Black-backed Gulls** were at PWT in Jun as usual and probably remained all season. A **Glaucous Gull** at PWT 6/12 provided a new spring late date, assuming it was actually still going north. A **Caspian Tern** at NSP 7/10 (AM, JMi) was the first southbound migrant, and a nice group of 7 stopped to fish at PVP 7/25 (JMi, AM).

Both **Yellow-billed Cuckoo** and **Black-billed Cuckoo** were felt to be very scarce after the first week in Jun. **Red-headed Woodpecker** continued at Haycock Twp. outside SGL 157 to at least 6/4 (DFa). A briefly seen fly-by at Solebury Twp. 6/9 was believed to be this species (DS). The **Barred Owl** previously reported in Doylestown Twp. continued through the season (MH). The **Pileated Woodpecker** pair at PVP fledged 2 young about the third week of Jun (TK, AM, JMi). The last spring migrant **Common Nighthawk** was at Nockamixon Twp. 6/1 (HM). The **Chuck-will's-widow** found in May at PWT, continued to at least 6/6 (No Doc.). The observer phoned me so I could hear the bird over the phone for confirmation. A very rarely reported **Whip-poor-will** was seen at MVL on the surprisingly late date of 6/3 (DL). The **Common Raven** reports continued in unprecedented frequency. Two were at New Hope 6/12 (BH). One flew by calling at PVP 7/4 (AM, JMi, TK), the first reported there since Oct 1977. More interesting was the late report of 6 together regularly at a quarry near Rushland in the spring (*fide* MS). Presumably the same 6 were noted flying over and calling at nearby MKF 6/15 (RS). They were seen again being harassed by **American Crows** at the quarry 6/21 (RS). It was later learned that these birds were regular visitors all season at a dumpster on private property in Buckingham Twp. near MKF (*fide* RS). The peak number reported by workers there was 8 but could not be confirmed. Whether 6 or 8, this probably was a family group and the highest count so far in the county. The **Purple Martin** colony at UMT was down by 50% this year (JMa). A large **Bank Swallow** colony at PWT of over 50 nests was the only colony reported.

Both **Chestnut-sided Warbler** and **Cerulean Warbler** were not reported again this year in the breeding season. **Yellow-throated Warbler** was not found after early May in its former breeding areas (DFa, AK). It had been rediscovered last year at the far northern end of the county. A **Blackpoll Warbler** 6/6 at CVP (VD) was late but not unexpected on that date. A **Prothonotary Warbler** was heard at

Bradford Dam 6/8 but not later (RFR). The male at PVP continued to at least 6/6 before vanishing (AM). **Louisiana Waterthrush** often sneaks through as it moves south early, but one migrant was spotted at Bradford Dam 7/15 (GJ), one was at PVP 7/27 (JMi, AM), and another was at Washington Crossing 7/28 (BK). Two **Yellow-breasted Chats** were believed to be feeding young at PVP 6/13 (TK), and 2 were at PWT 6/12. A **Grasshopper Sparrow** at Northampton Twp. Park 7/13 (NZ) provided hope that some may persist in small remnants of grassland in that part of the county. Six at Van Sant Airport 6/7 (JMi, AM) was a nice single site count.

One **Blue Grosbeak** was at CVP 6/6 (VD). Five singing males were at their favored landfill area at PWT 6/27 (DFa), and one was singing near Rushland 6/28 (AM, JMi, DFa). After last year's first proof of a breeding **Dickcissel** pair on the capped landfill at PWT, 2 singing males near the original site 6/27 were a hopeful sign that breeding may increase in the area. The observer was able to get agreement from the landfill manager to not mow the two territorial sites. Active Acres Farm at UMT continued to host breeding **Bobolinks**, the first known since the early 1990s from that far south in the county (BK). At least 6 adult males were seen 6/21. They may have benefited from the wet weather, since mowing of the fields was delayed. However, the observer has told me that this farm has been sold and will be developed in the future. Sporadic reports of one to two **Pine Siskins** continued, with reports from Kintnersville 6/11 (CE), Doylestown until 6/25 (WM), Levittown 6/24-26 (JMi), PVP 6/27 (*fide* KK), UMT 7/11 (JMa), and MKF 7/5-12 (RS, VS). No young were identified.

EXOTICS: Three **Egyptian Geese** reported in spring continued being reported through the season at NSP (DFa, HE). Breeding has occurred there in the past.

CORRIGENDA: The report of **Eastern Meadowlark** at Bradford Dam on the Central Bucks Christmas Bird Count in the Winter Issue Vol.23, No. 1 should have been listed as being at Pine Run Dam.

Observers: **August Mirabella, 1443 Wheaton Lane, North Wales, PA, 19454, (215) 368-0594, augustmirabella@aol.com**, Diane Allison, Alana Balogh (ABa), Erich Boenzli, Alan Brady (ABr), Marlin Corn, Henry D'Allessandro, Vince DeAntoniis, Carol Easter, Howard Eskin, Bill Etter, Devich Farbotnik (DFa), Doug Filler (DFi), Ron French (RFR), Roy Frock (RFo), Mark Furman, Douglas Gross, Ray Hendrick, Bill Hoehne, Mike Homel, Gail Johnson, Bill Keim, Tena Kellogg, Ken Kitson, Arlene Koch, Dave Long, Many Observers (m. obs.), Joe Majdan (JMa), Jim Maloney (JMi), Joe Marino (JMr), Wendy Margolis, Harry McGarrity, Art McMorris (AMc), Judy Mirabella (JMi), Bob Mullvihill, Ed Norman, John Papson, Pat Rossi, Hart Rufe, Diane Smith, Richard Smith, Vicky Smith, Hannah Smith, Mary Jane Stretch, Chris Vogel, Tom Vouglas, Nick Zahn.

Butler County

Locations: Armstrong Farms (AF), Birdwatchers Store (BS), Boyers Area (BA), Lake Arthur (LA), Marion Township (MT), Miller Woods (MW), Moraine State Park (MSP), Poplar Forest (PF), Slippery Rock Borough (SRB), Slippery Rock Creek (SRC), Slippery Rock Township (SRT), Wolf Creek Narrows.

Although the period was not as wet as last year (17.5 inches), June 2009 still had 6.25 inches of rain and July 3.75 inches for a total of 10 inches in the period. This high amount of precipitation, moreover, coincided with far below average temperatures that resulted in many avian families postponing nesting by two to three weeks or even giving nesting altogether. Again, like 2008, the grassland/field species did reasonably well because farmers could not mow or bale hay until July 4.

The **Canada Goose, Wood Duck, Mallard, Hooded Merganser, and Common Merganser** had a poor breeding season, mostly caused by high water, even flooding, on streams and in wetlands. Only a single female **Ring-necked Pheasant** in SRT 6/6 (GW) and a **Ruffed Grouse** in BA 6/28 (SS) were reported. The regular flock of **Wild Turkey** in PF disappeared this year but the small covey of **Northern Bobwhite** in SRT was present and accounted for throughout the period (GW). Pied-billed Grebe, Double-crested Cormorant, bitterns and night herons were missing; the **Great-blue Heron** and **Green Heron** were scarce away from LA (GW). Again, 7 **Osprey** pairs bred successfully atop telecommunication towers, and 3 **Bald Eagle** nests were active in the county plus a lone adult seen in BA 6/28 (SS). For the second consecutive year, the **Cooper's** and **Broad-winged hawks** failed to

nest in PF. However, an adult male **Sharp-shinned Hawk** remained in PF the entire season and was deadly accurate in preying upon many **Mourning Doves** at neighborhood bird feeders (GW, JW, PFWI). Another Sharpie hit mostly finches at the BS (CS). Both birds are still present at this writing. High water levels in wetlands prevented rails (King, Virginia and Sora) from nesting this year while **Killdeer** and **Spotted Sandpiper** were scarce. The only encouraging shorebird report was the 12 **Upland Sandpipers** observed in MT 6/13 (GW). The **Wilson's Snipe** and **American Woodcock** were not observed this breeding season and continue their downward spiral in numbers (GW).

Two **Red-headed Woodpeckers** were apparently nesting in BA 6/28 (SS) and the small **Yellow-bellied Sapsucker** colony continued nesting in PF (GW). Records for nesting flycatchers were few but 3 **Willow Flycatchers** in BA 6/28 (SS) a pleasant surprise. At least one pair of **Horned Lark** bred west of SRB in SRT and another pair east of SRB in SRT did likewise (GW, JW). Another family of 5 larks was found on AF south of Saxonburg 7/10 (AW, KW). The **Purple Martin** had another rough breeding season with nestlings and fledglings considerably down in numbers (DK). However, our two pairs of permanent (36 continuous months) **Red-breasted Nuthatches** still bring their fledglings to our black sunflower seed feeder on a daily basis in SRB (GW, JW). At least 3 singing **Veerys** and a **Yellow-breasted Chat** were observed in BA 6/28 (SS).

Field, Vesper, Savannah, Grasshopper and **Henslow's sparrows** delayed initial nesting until late June and thus were successful in producing fledglings in July. The **Bobolink** and **Eastern Meadowlark** did the same, resulting in their second consecutive excellent breeding season, at least in the northern and central parts of the county. Three or four **Pine Siskins** remaining from the winter's gigantic irruption lingered throughout the season at BS (CS) and on the SRU campus (GW).

Observers: **Gene Wilhelm, 513 Kelly Blvd., Slippery Rock, PA 16057-1145, genewilhelm@aol.com**, Dean Kildoo, Poplar Forest Wetlands Initiative, Steve Sanford, Cathy Setzer, Mark Vass, Amanda Wilhelm, Joanne Wilhelm, Kevin Wilhelm.

Cambria County

Locations: Colver Reservoir (CV), Patton (PA), Prince Gallitzin State Park (PG), St Lawrence (STL)

The **Great Blue Heron** colony at the northern end of the county is gone. All of the trees holding nests were blown down by storms. It is hoped the birds relocated, as it was the only known nesting site in northern *Cambria*. **Virginia Rail** and **Sora** continue in good numbers at PG (JS). A group of 4 **Spotted Sandpipers** was at CV in late Jun, with much interaction between the birds suggesting breeding (DG). **Willow** and **Great-Crested Flycatchers** were both found nesting at PG (DG, JS). A singing **White-eyed Vireo** was at PG 6/10 (JS).

Purple Martins finally found the gourd rack at PG, and one pair reared 3 young. Although common throughout the state, **Northern Mockingbirds** are rare in northern *Cambria*, so noteworthy was the first ever confirmed breeding for the species in that region, in the PA area. A pair raised at least one young (DG). **Yellow-rumped** and **Prairie Warbler** were a nice find at STL (DG, JS). A single male **Henslow's Sparrow** sang throughout much of the period at PG. This is our first record of possible breeding at the park. A pair of **Orchard Orioles** was at PG on 6/10 (JS).

Observers: **Dave Gobert, 287 Beech Road, Patton PA, (814) 674-8359 djgobert@verizon.net**, John Salvetti.

Cameron County

No Compiler.

Carbon County

No Report.

Compiler: **David Hawk, 521 Walnut Street, Lehighton, PA, 18235, (610) 377-2407, finch@ptd.net**.

Centre County

Locations: 2nd PBBA Blocks: 61B61, 61B71, 61B74, 62A12, 62A24, 62A25, 62A33, 62B11, 62B14, 63A44, 63A62, 63A63, 63A64, Bear Meadows Rd, Black Moshannon State Park, Dug Rd, East Mountain Rd, Fowler Hollow Rd, Howard, Old Pike Road, Scotia Barrens (SCO), Spring Creek, Wetlands west of Julian adjacent to Rte. 220 (JWET).

A late lingering **Common Loon** in breeding plumage was photographed swimming in the Toftrees pond 6/1 (CG). A **Caspian Tern** was seen from the Lower Parking lot flying around Colyer Lake 6/3 (MH). Three juv. **Bald Eagles** were seen in the nest in a white pine across the lake at Bald Eagle State Park in the presence of one of their parents 6/8 (MH). A few weeks later, three begging juv. eaglets were seen perched near the nest with two of them in the nest tree. After an approaching parent was photographed flying toward the nest, the screeching began in earnest. The third eaglet flew directly to the parent, and when the adult had enough, it flew a few hundred feet away, leaving the youngsters to sort it out among themselves 6/20 (CG). After a **Peregrine Falcon** was observed on the top of a water tower in Pleasant Gap, it took off toward the NE after being harassed by a robin 7/9 (HB). A few days later on 7/13, a large bird, tentatively identified as a Peregrine Falcon, was seen flying within 20 feet of the observer, with a bird in its talons and followed by another bird squawking up a storm in hot pursuit in Pleasant Hills, Pleasant Gap 7/13 (JC).

The last of three **Yellow-billed Cuckoo** chicks fledged from a backyard nest in Howard which was found with two eggs on 5/24 with the female on the nest the next day. The cuckoos permitted a close approach even while one would sit on the nest 6/13 (BS). A **Red-headed Woodpecker** was found along Rte. 45 about 2.5 miles east of Spring Mills 6/14 (MSH); another was seen at Governor's Park in Bellefonte 7/6 (BB), and again (could have been the same one) at the entrance to Governor's Park in Bellefonte the next day 7/7 (DB). The species has not been reported in this location for at least 13 years.

An **Olive-sided Flycatcher** was seen on the trail by the pond at SCO 6/5 (MM, *fide* KF), and one was seen on the Moss Hanna Trail off Rattlesnake Pike at Black Moshannon State Park 6/6 (JD, SL). A dark-breasted **Eastern Phoebe** was found and photographed at Millbrook Marsh 7/26 (NAB). Amidst strident calls from **Blue Jays** and **American Crows**, a crow was seen trying to lift off with a baby rabbit in its beak on Penn State Campus, but ultimately failed and dropped it 7/9 (DF). An active **Purple Martin** colony was observed in Howard 6/8 (MH).

While conducting a bird banding program at Houserville School 6/13, (NK) caught a chickadee the size of a **Carolina Chickadee** that exhibited coloration and measurements of Black-capped, Carolina, and in between. The coloration and extent of the edging of the greater coverts and inner secondaries was more Black-capped as was the extent of white and shape on the outer tail feathers. No discernable difference was seen in the coloration or extent of the bib, cheek patch or other body areas. A **Blue Grosbeak** was sighted several miles north of Snow Shoe 6/9 (GG); and on 6/25, about 9 miles south, a singing Blue Grosbeak was discovered and observed for several minutes in an open grassy former strip mine land with scattered trees north of Snow Shoe in northern *Centre* (GG), and was seen subsequently by (CK, AT, MH, JD). It was about 250 yards from where DG found one on 6/30/2008.

A small flock of about eight **Pine Siskins** (perhaps remnants of the 2009 winter irruption) were still feeding at thistle feeders a few times daily in State College 6/15 (LW).

More information about some of these locations is available at <www.scbirdcl.org>. This report is based on postings to the State College Bird Club listserv list <scbirdcl@lists.psu.edu>.

Observers: **Bob Fowles, 814 238-1990, P.O. Box 266, Pine Grove Mills, PA 16868, rbf@psu.edu**, Bob Benson, Diane Bierly, Hillel Brandes, Nan Butkovitch (NAB), Joe Conklin, James Dunn, David Facey, Kenny Frisch, Chet Gottfried, Debra Grim, Mark Henry (MSH), Greg Grove, Molly Heath, Chad Kauffman, Nick Kerlin, Scott Lewis, Melissa May, Bob Snyder, Aden Troyer, Leah Wasser.

Chester County

Locations: Bucktoe Preserve (BTPR), Chambers Lake (CHLA), Church Farm School (CFS), Struble Lake (STLA), White Clay Creek (WCC)

Wood Duck populations continued in good numbers throughout

the county with multiple double digit reports including a high count of 30 at Longwood 6/13 (LL). Single non-breeding **Ruddy Ducks** were at CHLA 6/10 and 6/20 (RR) and Somerset Lake 7/29 (AL).

Common Loon migration can sometimes stretch into Jun as evidenced by a northbound fly-over at Runnymede Farm 6/9 (KF). A **Pied-billed Grebe** at CHLA 7/31 was either an early migrant or a non-breeding individual (RR). Post-breeding **Great Egrets** were at Longwood 6/13 (LL) and in East Goshen Twp. 7/17-23 (NP). An imm. **Black-crowned Night-Heron** was at STLA 6/26 (RR). **Glossy Ibis** were found again in Landenburg with single birds reported 6/4 (KF) and 7/10 (AL). Last year as many as 17 were at this location. Non-breeding **Double-crested Cormorants** were at CHLA 6/10 and STLA 6/26 (RR).

Ospreys do not breed in *Chester*, at least no nest has yet been found, but individual birds in summer are regular. This year single birds or the same bird were at CHLA 6/10, 6/12, and 7/9 (RR). Single **Bald Eagles** were noted over Longwood 6/3 (LL) and at CHLA 7/9 and 7/31 (RR). It is suspected that these reports are of birds from nearby known nesting locations.

Three migrant **Forster's Terns** were at MCSP 7/29 (KF) the only terns reported. **Yellow-billed Cuckoos** were reported from multiple locations throughout the county (m.ob.) and at least two imm. **Black-billed Cuckoos** were reported from STLA 6/26 (RR).

Willow Flycatchers seem to be doing well in *Chester* especially at BTPR, Longwood and CFS with 4-6 pairs reported at these sites (m.ob.). **Great-crested Flycatchers** were reported from multiple locations with a single-observer high of 5 at BTPR 6/28 (CM). An early migrant **Bank Swallow** was at Runnymede Farm 7/21 (KF). **Wood Thrush** and **Veery** continue to be found in good numbers during regular surveys at BTPR and Longwood (JS, CM). **Cedar Waxwings**, which arrived in force in late May, were reported in good numbers throughout the county with many confirmed nesting.

Northern Parula was found nesting at WCC 6/21 (NP). **Cerulean Warblers** were reported from Pickering Creek 6/1-15 (VS). **American Redstarts** were nesting at WCC 6/21 (NP). Regular surveys at BTPR show **Ovenbird** numbers as strong (JS). **Yellow-breasted Chats** were found at several locations including CHLA 6/10 and 6/22 (RR), WCC 6/21 (NP) and Nottingham Park 7/12 (NP) and 7/22 (BB).

One of the best surprises of the season was the appearance of a **Henslow's Sparrow** at Runnymede Farm (KF). A Henslow's was found very near this spot in Dec 2008 and remained at least into Feb. This is most likely the same bird but which moved to a different location on the farm that was not frequently birded. Runnymede also hosted good populations of **Savannah** and **Grasshopper Sparrows**.

A **Rose-breasted Grosbeak** was seen frequently at CHLA during June (RR) and probably nested. **Blue Grosbeaks** were found in several locations including BTPR, Longwood, Nottingham Park, and Innisconre (JS, CM, NP, AL). A pair also visited a feeder in Willistown Twp. 6/26 (MP). This pair may have nested nearby at Kirkwood Preserve. Once again this year, a pair of **Dickcissels** frequented Runnymede Farm in Jun (KF, et al). As with last year, breeding was suspected but not proved.

The best find of the season was the first documented record of nesting **Pine Siskin**. An imm. was photographed coming to a feeder in Phoenixville 6/21 (VS). The photos clearly show the buffy tips to the greater coverts which separate this age group from adults that would have an off-white coloration. The bird also shows a buffy color to the breast.

Observers: **Nick Pulcinella, 613 Howard Rd., West Chester, PA 19380, (610) 696-0687, nickpulcinella@verizon.net**, Brian Byrnes, Kevin Fryberger, Andrew Leidig, Larry Lewis, Carol Majors, Martin Page, Rick Robinson, Joe Sebastiani, Vince Smith.

Clarion County

Locations: Curtlsville (CV), Mount Airy (MA), Mount Zion (MZ), Strattanville (ST).

Clarion's IBA area at Piney Tract, usually known as MZ, continues to show each year that it supports at least one pair of **Northern Harriers**. This year a pair of harriers was seen hunting and carrying food to a likely nest area 7/9, after being seen in the area as a pair since Apr (CW). In the best raptor news for the season, a pair of **Northern Goshawks** started a successful nesting near Gravel Lick along the Clarion River. On 6/4 the pair, a two year old male and a three

year or older female bird, were active at the nest along with young that were an estimated 10 days old. The pair and young were banded on 6/6 by Dave Brinker from Maryland, with two female chicks and one smaller male chick. The nest continued to be active 6/21 but by 6/30 the adults only were present. On investigation three feather piles in the area were presumed to indicate the three chicks, but predator/cause of death was not able to be determined. This nest was purported to be the only nest to at least make it to this stage successfully, as all other nests in western Pennsylvania appeared to have failed this year for reasons unknown (DB, RM, ChW). An **American Kestrel** box located on farm property near CV successfully fledged 4 young rather late in the season, with young leaving the nest 7/31 (CW). This pair defended their territory aggressively against a **Red-tailed Hawk** pair whose nest nearby appeared to fail this year. On an improvement in reporting from the past several years, **Upland Sandpipers** were noted on several dates both in pairs and calling at MA in their most regular traditional site in *Clarion*. Starting 6/6 through 7/3 birds were both heard and seen but definitive confirmation of breeding remains difficult with this species (DC, SG, AM, HT, MW). Near CV, 3 recently fledged young **Eastern Screech Owls** were found along with the adults (one red phase, one gray phase) 6/11. The young owls appeared to be two gray phase and one red phase birds (CW).

Common Nighthawks were seen as a pair performing courtship flights the first week of Jun near ST. Both rural gravel roads and a strip reclamation site very nearby with large areas of open ground and gravel were suspected as possible nesting sites but breeding was not able to be confirmed (KP). Nighthawks were also seen near Clarion over the local mall area 7/17 with possible roof nesting as more likely in that area. **Whip-poor-wills** were heard calling again in traditional areas along Millcreek near ST 6/3 (KP) and in the wooded hillsides along the Allegheny River near East Brady the first weeks of Jun (PW). In what would provide possibly a first record for *Clarion*, a **Scissor-tailed Flycatcher** was reported 6/21 near Lucinda, perched on a telephone wire along Rte. 66 (SC). As of this date, photos have not been submitted yet to verify this exciting new record.

On a property with a previous nesting record, a juvenile **Golden-crowned Kinglet** was seen 7/9 and 7/10 near a large spruce and pine planting where nesting was confirmed several years ago (CW). At a yard near St. Petersburg, a pair of **Eastern Bluebirds** successfully fledged an albino chick 7/19, with other normally colored young all being killed by a house sparrow attempting to claim the nest box, an interesting study on bird response to color (DA, MB, CS). No previous records of bluebird albinos are known for the county.

Golden-winged Warblers were noted in a new area this year, with a female bird seen 6/28 along Champion Rd near New Bethlehem, where one was spotted earlier in the spring migration (MW). This bird was not a hybrid in appearance, but nesting was not able to be confirmed. With the decrease in numbers for this species this will be an area to continue to watch in future years as suitable habitat is present. Another warbler with changing range, but for the positive, is the **Yellow-rumped Warbler**, with again this year new areas being noted for possible breeding birds. Singing, territorial males were noted at two separate areas of MZ 6/7 and 6/9 (HT, CW) and also at SGL 74 6/10 in the eastern part of the county (CW). **Kentucky Warblers** have been noted in some increased areas of the southern reaches of *Clarion* in recent years, possibly due to increased birding related to the BBA. This year they were able to be confirmed for the first time, with female being seen in good habitat along Holly Hill Rd near CV, carrying food and agitated (MW, CW). In the large areas of old farm land and reclaimed strip mine property that is now growing up into shrubs and small trees, **Yellow-breasted Chats** continue to show up in larger numbers and in new areas yearly. Four individuals were noted along Champion Rd near New Bethlehem 6/28 (MW), one singing male at MZ 7/6 (MF), and throughout June at a reclaimed strip mine near CV (MW, CW).

Clay-colored Sparrows continue their expansion in areas and numbers, with confirmed breeding in a new area of MZ on Stockdill Rd 6/9 and 6/30 (AM, HT, MW). They also continue in their previous areas in MZ and on old CV strip mine property, where numbers are slowly increasing to 6+ singing males regularly (JB, DC, MF, SG, RM, HT). The 2009 summer brought two encouraging reports of **Vesper Sparrows**, the most difficult grassland sparrow to find in the county, possibly due to changing conditions on the large areas of reclaimed strip mines, 20+ years past the height of mining in the area. A territorial male vesper was found during research study at MZ during July (RM, HT). Two singing males were found at a new location near ST 7/12 (MW) and then confirmed breeding, with adults being seen carrying

food 7/26 through 8/3 (CW). This new area is also a reclaimed strip mine but was done recently by the state in the past several years, so the habitat is quite different, with patchy growth, exposed rock and dirt and generally poor soil and vegetation conditions. Banded **Grasshopper Sparrows** and **Henslow's Sparrows** were both found by various observers at MZ this year, and are to be reported to Jason Hill, who is conducting research there over several years as part of doctoral research at Penn State University on response of grassland birds to woody vegetation growth (JB, MF, JH, MJ). Numbers of both these grassland sparrows appeared by all reports to be in very good numbers this year for all their expected breeding areas, with a new area for Henslow's being reported also north of I-80 this year near Miola, more unusual than in the southern part of the county (MW, CW).

Observers: **Carole Winslow, 159 Moggey Rd, Sligo, PA 16255, (814) 745-3818, cjnal@windstream.net**, Derek Altman, John Boback, Dave Brinker, Margaret Buckwater, Dick Cleary, Shawn Collins, Mike Fialkovich, Steve Gosser, Jason Hill, Mark Johnson, Andy Markel, Ron Montgomery, Kathy Pokrifka, Cindy Stephens, Harvey Tomlinson, Mike Weible, Paul Winslow, Chuck Williams (ChW).

Clearfield County

Locations: Curwensville Dam (CD), LaJose (LJ), Mahaffey (MH), Westover (WST).

The **Great Blue Heron** colony in the southern end of the county is no longer there. No birds and only one old nest where there in early May. The colony had about 6 active nests two years ago. Two **Spotted Sandpipers** were present at CD 6/10 (DG). A lone **Short-eared Owl** was seen several times at a reclaimed strip site at LJ (DG, JS). No evidence of confirmed breeding was observed. The bird was very vocal. **Willow Flycatchers** were at CD on 6/10 (DG). **Common Ravens** were seen at several locations throughout the county (DG, JS). **Veery, Wood Thrush, and Hermit Thrush** were present at WST (DG). A trip into the reclaimed strip area at LJ yielded **Field, Vesper, Savannah, Grasshopper, and Henslow's Sparrows**. Most of the species were confirmed. A pair of **Orchard Orioles** was at MH on 6/10 (DG).

Observers: **Dave Gobert, 287 Beech Road Patton, Pa. 16668 (814)674-8359 djgobert@verizon.net**, John Salvetti

Clinton County

As of the end of Jul, the pair of **Peregrine Falcons** near McElhatten was observed to be on a late nest with four chicks (BB, SB, WL). On 7/11, a pair of **Orchard Orioles** was seen tending to an active nest near Rote (MA, SA).

Observers: **Wayne Laubscher, 749 E. Croak Hollow Rd., Lock Haven, PA, 17745-8153, (570) 748-7511, wlaubsch@kcnet.org**, Bryce Bason, Steve Bason, Mervin Allgyer, Stephen Allgyer.

Columbia County

No Report.

Compiler: **Doug Gross, 144 Winters Road, Orangeville, PA, 17859, (570) 458-4568, douggross@sunlink.net**.

Crawford County

Locations: Conneaut Lake (CL), Conneaut Marsh (CoM), Custards Marsh (CuM), Fish Hatchery (FH), Ford Island (FI), Geneva Marsh (GM), Hartstown Marsh (HM), Pymatuning Area (PA), Pymatuning Goose Management Area (PGMA), Pymatuning Spillway (PS), Sugar Lake (SL), Tamarack Lake (TL), Woodcock Lake (WL), McMichael Marsh (McM).

A **Pied-billed Grebe** was noted at FH 6/11 (RCL) and one at Geneva 7/28. A good find was a **Common Loon** on CL 6/11 (RCL). **Herring Gulls** averaged 2 to 4 birds at PA, about normal. The top count of **Ring-billed Gulls** at PA this summer was 218. No other gulls were

reported. **Caspian Terns** were noted at Geneva (CL) and PYM (RCC, MV) this period, totaling one to 4 birds. **Forster's Terns** were seen at PYM from 6/7 to 7/31 (RCL, MV), with 7 at PS 6/18 (RCL). **Double-crested Cormorants** summered here in small numbers from one to 17 (m.ob.). Unusual was a male **Common Merganser** noted all of Jun on the Stone headwaters at PS (RCL). Six **Hooded Mergansers** were in the PGMA 6/13 (MV) and 2 were seen at FH 6/30 (CHO). A pair of **Green-winged Teal** was seen at PGMA 6/13 and 6/15 (CMV, TB). One to 5 **Blue-winged Teal** were found at numerous areas at PL (RCL, MV, TB). A lone male **Northern Pintail** was noted at PGMA 7/13 (in molt). A good total of 32 **Wood Ducks** were tallied at CoM 6/18 and noted all summer. One to three **Ruddy Ducks** were spotted at PS and FI 6/13 to 6/30 (RCL, MV, TB, CHO). Two immature or first year **Trumpeter Swans** were noted at Geneva CoM 6/6, neither was neck-banded. A **Great Egret** was found 6/7 at PPGC Headquarters Pond (MV). A **Black-crowned Night-Heron** was seen flying over FI 7/22. MF saw 6 **Sandhill Cranes** at HM 6/29 and two were in a field on Brooks Road with a flock of 150 **Canada Geese** 7/25, SE of Shermonsville. A **Virginia Rail** was heard at Geneva 6/29 (MF); one was there 7/12 and another was noted at HM's upper dam pond 7/25. A new location for a breeding pair of **Common Moorhens** was found 6/14 on a pond across the road from the old PPG plant s. of Geneva (RFL, RCL). Four were noted there 6/18 and 6/21, and one adult with 2 young were there 7/4.

The best bird of the season was an adult **American Avocet** discovered at PGMA by MV 7/17. It was also seen by CHO and RFC and was not seen again the next day or after. This is the second time that this species has ever been seen at PYM. (Two were found there in November 1998.) A pair of **Wilson's Snipe** were found at PGMA 7/16-18 (m.ob.). Two to 5 **Short-billed Dowitchers** were located at PGMA 7/17-24 (MV, CHO). A **Pectoral Sandpiper** was found at PGMA 7/17 (MV) and a pair was there 7/22. A **White-rumped Sandpiper** was seen at the FH's first pond at the entrance 6/15 (LM, TB, and members of the PITT Lab at Pymatuning). **Least Sandpiper** (2 to 17) showed up at the PGMA 7/16-22 (MV). One to 8 **Semipalmated Sandpipers** were seen at PGMA 7/16 (m.ob.). Six **Greater Yellowlegs** were found at PGMA 7/22 and the first fall migrant was one at FH 7/4. **Lesser Yellowlegs** arrived at PGMA 7/11, and 20 were there 7/22. MV found 5 **Solitary Sandpipers** at PGMA 7/17 and one remained there to 7/24. One or two **Upland Sandpipers** were recorded at PGMA 6/4-30 (MF, JV, Che).

A **Northern Harrier** was found at PGMA 6/11 (RCL), and a Sharp-shinned Hawk was at TL 6/12 (RCL). **Osprey** raised a pair of young at WL using last year's nest; a second pair's attempt at another nearby nest was abandoned. A **Barred Owl** was heard calling at ENWR 7/18 and a **Great Horned Owl** at FI 7/7. A pair of **Red-headed Woodpeckers** was reported near Adamsville HM 6/12 (RCL). One was heard at McM 6/29 (MF). A **Vesper Sparrow** was seen at TL 6/14 (RCL) and one was at Brown Hill CoM 7/28. Up to 14 **Swamp Sparrows** were found at CoM all period at both Geneva and McM (m. ob.). Despite the cooler and damper than normal summer, **Purple Martins** seemed to fare well with counts of 50 or more (m.ob.). The **Cliff Swallow** colony at the FH was a bit smaller this year with 120 birds nesting 7/12. RFL could only find 4 birds there by 7/28. A **Yellow-throated Vireo** was recorded at McM 6/29 (MF). A **White-eyed Vireo** was seen 6/10 at SL (RE) and 6/22 (RE). One was at Tournline Road near Pymatuning Refuge east side 6/21 (RCL, RFL), and a pair was there 7/25. **Prothonotary Warblers** were recorded 6/7 McM (MV), 2 at Philips Road PYM 6/13 (RCL), one 6/29 at McM, and one 6/10 at PA (RN). A **Blue-winged Warbler** was seen 6/18, and one was at PYM 6/10 (RN). A **Golden-winged Warbler** near SL 6/10 (RE).

A **Chestnut-sided Warbler** was located at PYM 6/10 (RN) and one responded to calls at Philips Road PYM 6/21 (RCL, RFL). Two **Louisiana Waterthrush** were reported near SL 6/16 (RE), and a **Mourning Warbler** was at SL 6/16 (RE) at Stiterville Road. A group of 4 **American Redstarts** were found 6/18 (RCL). A **Northern Mockingbird** was seen at Springbora 6/18(TCN). A **Carolina Wren** was seen at RFL's feeder 7/28 in Meadville. RFL found a **Sedge Wren** at ENWR along Rte. 173 on 7/19. **Marsh Wrens** were present all period at CoM. They stopped singing early, making it hard to estimate totals, but at least 4 were found a number of times. **Eastern Bluebirds** seemed to do well and many have nested twice.

Observers: **Ronald F. Leberman, 11508 Pettis Rd, Meadville, PA 16335, (814) 724-5071**, Anthony Bledsoe, Richard Eakin, Mike Fialkovich, Chris Heckel, Craig Holt, Robert C. Leberman, Chris Lundberg, Luke Musher, Thomas Clare Nicolls, Richard Nuget, Mark Vass.

Cumberland County

Locations: State Gamelands 169 (SGL169), State Gamelands 230 (SGL230)

With the 2nd PBBA completed in *Cumberland*, the summer season seemed to lack much of the excitement of the past few years. Some of the most active county birders went out of state and/or country. Yet the **Common Loon** that wouldn't leave, the possibility of **Least Bitterns** once again breeding in county, **Bald Eagles** doubling up, and the exploration for warblers at a location in the county that at least in the recent past has been ignored, provided some points of interest for the 2009 summer season.

One **Common Loon** that has been reported since Jan continues in Boiling Springs on the Children's Pond (m.ob.). One would have to assume that either it is injured and cannot fly or that the pond does not provide a long enough stretch of water for the bird to get airborne.

One **Least Bittern** was seen at the SGL169 on 7/26 (VG). With reports of this species in Apr, it is possible that they are once again breeding at this site. While no young have yet been reported, it should be remembered that in 2006 young were not discovered until 8/10, so the possibility still exists that Least Bitterns nested there this year. One **Virginia Rail** was reported at SGL169 on 6/1 (BO, VG). Additionally, one **American Coot** was found on Hidden Pond Huntsdale 6/1 (BO, VG)

There were nesting **Bald eagles** for the 2nd year in a row along the Conodoguinett just east of the Carlisle Country Club. This year there were 3 young (PL).

One **Dickcissel** was reported in a field off Hunter Road 6/22 (BO) just north of Newville, along with one male **Blue Grosbeak** singing, also Hunter Road 6/22 (BO) and 6/23 (VG). One **Summer Tanager** and one **Kentucky Warbler** were reported from SGL230 6/10 (AM). One very late **Wilson's Warbler** was reported on the Big Spring 6/5 (MJS, VG)

Thirteen species of warblers were identified as probable or confirmed breeders on the two-mile stretch of Elk Hill Road that begins off Rte. 233 and ends at the *Perry* line. The five confirmed species included **Cerulean Warbler**, **Black-and-white Warbler**, **Worm-eating Warbler**, and **Ovenbird**, and the eight probable species included **Northern Parula**, **Yellow Warbler**, **Blackburnian Warbler**, **Black-throated Green Warbler**, **American Redstart**, **Common Yellowthroat**, **Louisiana Waterthrush**, **Hooded Warbler**, and **Yellow-breasted Chat** (BF, LF, KK, AM, BO, VG). This diversity of warblers likely breeding in such a small area seems surprising at first, until one considers the change of altitude and the diversity of habitat in the area.

Finally, there were **Bobolinks** observed along Wolf Bridge Road, near Carlisle Springs (PL).

Observers: **Vernon Gauthier**, 111 W. Big Spring Ave, Newville, PA 17421, (717) 385-9526, pabirder@gmail.com, Bill Franz, Linda Franz, Kathy Kuchwara Peter Lusardi, Andrew Markel, Annette Mathes, Bill Oyler, and Mary Jane Spencer.

Dauphin County

Locations: Harrisburg (HBG), Hershey, Derry Twp. (HER), Hershey Important Bird Area #45 (HIBA), Hummelstown (HUM), South Hanover Twp. (SHT), Susquehanna River (SR).

During the annual BBS Route from Middletown on 6/7, a single **Tundra Swan** was observed flying over Shetland Dr. in SHT (BR, D&JR). This is the latest spring date this species has been reported in the county. The **Mute Swan** on the Swatara Creek in Derry Twp., first reported in Apr, was joined by another and both moved up creek closer to Rt. 743 (BC).

The Bellevue neighborhood of HBG's **Yellow-crowned Night-Heron** colony had a good year with at least eight fledglings observed either on the ground or on branches near their nests 6/29 (JM). A single **Yellow-crowned Night-Heron** was observed along the Swatara Creek during a "summer float" near Hummel Park in HUM 7/5, when two **Black-crowned Night-Herons** were also noted along the creek (DH).

An unusual visitor to WL was noted 6/22 when a **Northern Bobwhite** was observed "walking" along the East Shore Trail (CR).

This was a good summer for **Common Merganser** in the southern portion of the county. Both males and females, along with a few fledglings, were observed on the SR from Dauphin 6/20 (EC). Just a

week later, 6/27, a female with nine young were found on the Swatara Creek near the Derry Twp. boat launch park on Boathouse Rd. This same family group was observed again at this location 7/30, amazingly with all nine young still present and nearly full grown (PW, RW). On 7/28 eight Common Mergansers were viewed on the SR between Marysville and Ft. Hunter Park (RK).

Two **Black Vulture** chicks successfully fledged and were observed flying to and from the nest barn near Middletown 7/21 (GK). Two **Mississippi Kites** were seen flying over the SR just south of Three Mile Island near the *Lancaster* line on 7/4 (DC). On or about 7/15 an adult **Bald Eagle** was seen soaring over the Swatara Creek in the HIBA (S&RZ). A **Peregrine Falcon** was observed 7/8 at the intersection of Sandbeach Rd. and Front St. in HER (GK).

A **Common Moorhen** was reported at Tobias Lake near Halifax 6/12 (J&BH). A single **Purple Martin**, with **Tree** and **Barn Swallows**, was found along Swatara Rd. in the HIBA 6/23 (RW).

SGL 246 continues to be a reliable place to find both **Blue-winged Warbler** and **Yellow-breasted Chat**, which were two of the species found on an Audubon sponsored walk 6/6 (AS, et al.). On a Swatara Creek float 7/5 a singing **Yellow-throated Warbler** was found 1/2 mile downstream of the US Rt. 322 bridge and a **Northern Parula** and **Cerulean Warbler** were also found along the creek (DH). A **Northern Waterthrush** was observed along the Manada Creek 7/26 (S&RZ).

Observers: **Richard Williams**, 3 Parkside Dr., Hummelstown, PA 17036, (717) 566-6562, RWPuffin@aol.com, Betsy Carricato, Ed Chubb, Dick Cleary, Deuane Hoffman, Jenni & Barry Horton, Gary Kinkley, Ramsay Koury, Julie Moffitt, Chris Rebert, Brian Rollfinke, Deiter & Jackie Rollfinke, Art Schiavo, Patricia Williams, Sally & Rich Zaino.

Delaware County

Locations: Brandywine Conservancy, Chadds Ford (BC), Crum Reservoir (CR), Darby Creek watershed (DC), Darlington Tract (DT), Delaware River (DR), Haverford College (HC), John Heinz National Wildlife Refuge at Tinicum-DelCo portion (TI), Philadelphia International Airport (PHL), Ridley Creek State Park (RCSP), Springton Reservoir (SR), Swarthmore College (SC), Tyler Arboretum (TY).

June was a wet month with nearly five inches of rain at PHL. The National Weather Service reported rain on 17 of the 30 days in June. July was nice. It was the coolest July since 2001 and precipitation was about 90% of average. The only noticeable effect on birding was that the wet weather delayed, but did not hinder, **Purple Martin** nesting and may have caused a decline in nesting success for **Tree Swallows** at John Heinz NWR (DM).

An **American Black Duck x Mallard** hybrid reported in the spring continued at TI 6/26 (BB). For the second consecutive summer an adult **Yellow-crowned Night-Heron** stopped in a marsh in Chadds Ford. It was first found 6/19 (LL) and last reported 7/1 (BB). This species is a rare irregular visitor in *Delaware* although this report combined with reports from TI in the spring perhaps indicates a trend.

A third **Delaware Osprey** nest was reported on private industrial property DR 6/19 (*fide* DM). The nest on the DR near Harrah's Casino was reported to be active 6/19 (AG). I received no report on the Marcus hook nest. The only summer **Bald Eagle** report was from DR 7/25 (AG). A species of concern, **American Kestrel**, was present all summer near PHL and nesting was suspected 7/25 (AG). A **Caspian Tern** DR 7/12 (AG) is about as early as this species will appear.

Willow Flycatchers are annual breeders at TI in summer. Seventeen were singing on territory 6/1 (BB). That same day 8 **Warbling Vireos** were seen and heard TI 6/1 (BB).

Northern Rough-winged Swallows are regular along Crum Creek and were recorded on several dates in June (DE, AG) and TI 6/9 (BB). **Purple Martins** did very well thanks to the effort of some dedicated colony-keepers. Eleven hatchlings were banded at a new colony in Edgmont Twp. as 9 others flew nearby 7/25 (DM). Also new high numbers of eggs and hatchlings were recorded for colonies in Aston, Glen Mills, and Boothwyn (*fide* DM). An adult female and juvenile **Purple Martin** were spotted at Ridley High School, a location remote from the known colonies, 6/25 (TMCP).

A very late **Red-breasted Nuthatch** remained at TY 6/17 (TR). The observer noted only a single bird, no sign of nesting, and reports it was not seen afterward. **Marsh Wrens** proved themselves plentiful

when 24 were singing at TI 6/9 (BB). No nesting was confirmed for **Pine Siskin** but a report of 2 individuals at a home in Concord Twp. 6/24 (SD) was tantalizing.

Observers: **Dave Eberly, 112 S. Princeton Ave., Swarthmore, PA 19081 (610) 543-3499 david.eberly@gmail.com**, Brian Byrnes, Sue Downing, Al Guarente, Larry Lewis, Jim Lockyer, Doris McGovern, Tom McParland, Nick Pulcinella, Tom Reeves, Leonard Rooney, Alice Severeid.

Elk County
No Compiler.

Erie County

Location: Presque Isle State Park (PISP).

This was reported to be the coldest and wettest summer on record. In July it rained 15 days with rainy days spaced at intervals of every other day. Even though there were no reports of bird mortalities or of poor nesting success, conditions couldn't have been worse. Insect populations were reported to be very low, because of the extended period of wet and cold days. Fewer insects mean less food to feed hungry mouths of insectivorous birds. Perhaps when the fall season reports come in we'll have a better idea as to what impact the weather had on this seasons nesting success. The bird that took the spot light this period was a **Long-billed Curlew** seen circling over the lake off beach 6 on Presque Isle State Park. If accepted by the Pennsylvania Ornithological Records Committee, it would represent the second state record.

The following unusual birds were recorded from Presque Isle State Park (PISP) unless noted otherwise.

A **Tundra Swan** lingered to 6/6 at Edinboro Lake (*fide* DS), and one at PISP remained well into the summer and was last seen 7/23 (JM). **Common Mergansers** are rarely confirmed nesting in *Erie*, so the female with four young in Edinboro 7/26 was quite noteworthy. **Least Bittern** continue to be reported at PISP with singles reported at various site on the park through the period (m.ob.). A **Great Egret** was at Roderick Wildlife Reserve 6/7 (TW) and another was seen at Edinboro 7/27 (DS). The two **Peregrine Falcons** observed along Beach 11 at PISP were unusual for the late date of 6/11 (RS). A large concentration of 57 **Killdeer** was noted on the campus grounds of Edinboro University 7/27 (DS). A **Willit** made an appearance at Gull Point on PISP on 7/16 (JM) and four were there 7/22 (TL). Rarely reported in the county these days was an **Upland Sandpiper** seen in a field in North East Twp. 7/25 (TW). A **Whimbrel** was on Gull Point at PISP 7/31 (JM). The real find of the season was a **Long-billed Curlew** observed circling over the lake off Beach 11 on 7/26 (JH).

Very unusual for summer, an immature **Glaucous Gull** was at Gull Point at PISP 6/24 (JD). Rarely reported nesting in *Erie* in recent years, the report of two **Common Nighthawks** flying around an open grassy sand plain on PISP 6/8 was encouraging (DS). **Northern Mockingbirds** continue to be reported in summer in *Erie* with some evidence of breeding from a bird carrying nesting material 6/5 in Union City (DP). Closer to the lake, where mockingbirds are more frequently encountered, one was reported periodically through the summer in Girard (*fide* TW). Most unexpected was an adult **White-crowned Sparrow** at PISP on the unusual date of 6/29 (JF). Could the Pine Siskin at a feeder 6/27 at the Millcreek/McKean Twp. line (*fide* DS) have nested in the area?

Observers: **Jerry McWilliams, 3508 Allegheny Rd., Erie, PA 16508-2129, jerrymcw@aol.com**, Julie Dell, Jim Flynn, James Hill III, Tim Ludwick, Donna Peters, Don Snyder, Ruth Swaney, Tom Wasilewski.

Fayette County

Locations: Mill Run Reservoir (MRR), Ohio State Park (OSP)

A **Ring-necked Pheasant** was calling at Deer Lake in Chalkhill 6/27 (MF). It was nice to receive a report of a **Ruffed Grouse** with 5 young at OSP 7/17 (DW, ST) during this period of low density in recent years.

Unusual at this time of year, a **Common Loon** was at Lake Courage in Heritage 7/8 (DW, ST). The bird was in non-breeding plumage, so it was a wandering or summering sub-adult. Two **Green Herons** were at MRR 6/27 (MF).

A **Cooper's Hawk** with 2 fledglings at OSP 7/17 (DW, ST) provided a nice confirmation of breeding. A **Broad-winged Hawk** perched in a tree at OSP 6/27 (MF) stressed out some of the local **Blue Jays**; one was also seen at the park 7/5 (KSJ).

A **Black Vulture** was observed in flight along Rte. 119 near Uniontown 6/16 (DK); a rare species (and perhaps the first record) in the county. A fledgling **Killdeer** raced across Middle Ridge Road at high speed near OSP 6/27 (MF). A **Solitary Sandpiper** and a **Spotted Sandpiper** were at MRR 7/17 (DW, ST).

A **Yellow-billed Cuckoo** was at OSP 7/17 (DW, ST). Flycatcher reports were good with **Eastern Wood-Pewee** at OSP 7/17 (DW, ST). **Acadian Flycatchers** were present at OSP 7/5 (KSJ) and 7/17 (DW, ST) where numerous wooded streams provide excellent habitat. A good variety of flycatchers were found 6/27 including a **Willow Flycatcher** at Deer Lake, a **Least Flycatcher** at MRR, a **Great Crested Flycatcher** along Grover Road in Stewart Twp. and **Eastern Kingbirds** at MRR (MF). **Great Crested Flycatchers** were also at Lake Courage in Heritage and near Nemaquin Woodlands Resort 7/17 (DW, ST).

Large numbers of eastern hemlocks combined with high elevation provide habitat for northerly species such as **Blue-headed Vireo** which was at OSP 7/5 (KSJ) and 7/17 (DW, ST). A **White-eyed Vireo** was in a brushy area at OSP 7/17 (DW, ST).

A **Tree Swallow** was protective of two juveniles at Deer Lake 6/27 (MF). **Cliff** and **Barn Swallows** were feeding young in nests at the Rte. 381 bridges at MRR and Ohio, and **Northern Rough-winged Swallows** were also present at both locations 6/27 (MF).

A **Brown Creeper** was at OSP 7/5 (KSJ), adding another northerly component to the avifauna in the area. A **Golden-crowned Kinglet** was a nice find at Bear Run Nature Reserve 7/17 (DW, ST) where they probably breed. **Blue-gray Gnatcatchers** were active around MRR 6/27 (MF) and at OSP 7/17 (DW, ST). A **Wood Thrush** was heard at OSP 7/5 (KSJ) and a young bird was observed feeding on earthworms at OSP 7/17 (DW, ST). A **Brown Thrasher** was at Deer Lake 6/27 (MF) and young birds were observed in the OSP area 7/17 (DW, ST).

Unfortunately for the second year in a row, **Golden-winged Warblers** were not found at the traditional breeding site at OSP. Based on recent data collected for the Breeding Bird Atlas there are other locations near the park where they can still be found. Six **Northern Parula** were at OSP 6/27 (MF) and one was in Heritage 7/8 (DW, ST). A **Yellow Warbler** was at MRR 6/27 (MF) where lakeside brush provides excellent habitat. **Chestnut-sided Warblers** were at OSP 7/17 (DW, ST) where they can be locally common. High elevation specialists were found at OSP including **Magnolia Warbler** 7/5 (KSJ) and 7/17 (DW, ST), and **Black-throated Blue Warbler** 7/5 (KSJ). A **Black-throated Green Warbler** was singing in a wooded section of Springfield Twp. 6/27 (MF), and this species was at OSP 7/5 (KSJ) and 7/17 (DW, ST). A **Blackburnian Warbler** was at OSP 7/17 (DW, ST). A **Yellow-throated Warbler** was singing lakeside at MRR, and a **Black-and-white Warbler** was in full song in the forest that surrounds the reservoir 6/27 (MF). Another **Black-and-white Warbler** was found at OSP along with an **American Redstart** 7/5 (KSJ). Numerous **Black-and-white Warblers** were in the OSP area 7/17 (DW, ST). A **Kentucky Warbler** was singing at MRR 6/27 (MF). A male **Hooded Warbler** was singing at OSP 6/27 and a female and begging juvenile were also present (MF). **Ovenbirds** were singing in Springfield Twp. and OSP 6/27 (MF). **Worm-eating Warblers** are local and secretive breeders at OSP, so reports are very welcomed. A singing male was at the park 6/27 (MF) and 2 birds were seen at another location in the park 7/17 (DW, ST).

A **Vesper Sparrow** was a pleasant surprise in Springfield Twp. 6/27 (MF). **Savannah Sparrows** were also in the same area that day (MF) and near OSP 7/17 (DW, ST).

Agricultural fields on Middle Ridge Road just outside of OSP support grassland birds. At least a dozen **Bobolinks** were active 6/27, although courtship flight displays had ceased at this point (MF). **Eastern Meadowlarks** were present at this site as well as in agricultural fields in Springfield Twp. 6/27 (MF).

A **Purple Finch** was at OSP 7/17 (DW, ST). Although resident in the county, they are not reported regularly.

Observers: **Mike Fialkovich, 805 Beulah Road, Pittsburgh, 15235, (412) 731-3581, mpfial@verizon.net**, Dave Krueger, Kate St. John, Shannon Thompson, Dave Wilton.

Forest County

Locations: ANF – Allegheny National Forest; KL – Kellettsville; TI – Tionesta; TL – Tionesta Lake.

Data for *Forest* this summer shows 94 breeding species: 7 possible, 62 probable, and 25 confirmed. (All sightings by FM, JM unless otherwise indicated).

A female **Wood Duck** was seen, followed by 12 young, as she crossed the road to Tionesta Creek near KL 6/15. The timing was perfect—the observers reached the bridge just as the ducks reached the water, and were able to watch the brood swimming away.

Several flocks of **Wild Turkey** with large broods were noted this summer. The **Bald Eagle** nest discovered last year near TI successfully fledged 2 young. **Broad-winged Hawks** were noted in several locations. **American Woodcock** were noted at their usual locations.

A **Northern Flicker** was seen feeding young near TI 8/8, an unusually late date. A community of **Northern Rough-winged Swallows** nested again on the bridge at TL, and **Cliff Swallows** returned to the bridge at KL, where several active nests could be observed. Forty-eight nest boxes monitored at TL and KL for the Army Corps of Engineers fledged only 22 **Tree Swallows**; their numbers have been around 50 since a high of 92 in 2004. **Black-capped Chickadee** fledglings on this nest box trail numbered 20, which is about average. **House Wren** predation at these boxes was high, although only 4 House Wrens fledged. **Eastern Bluebird** fledglings numbered 34, just above average. A **Chestnut-sided Warbler** nest with young was found 7/28 at a banding site in the ANF north of Marienville, in a very brushy regenerative area. The nest was low in blackberry bushes, and apparently successful (LO, ET).

Observers: **Flo McGuire, 609 Ponderosa Lane, PA 16353, (814) 755-3672, fmcguire1@verizon.net**, Jim McGuire, Linda Ordiway, Steve Sandford, Emily Thomas.

Franklin County

No Report.

Compiler: **Dale L. Gearhart, P.O. Box 155, Shady Grove, PA 17256, (717) 860-5799, dgearhart01@comcast.net**

Fulton County

Location: Union Township

On 6/14 at 05:13 a.m. (almost thirty minutes before sunrise) I unexpectedly heard a spot-on call of a **Swainson's Warbler** in *Fulton*. I have no prior experience of seeing/hearing this species, but I've studied the song of this bird from tapes. I ruled out American Redstart, Louisiana Waterthrush, Yellow-throated Warbler, and Hooded Warbler songs. The only other bird that it might be would be an amazing performance from a mimic thrush, and I am not sure if a mocker could rendition the loud song that I heard. I listened to the Stokes Guide to Eastern Bird Songs within 20 seconds of hearing the bird. The bird (if accepted by the Pennsylvania Ornithological Records Committee) was heard between CREP route stops one and two of Fulton CREP Route #4. The region is in the southernmost *Fulton* along Harmon Road, near the Maryland Border.

I heard the song twice. The first time the bird sang was from an area of 50-75 ft high deciduous forest, with areas of thick understory (mostly multiflora rose) where two streams converge together. The rolling land terrain actually slopes downward into a gully of deciduous trees with an open understory of thickets of multiflora rose, jewelweed, and honeysuckle. There are some thick bramble patches under the canopy of deciduous trees. The second time the bird called (about 10 seconds later) it appeared to be going away (northward), becoming more distant, possibly above the theoretical tree-line approximately 100 yards away. This is important; the bird's second vocalization sounded as if it was flying northward while it called. The bird would have to fly over 0.3 miles of farmette and linear streamside deciduous thickets, before getting to more woodlots with streamside thicket understory. The bird apparently sang from the airspace above the farmette.

After my CREP route I went back to the initial area to listen at 08:30. I stayed for about 30 minutes and did not hear anything. I did

take pictures of the habitat site. I felt a little disturbed to see the stream nearest the road have a foam residue on the water's surface (cattle runoff?).

Several things about this sighting don't match-up with the literature. First, the bird has a tendency to sing while sitting in one location (this bird at least once sang the full song while flying over). Second, the habitat was not hemlock-rhododendron association. It was purely deciduous forest woodland with patches of thickets along a stream. Finally, the sighting was not at a high elevation (it was below 1000 feet), but it was on rolling terrain. Subsequent trips out there in late June did not locate any further evidence.

Other notable sightings: **Purple Martins** were detected near Hustontown 6/12. This was the first time in several years these swallows were found in the summer. A few late records of **Blackpoll Warbler** were made 6/6. Counter-singing **Northern Parulas** were noted along a hemlock-lined Tonoloway Creek 6/6. **Blue Grosbeak** sightings 6/14 were confirmed along Harmon Rd. in UN, and a nesting pair at the Mt. Zdon Church in UN.

Observers: **Daniel Snell, PO Box 653, Shippensburg, PA 17257, (717) 530-8313, dan_snell@hotmail.com**.

Greene County

Locations: Claylick Road (CLY); East View (EV); Hunting Hills Farm (HH); Kern Farm (KF); Last Chance Ranch (LCR); Ralph Bell Farm (RBF); Rogersville (RGV); Sycamore (SY); Waynesburg Borough (WB)

Canada Geese found the pond at CLY to their liking and raised a family there along with a family of **Wood Ducks** (LA). A **Mallard** family was noted on Ten Mile Creek near RGV (AD). **Ring-necked Pheasants** nested and raised chicks at HH (SS). **Wild Turkey** babies seen were small for date and few in number throughout the summer, perhaps indicating either delayed nesting or failure of early nests with later re-nesting as a result of so much rain this spring and summer. Three hen Turkeys with 4 young of various sizes, the largest being usual size for mid-Aug and the smallest barely pigeon-sized, were seen and heard clucking in the yard at KF (KK). Also noted at RBF there was a big decline in the number of this species as 3 was the greatest number seen at any one time (RKB). A pair of **Northern Bobwhite** nested and successfully fledged young in Franklin Twp. (*vide* SS).

Great Blue Herons are reported throughout *Greene* by many observers. A pair of **Green Herons** was found at the pond at HH (SS). **Turkey Vultures** are also noted by many throughout the area. However an unusual find was a vulture chick in the nest near RGV (AD).

At RBF a pair **Cooper's Hawks** was thought to be nesting nearby as an adult came into the yard most days and was chased by swarms of **Purple Martins** and **Barn Swallows**, a situation which was a repeat of the previous summer (RKB). A lone **Broad-winged Hawk** was noted near Nettle Hill on three separate occasions while driving through the area (KR). **Red-tailed Hawk** young were heard and seen on the southern edge of WB in mid-Jul. The nest was thought to be just across Ten Mile Creek on a steep hillside (KR). A pair of **American Kestrels** made use of the nest box provided at RBF and fledged a nice family (RKB). **Killdeer** nested at HH on the gravel driveway (SS).

Copious numbers of **Mourning Doves** can be found at KF and just about everywhere else this year! (KK / RKB) A recently fledged **Yellow-billed Cuckoo** was found in the yard at EV (JH). **Black-billed Cuckoos** were heard throughout the period (KK).

An **Eastern Screech-Owl** was found injured near the road in Morgan Twp., possibly hit by a car. The bird was nurtured overnight and seemed better in the morning. It was turned over to State Game personnel. **Barred Owls** serenaded each other and the area at SY (JC).

The house chimney at RBF was chosen for a nest site by **Chimney Swifts** (RKB). The feeder at LCR provided a nice buffet for the local **Ruby-throated Hummingbirds** and their young; however the feeders had to be taken down for a brief period due to the swarms of honey bees that came to the feeders (MLP). A neighbor shared that there was a large hive in an abandoned structure nearby. A family of **Belted Kingfishers** was a nice treat at LCR this summer. After many summers of seeing two birds at a time, seeing the whole family together was a nice surprise (MLP).

A family of **Red-bellied Woodpeckers** found a July apple tree to be a good source of food at KF where the youngsters were brought to feed (KK). **Northern Flickers** were a frequent site at RFB (RKB). A

treat at HH was a **Pileated Woodpecker** family (SS).

At RFB **Eastern Wood-Pewees** were heard singing all summer (RKB). Near a small stream at RBF **Acadian Flycatchers** could be found throughout the period (RKB). At EV a family of **Eastern Phoebe**s made their home (MH). Nearby in RGV a pair of **Eastern Kingbirds** was noted frequently (AD). At field and woods edges at HH **White-eyed Vireos** were often found (SS). **Yellow-throated Vireos** were seen at EV but the nest was not located (MH). Near a covered bridge in Morgan Twp. there is a huge old sycamore and a few other tall trees that were home to at least 3 singing **Warbling Vireos** through Jun and into Jul (KK). **Red-eyed Vireos** were frequently heard at HH all season (SS).

Blue Jay young were found at SY (JC). **American Crows** were not favorably thought of at RBF this summer. RKB states, "Crows were a real pest in the yard this summer always looking for nests to get food for their young. The **Northern Mockingbirds** had built a nest in the rain trough on the barn and laid 3 eggs. The crows raided the nest on 6/11 and the mockingbirds sure weren't happy." A young **Common Raven** was heard calling at RBF 6/18, and 4 were seen 6/23 leading RKB to speculate that they had nested nearby. Also a raven was noted in WB several mornings in Jun (*fide* KR).

Many **Purple Martin** colonies had "NO VACANCIES" again this summer. The fledging started around 7/13 and by 7/23 most all the young were out of the nests at RBF (RKB). The electric wire at RBF provided a perch for 2 young **Tree Swallows** 7/20. RKB relates the first nest of this species he found in *Greene* was in 1968. Now they seem to be common at RBF with at least 8 pairs nesting in the bluebird boxes. They also use the bluebird boxes at HH (SS). **Northern Rough-winged Swallows** nested once again this year in the drain pipes at the Pollock Mill Bridge and were seen feeding the young at the pipe entrance (RKB). **Barn Swallows** were noted nesting by several observers. **Carolina Chickadees** brought their young into the yard at EV (MH). The yard at SY was a busy place this nesting season with **Tufted Titmouse**, **White-breasted Nuthatch**, and **House Wrens**, all nesting (JC). **Carolina Wrens** are frequently reported this summer. JC at SY relates "The Battle of North and South Carolina (Wrens)". She tells, "One pair of Carolina Wrens built a nest on the north side of our little house porch. A few weeks later another pair built a nest on the south side of the porch. Every evening they chased, scolded, chirped, and sang for at least a half hour. Usually 2 or 3 other wrens would join in the ruckus. They really made a lot of noise and mess. About mid June I saw 4 fledglings leave the nest on the north side. The south nest was still used but I didn't see the fledglings leave. After all was quiet and there was no more activity, I watched a House Wren tear out the nest on the south side."

Eastern Bluebirds made good use of the boxes supplied at HH, but unfortunately a pile of blue feathers on the ground and scratches on one box's sides were found providing evidence of (probably raccoon) predation (SS). As usual **Wood Thrushes** were found in many wooded areas throughout *Greene*. **American Robins** were noted as nesting by most all observers. At CLY a **Gray Catbird** was observed building a nest (LA). Meanwhile at RBF a **Northern Mockingbird** again chose an unusual nest site in a rain gutter on the barn. Three eggs were laid and the bird was seen going to and from the nest many times, but the nest was raided by crows 6/11 (RKB). Last summer a **Northern Mockingbird** built a nest in the same rain trough and laid three eggs, but was flooded out after a heavy rain. **Brown Thrashers** nested at SY (JC). A common species that is everywhere but is not frequently reported is **European Starling** which nested at SY (JC).

Blue-winged Warblers were noted at HH (SS). **Northern Parulas** and **Cerulean Warblers** were present at RBF all season (RKB). A **Yellow Warbler** pair was observed building a nest at RGV (AD). A singing **Yellow-throated Warbler** was heard again this summer in some tall conifers in a yard in Franklin Twp. (KK). **Ovenbirds**, **Kentucky Warblers**, **Common Yellowthroats**, **Hooded Warblers**, and **Yellow-breasted Chats** were all easily found at HH (SS). While on a bird club birding trip to Enlow State Game Lands, several observers watched a **Louisiana Waterthrush** forage along the stream's edge.

A pair of **Scarlet Tanagers** was present at HH (SS). Another common species that is seldom reported is **Eastern Towhee** which nested at SY (JC). About 30 pairs of **Chipping Sparrows** nested in the young pine trees being cultivated for Christmas trees at RBF (RKB). Several young **Field Sparrows** were noted foraging along the road near Ruff Creek (MH/KK). Nesting **Song Sparrows** were noted at EV (MH). A treat at SY was seeing a **Rose-breasted Grosbeak** family (JC). Nesting **Indigo Buntings** were found at HH (SS). A singing male **Bobolink** was present at RBF until the hay was mowed in late Jun

(RKB). **Red-winged Blackbirds** nested at SY (JC). Several pairs of **Eastern Meadowlarks** nested at RBF (RKB). **Common Grackles** were reported nesters at CLY (LA). A pair of **Orchard Orioles** spent the season in the yard at KF (KK). **Baltimore Orioles** nested at SY (JC).

While not nearly as profuse as a few years ago, **House Finches** did nest at RBF (RKB). **American Goldfinches** were a common find at HH (SS). Also using the bluebird boxes at HH were **House Sparrows**.

Observers: **Kathy Kern 322 Kennel Road, Waynesburg, PA 15370, (724) 627-5376, n3xsj@windstream.net**, Lyn Argent, Ralph K. Bell, Jan Churney, Al Deynzer, Jerry Howard, Marj Howard, Mary La Plante, Kathy Reeves, Sally Sisler

Huntingdon County

Four **Common Loons** were at Lake Raystown from 7/16 into Aug. (GB). For the sixth consecutive year, **American Kestrels** nested in an abandoned house in Ennisville (DW). As part of the Pennsylvania (and U.S.) Nightjar Survey, two routes were run. Surveys consist of a listening period at each of ten stops spaced at one-mile intervals, with no use of recordings. On a route in Stone Valley 6/1, a total of 4 **Whip-poor-wills** were recorded. On a Rothrock SF route 6/7, with stops in both Huntingdon and Centre, 12 **Whip-poor-wills** were recorded, with birds at 8 of the 10 stops (GG). On a negative note, no **Common Nighthawks** were noted in the town of Huntingdon after migration in May; they have been a long-time regular, if uncommon, summer resident there (DK).

For the 18th year, three BBS were conducted within Rothrock SF; a total of 150 point counts (GG, DG, NB). Most stops are in *Huntingdon*; some are in *Centre* and *Mifflin*. The following table shows the 11 most abundant species in 2009, along with 18-year averages:

	Species	2009	avg.
1	Red-eyed Vireo	195	192
2	Ovenbird	127	150
3	Eastern Towhee	99	77
4	Scarlet Tanager	61	72
5	Wood Thrush	53	48
6	Common Yellowthroat	49	45
7	Chipping Sparrow	44	34
8	Hooded Warbler	36	25
9	Eastern Wood-Pewee	33	37
10	Veery	31	17
10	Bl-thr. Green Warbler	31	29

With no caterpillar infestations this summer, it was not surprising that cuckoos were scarce in Rothrock SF. Only six **Yellow-billed Cuckoos** were counted on the 3 BBS routes compared to the 18-year average of 17. A first for the any of these BBS routes was a **Northern Waterthrush**, heard singing along Greenlee Run. This species is known otherwise to breed in Rothrock SF only in the bog in the Bear Meadows Natural Area. Two species have shown a substantial increase in number over the 18 years of these BBS efforts. From 1992–2000, an average of 11 **Veeries** were recorded; from 2001–2009, the average was 23. Similarly, from 1992–2000, the average number of **Hooded Warblers** was 17; from 2001–2009, the average was 33.

Observers: **Greg Grove, 4343 McAlevys Fort Road, Petersburg, PA 16669, gwg2@psu.edu**, Gloria Bickel, Nick Bolgiano, Deb Grove, David Kyler, Doug Wentzel.

Indiana County

Locations: Indiana (IN), Shelocta (SH), Yellow Creek State Park (YC).

With the Atlas project coming to a close, very little birding was done away from YC. A **Double-crested Cormorant** appeared 6/2 (MH, MVT) at YC, where one week later 3 were sighted (MH, MVT); a singleton was last seen there 6/16 (MH, DM). An adult **Bald Eagle** was found 6/30 (MH, MVT), 7/7 (MH, DM), 7/14 (MH, DM, MVT), and 7/26 (LC) at YC where a juvenile was observed 7/21 (MH, DM, MVT). **Sharp-shinned Hawk** was noted only n. of IN (SB) but **Cooper's Hawks** were found at two locations.

The water level at YC remained high with very little exposed mud

in Little Yellow Cove. Two **Semipalmated Plovers** arrived 7/26 (LC), and one **Least Sandpiper** and a **Short-billed Dowitcher** were nice surprises 7/14 (MH, DM, MVT). Single **American Woodcocks** near LV 6/10 (MC) and at Nolo 6/16 (AB, GL) were the only ones reported. A single **Ring-billed Gull** was seen at YC 6/9 (MH, MVT) and 6/16 (MH, DM). YC yielded 5 **Forster's Terns** 6/2 (MH, MVT) and 2 on 6/30 (MH, MVT).

Both **cuckoos** were rather scarce with only one **Black-billed** found near Spruce 6/14 (MH, RH) and two **Yellow-billed** reports, both at YC 7/21 (MH, DM, MVT) and 7/28 (MVT). A **Whip-poor-will** was calling in Dark Hollow 6/15 (EF, MF, RH).

An **Alder Flycatcher** singing at YC 6/2 (MH, MVT) was still present and vocal 7/21 (MH, DM, MVT). **Blue-headed Vireos** were found at YC 6/2, 9 (MH, MVT), 6/23 (MJA, MH, DM, MVT), and 7/7 (MH, DM) and near SH (MH, RH) throughout the summer. A **Warbling Vireo** at Creekside 6/10 (MH) was the lone report. A **Common Raven** flew over YC calling 6/9 (MH, MVT).

Northern Rough-winged Swallows were observed carrying food and/or fecal sacs at three YC nests 7/14 (MH, DM, MVT). A **Bank Swallow** at YC 6/2 (MH, MVT) was unusually late.

A pair of **Red-breasted Nuthatches** was carrying food near SH 6/26 (MH). A **Hermit Thrush** was singing near Spruce 6/13 (MH, RH).

The only **Blue-winged Warblers** were noted at YC. A territorial **Northern Parula** sang at YC 6/2 (MH, MVT) through 7/7 (MH, DM). Single **Magnolia** and **Blackburnian Warblers** were singing on territory at YC 6/16 (MH, DM) and 6/30 (MH, MVT). One to 2 **Pine Warblers** were found on YC outings between 6/2 (MH, MVT) and 7/14 (MH, DM, MVT), and another was near SH through 6/23 (MH). A family group of 4 **Black-and-white Warblers** was listed at YC 7/28 (MVT).

A pair of **Orchard Orioles** was feeding at least two fledglings at YC 6/23 (MJA, MH, DM, MVT). **Baltimore Orioles** were still carrying food 7/7 (MH, DM) at YC. A female **Purple Finch** was observed nest building at YC 6/16 (MH, DM). Single **Pine Siskins** visited a yard near Lewisville 6/8-9, 25-26; 7/6 (MC) and a SH feeder 6/19 (MH).

Observers: **Margaret Higbee, 3119 Creekside Road, Indiana, PA 15701-7934, bcoriole@windstream.net**, Mary Jane Alexander (MJA), Alice Beatty, Sid Blair, Lee Carnahan, Marcy Cunkelman, Betsy Fetterman, Evelyn Fowles, Mike Fowles, Roger Higbee, Pat Johner, Gloria Lamer, Donna Meyer, Marjorie Van Tassel (MVT).

Jefferson County

No Report.

Compiler: **Mike Weible, 124 N. Third Street, Shipperville, PA 16254, (717) 357-3319, feather_ridge@yahoo.com**

Juniata County

Locations: Lost Creek Shoe Shop (LCSS)

Three **Bald Eagles** fledged from the nest near Arch Rock 6/25. A possible southwestern subspecies of the **Cliff Swallow** was documented at a farm outside of Port Royal 6/6 (CK, AT, DR). A **White-throated Sparrow** was seen in Oakland Mills at LCSS 7/23 (AT). A single **Pine Siskin** was visiting a feeder at LCSS 6/1 (AT).

Observers: **Chad Kauffman, 91 Kauffman Lane, Mifflintown, PA 17059, (717) 994-6715 (m), (717) 436-8257 (h/w), chadkauffman@earthlink.net**, Daniel Renno, Aden Troyer.

Lackawanna County

Locations: Lackawanna State Park (LSP)

I received few reports for the summer season in *Lackawanna*. The weather in June and July surely contributed to the dearth of reports. Even the PA Birds listserv had nothing to contribute this season. If any readers have sightings to report in the future, please contact me. My information is below. As a non-resident compiler, I rely on others for the majority of sightings.

The season was marked by below average temperatures and above average rainfall. All sightings are from over the course of a week

in July during a vacation when we visited family in Jermyn.

On 7/26, a **Broad-winged Hawk** was flying and calling over Jermyn (JG). Also on that date was a **Red-tailed Hawk** on Rte. 6 and a **Turkey Vulture** over "Lakeland" Mountain.

On 7/27, an adult **Bald Eagle** was seen flying over Lackawanna State Park (JG). Also seen at LSP were **Great Blue Heron**, Eastern Phoebe, **Eastern Kingbird**, **Red-winged Blackbird**, **Chipping Sparrow** and **American Goldfinch**.

Observers: **Joe Greco 3116 Township Woods Rd, East Greenville, PA 18041, (610) 457-1812 joe@grecofamily.org**.

Lancaster County

Locations: Susquehanna River, Conejohela Flats (SRCF), Middlecreek WMA (MCWMA)

This summer was highlighted by sightings of **Mississippi Kite**, **Black-necked Stilt**, **Hudsonian Godwit**, **Arctic Tern**, and **Least Tern**.

Common Mergansers were seen regularly this summer on the Susquehanna River with five at SRCF 6/10. This species is at least an irregular breeder on the river. 25 **Great Egrets** were at SRCF 7/28 (CC) and 2 **Little Blue Herons** there the same day were the first of the season. **Yellow-crowned Night Heron** no longer known to breed in *Lancaster*, but juvenile birds are usually seen at least every other year. A kayak trip on the Conestoga River from Ephrata to Brownstown on 7/17 produced several **Black-crowned Night Herons** and a juvenile **Yellow-crowned Night Heron** (TA, CC). A leucistic **Turkey Vulture** was seen and photographed flying over the Breezyview Park Overlook and Chickies Rock 6/7 (ML). The **Mississippi Kites** that were seen at the end of May carried into June with a single bird seen 6/1 at the Breezyview Park Overlook between Marietta and Columbia (m.ob.).

Both **Virginia Rail** and **Sora** were still present at Wood's Edge Pond near Centerville 6/10 (CC, et al.). They probably bred this year although to my knowledge that was not confirmed.

Shorebirds during the spring migration at SRCF included **Semipalmated Plover** 6/10 and 2 **Black-necked Stilts** the morning of 6/10 (CC, et al.) and **Dunlin** 6/5. Returning shorebirds later in Jul included **Greater Yellowlegs** 7/15, **Lesser Yellowlegs** 7/15, **Solitary Sandpiper** 7/20, **Semipalmated Sandpiper** 7/20, **Hudsonian Godwit** 7/29 (CC, BS), **Sanderling** 7/29, **Least Sandpiper** 7/10, **Pectoral Sandpiper** 7/22, and **Short-billed Dowitcher** 7/15. By the end of Jul shorebirds were still being reported only in small numbers, which has been the trend this year. **Caspian Tern** was at SCRF 7/10 and was seen later in the month. 6 **Forster's Terns** were at SRCF 6/23 and 3 more at the same location 7/28. **Arctic Terns** were reported late in May from the "Rocks" on the Susquehanna River just south of Columbia, and 2-3 were still being seen 6/2 (AD, JD, DW). A **Least Tern** was a good find and a one day wonder at SRCF 6/7 (BS, EW, m.ob.).

Prothonotary Warblers were reported nesting in good numbers at SRCF. **Blue Grosbeak** is a regular breeder in the southern part of the county and farther north along the Susquehanna River. This year a pair was seen near Manheim just north of the intersection with Auction and Junction Roads (BC). An immature was at MCWMA 7/4 (BC). **Pine Siskins** bred in the county this spring after their invasion this past winter. Two stragglers continued to visit feeders in Churchtown through 6/2 (BH, FH).

Observers: **Jonathan Heller, 720 Aspen Lane, Lebanon, PA 17042, jonathan.heller@comcast.net**, Tom Amico, Bruce Carl, Chuck Chalfant, Amy Davis, Jeffrey Davis, Tom Garner, Barb Haas, Frank Haas, Meredith Lombard, Andy McGann, Kate Miller, Randy Miller, Tom Raub, Bob Schutsky, Drew Weber, Eric Witmer.

Lawrence County

Locations: New Beaver (NB), Volant Strip Mines (VSM).

A **Common Loon** in non-breeding plumage was at NB 6/5-12 (MV). A **Pied-billed Grebe** with young was seen at NB 6/12 (MV). Interesting mid-Jun was a female **Red-breasted Merganser** at NB 6/12 (MV). Three **Common Mergansers** were at a gravel pond near the Slippery Rock exit off I-79 on 7/31 (MV).

Common Moorhens bred at a marsh near New Galilee again this

year (MV). Two **Sandhill Cranes** with one young in tow were found at the usual location in Plain Grove Twp. 7/31 (MV). Exposed mud at Black Swamp attracted some early returning shorebirds, such as **Lesser Yellowlegs** 7/4 and **Least Sandpiper** 7/10 (MV). The gravel pond near I-79 mentioned above also produced some shorebirds, including 5 **Least Sandpipers** 7/11 (MV). Shorebird reports in both locations increased in Aug and will be reported next season. A **Solitary Sandpiper** on private property 7/27 (ST) was the first reported. Four **Forster's Terns** at NB 6/20 (MV) were notable. **Purple Martins** were reported nesting in New Wilmington 6/22 (CH) and were also seen on private property 7/27 (ST).

Grassland species were widely reported by several observers at VSM this summer. These included **Henslow's Sparrow**, **Grasshopper Sparrow**, **Savannah Sparrow**, **Bobolink** (including a report of 30+ on 6/22 by CH), **Eastern Meadowlark**, **Northern Harrier**, and **American Kestrel**.

Report was compiled by the chief editor.

Observers: Anthony Bledsoe, Craig Holt, Richard Nugent, Geoff Malosh, Steve Sanford, Steve Tucker, Mark Vass.

NEW COMPILER BEGINNING FALL 2009: Stephen Tirone, 135 Isolda Drive, Pittsburgh, PA 15209, (724) 719-8643, stephen.tirone@gmail.com.

Lebanon County

Locations: Camp Shand (CS), Fort Indiantown Gap (FIG), Lake Strouse (LS), Middlecreek Wildlife Management Area (MC), Mt. Pleasant Road (MPR).

About 20 **Snow Geese** spent the summer at MC (m.ob.). An immature male **Ruddy Duck** was at MPR on 6/2 for a new late date (CB). An **Osprey** was at LS from 7/14 (JL) to 7/19 (GK). This is a small lake with homes all around. A **Northern Harrier** was at FIG until 6/1 in the grassland area (DM). **Bald Eagles** were seen throughout the county all quarter (m.ob.).

A near adult **Sandhill Crane** found at Lake Duffy on 6/15 (AA) would have set a new late date but was seen almost daily until 6/30 (m.ob.). This crane was very brown and was the same one seen along Spangler Road a few miles to the north in late May (m.ob.). The Sandhill Crane was seen 5 times in July: 7/9 (MM), 7/19 (JH), 7/22 (MM), 7/30 (TB), and 7/31 (SH, m.ob.). These are a first July records for the county and the 14th county record overall.

Two **Lesser Yellowlegs** were at MC on 7/1 (RCM). All the other ponds are flooded with no mud in the county.

An adult **Red-headed Woodpecker** was seen in a new clear cut on SGL 145 on 6/10 (SH). Another was heard calling nearby (FH). Only one was there on 6/11 and not after (RCM).

Very few **Red-eyed Vireos** were found on SGL 145 and 156 and other forested areas in the southern part of the county (m.ob.), but very good numbers were on SGL 80 this quarter (GK). A **Black-capped Chickadee** was singing on 7/14 at SGL 156 (RCM). They are very uncommon in the southern part of the county in summer.

An **Orchard Oriole** was found on 6/8 in Palmyra at a quarry rock pile was out of place (GK).

Observers: **Randy C. Miller, 607 Woodland Dr., Manheim, PA 17545, (717) 664-3778**, Anne Annibaldi, Chuck Berthoud, Terry Brown, Denise Donmoyer, Fred Habegger, Jim Hollinger, Steve and Annette Holtzman, Sid Hostetter, Evelyn Koppel, Jim Logan, Linda McKinne, Mike McKinne, David McNaughton, Kate Miller, Ryan Miller, Andy Ohrman, Art Schiavo, Roberta and Robbie Warren, Susan Wheeler, Fred Wilcox, Dale Zimmerman.

Lehigh County

Locations: Lehigh Gap Nature Center (LGNC)

Breeding season 2009 was uncharacteristically cool and wet in the Lehigh Valley. Combined mean temperatures for June and July were 2.1° F below norm, while rainfall was 2.23 inches above norm (NOAA / National Weather Service data for Allentown, archived at <http://www.weather.gov/climate/index.php?wfo=phi>). Unfavorable

conditions may have resulted in failed or delayed breeding, according to observers. Water levels were generally high throughout the season, with the exception of Leaser Lake, which was drawn down on 6/12 by the Pennsylvania Fish & Boat Commission in preparation for future repairs to the dam. Conditions at Leaser Lake were favorable for northbound shorebirds in spring, but most muddy areas had become overgrown and meadow-like by late July. In total, 119 species were reported in *Lehigh* this season. 97 species were reported breeders (50 Confirmed, 28 Probable, and 19 Possible, based upon criteria established for the 2nd PBBA).

Four **Snow Geese** continued into summer at Lake Muhlenburg. The birds were banded, but information regarding provenance is unknown at this time. **Hooded Merganser** and **Ruddy Duck** lingered at Dorney Landfill through at least 6/6 (BW). A family group of 6 **Common Mergansers** on the Lehigh at Salisbury Twp. indicated breeding there (ES). At Leaser Lake, a small covey of **Northern Bobwhite** was heard by several observers from early spring into late July. Though it is hoped they fare well in the wild, these quail are almost certainly released birds.

A lone juvenile **Double-crested Cormorant** was at Dorney Pond 7/10 to 7/15 (BE). **Great Egret** was at Haafsville on 7/3 (DN), and an immature **Black-crowned Night-Heron** visited a Lynn Twp. mini-golf water hazard on 6/29 (BW). **Osprey** and **Bald Eagle** were noted at various points along the Lehigh River; a pair of **Osprey** nesting on the *Northampton* side of the Lehigh River near Laurys Station accounted for several *Lehigh* sightings. **Bald Eagle** was reported from LGNC (CH), Cementon (ML), and Salisbury Twp (ES).

Allentown's **Peregrine Falcon** pair was present for the third consecutive year (TW, RH, AM). Following 2008's initial successful nesting, which produced 4 chicks atop the PPL Building, the pair moved a quarter mile south in 2009, and were found nesting on the 8th Street bridge over the Little Lehigh Creek in mid June (JL). This year's nest again produced 4 chicks (1F, 3M), which were banded on 6/16 (AM). Sadly, one of the fledglings impaled itself on a lightning rod atop the 23-story PPL building sometime in mid July, and was found dead after approximately two weeks (BH, AM). On a more positive note, at least one sibling from the '09 clutch was alive, active, and well, lingering at the 8th Street nest site as late as 7/31 (TW). On a side note, one of the three female Allentown fledges from 2008 was found injured in a presumed territorial battle in the Bronx, NY in mid April 2009 (*vide* AM).

American Coot remained at Dorney Landfill through at least 6/6 (BW). At Leaser Lake, some early migrant shorebirds were recorded by 7/21: **Spotted** and **Solitary Sandpiper**, both **Yellowlegs**, and **Least Sandpiper** (FD). A second cycle **Ring-billed Gull** was seen flying over one of the many fast food joints in Whitehall Twp on 7/3, and a lone **Common Nighthawk** was cruising over Slatington 7/7 (BE).

At SGL205 in Lowhill Twp., a singing **Blue-headed Vireo** appeared to be territorial on 6/12 (BE). This species is a rare breeder south of the Blue Ridge, and may have been a late migrant. High atop the Blue Ridge, a **Common Raven** was at Bake Oven Knob on 7/7 (FD). **Horned Lark** was present in Heidelberg Twp on 6/6 (BH). No **Purple Martin** colonies were noted, but a lone adult bird was at Dorney Pond on 07/12. **Bank Swallows** were in Upper Saucon and Washington Twps; numbers at the colony east of the Promenade Shops in Upper Saucon appeared to be significantly lower than the previous two years (BE, TW).

Fourteen species of warblers, including a late migrant **Blackpoll** were recorded this season. Notable breeders were **Pine Warbler** at Trexler Pines (probable - BE), **Prairie Warbler** at LGNC (at least 3 pairs confirmed - CH), and **Cerulean Warbler** along Bake Oven Road, where at least 5 were heard singing on 6/6 (BH).

Grassland species including **Vesper**, **Savannah**, and **Grasshopper Sparrows** were present at locations across northern *Lehigh* (Heidelberg and Lynn Twps - BH) and at Scheirers Road near SGL205 (BE). **Grasshopper Sparrow** was also present in North Whitehall Twp (BH, BE), and, somewhat less predictably, at the Queen City Airport along Lehigh Street in southern Allentown (KS, BE). A pair of **Blue Grosbeak** was found carrying food to a presumed nest in North Whitehall on 7/5 (BH) and seen regularly over the following weeks.

And finally, the Summer 2009 "winter finch" report for Lehigh: Winter 2008-2009 proved to be a notable irruption year for both **White-winged Crossbill** and **Pine Siskin**, but the fact that a few individuals of each species lingered into the summer breeding season was truly remarkable. On 6/12, at least 4 very vocal **White-winged Crossbills** were seen flying from a small stand of Norway spruce on SGL205 in Lowhill Twp (BE). In Fountain Hill, a single **Pine Siskin** associated with a group of **American Goldfinch** visited a feeder almost daily from 6/27

to 07/05 (ES).

EXOTICS: A **Chukar** at SGL205 on 6/29 (BE) was certainly released or escaped.

Observers: **Bill Etter, 209 E South St, Slatington PA, 18080. 215.964.3613. billetter01@gmail.com**, Frank Dickman, Bob Hoopes, Corey Husic, Matt Loyko, Jeff Luzenski, Art McMorris, Dave Neimeyer, Ed Sinkler, Kathy Stagl, Todd Watkins, Billy Weber.

Luzerne County

Locations: Francis Slocum State Park (FSSP), Plymouth Fats (PLYF), Pennsylvania Power & Light Riverlands (PPL), Ricketts Glen State Park (RGSP), Susquehanna River (SR),

The summer breeding season was cool and wet and it appears that recorded sightings were somewhat below normal. Never the less there were still some notable records submitted.

A **Snow Goose** was found in Wyoming on the SR with a flock of **Canada Geese** on 6/6 (JS) and was still present on 7/21 (KR).

Great Egret was seen 6/28 at PLYF and another was found on 7/7 along the SR in Wilkes-Barre (KR, JS). By the end of Jul there were numbers of Great Egrets being seen along the SR (KR, et al).

Shorebirds began moving through our area in late Jul with reports of **Solitary Sandpiper, Least Sandpiper, Semipalmated Sandpiper, Lesser Yellowlegs, and Pectoral Sandpiper** 7/21 along the SR (KR).

Bald Eagles continue to be observed throughout the year now along the SR and are presumed nesting in the greater Wyoming Valley region (JS, et al.). Another raptor species that has recently (past 12 years) called *Luzerne* home is the **Peregrine Falcon**, which has been very well documented in the Wilkes-Barre area (BW, JHa) but the bird seen in downtown Hazelton on 7/11 (JD) may represent a possible new nesting location. We're also starting to receive reports of **Merlin** during the breeding season but as of yet no confirmed nest sites have been found (KR). **Red-shouldered Hawk** was found nesting in Dorance (RK) and was seen frequently this period at RGSP & SGL 57 (RK, JH).

A **White-eyed Vireo** was heard singing in Beach Haven on 6/7 (RK) and re-located a week later in the same area (JH). The **Swainson's Thrush** that was heard singing on 6/14 at RGSP was a welcome find for this observer (JH, RK). At least 12 individual **Acadian Flycatchers** were found on the same day along the Falls Trail of RGSP (JH, RK). **Cerulean Warbler** continued throughout the period at the PA Fish & Boat Commission Access near Shickshinny and at least 4 individuals were located a little farther downriver on the Mocanaqua Trail (JH, RK).

The **Orchard Oriole** pair that had successfully bred for the past two seasons near FSSP met a tragic end this year when the female was hit by a car (BT). They also continue to be reported from PLYF and PPL so they seem to have a good foothold in the county (KR, RK).

Observers: **Jim Hoyson, 88 Ridge St., Shavertown, PA 18708, (570) 696-4925 birdder@aol.com**, Jonathan DeBalko, Jeff Hartman (JHa), Rick Koval, Kevin Ripka, Jim Shoemaker, Bruce Troy, Bob Wasilewski.

Lycoming County

Locations: Little Pine Creek (LPC), Pine Creek (PC)

Without the breeding bird atlas to motivate fieldwork, few reports were generated during this season. DB and FS, however, visited abandoned gravel pits near the airport on 7/23 to look for shorebirds and other species. Two young of year **Bald Eagles** were observed soaring, and on the extensive mudflats were about 15 **Killdeer**. Flying among the abandoned gravel ponds were 3 **Caspian Terns**. They also heard and observed an actively singing **White-eyed Vireo**, this first summer observation in Region 50 during the whole 2nd PBBA period, but past its safe-date!. A BBS route along LPC and PC reported more frequent encounters with **Yellow-billed** and **Black-billed Cuckoos** (DB). Also in the sycamores of the creeks, **Warbling Vireo** (relatively uncommon in the Plateau) was detected more frequently than expected (DB).

Observers: **Dan Brauning, (570) 547-6938, dbrauning@state.pa.us**, Fred Stiner.

McKean County

No Compiler.

Mercer County

Locations: Williamson Road (WR)

Sixty-seven species were confirmed as breeders in the county, 31 as probable, and 2 as possible.

The PA Power company erected metal barriers atop a telephone pole along Rte. 8 Causeway to discourage **Osprey** from nesting there. The strategy didn't work. Osprey used it anyway and fledged 2 young.

MV reported that the water level of the wetland at Pennsy Swamp was extremely low. It hosted 2 **Green Heron**, 36 **Killdeer**, 3 **Solitary**, one **Spotted**, one **Semipalmated**, 17 **Least**, and 3 **Pectoral Sandpipers**.

A **Black-billed Cuckoo** was observed carrying food to young at Nicklin Lane in mid-Jun. A **Common Nighthawk** flew over WR 6/3. An **Alder Flycatcher** was at the same place 6/4. A mixed flock of **Northern Rough-winged** and **Barn Swallows** was along WR 7/24. **Brown Creeper** and **Dark-eyed Junco** were heard at SGL 130 on 7/11. A single **Pine Siskin** briefly visited a feeding station at WR 7/4 (all NT). In summary, the period was uneventful.

Observers: **Marty McKay, 841 East Lake Road, Transfer, PA 16154, (724) 962-7476**, Harriet Bauer, Harvey Troyer, Jerry Troyer, Neil Troyer, Ruth Troyer, Samuel Troyer, Mark Vass.

Mifflin County

Location: Rothrock State Forest (RSF).

A **Ruddy Turnstone** with a broken wing was found in a field near Belleville 6/9 (JZ). Birds observed in the Spruce Mt. area of Rothrock SF from the *Mifflin* section of a BBS 6/21 included **Broad-winged Hawk, Acadian Flycatcher, Blue-headed Vireo, Veery, Chestnut-sided, Magnolia, Black-throated Blue, Black-throated Green, Worm-eating, and Hooded Warblers, and Ovenbird** (DG, GG).

Observers: **Greg and Deb Grove, 4343 McAlevys Fort Road, Petersburg, PA 16669, (814) 667-2305, gwg2@psu.edu, dsq4@psu.edu**, Jay Zook.

Monroe County

Locations: Delaware Water Gap National Recreation Area (DWGNRA), East Stroudsburg (ES), Monroe County Environmental Education Center (MCEEC).

The Pocono region experienced one of the wettest Junes on record, and July was unseasonably cool. Few reports were received.

Surprising the observer (and its prey!) was the **Red-tailed Hawk** seen 6/13 taking a **European Starling** at its nest cavity in a downtown ES building (CT). An excellent find was the **Virginia Rail** with at least one young in a DWGNRA wetland near Bushkill 7/3 (JW). An occupied **Purple Martin** house, unusual to come by in the county, was reported 6/17 near Dansbury Park along the Brodhead Creek in ES (WL).

Two warblers furnished rare summer records for the county. The **Yellow-throated Warbler** found in late May along the Brodhead Creek south of Canadensis continued at this location through June (RW); breeding was not confirmed. Also, a singing **Mourning Warbler** was found 6/6 at Tobyhanna State Park (fide DS); no subsequent reports of this bird were received.

Three **Pine Siskins** visited feeders near Cherry Valley into mid-Jun (E & RC), and an adult feeding a fledgling 6/9 at this same location provided a rare county breeding record (BH). The last Pine Siskin at MCEEC's feeders was seen 6/10 (BH).

Observers: **Brian Hardiman, Monroe County Environmental Education Center, 8050 Running Valley Rd, Stroudsburg, PA 18360, (570) 629-3061, bhmcdd@ptd.net**, Bill Clark, Elizabeth and Ron Cortright, Wendy Lichty, John Serrao, Darryl Speicher, Craig Todd, Jim Wilson, Rick Wiltraut.

Montgomery County

Locations: Franconia Township, Green Lane Reservoir (GLR), Norristown Farm Park (NFP), Unami Creek Valley (UCV), Upper Gwynedd Township.

The summer season brought below average temperatures and above average rainfall. Following a very rainy May (6.88"), precipitation for June and July totaled 10.31", dashing any hopes for mudflats at Green Lane Reservoir. All sightings by George Francois (GAF) unless noted otherwise.

Waterfowl of note included **Common Mergansers** breeding again at Church Road, GLR. Even more surprising was an immature **Hooded Merganser** in the company of two **Wood Ducks** at Norristown Farm Park 6/30 (A&JM). As this species is not known to breed in *Montgomery*, some of us had to wonder, was this bird the result of a dump nest?

A **Common Loon** was a mid-summer surprise at Walt Road, GLR 6/14, and **Double-crested Cormorants** spent the entire season at GLR. Three **Great Egrets** flew over Walt Road, GLR 7/22. **Green Herons** were seen throughout the season at several locations. This was a welcome sign from this species in continued decline. An immature **Black-crowned Night Heron** was at Walt Road, (GLR) 7/4.

GLR's **Bald Eagle** nest fledged one youngster in mid-Jun (GAF, m.ob.). Unfortunately, the fledgling was found dead nearby 6/29. The bird did not appear emaciated or show any outward signs of injury (KC). The specimen was collected by the Pennsylvania Game Commission Southeast Region office, but the cause of death is yet unknown. On a more upbeat note, at least one **Osprey** was at GLR the entire season (GAF, KC). **Cooper's Hawks** continue to thrive as year-round residents, and soon will not warrant mention. Reports were received from many locations including GLR (GAF), UCV (KC), Norristown Farm Park, and Upper Gwynedd Twp (A&JM).

Given the high water levels, any shorebird sighting was welcome. Five **Spotted Sandpipers** at Walt Road 7/15, and a **Lesser Yellowlegs** 7/20 were our only reports. Two **Caspian Terns** were at Walt Road 7/6, setting a new record early date (GAF). Another 2 were at Church Road, GLR 7/27.

A **Common Nighthawk** over Pennsburg 6/12 was another avian surprise from a declining species.

The season's best flycatcher was an **Alder Flycatcher** at Walt Road, GLR through at least 7/6. A **White-eyed Vireo** was on a power line crossing 6/20. (KC) The bird's song began as a typical one for the species, but ended in the "dee-dee-dee" ending of a Carolina Chickadee's song. Oddly, this species was found in this very spot during the first year of the PBBA in 2004, and not reported again until this season.

A **Purple Martin** was in Franconia Twp. 6/23, most likely a local breeder (A&JM). The first migrant martins were detected at Walt Road, GLR 7/15 (GAF) and UCV 7/21 (KC). A **Bank Swallow** at Norristown Farm Park 7/12 was our only one for the season (A&JM). A **Veery** in the UCV was another nice surprise, as the species has all but disappeared as a breeding bird there. **Brown Thrashers** were at Walt Road, GLR 6/9 through the end of July.

An **Eastern Meadowlark** was at Church Road, GLR 6/6 (JG), and 4 were seen there 7/8 (GAF). **Orchard Orioles** were regular at Walt Road beginning 6/9, and a male was seen feeding 2 fledglings there 7/27.

Observers: **Kevin Crilley, PO Box 100, Sumneytown, PA 18084, (215) 234-6867, kcrilley@mail.montcopa.org**, George Francois (GAF), Joe Greco, August and Judy Mirabella, Edith Parnum.

Montour County

No Report.

Compiler: **Jon Beam, Montour Preserve, 700 Preserve Rd., Danville, PA 17821, (570) 437-3131, jdbeam@pplweb.com.**

Northampton County

Locations: Martins Creek Environmental Preserve (MCEP)

There was a **Great Egret** at Green Pond 6/27 (MS). A **Peregrine**

Falcon was observed taking an adult male **American Kestrel** 6/22 (PK). Karner noted the 3 young he banded would have to rely solely on their mother for survival. There was a **Semipalmated Plover** at Green Pond 7/30 (DD). One **Red-headed Woodpecker** was seen in Bath 7/27 and 2 immature **Red-headed Woodpeckers** were seen at Jacobsburg State Park 7/12 (RW, SB). On 7/21-24, 4 **Purple Martins** were seen on wires along Hillside rd, E Allen Twp (BM). An **Alder Flycatcher** called from the powerlines section at Bear Swamp 6/27 (RW). There was an **Acadian Flycatcher** nest containing 3 eggs near the trail entrance at Bear Swamp 6/28 (MS). I checked the nest a week later and the eggs were still being incubated. In the Mt Bethel area, a **Brown Creeper** was seen 6/11 (MSa).

At Bear Swamp on 6/28, a **Northern Waterthrush** nest was discovered (RW). RW heard a **Pine Warbler** in the swamp singing that same day. A **Yellow-throated Warbler** was seen and heard at Bethlehem Boat Club 6/27 (MS). For the second year, a **Kentucky Warbler** held a territory by a small quarry at Jacobsburg State Park (MS).

It has been a good year for **Blue Grosbeaks** in the county. With new housing developments popping up all over, there is good habitat. Land is cleared and roads put in but the houses go up slowly, leaving grassy, weedy open areas that are favored by grosbeaks. On 6/11-19, a Blue Grosbeak was found along Bender's Church rd (RW) and another pair was along Jacktown rd (MSa) 6/28, both areas in Plainfield Twp. A housing project in progress in E Allen Twp had an immature male (DW). The grasslands at Grand Central Landfill in Pen Argyl also hosted a pair of Blue Grosbeaks. There were at least 5 **White-winged Crossbills** still around at Nazareth Boro Park 6/5.

Observers: **Michael Schall, 126 N Chestnut St, Bath, (610) 737-5275, mdtjschall@yahoo.com**, Steve Boyce, Dave DeReamus, Paul Karner, Betsy Mescavage, Matt Sabatine, Dustin Welch, Rick Wiltraut.

Northumberland County

No Compiler.

Perry County

No Report.

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Philadelphia County

Locations: Art Museum (AM), Benjamin Rush State Park (BRSP), Carpenter's Woods (CW), Darby Creek (DC), Delaware River (DR), East Park Reservoir (EPR), Fairmount Park (FP), Franklin D. Roosevelt Park (FDR), Glen Foerd Mansion on the DR (GF), John Heinz National Wildlife Refuge at Tinicum-Philadelphia portion (TI), Naval Business Center (aka Navy Yard) (NBC), Pennypack Environmental Center (PEC), Philadelphia International Airport (PHL), Pennypack on the Delaware (POD), Schuylkill River (SR), Schuylkill Center for Environmental Education (SCEE), Wissahickon Creek (WC).

Global warming must have gone somewhere else this summer, because Philly had a record rainy June and a record cold July. Comments from contributors were that passerine nesting was late and butterfly numbers were decimated due to the cold and rainy spring. The number of known breeders reflected on the Summer Breeding Chart includes a new species, **Pine Siskin**, seen building a nest at GF on 4/27 (FW). SD saw a **Pine Siskin** at his thistle feeder 6/25 and two at the same feeder as late as 7/26 with no other breeding behavior noted. We confirmed nesting for 85 species, found 5 to be probable nesters and 11 to be possible. There were no sightings of **Common Moorhen** or **Blue Grosbeak**.

Please note an important change in site abbreviations. The small city park called Pennypack on the Delaware (POD) was denoted as R-DR (Rhawn St. at the Delaware River, which is a true descriptor). POD has become a hot birding area through the attention of FW (191 species recorded in just two years). I no longer fear confusion between Pennypack on the Delaware (POD) and Pennypack Park (PEC) hence the change.

On the SCEE breeding bird census 62 species were counted on

6/6. LA, who has sadly left SCEE, noted the "lack of some species seen in the recent past, such as **Cooper's hawk**, **Eastern Kingbird**, **Field Sparrow**, **Wild Turkey**, **White-eyed Vireo**, **Rose-breasted Grosbeak** and **Northern Parula**."

On 6/7 five **Snow Goose** were photographed feeding in a grassy area in the 6200 block of Lindbergh Blvd (AJ). **Common Merganser** lingered at TI until at least 6/26 (BB). A **Least Bittern** nest with two hatchlings was found at TI on 7/2 (DM). **Bald Eagle** and **Peregrine Falcon** continue to be successful nesters. **Cooper's Hawk** nested in the same area at TI as past years, successfully fledging two young.

MD was dining on a rooftop at 21st and South St. where 2 **Common Nighthawk** engaged in a vigorous courtship display 6/17, and in Northern Liberties a pair was observed on 6/18 (KS). These two observations led me to change the breeding code from Probable to Confirmed even though we had been sure that at least a small number of **Common Night** hawk breed annually in Philly.

The planned impoundment drawdown at TI was not effective and the influx of waders never materialized except for a few **Semipalmated Sandpiper** and **Least Sandpiper**. At Morris Arboretum on 7/12 KJ saw 6 **Killdeer**, a **Greater Yellowlegs**, a **Solitary Sandpiper**, a **Spotted Sandpiper**, and a **Least Sandpiper** which is a nice assortment of birds for this small wetland area. POD proves to be the new hot spot for waders, as well as passerines, when the tide is low exposing extensive mud flats or on the acres of grassy playing fields which provide a high tide resting place for waders. FW saw a **Black-bellied Plover** there 7/29 along with **Semipalmated** and **Least Sandpiper** in July.

Laughing Gull is present on the DR almost year round in most years and certainly in June and July. Two adult **Caspian Tern** with a juvenile were an unusual find at POD on 7/30 (ph. FW). **Forster's Tern** feeding young are common at TI even in early July (DM).

On 6/11 a **Black-billed Cuckoo** was at Houston Meadow in the Andorra Natural Area (KR). **Yellow-billed Cuckoo**, absent from TI, were reported at BRSP on 6/3 (FW) and at the northern county border 6/20 (AA). Four **Purple Martin** over POD on 7/10 were the only record (FW). Without knowledge of nesting colonies in Philly, we assume several **Bank Swallow** seen 6/1-9 at GF, POD, and PEC are New Jersey birds. Hundreds of **Tree Swallow** nest boxes at TI and the sewage treatment plants along the DR usually produce many hundreds of fledglings. This year the majority of boxes were empty and I removed scores of dead birds, probably due to hypothermia. Less than 75 birds were banded. A **Hermit Thrush** in the northeast along the DR was a shocker on 6/4 (FW).

A singing **Magnolia Warbler** in Germantown caught the attention of MS on 6/22. A **Pine Warbler** at GF was singing 4/27-6/2 (FW). KR found a late **Blackpoll Warbler** along the Upper WC on 6/5 and **Black-and-white Warbler** was along the DR in the northeast 6/1 (FW). **American Redstart** attempted to nest at TI for the second year, but failed, probably due to the weather. **Worm-eating Warbler** is always a good bird and especially so when FW found it singing at Bell's Mills Rd on 7/5. A singing male **Hooded Warbler** was found at TI 6/9 (BB). A 6/7 sighting of a **Yellow-breasted Chat** at BRSP was the only report (FW).

Contributors: **Doris McGovern, 209 Dogwood Rd., Media, PA 19063, (610) 565-8484, mcgovern100@comcast.net**, Andrew Albright, Leigh Ashbrook, Denis Brennan, Brian Byrnes, Martin Dellwo, Steve DuPont, Todd Fellenbaum, Gregg Gorton, Ken Januski, Chuck Lyman, Art McMorris, Nick Pulcinella, Lynn Roman, Keith Russell, Matt Sharp, Kate Somerville, Gary Stolz, Frank Windfelder.

Pike County

No Compiler.

Potter County

No Report.

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Schuylkill County

No Report.

Compiler: **Tom Clauser, P.O. Box 531, Pottsville, PA (570) 294-9760, runner01@comcast.net.**

Snyder County

Locations: Faylor Lake (FL), Susquehanna River (SR), Walker Lake (WL).

A single male **Greater Scaup** was found and photographed on a pond along Decker Rd, south of Port Ann, 6/15. This is an unusual species for the county during any season and very likely the first "summer" season report (P&RW). **Double-crested Cormorant** numbers this summer are on the increase at the fabric dam across the Susquehanna River near Sunbury (DU).

An **Osprey** was observed flying over Middle Creek at Covered Bridge Rd. north of Beavertown 6/15 (P&RW). **Bald Eagles**, both mature and immature, are regularly observed near the Isle of Que, at Selingsgrove, from Hoover's landing to Shady Nook (DU).

Two **Red-headed Woodpeckers** were observed along Decker Rd. about 1/2 mile south of Port Ann 6/15 (P&RW).

Observers: **Richard Williams, 3 Parkside Dr., Hummelstown, PA 17036, (717) 566-6562, RWPuffin@aol.com**, Don Ulrich, Patricia Williams.

Somerset County

Locations: Berlin Area (BA), Buffalo Creek (BC).

The breeding season was best described as wet and cool. Many low lying areas stayed wet through most of the season, perhaps resulting in the most significant finding of summering **Sandhill Cranes**. Overall observer effort was very low this season.

Twelve young **Ring-necked Pheasants** were observed near Meyersdale (EB). These are raised releases and not wild caught Pheasant Forever project reintroduced birds.

A pair of **Sandhill Cranes** was discovered at BC 6/15 and were present through the period and beyond with no obvious signs of nesting (JP, LP, CP). This site is within 15 miles of the Maryland border, a very southern location for summering. The area was exceptionally flooded by beavers, creating 100+ acres of mixed open water, flooded reed canary grass, and scrub/shrub wetlands. The birds flew daily into farm fields to feed and were seen by several local residents. Will they return and possibly breed in the future?

A pair of **Northern Harriers** had been observed in a BA field frequently. While cutting hay 6/8, the farmer noticed the female jump up in front of the tractor. Stopping, he found a nest with four eggs and mowed around it without damaging the nest. The birds were seen subsequently in the area but were not present at the next cutting in late July (LY). Unfortunately, it is not known if the chicks hatched or fledged. This is an area that had been CRP until the contract expired two years ago. LY also reports one **Upland Sandpiper** was seen in May but not after that in this site that had nesting birds for many years. It is not known whether losing CRP grass, the presence of nesting Harriers, or other causes are responsible for the loss of nesting Upland Sandpipers here.

Three **Red-headed Woodpeckers** reportedly fledged near Summit Mills (EB). The same observer found a **Dark-eyed Junco** nest in Mount Davis.

Observers: **Jeff Payne, 99755 Glades Pike, Berlin, PA 1550 (814)267-5718, Elmer Brennehan, Chris Payne, Lauretta Payne, Levi Yoder.**

Sullivan County

It seems the summer that never arrived has come to an end. The weather all the way through August stayed mild and wet on the mountain. This no doubt did not help breeding. Coupled with the end of the 2nd PBBA, the poor weather reduced the time in the field. No additional work was performed in the county specific to the breeding atlas.

An active **Bald Eagle** nest continues in the county. **Sandhill Crane** was also confirmed in the county again. We did not record any out of the ordinary nesters this year. All the other confirmations were of widespread and common birds. These included **Canada Goose**, **Eastern Phoebe**, **Tree Swallow**, **American Robin**, **Eastern Bluebird**, and **Chipping Sparrow**. A very active pair of **Eastern Kingbirds** was

tracked back to a nest in an apple tree.

A single **Fish Crow** observation made in the town of Dushore in mid May of 2008 became observations of multiple birds in multiple locations near town virtually every trip there in the early summer. Only time will tell if this phenomenon is a true indicator of further northward range expansion. This species had not been recorded at the higher elevations previously.

Northern Mockingbird and **Pine Warbler** are not considered common in the county on an even casual basis. A single male of both species was found to be singing over a period of about a month each in specific locations that could be construed as territories. No mates or any other possible breeding activity was seen.

Singing males of the following birds were all heard in May. None of the four species is seen every year and these could be migrants or vagrants although all of them have been observed in prior years. They include **Carolina Wren**, **Warbling Vireo**, **Hooded Warbler**, and **Orchard Oriole**.

Observers: **Rob Megraw, 131 Butternut Drive, Pottstown, PA 19464, (610) 323-0119, robert.r.megraw@xo.com**, Skip Conant

Susquehanna County

No Report.

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Tioga County

No Report

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Union County

No Report.

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Venango County

No Report.

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Warren County

No compiler.

Washington County

Locations: Bentleyville (BENT), Canonsburg Lake (CL).

Washington was either severely underbirded this season or birders decided to keep their sightings to themselves. This season offered by far the fewest number of sightings reported to me since I began compiling for the county four years ago. This is quite unfortunate, considering that *Washington*—with a variety of habitats and large tracts of undeveloped land—may well have the best birding potential of all southwestern Pennsylvania counties.

A late **Double-crested Cormorant** was in BENT 6/2 (AB).

As reported last season, the **putative Great Egret x Great Blue Heron hybrid** nested with a pure Great Blue Heron at a rookery in North Strabane Twp. Three young were observed at the nest 6/28, and all were presumed fledged by 7/2 (PB). A fourth chick apparently did not survive through June. PB described their development over several weeks of observation. He reported that the young birds initially did not appear substantially different from any other Great Blue chick in the rookery, but as they aged it became obvious that they were quite different from their counterparts. They became much lighter gray and showed a white breast and abdomen, whereas the nearby Great Blue

juveniles showed streaking in these areas. They also showed white thighs compared to rufous thighs on the Great Blues. One of the nestlings showed an almost completely yellow bill, compared to the dark upper mandibles of the young Great Blues. As promised last issue, look for a comprehensive re-review of this intriguing bird and its known history in *Washington* in a future issue of *Pennsylvania Birds*, and many thanks to PB for discovering and diligently tracking this latest and most interesting development in the story.

Turkey Vultures that nested near Meadowcroft Rockshelter in Avella were featured in a story in the *Pittsburgh Tribune Review* 7/11. A **Bald Eagle** near Claysville 6/13 (CC) was well out of place. A **Broad-winged Hawk** was over Washington Cemetery 6/6 (MV).

The resident **American Coot** spent another summer at the AMD Pond on Hahn Road in North Strabane Twp. First **Solitary Sandpiper** returned to CL 7/13 (MV). A fallout of late spring migrant shorebirds put down in BENT 6/2, which included 55 **Semipalmated Sandpipers**, 6 **Least Sandpipers**, and one **White-rumped Sandpiper** (AB).

A **Black-billed Cuckoo** was spotted in Eighty Four 7/8 (LD). **Common Nighthawks** were found in BENT 6/2 (AB) and in California 6/22 (AT). A **Red-headed Woodpecker** spent the summer coming to a feeder in BENT (ph. AB).

A bird with a long forked tail, believed to be either a Scissor-tailed Flycatcher or a Fork-tailed Flycatcher, was spotted outside Houston 6/2 (RG). Unfortunately the encounter was brief and back-lit, and the bird was not confirmed or recovered. A nice count of 135 **Barn Swallows** was made in BENT in mid-Jul (AB). Five **Red-breasted Nuthatches** were counted in Washington Cemetery 6/6 (MV). Highlights from a trip to Bavington 7/11 included **Brown Thrasher**, **Prairie Warbler**, **Grasshopper Sparrow**, and **Henslow's Sparrow** (MF). An orange-variant **House Finch** was seen in Eighty Four 6/1 (LD). Following the exciting observation of courtship behaviors among White-winged Crossbills at Washington Cemetery in May, no crossbills (or siskins) were reported at the cemetery or anywhere else in the county in Jun or Jul.

Observers: **Geoff Malosh, 450 Amherst Avenue, Moon Township, PA 15108-2654, (412) 735-3128, pomarine@earthlink.net**, Andy Berchin, John Boback, Paul Brown, Cassie Campsey, Mike Campsey, Lori DeThomas, Mike Fialkovich, Ross Gallardy, Amy Taracido, Mark Vass.

Wayne County

No Compiler.

Westmoreland County

No Compiler.

Wyoming County

No Report.

Compiler: **Joe DeMarco, 15 West Tioga Street, Tunkhannock, PA 18657, (570) 836-1468, jdemarco@epix.net**.

York County

Locations: Brunners Island (BI)

A **Black-crowned Night-Heron** was found at BI 6/24 (BJH) and 7/1 (LC). Another **Black-crowned Night-Heron** was seen at the Lake Williams spillway 7/16 (AP), a favorite feeding location for the species. On the evening of 7/10 there was a **Short-billed Dowitcher** at a pond on BI (DC).

A **Hermit Thrush** was reported at the late date of 6/6 at a residence south of the city of York (DC). A **Prothonotary Warbler** was at BI 6/24 (BJH), where it is known to nest.

Observers: **Peter J. Robinson, P. O. Box 482, Hanover, PA 17331, (717) 542-8341, pabirder@hotmail.com**, Lou Carpenter (LC), Dick Cleary (DC), Barry & Jenni Horton (BJH), Ann Pettigrew (AP).

Photo Quiz #26

Can you identify this bird? Answer in the next issue.



PUBLICATION SCHEDULE: Materials to be included in the publication are needed by the due dates below.

Issue	Sightings due to Compilers by...	Articles due to Editor by...	Publication Date
Dec-Feb (Vol. 1)	31 March	1 May	July
Mar-May (Vol. 2)	30 June	1 August	October
Jun-Jul (Vol. 3)	31 August	1 October	December
Aug-Nov (Vol. 4)	31 December	1 February	April

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